# Everyday Landscapes: Picturing Places of Labour, Leisure, and Industry in Quebec's Eastern Townships, 1900-2015

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**ABSTRACT**

**Everyday Landscapes: Picturing Places of Labour, Leisure, and Industry in Quebec's Eastern Townships, 1900-2015**

**Caroline Beaudoin, Ph.D. Concordia University, 2017**

Focusing on the Eastern Townships area of Quebec, this dissertation attends to the complex values that can be assigned to landscape as visual representation, and to landscape as place. The case-studies, beginning at the turn of the 20th-century, consider landscape in relation to a broad network of social relations and cultural meanings. Section I of the thesis starts by examining paintings and illustrations of loggers by F.S. Coburn as a way to address the logging industry in the Eastern Townships, and to consider the presence or absence of labour in landscape representation. Section II concentrates on early 20th-century postcards of towns, sites of leisure and asbestos mines in the region. I approach these postcards as modern material agents that articulate the everydayness of landscape and place through their imagery, as well as through their usage. Section III comes up to the present day through a discussion of an eco-park in Magog that negotiates the tension between ecological activism and eco-tourism, as the Eastern Townships struggles to achieve a post-industrial identity.

Organized into three chronological and overlapping sections that span 115 years of one region's history, the thesis develops an approach to landscape that is both art-historical and interdisciplinary. This study builds on recent scholarship within Canadian art history that challenges the association of landscape art with a myth about the country's uninhabited wilderness; the region's landscapes studied here are inhabited, and imbued with rural, industrial and bilingual histories. The visual culture methodology deployed here means that canonical modes of artistic landscape representations are addressed relative to landscape images circulating on postcards, newspaper and book illustrations, documentary photographs, a labour recruitment booklet and an ecopark's website for example.

The theoretical and scholarly foundation of this thesis has been constructed by drawing on discussions of landscape by art historians, but also by sociologists, geographers, anthropologists, and philosophers. It is this interdisciplinary breadth that allows landscapes to be regarded as sites of everyday human interactions, that inevitably intersect with collective, commercial and political motives, and with cultural ideals, interests, and values. The writings of Henri Lefebvre on the value of the everyday have been important for this thesis, as has his critique of capitalist practices of labour and leisure. Another key author is Félix Guattari who was also highly critical of capitalism, while turning his attention to the state of the world's post-industrial ecology. Likewise, this thesis calls attention to the role of capitalist initiatives in the production of everyday landscapes. This analysis of diverse landscape images is meant to shed light on the Eastern Townships' complex identity as it transitions from a former industrial modern era to its current post-industrial phase. This thesis asks what the term landscape has come to imply measured against social tensions relating to class differences, or economic and environmental imperatives, and how its range of meanings can encompass territory, property, picture, place, and environment.

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Finally, I wish to thank and dedicate this document to my family for everything and everyday.

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## INTRODUCTION

### A glimpse at the Eastern Townships' history and geography

The Eastern Townships was first settled following the American War of Independence by New England Loyalists who established themselves along the Northern shore of Lake Memphremagog during the late 18th-century, although by the end of the 19th-century French Canadians had become the region's majority population. The Indigenous people's legacy to the Townships is maintained to this day through historical Abenaki names for the territory's rivers, lakes and some villages including Memphremagog, Massawipi, Yamaska, Tomifobia, Coaticook, Mégantic, and Missisquoi for example. In *Histoire des Cantons de l'Est* the authors have determined that a 17th-century village named "Arsikantegok, ait existé a cette époque [1682] sur un affluent de la rivière Saint-François, peut-être au site de Magog."[1] During the era of fur-trade induced competitive warfare between the Abenaki (aligned with the French) and Mohawks (aligned with the English), the Mohawks' "voie d'invasion favorite emprunte le lac Champlain, la Rivière Missisquoi, le lac Memphrémagog et la rivière Saint-François."[2] During the modern to post-industrialization period examined in this study, from approximately the turn of the 20th-century to present, the oldest known and closest Indigenous settlement to the Townships is Odanak, located approximately 130 kilometres north of Magog between Sorel and Nicolet in the Central-Quebec region. According to the 2011 Canada census Odanak's population that year was 457, with 88% of the people reporting a French only mother tongue language, and the remaining 12% reporting an English only mother tongue language.

The land that is currently settled at the northern tip of Lake Memphremagog was first named the 'City of Magog' in 1890, having developed progressively in tandem with the small community's first textile mill. The city's original coat of arms was bilingual and featured a crest depicting its four key

[1] Kesteman et al, Histoire des Cantons de l'Est, 66.
[2] Kesteman, 67.

resources: lumbering, textiles, farming, and fishing. The logo also championed the motto "*Progress and Prosperity*", attesting to that modern era's preoccupation with industry and the cultivation of natural resources. According to a local historian, in Magog "one thing became plain; as the textile industry thrived in the future, so would thrive Magog [...] Both municipality and manufacturer had come to see that they must progress and develop together."[3] Beginning in the mid-19th-century, however, another industry was also emerging in Magog, an industry based on tourism. Lake Memphremagog rapidly developed into a hub for summertime leisure and recreational activities that attracted tourists, campers, and *villégiateurs* alike. These *villégiateurs*, or summer residents, included elite Montreal Golden Square Mile mansion owners and their families such as Alexander Molson, Harold Redpath, Judge Charles Dewey Day, John Murray, Henry Chapman, "Cotton King" Andrew Frederick Gault and Sir Hugh Allan who established lavish lakeside estates along the Eastern shore of Memphremagog. Historian Jody Robinson emphasizes how these families "came to the lake in search of a closer experience with nature and for healthful living [...] Rather than being relatively passive consumers of nature, they were directly interacting and transforming nature to suit their desires."[4] Regattas, bicycling, tennis, bathing, gardening, and swimming were among some of these summer residents' preferred summer activities. Robinson notes how during this era "the notion of physical activity as a form of leisure was largely limited to the upper and upper middle classes."[5] The city's origins were thus inextricably tied to the tourism, logging and manufacturing industries, which were in turn indebted to the landscape's natural attributes- the factory operated 100% on energy provided by Magog's two primary waterways: Lake Memphremagog and Magog River, and the surrounding forests yielded an abundant supply of lumber. At the turn of the 20th-century, an admirer of the area once described how "no lake in Northern Vermont, or along the Canadian Frontier, is more beautiful in appearance, attractive in scenic effects,

[3] Paradis, Commercial and Industrial Story of Magog, 38.
[4] Robinson, Montreal villégiateurs on Lake Memphremagog, 1860-1914, 46.
[5] Robinson, 100.

better suited to the wants of the tourist, or is more accessible by highway or rail than is Lake Memphremagog, or the 'Geneva of Canada', as it is frequently and appropriately called."[6] The lake is a relatively narrow and irregularly shaped lake that is approximately fifty kilometres long. The majority of its surface area is located in Quebec, although it is considered an international body of water because its southern shore is situated in Newport, Vermont. It is the largest body of water in the region and also recognized for having "the longest stretch of navigable water in the Eastern Townships."[7]

The region's terrain is reputed for its densely forested mountains that are part of the northern chain of the Appalachian range which spreads throughout the territory. The forests are indigenously rich in maple, pine, oak, and birch. Open fields of snow or wildflowers, railways, agricultural crops, and highways disrupt the flatter terrains' monotony with colour and movement. Coyotes, bears, cougars and moose roam the forests, as does a significant population of deer, porcupine and rabbits. The mountains are surrounded by lakes, rivers, streams, falls and wetlands. This territory's abundant wildlife, forests, waterways, fields, quarries and mines provided a diverse wealth of natural resources that contributed to the region's prosperity throughout the industrial era. Its agricultural, mining, manufacturing, tourist and recent ecological enterprises are closely entwined with the territory's natural environment.

The land's richly diverse scenery also appealed to many landscape artists beginning in the 19th-century who were drawn by the area's vast and varied natural terrain. The natural environment's distinct mountains include Owl's Head, Elephantis and Orford, which all surround Lake Memphremagog on the Canadian side of the border. In addition to attracting wealthy Montreal families who established elaborate summer estates on the lake's bordering hillsides following the completion of the Victoria Bridge in 1860, these mountains and their adjacent scenery were also recurrent subjects for landscape painters and photographers during the 19th and 20th centuries including, for example, Cornelius

[6] D. W. Hildreth, Beautiful Memphremagog, np.
[7] Matthew Farfan, Townships heritage web magazine. <http://townshipsheritage.com/article/steamers-lake-memphremagog-part->,consulted June 15, 2013.

Kreighoff, William Notman, John Fraser, Henry Sandham, Allan Edson, Frederick Simpson Coburn, Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Côté, Goodridge Roberts, and John Lyman. It is important to consider the development of the Townships in relation to the much larger picture of how Canada evolved, politically and economically.

**A portrait of early Canadian landscape**

Omer Lavallée's publication entitled *Van Horne's Road: The Building Of The Canadian Pacific Railway* begins with a telling excerpt from an anonymously authored article printed in *The Century,* dated October 1885: "What tempted the people of Canada to undertake so gigantic a work as the Canadian Pacific Railway? [...] We were under the inspiration of a national idea, and went forward. We were determined to be something more than a fortuitous collection of provinces [...] Our ultimate destiny will be none the worse because we have - not unwillingly - made sacrifices in order to make ourselves a nation."[8] William Cornelius Van Horne, supported by an elite team of wealthy investors, embarked upon an unprecedented promotional campaign in Canada to reinforce and communicate this "national" ideal through landscape representations of magnificent scenery encountered along the railroad line that essentially linked the country from east to west, and opened up the nation, and its trade, to the Pacific coast. The early imaginary of Canada was thus associated with landscape early on in the country's history, and would prove to be a contentious tradition linked to issues of identity that endured for well over a century. Van Horne's vision seems untenable measured against today's celebration of diversity and multiculturalism, yet even by 19th-century standards his ambitions were emphatically and detrimentally oriented towards reconfiguring the topography in order to accommodate his plans, at any cost. One need only consider Manitoba's Métis people, or Quebec's habitant labourers, and Alberta's ranchers to realize how sweeping and hegemonic such a vision was, in light of how each of these cultural groups had its own unique relationship to, and understanding of,

[8] Qtd. in Omer Lavallée, Van Horne's Road, np.

their everyday landscape environment based on heritage and traditional customs. As Lavallée observes, "few modern nations have been born with as much apparent reluctance as Canada."[9] Many parts of the country had no interest in being subsumed by Confederation, but Van Horne's road contributed significantly to ensuring that even the most resistant parties were eventually entwined with the railway's ties. The American theorist of landscape John Brinckerhoff Jackson has insisted that landscape is a visible manifestation of community, and that it is "simply the by-product of people working and living." He further emphasizes that "no landscape can be exclusively devoted to the fostering of only one identity."[10] These perspectives clearly oppose Van Horne's traditionally colonial understanding that landscape can represent a singular, unifying and homogeneous national ideal. Roger Boulet underscores the point of how most of the artists who responded to CPR president Van Horne's offer for free passes to artists and writers, whose work was intended to encourage settlement and tourism throughout Canada, had strong British Imperial ties. He further describes how during the late 1800s

> the CPR could exploit through tourism the mountainous landscape that was unsuitable for settlement and agricultural pursuits. At the same time, through painting and photography, an image of Canada was emerging through iconic and clichéd views of western landscape which were also part of the construction of a nascent national identity. This vision of the Western Canadian landscape emerges primarily through the eyes of artists from the East, all of whom shared ideals of imperialism and nationalism. Significantly, no French Canadian artists sought to visit the West. Imbued with a strong sense of their own unique identity, they did not identify with the British Empire.[11]

**Thesis question and case-studies**

The question posed in this thesis is how do landscapes mediate prevalent cultural priorities and social tensions that have pervaded capitalist environments in the Eastern Townships from 1900 to 2015. In order to respond, this thesis contextualizes landscape's agency relative to everyday and modern productions of labour and leisure; it analyzes landscape's role in promoting and contributing to various leisure and labour practices by exploring those practices. It sets out to examine landscape

[9] Lavallée, 15.
[10] J. B. Jackson qtd. in Paul Groth, Understanding Ordinary Landscapes, 12.
[11] Roger Boulet, Vistas: Artists on The Canadian Pacific Railway, 19.

representations of the region, working with a concept of landscape as a cultural construct and emphasizing the way that landscapes have been pictured, lived in, worked on, and exploited. It questions how the circulation of diverse landscape images has contributed to a greater understanding of the Eastern Townships' complex identity as it transitions from a former production-based era to its current post-industrial phase. Both the economic development of the region, and the question of how the art and visual culture of the Townships was forged are deeply connected to broader Canadian issues, although I emphasize specific circumstances and local experiences. The thesis consists of three sections. The first section considers paintings and illustrations of loggers made by Frederick Simpson Coburn (1871-1960) mainly between 1890 and 1930, in addition to photographs of the region and the lumberjacks that were working during the same period that Coburn was painting and illustrating. The second section analyzes a small sample of some of the early picture postcards of the Townships from the so-called "Golden Age" (1900-1915). The third and final section questions the ambivalent vocation of the municipality of Magog's public, ecological park as it strives to balance its environmentally sustainable mission with its tourism agenda.

**Methodological approach**

By focusing on only one designated region in the province of Quebec, this thesis acknowledges that Canada's identity is actually a heterogeneous one that is characterized by layers of history and diversity that are deeply embedded in, and influenced by, the land. Within the context of this study, landscapes are understood as spatial/temporal fragments that represent and harbour ambiguous moments within a territory's contentious history. This thesis questions how various people's cultural values and perceptions have contributed to transforming and framing such volatile spaces and differing places. In order to optimize the scope of this analysis, both visual culture and material culture methodologies are invoked in consideration of landscape studies' multidisciplinary breadth. This dual visual/material method resonates with Henri Lefebvre's critical thinking about everyday life in the

modern world; and so this research project acknowledges landscape as a visual and material agent, that in the West, has mediated prevalent social ambiguities, conflicting cultural priorities and urgent environmental imperatives since the modern era. As an art historian working in the 21st century, I did not want to limit the field of this study too narrowly, in view of the many compelling theories and themes relating to issues of landscape that have been addressed in recent interdisciplinary studies. The "landscapes" included in this thesis therefore encompass photographs, painted works of art, illustrations, postcards, and an ecopark. I will consider all of these formulations relative to everyday life in the Eastern Townships. This thesis engages with art historical concepts of landscape and also a range of interdisciplinary problematizations relating to landscape, while turning to Lefebvre's theorization of the "everyday." His ideological position regarding modern life is metaphorically articulated in terms of a landscape, one that he conjures through text rather than image. This becomes evident in his following description:

> Everyday life is a crust of earth over the tunnels and caves of the unconscious and against a skyline of uncertainty and illusion that we call Modernity, while overhead stretch the Heavens of Permanence; [...] high over the polar horizon we have Technology and elsewhere Youthfulness; [...] among the fixed stars of the first magnitude we might place Urbanism and Urbanization, so long as we do not omit Naturalness, Rationality and a few others.[12]

This thesis endeavours to link a number of themes and subfields into a single framework of everyday life, as a means to acknowledge and contemplate both the routine habits and extraordinary circumstances that characterized modern life, and then later informed post-industrial concerns, while emphasizing how these imperatives are re-presented through landscapes. Much attention is given to the extent and variety of ways that capitalist interests and values have left their imprint on the landscape, whether through deliberate action, intentional or unconscious acts of representation, or calculated omission. Consideration is also given to the production and consumption of landscape representations. Additionally, their various manifestations as by-products relating to capitalist enterprises including the

[12] Henri Lefebvre, Everyday Life In The Modern World, vii.

lumber, railway, mining, and tourism industries - and how such enterprises have contributed to formulating ambiguous and complex landscape sites of labour and leisure - will also be considered. This thesis contributes to existing art historical scholarship on landscape through an analysis of the multiple, ambiguous and often conflicting expressions of modern landscapes in Quebec's Eastern Townships following Confederation. By joining visual and material culture methodologies to a broad range of multidisciplinary perspectives and theories of landscape, this thesis essentially questions the cultural, historical, economic and personal values that contribute to landscape, alongside questions of wilderness, territorial boundaries, picturesque, commoditized or sublime ideals of nature. In this context, landscape is understood as a portrait of the relationship between human beings and environments.

**Henri Lefebvre's everyday life theories**

Lefebvre was a French Marxist philosopher and sociologist who completed his studies at the Université de Paris in 1920. His prolific intellectual career as activist, writer, and professor subsequently flourished throughout much of the  century. He is perhaps best known for his thoughts on everyday life and the production of social space. Some of his most significant contributions to social thought can be found in his *Critique of Everyday Life* volume II, first published in 1961. He is recognized as a Marxist thinker who broadened the scope of Marxist theory through his embrace of everyday life, and because he explored the meaning of urban space in the west during the 20th-century. His theories of everyday life provide a model that enables material and visual culture studies to be considered as a "dialectical interaction that is the inevitable starting point for the realization of the possible."[13] Lefebvre called for "a philosophical inventory and analysis of everyday life that will expose its ambiguities [...] and by these unorthodox means release the creative energies that are an integral part of it."[14] Even though capitalism attempts to control and commodify many aspects of life, this does not happen without resistance. It is

[13]Lefebvre, Everyday Life, 14.
[14]Lefebvre Everyday Life, 13.

precisely within this control/resistance realm of the everyday that capitalism's ambiguities and contradictions become evident. I want to argue that these ambiguities and contradictions are often embedded in landscape representations, and this thesis endeavours to examine and underscore such instances through an analysis of everyday life. In view of this project's interdisciplinary range, everyday life as a subject and method is the thread that weaves together modern issues and themes relating to this thesis' three main themes (landscape, labour and leisure) as it winds its way through academic fields relating to art history, tourism, cultural landscape studies and ecology, for instance.

Lefebvre advocates ordinary people's rightful access to, and participation in the modern world, and he freely acknowledges that his interest is in transforming everyday life. This thesis attempts to make apparent that landscape, like everyday life, problematizes "how the social existence of human beings is *produced,*"[15] and in the modern world that production is without question driven by capitalist interests and initiatives. In *The Everyday and Everydayness,* Lefebvre emphasizes that the concept of everydayness does not designate a system, but it is rather a common denominator of existing systems - systems that are inevitably oriented towards capitalism. Significantly, Lefebvre notes how the concept of everydayness "has always been repetitive and veiled by obsession and fear,[16] fears and obsessions that may stem from feelings of oppression, longing, dissatisfaction, disconnectedness or dependency. He further emphasizes how the everyday is situated between the cyclical (nature) and linear (rational) modes of repetition as it "implies on the one hand cycles, nights and days, seasons and harvests, activity and rest, hunger and satisfaction, desire and its fulfillment, life and death, and it implies on the other hand the repetitive gestures of work and consumption."[17] The everyday thus encompasses modern life patterns, or lifescapes, that are also indelibly rooted in landscapes. From a social perspective, Lefebvre

[15] Lefebvre, Everyday Life, 23.
[16] Henri Lefebvre, The Everyday and Everydayness, 10.
[17] Lefebvre, The Everyday, 10.

insists that the monotony that ensues from such cyclical repetition engenders an "organized passivity. This means, in leisure activities, the passivity of the spectator faced with images and landscapes."[18]

Through visual analysis, historical documents, archival material and existing scholarship relating to landscape studies, this thesis examines the dualities and overlaps between landscape as imagined space, and landscape as cultivated place. Landscape's range of incarnations enables dynamic and intellectually stimulating opportunities for interdisciplinary research. When contemplating landscape as a product of modernity in its broadest sense, it is important to concede that everyday life, as a condition of modernity, unfolds within landscape's diverse environments. The landscape representations addressed within this study expose 'everyday life' ambiguities that range from the mundane to the extraordinary. Particularly relevant to this study is how Lefebvre insists that "production is not merely the making of products: the term signifies on the one hand 'spiritual' production, that is to say creations (including social time and space), and on the other material production or the making of things; it also signifies the self-production of a 'human being' in the process of historical self-development, which involves the production of social relations."[19] Landscapes can be recognized as sites for and of such production processes, as creations of social time and of historical spaces. Lefebvre also notes how "the most remarkable aspect of the transition we are living through is not so much the passage from want to affluence as the passage from labour to leisure [...] The stress of 'modern life' makes amusements, distractions and relaxation a necessity."[20] In this thesis, landscape is indeed situated at the very heart of this transition from labour to leisure, and the diverse ways which it manifests modern interests, anxieties, values, preoccupations and pleasures are at the forefront of this visual-material culture study.

[18] Lefebvre, The Everyday, 10.
[19] Lefebvre, Everyday Life, 31.
[20] Lefebvre, Everyday Life, 52-3.

**Landscape & Canadian art history**

In Canada, landscape art has maintained a long tradition of addressing issues that relate to nationhood and identity. Barry Lord's *The History of Painting in Canada: Toward a People's Art* (1974) is one of the few 20th-century art historical texts however, to make questions of empire and social class central to the discussion. Lord confronts both the French and British elites' influence on painting in Quebec and Canada through a Marxist lens in order to bring attention to political, social and economic practices and inequalities which informed Canada's artistic traditions that were maintained by both patrons and artists alike. His survey begins with the nomadic First Nations people's works of art and ends in 1974, but his focus is on how, since the time when Quebec was New France, Canada has "always been the No. 1 colony of the world's leading imperial system,"[21] and the diverse ways which that system influenced the country's art. He underscores how each new generation's small elite circle that sells the nation off to imperialist interests "is the same group of people who have controlled most of our art, and our art history." This means that Canada's art history is invariably "studied as a colonial appendage to these imperial cultures." [22] His text attends to the politics of art and how policies and interests in turn inform the traditions, selection and promotion of art through official networks regulated by prominent patrons. For example, Lord argues that there are no paintings of the working class' successful demonstrations in Canada, because there was no patronage for such works. He further notes how the artworks that do exist of the country's working class, show those labourers in much the same context as other imperial assets or resources including lumber, land and fur. According to him, the practice of commissioning such trophy works in Canada dates back to at least 1840 when a Glasgow merchant "who was making big profits from the labour of Canayen lumbermen commissioned a painting of Wolfe's Cove, the harbour from which his ships sailed for Scotland, to be hung in his head office."[23] The

[21] Barry, Lord, The History of Painting in Canada: Toward a people's art, 9.
[22] Lord, p. 9.
[23] Lord, p. 44-5.

landscape was painted by British born artist Robert Clow Todd, and it shows floating logs in the harbour at Sillery, Quebec. This particular landscape must have made a strong impression on artists and patrons alike, as it was first sketched by William Henry Bartlett in 1838 and printed in *Canadian Scenery Illustrated* in 1842, and then again painted by Cornelius Krieghoff and renamed *Sillery Cove* and sent off to Paris for the 1867 Universal Exhibition (fig. 5). The practice of commissioning such trophy landscapes that symbolize wealth, influence and ownership for display in head offices is further addressed in Section I of this thesis with reference to a large, professionally photographed panoramic diptych photo of a factory (fig. 16), and re-emerges again in Section II as a commissioned photograph set into public circulation as a postcard to promote a prominent and prosperous mining company (fig. 56).

Five years after Lord's text was published, Canadian art historian Dennis Reid introduced *Our Own Country Canada: Being an Account of the National Aspirations of the Principal Landscape Artists in Montreal and Toronto 1860-1890*, published by the National Gallery of Canada in 1979, which offered a view of the country's mainly post-confederate artistic development. Reid's main focus on Montreal and Toronto excluded much of the rest of the provinces and territories which were part of the nation's boundaries during the purview of his account, with the small exception of two of his fourteen chapters: XII/Those Who Faced East (1880-1890) and XIII/Western Landscape and the CPR. New Brunswick and Nova Scotia had also joined confederation in 1867, Manitoba and the North West Territories signed up in 1870, British Columbia became a member in 1871 and PEI as of 1873. *Our Own Country Canada*'s dust jacket informs prospective readers that:

> Empire was the Canadian obsession of the [eighteen]eighties as much for the artist as for any politician or railway entrepreneur. During these robust and stirring years of Canada's westward expansion, when the great railways were flung like shining ribbons from sea to sea, it was Canadian painters and photographers who charted the boundaries of this brave new world. In their response to the landscape they were affected by, and in their work affecting, the surging drive of nationalism that was so much the spirit of the times.[24]

[24] Dennis Reid, Our Own Country Canada, np.

According to Reid, the artists' response to the landscape during that era was profoundly affected by Canada's rapid territorial expansion, and "their national aspirations, [...] like Van Horne's, tied to personal ambition, to a sense of advancement and self-improvement."[25] He proposes that "the poetry of their vision" was manifest in both their romantic and naturalistic representations "of the noble adversary"- the exalted land itself. This vision naturally reflected the newly confederated nation's "ambition to appropriate and enlarge."[26] Many of these artists were recent immigrants from Europe, and "they brought with them the instruments of their culture."[27] Canada's patrons, too, had strong ties to the Continent. Following confederation there was an enduring and conservative preference by many affluent Canadian collectors for European art that prevailed into the 1920s, at which time an interest in "modern art" and the Group of Seven's national vision of "wilderness" gradually emerged. Reid's emphasis on the country's landscapes relative to the nation's potential for economic and commercial development combined with its many wealthy patrons and their preferred artists' "surging drive of nationalism," intentionally or not, overlooks that nation's native people, social issues, French Canadian population, developing industries and heightened urbanization. The result of *Our Own Country Canada* projects a scarcely populated British colony that, as a new nation, pictures itself in a mirror image that reflects the crown's long established aesthetic tastes and traditional pictorial conventions.

*Beyond Wilderness: The Group of Seven, Canadian Identity, and Contemporary Art* (2007), a Canadian art historical compendium edited by John O'Brian and Peter White, is indicative of the new wave of scholarship that has taken hold in the 21st century. The essays in this book examine how the Group of Seven and the National Gallery of Canada promoted "wilderness myths" in order to establish a sense of national identity that was independent of colonial Europe. Specifically, it examines how the adoption of the Group of Seven's wilderness painting aesthetic and the expressive potential of

[25] Reid, 4.
[26] Reid, 4.
[27] Reid, 5.

landscape were initially promoted as a national means to free Canadian art from European "political and cultural subordination."[28]Group member A.Y. Jackson (1882-1974) claims that it was J.E.H MacDonald (1873-1932), a fellow group member, who was the first artist to insist that Canada's painting should interpret "our own country."[29] Jackson also advocated that "there was need in the Academy of a more aggressive spirit to counteract the tameness and unadventurous outlook of many of its members."[30] In *Beyond Wilderness*, the contributing scholars, however, underscore how the Group's wilderness myths systematically overlooked the era's Indigenous population, women, growing urbanization, industrialization, political refugees and people. *Beyond Wilderness* thus probes Canada's fetishization of landscape "in the name of unity" from multiple perspectives and diverse agendas. The contributing scholars' arguments connect through their common goal to demonstrate, in varying ways and during different decades, how the idea of wilderness "is no longer the authoritative source of power the group and their associates once claimed it to be."[31] As such landscapes are reconsidered in terms of a contemporary understanding of the economic and social circumstances during which the Group was working, while measured against today's changing political, technological, and environmental interests. The editors note how "the natural world and the exploration of its resources are always mediated by technological, economic, and political forces."[32] O'Brian's insistence on how "wilderness and capitalist modernity in Canada went hand in hand,"[33] and his argument that Canada's willingness to embrace the Group's landscapes stemmed from "technological anxiety"[34] are relevant to this thesis. Issues pertaining to capitalism, and to the theme of anti-modernism as a recoil or escape from industrialization and modern urban life towards landscapes of nature or rural living, are important to this research that

[28] John O'Brian, Beyond Wilderness, 21.
[29] A.Y. Jackson qtd. in Evelyn Loyd Coburn, Frederick Simpson Coburn, vi.
[30] Coburn, vi
[31] O'Brian, 6.
[32] O'Brian, 5.
[33] O'Brian, 22.
[34] O'Brian, 28.

questions how landscapes contribute to a greater understanding of complex human environments, as I explore social and cultural ambiguities that are routinely negotiated and navigated during the unfolding of everyday life.

Whereas *Beyond Wilderness* stresses how wilderness artworks prompted the young nation to imagine itself through a different lens than adopted by colonial Europe's traditional gaze, art historian Marylin McKay, in her 2011 book *Picturing the Land: Narrating Territories in Canadian Landscape Art, 1500-1950*, links her chronological discussion of landscape art to five other concepts of territory: nomadic, Arcadian, Edenic, sedentary, and universal. Her text distinguishes between French and English perceptions of territory, an issue which is relevant to my discussion of the Eastern Townships' diverse landscapes, industries and people. While not as politicized in her analysis as Lord or the *Beyond Wilderness* book, she does set out to "demonstrate how dominant social, economic, and political conditions both support and are supported by particular forms of representation."[35] McKay examines the Arcadian pastoral concept, for instance, as something which was revived during the Renaissance and then further supported by the Romantics, but which in a Canadian context became a form of resistance to industrialization and urbanization, as idealized farmland pictures seemed to offer an alternative or escape from such modern environments. McKay maintains that from the 1860s to 1930, English Canadian artists produced "images of farmland based on combinations of Arcadian, Edenic, and nomadic concepts of territory", while French Canadian artists based their landscapes on the "sedentary concept of territory."[36] She notes that following the 1930s Canadian artists abandoned their earlier concepts in favour of "modernist and semi-abstract forms to avoid the glorification of a particular location or way of life."[37] The art historian qualifies the 'modernist style' landscapes as "fantasies that allowed both French and English Canadians to escape from what had become formulaic representations

[35] Marylin Mackay, Picturing the Land, 3.
[36] Marylin Mackay, 7.
[37] Marylin Mackay, 7

of the land: expressions of cleric-nationalism based on sedentary concepts of landscape on the one hand, and pan-Canadian nationalism based on nomadic, Arcadian, and Edenic concepts of landscape on the other.[38]

O'Brian discusses the popularity of the Canadian wilderness theme as a by-products of people's anxiety regarding industrialization and technological progress during the first half of the 20th-century, and McKay further advances how such resistance to industrialization is "alive and well within the many ecological movements coming out of urban centres today."[39] The perceptions and conceptions of landscape and territory presented in this research are measured against, and understood as, social and economic side-effects of modern, capitalist and everyday life. This thesis demonstrates how tendencies to either showcase the natural environment's abundant resources available for conversion into profit, or turn to nature and the landscape to counter the traumas imposed upon the land and people by industrial practices, are addressed by art historians and scholars from various fields.

In his book *Le Paysage Dans La Peinture au Québec* (1984), Guy Boulizon addresses the "Paysage Québécois face au Canadian Landscape."[40] In contrast to the Group of Seven's national and uninhabited wilderness scenes, Boulizon identifies one unique quality that he finds characterizes the essence of Quebec landscape paintings: "La <constante>, première et essentielle, qu'on remarque dans ces paysages [du Québéc], c'est d'être <habités>; et habités au sens le plus fort et le plus complet du terme, c'est à dire marquées profondément par une <culture> spécifique, historiquement et sociologiquement."[41] The small villages, trails, and farm buildings so frequently present in these landscapes are "signs", according to Boulizon, of Quebec's people, history and culture. This perspective, which insists on the human presence of a specific culture within Quebec's landscape, aligns with Mackay's assertion that French Canadian artists painted according to a sedentary concept of territory

[38] Marylin Mackay, 14.
[39] Marylin Mackay, 6.
[40] Guy Boulizon, Le Paysage Dans La Peinture au Québec, 23.
[41] Boulizon, 25.

from 1860 up until the 1930s. The distinction made between French and English landscape painters during this modern era is particularly relevant to Section I's discussion of Frederick Simpson Coburn, a Quebec Anglophone landscape artist who painted 'inhabited' idealizations of the Eastern Townships in winter which conflicted with the wilderness ideals advanced by his Anglophone peers.

More than a decade after Boulizon's text, Esther Trépanier's essay "Nationalisme et Modernité: La réception critique du Groupe des Sept dans la presse montréalaise francophone des années vingt" (1996) questions the significance of the term 'national art', and probes issues of identity relative to regionalist and nationalist ideologies. She writes, with reference to the first two decades of the 20th-century, "si l'on étudie l'ensemble du corpus de la critique d'art montréalaise francophone, les notions "d'artistes canadiens", "d'art canadien" demeurent ambiguës."[42] Trépanier cites Ernest Bilodeau's 1915 review of the RCA's (Royal Canadian Academy of Arts) fall exhibition in *Le Devoir* as a good example of this ambiguity, noting how:

> ce texte n'établit pas de distinction claire entre <le pays canadien> et la <vie canadienne-française>. Cependant, quand on le voit citer les oeuvres de Coburn aussi bien que celles de Clarence Gagnon et d'Ozias Leduc, on se demande si les représentants de cet <art canadien> ne sont pas d'abord les peintres qui peignent le Québec et qui, anglophones comme francophones, sont associés par plusieurs [...] au régionalisme.[43]

She insists on how Bilodeau frequently reiterated the importance of supporting artists that represented "les beautés du pays canadien", and she stresses how "le terme utilisé est l'adjectif "canadien "et est toujours accolé aux mots "nature", "beautés", "vie". Le mot *Canada* n'est pas employé."[44] Citing a later art review by an anonymous writer in a 1919 edition of *Le Devoir*, Trépanier questions how "l'auteur cite, à titre d'examples positifs, aussi bien les oeuvres de Coburn, d'Hébert, de Horne Russell que celles de Suzor-Coté. Toutefois, quand il ajoute qu'une "petite partie des exposants seulement sont des

[42] Trépanier, Nationalisme et Modernité, 31.
[43] Trépanier, 32.
[44] Trépanier, 32.

*canadiens"*, on se demande s'il entend par là les seuls Canadiens français?"[45] She then considers how the Group of Seven's works were admired by Quebec's French Canadian critics, but that those critics referred to them as the "Groupe de Toronto" or "peintres de Toronto", and mentioned Jackson as a "peintre ontarien"; she finds that the French press during those early decades did not refer to the Group's painters as a national school, nor as "artistes canadiennes", because terms such as 'national' and 'canadienne' were used by French speaking critics solely in reference to French Canadian or Quebec artists.[46]

In his essay "The Forest, Niagara, and the Sublime," published in the 2009 compendium *Expanding Horizons: Painting and Photography of American and Canadian Landscapes 1860-1918*, François-Marc Gagnon addresses how, in Canada, "since 1910 people have droned on about the country's wilderness," even as it was being assailed from all directions by mining companies, railroads and lumberjacks."[47] He states that:

> if the sublime did not have as strong a hold on Quebec, it is because a different route was taken in escaping from reality - toward the past rather than the future, toward the bucolic, simple minded "good old days" of our "ancestors" rather than toward the development and exploitation of natural resources. Our need was to "survive," as they said. Our need was to preserve the French language - "guardian of the faith" (the Catholic faith, of course) - and our old ways and customs as purebred Canadians.

The differing French - English aesthetic response to landscape, Gagnon writes "was just as much of an escape, but [for the French] toward "our master the past [...] While English Canadian painters strove to eliminate all human presence from their paintings, French Canadian painters were depicting village streets of yesteryear and tilled fields."[48]

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[45] Trépanier, 32.
[46] Trépanier, 36.
[47] François-Marc Gagnon, qtd. in Expanding Horizons: Painting and Photography of American and Canadian Landscapes 1860-1918, 33.
[48] Gagnon, 33.

This thesis contributes to the art historical discourse that challenges the early 20th-century's Canadian wilderness myth through its close examination of various representations of the Eastern Townships, and then different manifestations of the land itself, which visually and materially document an inhabited region that has a complex rural, industrial and multi-cultural history. This research project conveys a fascinating modern social history of ordinary people's everyday lives beginning in the late 19th-century. It considers both ways which capitalist interests have impacted the land, and the extent to which those interests have influenced the representations of that land. It must be acknowledged that the territory under study was first occupied by the Abenakis people prior to colonization by Europeans, even though that era is beyond the purview of this thesis.

**Landscape as taken up by non-Canadian art history**

This thesis also builds on the scholarship of several international scholars who have acknowledged that landscape art in the wake of industrialization, across a range of national contexts, can be regarded as a culturally constructed alternative to, or escape from, urban environments that encroach upon the natural environment. In a perspective which resonates with O'Brian's view that wilderness and capitalism in Canada went hand in hand, the American scholar W.J.T Mitchell recognizes the rise and development of landscape as "a symptom of the rise and development of capitalism"[49] in *Landscape and Power* (1994). He underscores how landscape art was culturally constructed to alleviate people's sense of alienation during industrialization as it spread throughout the West, and argues that land is raw material, and landscape is artifice - an aesthetically processed and mediated version of the land. He insists on how landscape circulates as a medium of exchange, and that it is as much a site of visual appropriation as it is a symbol of identity. Mitchell recognizes landscape as a cultural and ideological medium that is entwined with imperial and colonial agendas relating to power.

[49] W.J.T. Mitchell, Landscape and Power, 7.

In *The Dark Side of the Landscape* (1980), John Barrell's brings a Marxist analysis to bear on John Constable's early 19th-century landscape paintings, discussing England's class relations, economy and social structures in order to cast light on how a hegemonic spirit of domination is manifested in the artworks. He objects to the way that Constable minimizes the labourers' roles within the landscape by pushing them into the shadows, or deep into the background. Barrell finds that the painter's treatment of the labourers in his work is unsurprising due to ''his birth and the position of his family'' as wealthy landowners, and underscores how Constable's labourers ''keep their place, and it is a very small place, a long way away.''[50] The distance between Constable and his figures is critical to Barrell's theory that the painter's goal is to maintain, at all costs, a sense of peace within his vision of an ''ideal'' society that is hierarchically divided by class structures. Barrell takes particular exception to certain scholars' willingness ''to ignore the fact that the basis of his social harmony is [actually] social division,''[51] and that, in the West, landscapes have been inextricably linked to power, wealth and identity. Barrell's text confronts the moral, ideological, and political shadow that darkens 18th-century English landscape painting as it underestimates the working class' presence, contributions and place within that landscape. This text has served as an important theoretical model for this thesis, to the extent that the working class and its actual labour has often been minimized within, if not omitted from, Canadian landscape representations.

**Interdisciplinary theories & landscape**

This thesis further draws upon interdisciplinary scholarship that has contributed to a broader understanding of what is at stake when we talk of landscape. Beginning in the 1950s J.B. Jackson was instrumental in developing the field of "cultural landscape studies" through his focus on exploring the visual experience of the everyday world. He advances that the beauty "we see in vernacular landscape is the image of our common humanity: hard work, stubborn hope, and mutual forbearance striving to be

[50] John Barrell, The Darkside of the Landscape, 134.
[51] Barrell, 164.

love."[52] According to his perspective landscape "is a concrete, three-dimensional shared reality."[53] Jackson argues that the etymology of the word landscape shows that it has always been a human construct, and that therefore it "is not a natural feature of the environment but a *synthetic* space, a man-made system of spaces superimposed on the face of the land."[54] As a cultural geographer, Jackson's interest in landscape studies is contingent on the landscape's human presence. Groth emphasizes how cultural landscape studies "focus most on the history of how people have used *everyday* space [...] to establish their identity, articulate their social relations, and derive cultural meanings."[55] The cultural landscape perspective insists on how "the term *landscape* means more than a pleasing view of scenery. *Landscape* denotes the interaction of people and place: [...] all human intervention with nature can be considered as cultural landscape."[56] More recently, cultural landscape scholars advocate a better knowledge of ordinary environments in order to "lessen the environmental dangers caused by people."[57]

Geographer Denis Cosgrove is another important contributing scholar to landscape studies; he examines the ambiguities embedded in the term landscape both in the sense of dwelling (material) and picture (visual) as a way to discover cultural meaning. This approach, like the cultural landscape perspective, is foundational for this thesis as a model that ties modern material and visual preoccupations to everyday human interests. More specifically, Cosgrove argues that "from a cultural perspective, the pictorial dimension of landscape has frequently been charged with duplicity,"[58] citing how representations often contain a hidden agenda to reinforce particular cultural values or myths. He further emphasizes the curious and persistent nature of "landscape's capacity to 'naturalize' social or

[52] J.B. Jackson qtd. in Groth, xii.
[53] J.B. Jackson qtd. in Groth, 5.
[54] J.B. Jackson qtd. in Groth, 8.
[55] Groth, 1.
[56] Groth, 1.
[57] Groth, 2.
[58] Denis Cosgrove, "Modernity, Community and the Landscape Idea", 51.

environmental inequities through an aesthetic of visual harmony," and he refers to landscape as a 'hegemonic tool' that evolved into a 'landscape idea' which references the pictorial and spatial way of "connecting the individual to the community."[59] According to this idea, landscape is a "synthesis of the territorial and the pictorial." However, Cosgrove emphasizes how harmonious and picturesque scenery now acts "as a moral barometer of successful community."[60]

The sections of this thesis that pertain to ecological questions draw on the writing of philosopher (and psychoanalyst) Félix Guattari, particularly his essay "The Three Ecologies." Guattari introduces his *ecosophy* as an ethico-political and ethico-aesthetic articulation of what he identifies as three ecological registers – the environment, social relations and human subjectivity – as a viable means to counter the dangers that "threaten the natural environment of our societies."[61] He questions the ways of living on this planet amidst rampant capitalist values, accelerated techno-scientific mutations and considerable demographic growth, and objects to how Earth's techno-scientific transformation is causing "otherness [...] to lose all its asperity."[62] He cites tourism as an example which, he argues, now "usually amounts to no more that a journey on the spot, with the same redundancy of images and behaviour."[63] Guattari opposes "dominant modes of valorizing human activities," and particularly objects to those of the imperium of "a global market that destroys specific value systems and puts on the same plane of equivalence: material assets, cultural assets, wildlife areas, etc."[64] As a strategy against this system of values he advocates the production of subjectivity through "individual and/or collective resingularization" as opposed to the "collective, mass media subjectivity" that he finds "is synonymous with distress and despair."[65] Guattari insists that "now more than ever, nature cannot be

[59] Cosgrove, 51.
[60] Cosgrove, 52.
[61] Félix Guattari, The Three Ecologies, 19.
[62] Guattari, 19.
[63] Guattari, 19.
[64] Guattari, 20.
[65] Guattari, 23.

separated from culture."[66] This perspective is developed in Section III of the thesis, as I address ecotourism and ecology in the Eastern Townships.

Tourism studies are another important scholarly area that underscores the commercialization of space and highlights landscape's role in the process of commodification – a theme that recurs throughout the three sections of the thesis. In *Consuming Places* (1995) John Urry notes how the tourist's gaze is intentionally diverted to land and town scapes removed from his or her everyday experiences. He insists that "a crucial aspect of the tourist gaze is that there is a dichotomy drawn between the ordinary and the extraordinary."[67] His is a sociological study that is particularly attentive to the various ways places are consumed, with emphasis placed on the visual nature of that consumption. Dean MacCannell's *The Tourist* (1976) approaches tourism from a sociological perspective, looking into hidden structures informing both pro-tourist and anti-tourist positions. He has noted that since the 1960s leisure has largely displaced labour from the center of the modern social structure. He describes his research in terms of "an ethnography of modernity" that analyzes the leisure class' touristic practices and the tourism industry's production of resorts and parks as "tourist factories." MacCannell identifies the tourist as the product of a modern and international middle class that has replaced the industrial era's working class. He underscores how the uneven global distribution of tourists fuels the politics of tourism.

The writings of anthropologist Tim Ingold are also of particular interest to this thesis, due to his insistence that landscapes are lived-in spaces. He perceives landscape as a story, a story based on and embedded in history. According to this perception he understands landscape as the familiar domain of our dwelling, and as such, it "is *with* us, not *against* us, but it is no less real for that. And through living in it, the landscape becomes a part of us, just as we are part of it."[68] Ingold proposes that rather than

[66] Guattari, 29.
[67] John Urry, Consuming Places, 189.
[68] Timothy Ingold, Perception of the environment, 191.

adhering to "the conventions of modern society, to describe our experience of landscape as though we were viewing a picture [...] In the landscape of our dwelling we [should] look around."[69] Through this "dwelling perspective", landscape is "constituted as an enduring record of - and testimony to - the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in so doing, have left there something of themselves."[70] His conception of landscape is largely temporal rather than spatial. He makes a distinction between land which he categorizes as "quantitative and homogeneous," and landscape as "qualitative and heterogeneous."[71] In order to put his temporal perception of the landscape into practice, Ingold undertakes a close reading of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's 16th-century painting *The Harvesters.* Inspired by this model, in Section II I analyze a specific landscape postcard of North Hatley (fig. 64) as a means of interpreting the landscape's temporality. Ingold's perspective aligns well with this postcard section's preoccupation with the landscape's human presence.

**Visual & material culture methodologies**

In order to address a wealth of heterogeneous images, spaces, and modes of viewing, this thesis has constructed an interdisciplinary visual and material methodology which draws upon the work of several authors. In his 2002 article entitled "Showing seeing: a critique of visual culture," W.J.T. Mitchell stresses that visual culture is not a new, recent, or even modern phenomenon, but an historical one that has endured since antiquity, and it is "re-newed" with each new technical or innovative medium. He insists however, that there is no such thing as a "purely visual medium", and emphasizes how "all media are mixed media,"[72] citing cinema and literature as two examples. Mitchell argues that "if visual culture is to mean anything, it has to be generalized as the study of all the social practices of human visuality, and not confined to modernity or the West."[73] In his critique he strives to unveil the familiarity that

[69] Ingold, Perception, 202.
[70] Ingold, Perception, 189.
[71] Ingold, Perception, 190.
[72] W.J.T. Mitchell, Showing seeing, 178.
[73] Mitchell, Showing, 174.

shrouds the experience of seeing. He attends to how "vision and visual images [...] are actually symbolic constructions, like a language to be learned, a system of codes that interposes an ideological veil between us and the real world."[74] Two arguments that are particularly influential and relevant to this thesis are Mitchell's emphasis on the importance of describing "the specific relations of vision to the other senses,"[75] and his call to scholars to acknowledge that visual studies "attend *both* to the specificity of the things we see, and to the fact that most of traditional art history was already mediated by highly imperfect representations such as the lantern slide, and before that by engraving, lithographs, or verbal descriptions."[76]

The theories presented in Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin's text *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (1999) further contributes to my research on landscape's varied and convoluted transmutations that range from high art representations examined in Section 1, to mass consumed representations that circulated as everyday communications on postcards as analyzed in Section 2, to an ecopark that underwent environmental remediation through a local group of activists' collaborative initiative to decontaminate a wetland territory that served as the city of Magog's unofficial garbage dump between the 1950s and 1980s as introduced in Section 3. According to their theory it is possible to identify the same process of remediation "throughout the last several hundred years of Western visual representation [...] All of them seek to put the viewer in the same space as the objects viewed."[77] They note an underlying paradox that emerges with each new attempt to create an improved virtual experience, and that is due to how "each medium promises to reform its predecessors by offering a more immediate or authentic experience." However, "the promise of reform inevitably leads us to become aware of the new medium as a medium."[78] In particular, this thesis deploys the concept of

[74] Mitchell, Showing, 1.
[75] Mitchell, Showing, 174.
[76] Mitchell, Showing, 168.
[77] Bolter & Grusin, Remediation, 11
[78] Bolter & Grusin, 19

remediation when looking at examples of landscape paintings, photographs and engravings that are reproduced in the form of postcards, and more broadly, when picturesque or sublime landscape aesthetics migrate to unlikely places such as a 1910 recruitment pamphlet by Dominion Textiles, or in the pictorial strategies used by Magog's eco-park in the 21st century.

**Section I/ Landscape, Industry, and Loggers in the Eastern Townships of Quebec**

Section I of the thesis centers on Frederick Simpson Coburn's paintings and illustrations of the Eastern Townships forests, and the lumberjacks who made their living working in those forests. Coburn was a native Anglophone Townshipper who spent much of his career as an artist painting the scenery of the region, which often featured subtle variations on his preferred theme of a solitary logger accompanied by his team of horses leisurely plodding along a logging trail in winter. His illustrations for two Quebec authors, Louis Fréchette (1839-1908) and William Henry Drummond (1854- 1907), were also inspired by the region's rural landscapes and the people he routinely encountered throughout his life, initially as a child and teenager and later as a mature and professionally trained artist. These representations, which were produced for several decades from the late 1890s well into the 1940s, are analyzed and interpreted as examples of "antimodern modernist" landscapes that operate as escapes or recoils from the era's rapidly spreading urbanization and industrialization. The hybrid term "antimodern modernism" suggests how many of the era's landscape representations framed, intentionally or not, the complexities and ambiguities that accompanied artists and patrons alike as they struggled to keep pace with the modern era's rapid technological and political changes. This section owes much to the scholarship presented in the book *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity,* edited by Lynda Jessup. The contributors explore "antimodernism as an artistic response to a perceived sense of loss - in particular, the loss of 'authentic' experience."[79] In addition, Donald MacKay's *The Lumberjacks* provides tremendous insight into the lumberman's arduous and everyday labour

[79] Lynda Jessup, Antimodernism and Artistic Experience, np.

through documented oral histories and other archival material. The social history provided in MacKay's book has allowed me to recognize the human labour that is altogether overlooked in Coburn's picturesque landscape paintings of teamsters in winter. A number of photographs documenting the lumber industry during Coburn's lifetime are also considered in this section, to situate Coburn's artwork in relation to the visual culture of that modern period. The artist's romantic vision of these rural labourers and his omission of any signs of industry within his framed landscapes conflict significantly with the region's actual environment that was prospering due to a surge of industrial activity during the time Coburn was painting. His vision reflects an urge to escape to pre-industrial, natural environments, and his paintings overlook the actual hardships and labour the working class was confronted with during the years that correspond to his career.

This antimodern and romantic longing for a former way of life was an established western art tradition that Malcolm Andrews summarizes as "the elegiac record of humanity's sense of alienation from its original habitat in an irrecoverable, pre-capitalist world."[80] In this section I address themes relating to capitalism, elitism, ownership, folklore, Quebec's French/English heritage, and nature as resource in relation to landscape representation as understood by Mitchell "as the uniquely central medium that gives us access to ways of seeing landscape, but as a representation of something that is already a representation in its own right."[81] My reading of Coburn emphasizes the different classes' relationships with, and perceptions of, landscape and its various mediums during this early industrial and modern era in Canada. I describe how his paintings show idealized portrayals of generic loggers, whose individual features and expressions are blurry dabs of paint - each one similarly pictured leisurely traveling through the landscape, in harmony with nature. In contrast to these landscape-oriented paintings, Coburn also created a body of detailed and physiognomic illustrations for W.H. Drummond and Louis Fréchette's books of poems and stories. The anglophone Drummond wrote poems that mimic

[80] Malcom Andrews, Landscape and Western Art, 21-2.
[81] Mitchell, Landscape, 14.

a rural francophone's accent when speaking English, while the French Canadian Fréchette recalled popular and traditional stories that had made their way to Canada from France. Drummond and Fréchette's tremendous popularity at the time is surely because their stories, based on traditional folklore, evoked a pre-industrial era. In this section, I contend that Coburn's illustrations for these books reinforced this nostalgic quest for tradition by representing figures who conveyed a strong sense of "authentic" rural identity tied to their everyday life-experience. These illustrations offer glimpses of rural Quebec settlers' intimate and laborious relationship to the land. On the other hand, his paintings of loggers in winter facilitated his patrons' desire to escape to the countryside in order to reconnect with the land, through imaginary and picturesque representations of that land which showed no signs of the labour, hardship, or industry that existed in that region.

**SECTION II/ Places, People and Postcards of the Eastern Townships, Quebec**

Section II shifts from a discussion of the region's traditional lumber industry and the antimodern values and perceptions attached to Coburn's artwork, to a study of early picture postcards of the Eastern Townships, and the modern values, interests, and social practices that are associated with these postcard landscapes. The photographic picture postcard appears around 1900. These postcards quickly developed into a fad during in the first decade of the 20$^{\text{th-century}}$ - a popular practice that lasted up until mid-century. The producers of these postcards included large international printing companies, but also included locally based photographers or merchants. The postcards addressed in this section were at times discovered in archives, while in other instances they were acquired in antique stores, trade shows or on eBay. In many cases, very little is known about the individual photographers or studios that produced them. The period in question, between the turn of the 20$^{\text{th-century}}$ and the 1930s, coincides with the height of Coburn's career as a landscape artist. The landscape imagery on these selected postcards offers a sharp contrast to the romantic vision of the natural environment seen in Coburn's artwork: here we see a natural environment that comes up against logging, mining, railroad stations, roads, buildings

of all kinds, and cars. These postcards also show the landscape to be inhabited in a way that I argue corresponds to Henri Lefebvre's concept of the everyday, and J.B. Jackson's emphasis on the human presence within the landscape.

The insight postcards have added to the advancement of visual studies is increasingly recognized amongst scholars from various disciplines. As objects that encapsulate modern interests on multiple levels, postcards popularized the collecting and trading of images, and became highly distributed pop culture commodities. In the 2010 book *Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity,* the editors David Prochaska and Jordana Mendelson argue that "postcards form a constitutive part of the way in which the business of art, commerce, history, and identity is negotiated on a daily basis."[82] Although many postcards featuring landscape representations of the Eastern Townships region clearly maintained a centuries-old western picturesque tradition, others chosen for this thesis offer evidence of alternative modern traditions and interests that present very different visions of that territory's landscape. Postcards brought landscape representations into mass and public circulation on an unprecedented scale which contributed to those representations' social and cultural everydayness. It is significant to note how the region's tourists and townspeople were collecting and sending landscape pictures of the Townships on postcards during the same era that affluent art patrons were acquiring oil paintings that represented that same territory. The popularity and iconography of these cards, however, speaks to the importance of industry and tourism during the modern era – which serves to challenge the antimodern ideals represented in paintings such as Coburn's, further reinforcing their value as important heritage documents. In light of how early 20th-century landscape paintings were collected by a select group of patrons in Canada while postcards featuring the nation's landscape were circulating in quantities that climbed into the millions during that same period, it is apparent that postcards are commercial products of modernity which, according to historian Herman Lebovics, have a unique status as interdisciplinary

[82] Prochaska, David and Mendelson, Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity, xi.

image-objects.[83] This section explores how postcards contribute vital insight and legitimate value to an expanded visual culture field as images that are communicative, set into circulation and re-circulated, shared and collected, while also attending to the extent to which postcards re-mediate traditional forms of painted and printed landscape art. It also addresses this thesis' main subject and themes of landscape, leisure , labour, and industry relative to modern practices that include mobility, technology and communications.

In each chapter of this section a selection of postcards offers insight into the human interaction and engagement with the Townships' territory. In one series of postcards a man identified only as Emile provided a detailed account of his everyday, pleasant domestic life - his messages carefully typed on the backs of picturesque landscapes of his hometown Coaticook. Another series of postcards speaks to the miners' arduous, hazardous and repetitive labour in the harsh asbestos mines in Thetford. Although these two series were not directly part of a tourist economy, this too develops during this period, and there are indeed many postcards that were meant to appeal to the vacationers who toured the region's lacustrine areas, hotels, and natural sceneries aboard the region's steamships and trains. All of these landscapes however, can be understood as by-products of people's everyday living; this section is thus indebted to Jackson's insistence on acknowledging vernacular landscapes as worthy of study as they add new layers to traditional landscape ideals including wilderness, sublime, beautiful, or picturesque environments.

In order to situate postcards as quintessentially modern objects, it is important to understand people's changing perception of time and space during the early years of the 20$^{th\text{-}century}$. In order to do so, I draw on Wolfgang Schivelbusch's analysis of the railway industry in light of how it impacted people's physical experience of the landscape, while Stephen Kern's text, *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918* (1989), adds additional insight into how technological innovations affected people's spatial

[83] Qtd. in Prochaska et al, np.

and temporal thinking. The complicitous nature of landscape and tourism arises in the work of Dean MacCannell's *The Tourist* (1976), and Catherine Gudis' *Buyways: Billboards, Automobiles, and the American Landscape* (2004) as she recognizes the automobile's participation in transforming the experience of the landscape into a heightened commercial one. In this section's final chapter the themes of mobility, technology and people's experience of the landscape are framed within the context of ordinary leisure practices oriented towards consumption.

**Section III/ *Le Marais*: Between Environmental Activism and Ecotourism**

Whereas the first two sections focus mainly on the region's industrial era prior to WWII, Section III moves up to Magog's present day as it concentrates on an eco-park that is located at the edge of the city's centre, adjacent to Lake Memphremagog. Along with this historical shift to present-day concerns, it must be noted that this section also involves a methodological shift: while the previous two sections were primarily concerned with the role of visual images (whether paintings, illustrations, photographs or postcards) in creating and mediating landscapes, this section is concerned with an actual landscape space. And so, even if visual images do figure on the eco-park's website and publicity materials, my analysis and interpretation depends more on a material culture approach than on a visual culture methodology. As will be presented, though, the understanding and perception of this eco-park has much in common with a legacy of landscape representation. The eco-park's territory partially borders the former Industrial Specialty lumber yard situated along the Cherry River's embankments, introduced in Section I (fig. 15). *Le Marais de la Rivière aux Cerises'* current eco-park owes much to local industrial initiatives which took place in Magog during the 19$^{th}$-century. The Industrial Specialty Company was a subsidiary of the Dominion Textiles Inc. Company's much larger factory located at the foot of Lake Memphremagog's outlet, situated slightly downstream from the marsh and lake's confluence. This reclaimed wetland territory (fig. 74) embodies the city of Magog's historical transformation from a primarily industrial and working class permanent population that branded itself as "place à la famille"

right up until the late 1990s, into what I refer to now as a "place à la retraité," or retirement town. The city's efforts to rebrand itself in the face of the Dominion Textiles' financial struggles reached a turning point in 2011 when the factory's waning manufacturing activities inevitably came to an end. This section is concerned with shifting perceptions of place, over a period that spans more than a century in Magog; I examine the cultural imperatives that have affected this landscape, which range from industrial development (railway, Dominion Textiles and Industrial Specialty), surplus waste alternatives (municipal garbage dump), environmental sustainability (*LAMRAC*), economic viability (ecotourism), and equitable ecologies (Guattari). To address this heterogeneous landscape, this section draws on theories of ecology as well as eco-tourism studies.

Here I consider how prior to the 1970s, wetland were socially and economically marginalized – popularly perceived as, in this case quite literally, mere wasteland. Since the 1980s however, landscape ecology has increasingly spread into mainstream fields of study. According to Monica Turner, "landscape ecological research has contributed to substantial advances in understanding the causes and ecological consequences of spatial heterogeneity and how relationships between pattern and process vary with scale," which have contributed to "new perspectives on the function and management of both natural and human-dominated landscapes." [84] My analysis of *Le Marais* draws extensively on Félix Guattari's *The Three Ecologies*, first published in 1989, particularly in relation to his emphasis on forging an alternative or difference to capitalism's oppressive and destructive homogeneous profit – driven interests. This set of issues is important, especially because *Le Marais* can be considered as an example of a global eco-tourism industry that continues to commodify landscape in certain ways.

In 1990, wetland occupied approximately 6% of the world's land surface. Currently in Quebec 10% of the province's overall territory is categorized as wetland terrain. Wetland, once perceived as virtually useless, are now recognized for playing an equally important role as agricultural land and

[84] Turner, Landscape Ecology in North America, 1967.

forests. Magog's wetland call attention to the historical shift in cultural attitudes towards landscape, while underscoring how collective and personal interests are indelibly linked to the land, whether on a national, regional, municipal or individual level. Landscapes are host to multiple and diverse ideals, values and meanings that contribute to complex and heterogeneous relationships between places and identities. The ecological concerns that arise in relation to *Le Marais* include people's emotional conscious, and I am indebted to the multidisciplinary perspectives on place offered by Convery, Corsane and Davis, who write that "place, as distinct from space, provides a profound centre of human existence to which people have deep emotional and psychological ties and is part of the complex processes through which individuals and groups define themselves."[85] Landscape, when studied or theorized in terms of place, has a deeply affective relationship with issues of human identity, whether positive or negative, or constructive or destructive.

This section thus questions how landscapes are called upon to fulfill post-industrial agendas. It examines the impact ecological priorities have had on landscapes, and considers how people's sense of place contributes to shaping contemporary perceptions of landscape measured against post-confederate nationalist ideals. It acknowledges landscape and the natural environment as restorative and educational spaces that differ from the idealized, romanticized, harvested and mined spaces examined in the first two sections. It approaches landscape as a cultural and ecological imperative, one that seeks to balance long-term sustainability and short-term wellbeing. This last section attends to the importance of examining and acknowledging landscape's multiple, complex, ambiguous and often conflicting manifestations as cultural objects.

[85] Convery et al, Making sense of place, 1.

**SECTION I. Landscape, Industry, and Loggers in the Eastern Townships of Quebec**

## 1. A Synopsis of the 20th-century's Socio-Cultural Climate in Quebec

**Figure 1. George Nakash, *Entrance Hall Norton's Coaticook Residence*, 1942, photograph, courtesy of Le Musée Beaulne.**

Frederick Simpson Coburn was an Anglophone Canadian landscape painter from the Eastern Townships in Quebec. The artist is best known for his peopled and picturesque rural landscapes in winter. In his forward to Gerald Stevens' monograph *Frederick Simpson Coburn*, published in 1958, Group of Seven member A.Y. Jackson wrote "In these days of rapid change of ideologies the art societies cannot adjust themselves very readily, the younger and older members have too little in common. To be tolerant of paintings of no recognizable content and of paintings of slavish dependence on nature, one must have no convictions at all. Coburn is fortunate in being a painter whose interest is in painting with

no concern for isms or ideologies at all."[86] In light of such a sweeping and haughty statement, one is left wondering which 'isms' Jackson had in mind while writing that introduction during the late 1950s. Was he perhaps referring to nationalism? Was it regionalism or universalism? Maybe he was thinking of modernism, urbanism, or capitalism. I want to contend that, contrary to Jackson's claim, Coburn's paintings represent a distinct and complex ideology, one that was characterized by an antimodern - modernist thinking and shared by a diverse group of individuals during an era which coincided with much of the artist's long career.

Lynda Jessup notes how, with reference to the Group of Seven, "most of the patrons serviced by the artists belonged to a small, Toronto-based Anglo-Canadian elite."[87] This was not so for Coburn patrons. In contrast, during the same era Jessup refers to, Coburn's paintings and illustrations appealed to a much broader demographic that will be addressed further in this section, and included both Anglophone and Francophone collectors from across Canada, in addition to patrons from the United-States and overseas.[88] Art historian and professor of literature Guy Boulizon insists on how Quebec landscapes show "signs" of settlement, and notes that "le paysage québécois est donc une Nature, rejointe, modifiée, humanisée, civilisée par une Culture."[89] In a striking contrast to Boulizon's profound admiration for the province's inhabited and rural cultural landscape, A.Y. Jackson - a native Montrealer who studied and sketched in France and Europe between 1906-1909, and who also created many inhabited and rural landscape paintings of Quebec - perplexingly described in a 1949 article how the villages and shack towns found in the landscape surrounding his adopted home of Toronto were "untidy", "ragged", and "burnt":

> In Montreal the influence of European art has always been evident, but in Toronto, further in land, the country itself has been a stimulus.[...] The country was exciting, the atmosphere clear and sharp, the colours bright -crude, if you will. The villages scattered, some of them just shack

[86] Coburn, vii.
[87] Jessup, qtd. in Beyond Wilderness, 190.
[88] For a representative list of Coburn's collectors see Gerald Stevens' Frederick Simpson Coburn, 70-72.
[89] Boulizon, 25.

> towns, the landscape untidy and ragged as you went north, swampy, rocky, wolf-ridden, a land burnt or scuttled and flooded by lumber companies, with rivers and numerous lakes all over it, and on top of all this variety there were changes of season such as they hardly knew in Europe. In autumn it flamed with red and gold, in winter wrapped in a blanket of dazzling snow, and in spring time it roared with running waters and surged with new life. So why stick to the barnyard, why paint cows and sheep and rural tranquillity?[90]

One is left wondering where the shack towns, scattered villages and various burnt and untidy features in the landscape Jackson is referring to are in his wilderness paintings of the country north of Toronto. It is surprising that he questions the interest in painting scenes of "rural tranquility" when he himself was also painting such scenes well into the 1930s.

This thesis recognizes landscape as a cultural phenomenon, and further acknowledges it as a conceptualized agent of modernity that responds well to Henri Lefebvre's critique of everyday life in the modern world. This acknowledgement of landscape as a compelling modern agent reinforces my understanding of landscape as a negotiated space: a visual and material means to reconcile personal values and ideals with actual and ordinary life experiences. As this section sets out to demonstrate, the social tension and ambiguity embedded in landscape representations reflect the rather complex, regularly conflicting, and frequently overlapping anxieties and aspirations characteristic of the modern period. Without insisting on resolutions, I aim to be attentive to the deeply rooted cultural ambiguities and social ambivalence that characterize modern life within landscape representations, in order to generate opportunities for further understanding, while examining identity construction in the realm of elite culture and fine art. The goal is to "make the culturally constructed nature of landscape apparent to viewers"[91] by underscoring how F. S. Coburn's picturesque paintings of loggers travelling along snow – covered trails in winter share an antimodernist and romantic vision of nature "that was conventionally naturalized in the operation of landscape representations,"[92] which stems from a tradition that dates

[90] A.Y. Jackson, Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, Vol. 97, No. 4786 (JANUARY 14, 1949), 134-5.
[91] Lynda Jessup, Landscapes of Sport, Landscapes of Exclusion, 109.
[92] Jessup, Landscapes, 109.

back to pre-Confederation in Canada, even though formally Coburn's paintings were influenced by modernism which is addressed in chapter 3. The artist's aesthetic response to his apparent nostalgic yearning for a pre-industrial and rural lifestyle is what I refer to as an 'antimodern modernism'. According to Jessup, "antimodernist nostalgia represented an attempt to come to terms with modernity, not by a wholesale rejection, but by its moderation through the inclusion of pre-modern physical and psychological zones of retreat."[93]

Figure 1 is a photograph of the prosperous Norton family's entrance hall in their Coaticook home, located in the Eastern Townships. It is worth noting that the three framed paintings in the richly decorated hallway are landscapes. Based on a loan agreement between Mr. O.B. Thornton (a Norton family representative) and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts,[94] it is possible to identify the three artworks: the first is Homer Watson's undated *Forest Scene*, the middle painting is Maurice Cullen's undated *Snow Covered Mountains,* and the third is F. S. Coburn's 1932 *Man Attaching Chains to Logs*; each one a landscape closely associated to trees and lumber. In his essay "Homer Watson and *The Pioneer Mill*", Brian Foss addresses several circumstances and themes that informed Watson's art production during the second half of the 19th-century which I find resonate with Coburn's antimodernist ideology. This suggests that Coburn's antimodernism was an ideological legacy that was carried over from earlier generations dating back to atleast the mid 19th-century. Foss writes:

> although the confederation era placed much faith in steady progress and in the related rise to cities, that assurance was tempered by an increasing association of urban life with noise, dirt, a hectic pace, materialism, and artificiality. All of these were blamed for what were claimed to be escalating levels of stress, poor mental and physical health, and the loss of the self-reliance that rural life - trumpeted as an organic social order founded on simplicity and natural virtue - supposedly fostered and symbolised.[95]

[93] Jessup, qtd. in *Expanding Horizons*, 95.
[94] Courtesy of the Musée Beaulne's Norton fonds.
[95] Foss, Homer Watson, 62.

**Figure 2. George Nakash, *Harry Study Norton's Coaticook Residence*, 1942, photograph, courtesy of Le Musée Beaulne.**

More specifically, Foss describes how Watson's painting *The Pioneer Mill* "derived from a rich confluence of factors. These included: broad aesthetic and cultural trends; the economic development of southern Ontario; the relationships between rural and urban realities, expectations and attitudes; and the personal histories of Watson and his forebears."[96] One of the aesthetic and cultural trends he refers to is "the field of romantic literature" and the poems and songs that nostalgically recalled a lost age.[97] Such poems and songs, while usually specific to a region or culture, call to mind the artistic/literary collaboration Coburn enjoyed with Drummond and Fréchette as he created illustrations for their books that celebrated 'forgotten days' and lost traditions. With reference to the examples that he cites, Foss

[96] Foss, Homer Watson, 53.
[97] Foss, Homer Watson, 56.

writes "such unabashedly antimodern texts and songs continued into the  century, nourished by the collapse of traditional ways beneath the onslaught of the modern world."[98] He notes, in particular, how images of water-powered mills were used as symbols "to suggest a bygone rural simplicity that was out of step with the hurly-burly of the modern world", and how water-wheel imagery was used in popular publications "to counterpoint views of modern factories." He cites the following passage from an edition of *Picturesque America* that was published in 1874*:* "Labor mars the landscape it enters, but the mill seems to partake in the spirit of its surroundings, to gain a charm from the woods and waters, and to give one."[99] How relevant this passage becomes to Coburn's idealized landscapes of loggers by substituting the term "mill" with "teamster", as each symbol functions as a suitably picturesque allegory of labor that adds charm to the landscape, rather than "marring" it.

The notion that labor spoils a landscape stems from an aesthetic tradition that has ties to industrialization. Coburn's 20th-century picturesque paintings of loggers and Watson's 19th-century landscapes with water-wheels maintain that centuries long tradition of diverting attention away from what British scholar John Barrell identifies as the "darker side of the landscape". Barrell confronts how the working class' actual labour is overshadowed by elite ideals that seek to maintain, at all costs, a sense of tranquility and social harmony that conforms to their hegemonic vision of a peaceful and united nation. Writing about 18th and 19th-century English landscape painting, Barrell particularly objects to the way Constable streamlines the labourers' roles within the landscape, by reducing their presence to mere dabs of pigment on the distant horizon, in order to present a pleasant relationship between them and nature. He finds the artist's treatment of the labourers in his work is unsurprising given ''his

[98] Foss, Homer Watson, 56.
[99] O.B. Punce, qtd. in Homer Watson, 58.

birth and the position of his family,''[100] and emphasizes how Constable's labourers ''keep their place, and it is a very small place, a long way away.''[101]

According to one study on antimodernism and English Canadian imperialism, by the mid -19th-century in Canada, imperialism was not only about securing ''a prominent future position in the British Empire, it was also about the invention of a national, unifying mythology''[102] that could accommodate First Nations, French, and English cultures within one immense territory. Landscape representations were well suited to communicating this harmonious national myth in an attempt to promote a collective national vision. Within this contrived vision, Ian McKay notes how the Native and the Habitant were ''perfectly suited to the perspective of those who were seeking new ways of imagining their communities, yet who also had every reason to hope that these new ways would entail the restoration of a comforting conservative ideal.''[103] For example, the enduring popularity of Cornelius Krieghoff's (1815-1872) 19th-century landscapes, which often pictured daily-life scenes peopled by First Nation or French Habitant figures, can be understood as representing symbols of pre-industrial community life, as each culture thrived on kinship systems bound by traditional values, shared language, and spiritual/religious beliefs. Through their patronage of such paintings, antimodernist collectors were well placed to voice ''their discontent with modern culture: its crackpot obsession with efficiency, its humanist hubris, its complacent creed of progress.''[104] Their personal pursuits were made possible by what Donald Wright lists as their ''inherited wealth, dedicated wives and the labour of hired servants [which] freed them from the sphere of necessity.''[105] Additionally, that era's elite class of industrialist art patrons was exploiting the flood of migrating rural French Canadian workers for their cheap labour

[100] John Barrel, The Dark Side of the Landscape, 134.
[101] Barrel, 134.
[102] Donald A. Wright, W.D. Lighthall and David Ross McCord: Antimodernism and English Canadian Imperialism, 1880s-1918, 139.
[103] Ian Mackay qtd. in, Lighthall and David Ross McCord, 140.
[104] Jackson Lears qtd. in Lighthall and David Ross McCord, 143.
[105] Wright, 142.

needed to fuel the everyday operations of a rapidly growing number of urban factories, while systematically restricting the First Nations peoples access to their native land through a governmentally imposed Treaty system that first emerged in the 1830s,[106] just as they actively collected landscape paintings that paradoxically idealized these two cultures' traditional ways of life. By the 1870s, the practice of stereotyping First Nations people as a "dying race", according to Maureen Ryan, "was able to assert for an Anglo-Canadian public the mythology of a tradition of humanitarian concern that could be used to claim the superiority of British and Canadian legislative institutions [...] the "dying race" in representation could imply the existence of a constituency whose nostalgic sympathy attested to a charitable justice that could be identified with the progressive character of the nation."[107] Arthur Versluis explains how antimodernism "has at its core the awareness of decline. If the essence of "modernism" is progress, a belief that technological development means socio-economic improvement, the heart of antimodernism is a realization that "progress" has an underbelly—that technological-industrial development has destructive consequences in three primary and intertwined areas: nature, culture, and religion."[108] Antimodernists fully recognize and recoil from what they perceive as modernity's "darker side", while championing its more utopian ideals and aspirations in the name of progress and prosperity. Versluis argues that "cultural antimodernism during much of the late 19th and early 20th centuries tends toward critique and efforts at reform or social transformation."[109] He describes this as a 'soft antimodernism', noting how "abandonment of modernity, for the most part, was not yet perceived as an option by socio-cultural critics. Instead, critics sought to create a safe haven, a refuge away from the depredations of modernity in works of art."[110]

[106] Maureen Ryan, Picturing Canada's Native Landscape, 142.
[107] Ryan, 145.
[108] Versluis, Antimodernism, 97.
[109] Versluis, 100.
[110] Versluis, 100.

As I address further in this section concerning Coburn's career, Foss too underscores how there was a "reciprocal relationship between the rural and the urban [that] played itself out in Watson's career. The cities of Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa were where his work was most frequently exhibited [and] his most visible and acquisitive collectors tended to be urban dwellers associated with industry and high finance."[111] F. S. Coburn, like Homer Watson "dedicated himself to lovingly recording a local landscape with which he was intimately familiar and then selling those paintings to powerful figures whose lives and activities were thoroughly urban."[112] Based on the titles listed in the contract between the Norton family and the MMFA mentioned earlier, and signed in Montreal on May 4 1961, I have determined that 24 of the 28 loaned paintings are landscapes. Citing an anonymous review of the RCA's 1892 exhibition, Foss notes how Watson's works exemplified, according to the critic, how "landscapes are the most lastingly soothing of all pictures; they bring the tired and harassed drudge of city life back to the playgrounds of his youthful truant days, and woo the memory away from present care."[113] In light of how Helen Norton's loan agreement with the MMFA was signed almost 70 years after the 1892 exhibition review, and landscapes represented 86% of her loaned paintings, the critic certainly did not err in referring to them as "the most lastingly soothing of all pictures."

Jessup argues that landscape paintings were collected and exhibited by wealthy male patrons, along with other sportsman trophies, to counter their perceived sense of lost masculinity in the wake of an increasingly commodity-based, modern and urban lifestyle. Various objects were collected and showcased in masculine spaces as a means to alleviate the affluent males' alienating sense of lost masculinity within their routine environments, and to reinforce their sense of good cultural taste. Figure 2 is a photograph of a masculine space, also situated in the Norton family Coaticook residence, one that belonged to Harry Norton (1870-1948) who was at one time a captain of industry – and notably, a

[111] Foss, Homer Watson, 56.
[112] Foss, Homer Watson, 63.
[113] qtd. in Foss, Homer Watson, 64.

collector of Coburn's artwork. The room was Mr. Norton's private study. Norton was heir to his business-minded father's self-made fortune that was amassed from selling ball bearing lifting jacks used for trains at the height of the railway industry 's operations. Arthur Osmore Norton (1845-1919) had the jacks manufactured in two of his factories, one located in the Eastern Township of Coaticook Quebec, and the other in Boston Massachusetts. The Norton family owned homes and estates in Montreal, Boston, Coaticook, Ayer's Cliff, and overseas. Harry Norton was the honorary president of the Art Association of Montreal from 1938 until his death in 1948. The AAM was subsequently named the Montreal's Museum of Fine Arts in 1949. The museum's marble staircase flanked by elaborate brass railings still bears the Norton family name. As philanthropists, both Harry and his sister Helen Norton (1876-1967) generously supported several educational, health, and cultural institutions; Harry bequeathed his highly valued collection of rare vases and glass to the museum. His study's outdoor and adventurous male tropes include a *trompe l'oeil* representation of dead game ceremoniously hanging by a string after the kill, placed beside a deer buck head with hooves professionally mounted on a customized wooden frame that is next to a pair of snow shoes hanging diagonally across a natural field stone hearth. Significantly, Jessup emphasizes how "in the interior decoration of these spaces were such emblems of sport as horns, animal heads, mounted fish, and pelts."[114] These outdoors and sportsmanly artefacts are showcased alongside symbols of refinement and material wealth scattered throughout the room in the form of a framed formal photograph portrait of Harry Norton, antique vases on display atop a cabinet next to the portrait, an open book perched on its stand, a large woven woolen rug, handcrafted wooden carved furnishings, and thick, dark wooden mouldings.

Montreal gallery owner William R. Watson described how Harry Norton took great pleasure in buying "paintings from Canadian artists which he collected for love and not as an investment."[115] Watson further recalled how Norton had little interest in running his inherited business, and in 1920 "he

[114] Jessup, Landscapes, 89.
[115] Watson, Watson Retrospective, 53.

took a trip to the town of Hell, in Denmark. From there he sent postcards to all his customers with the message, 'I am now in Hell and this is the last time you will hear from me.' "[116] After selling the family business his father had established, he devoted his time to furthering his interests in gardening, botany, composing music, and collecting art. Versluis explains how cultural antimodernist trajectories, such as Harry Norton's, "play into and even support the modern industrial-technological enterprise because they offer 'escapes' from it rather than a transformation of it." He characterizes the early -century Arts and Crafts movement in this way, and suggests that "it was a cultural pattern that continued throughout the modern period under a wide range of guises."[117] Certainly, the abundance and popularity of publications, illustrations, and paintings of Habitant figures, loggers, and teamsters that circulated during the early  century can be recognized as some of those "guises", as antimodernists including F.S. Coburn, Louis Fréchette, Georges Bouchard (1888-1956), Edwin Holgate (1892-1977), and W.H. Drummond invoked symbols and values of habitant culture as escapes from industrialization and the "progress" of modernity.

In a recent essay, art historian Anne Whitelaw emphasizes how the panel introducing the Montreal's Museum of Fine Arts' "Founding Identities" collection points out that " 19th-century landscapes were the first *Canadian* works of art to be exhibited by the Art Association of Montreal and, as the catalogue notes, they were also the association's earliest acquisitions."[118] This early Canadian affinity for landscapes was fuelled by Montreal's industrial barons/art patrons who not only pioneered the vision of a unified nation in harmony with nature, they also promoted the terrain's natural resources as symbols of an emerging national identity and economy founded on progress and prosperity. The resulting campaign to foster an expanded national identity was complicit with capitalist agendas that sought to harvest and promote its resources for profit. Ryan notes how during the "era when incursions form the

[116] Watson, 52.
[117] Versluis, 101.
[118] Anne Whitelaw, JCAH/ACAH, Volume 34: 1, 176.

United States were feared along the 49th parallel and sympathy for Republican values within the new Dominion was considered a threat, both the assertions of the justice of British institutions, and claims to the peaceful opening of land for immigrants, were important factors in the forging of a Canadian national mythology."[119]The Canadian Pacific Railway stakeholders for instance, led by Sir William Cornelius Van Horne had much to gain from "popularizing" the Canadian landscape. Roger Boulet, like Ryan, also emphasizes how "the Canadian initiative to build a railway to the Pacific was a response to America's western expansion, and an affirmation of the continued British presence in North America."[120] Boulet further insists, however, that:

> The expression of an emerging Canadian identity through landscape must also be considered through the corporate lens of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the promotion of its own interests. Insofar as these were compatible with the political aspirations of the Dominion government, the company could identify its own corporate goals as goals in the national interest [...]William Van Horne was a tireless promoter of the railway, always on the lookout for ways to expand the services of the CPR [...] The realization that the company could capitalize on cultural expression for its own purposes also inspired Van Horne to facilitate travel for artists to the CPR's mountain scenery.[121]

It is worth noting that Van Horne had a substantial art collection that contained a significant number of landscape paintings. Watson, the gallery owner cited above, recalled how the influential railway baron was himself an accomplished landscape painter who signed his works Enrohnav, the reversed spelling of his surname. Several of Van Horne's works are permanently on display at his former summer residence *Covenhoven,* located on Minister's Island, at one time his nearly exclusive private island estate adjacent to St. Andrews in New Brunswick. In an inventory taken in 1959 of *Covenhoven* 's paintings, 15 of the 75 listed works were signed by Van Horne (Enrohnav).[122]

Canada's post- confederation art patrons were motivated by ambitious personal plans with an eye on the future. Their business aspirations were conflated with their social and cultural imperatives to

[119] Ryan, 155.
[120] Boulet, 15.
[121] Boulet, 18-19.
[122] David Sullivan, Minister's Island, 173.

reinforce a shared vision of "a" national identity that was closely tied to capitalist interests. Wright argues that Montreal collectors assigned power and value to their collected objects in response to their feelings of anxiety and uncertainty in the face of change.[123] This phenomenon is well aligned with Malcolm Andrews' claim that "landscape art in the West, over the last 500 years, can be read as the elegiac record of humanity's sense of alienation from its original habitat in an irrecoverable, pre-capitalist world."[124] John O'Brian also addresses Canada's willingness to embrace the Group of Seven's landscapes, in part as "a product of technological anxiety."[125] There is thus a modern/antimodern ambiguity at the heart of landscape as an artistic genre: as a "recoil" from modernity on the one hand, while acknowledging its complicity with modernity and capitalism on the other. As both an accessible commodity and a highly negotiated agent of modern values, landscape is without question firmly clasping hands with capitalism, while confoundingly offering an ideological escape from modernism's darker industrial side. Modernity in Canada is also characterized by "its linguistic dualism - the historical cohabitation of a French - speaking minority concentrated in Quebec and an English-speaking population that constitutes the vast majority of every other province."[126] Award winning Montreal novelist Hugh MacLennan addressed this duality in his 1945 publication aptly named *Two Solitudes,* which was later summarized by critics as "a penetrating study of the beliefs and behaviors, the myths and animosities, that have caused French-Canadians and English-Canadians to resist amalgamation into a homogeneous nation and to exist as two separate peoples, uncommunicative and isolated."[127] This divide in Montreal was not exclusively linguistic, as class and religion also played a role.

[123] Wright, 135.
[124] Andrews, 21-2.
[125] O'Brian, 28.
[126] Adams and Bressani, The Edge Condition, 75.
[127] "Summary" Critical Guide to British Fiction Ed. Frank N. Magill. eNotes.com, Inc. 1987 eNotes.com3 Nov, 2015 <http://www.enotes.com/topics/two-solitudes#summary-the-novel>

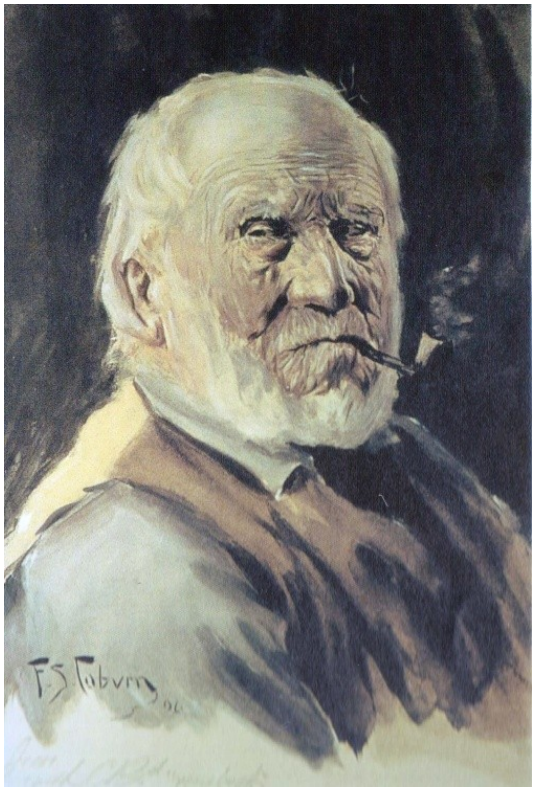

**Figure 3. Frederick Simpson Coburn. *The Habitant Bust*, 1897, Watercolour, 29.2 x 22.9 cm., F.S. Coburn: Beyond the Landscape.**

De place I get born, me, is up on de reever
Near foot of de rapide dats call Cheval Blanc
De fader of me, he was habitant farmer, Ma gran' fader too, an' hees fader also,
Dey don't mak' no monee, but dat is n't fonny
For it 's not easy get ev'ryt'ing, you mus' know-
So I'm workin' away dere, an' happy for stay dere,
On farm by de reever, so long I was leev.
Mos' ev'ry day raf' it is pass on de rapide
De voyageurs singin' some ole chanson
'Bout girl down de reever- too bad dey mus' leave her,
But comin' back soon' wit' beaucoup d'argent. (W.H. Drummond, Habitant, 1-3)

Significantly, two affluent Anglophone poets living in Montreal, W. H. Drummond (1854-1907) - a doctor, and W. D. Lighthall (1857-1954) - a lawyer, separately set out to commercially appropriate French-Canadian culture by re-presenting its traditional folksongs, legends, and social customs in their writings. Through their romanticized vision of the Habitant, each proposed that ''the best traditions of seventeenth-century France were being preserved - love of music, warmth of sentiment, romance,

pleasure in work, delight in the charms of nature.''[128] Wright insists this was very much a commercially successful antimodernism, given how ''it was an accommodation with modernity as much as it was a resistance to it.''[129] Drummond's book of poems entitled *The Habitant,* illustrated by Coburn*,* was written with the intent to acquaint an English - speaking urban population with the rural French-Canadian ''type'' (habitant). Figure 3 shows the original watercolor illustration that was created by Coburn for Drummond's publication, which was refashioned in gold on the book's cover, and printed in black and white for its frontispiece. The publication met with such commercial success that it was reprinted more than twenty times throughout the following decade. It is of further interest to draw attention to how, in his preface, Drummond felt compelled to inform the public that he had ''not written the verses as examples of a dialect, or with any thought of ridicule.''[130] Despite this declaration, the written text belies the author's assertion. With reference to Drummond's text, art historian Denis Longchamps reinforces how ''on y décèle néanmoins une pointe de sarcasme lorsqu'il imite le dur accent français de l'habitant qu'il fait parler dans la langue de Shakespeare.''[131] Drummond further described how he ''endeavoured to paint a few types, and in doing this, it has seemed to me that I could best attain the object in view by having my friends tell their own tales in their own way, as they would relate them to English-speaking auditors not conversant with the French tongue.''[132] With reference to the ''object in view'', one wonders whether Drummond is referring to his objective of acquainting his Anglophone peers with Canada's rural French population, or rather if he his referring to the Habitant people as an object of study. It is precisely this type of opacity in writing that generates ambivalence and contributes to complicating issues relating to identity, nationhood, and modernity as Trépanier notes with reference to the choice of terms used by Montreal's French art critics: "ces différences de

[128] Wright, 137.
[129] Wright, 142.
[130] W. H. Drummond. The Habitant and Other French Canadian Poems, xi.
[131] Denis Longchamps, L'habitant canadien français dans les arts visuels au Québec, 51.
[132] Drummond, The Habitant, xi.

formulation ne sont pas accidentelles, [...] Elles recouvrent bien, fusse inconsciemment, une réelle ambivalence dans la perception de ce qui est <canadien>, ambivalence qui se fonde sur la complexité même de la situation politique, géographique, culturelle et historique du Canada."[133]

I want to suggest that Coburn was an interesting and complex Canadian artist who has been frequently overlooked by past art historians despite the length and scope of his career. One reason his career deserves scrutiny is precisely because of his careful representations of rural Quebec's figures to illustrate Drummond's various publications. I want to argue that he individualized the subjects and characters with a sensitivity that contrasts significantly with Drummond's lighthearted verse, as the poet attempts to emulate the French Canadian Habitant's accent when speaking English. These detailed illustrations differ from his blurred and generic painted teamsters. Many of the tales and anecdotes stem from folklore that was cherished and transmitted in the lumber camps during the 19th-century as entertainment for the lumberjacks - legends that had been preserved from generation to generation through a culture's oral history, many of which had originated in France. Figure 3 emphasizes the discrepancy between Drummond's ridiculous verse and Coburn's earnest illustration. Coburn portrayed the old Habitant as a strong and self- assured individual, qualities that are conveyed by the figure's direct gaze and reinforced by his weathered skin worn with confidence as a mask of wisdom. The viewer readily senses how the old man's aged skin has been transformed from a lifetime of outdoor labour, each one of his lines a natural scar that symbolizes his seasonal exposure to the burning sun, powerful winds, and bitter cold. The artist's representation suggests a determination and resolve that stems from a lifelong accumulation of experience, while Drummond's prose alludes to circumstantial inevitability and poverty, packaged as the habitant's predetermined cultural legacy – all of this articulated in the first person pidginized version of English that Drummond devised to voice Quebec's habitant population's ordinary life. The verse for which Coburn's watercolour serves as illustration (fig. 3) mentions that the

[133] Trépanier, 34.

man's father and grandfather "don't mak' no monee", but the reader is not really informed of the rural population's financial challenges as agriculturalists on their family farms, or the male habitants' traditional and frequent need to leave those farms to earn money as *voyageurs* for fur and lumber companies. Drummond's poems interpreted rural Quebec's French Canadian traditional lore and everyday life specifically for the amusement of an educated Anglophone reader market. *The Habitant's* popularity amongst English speaking communities was immediate- the book was reprinted by G.P. Putnam's Sons fifteen times between 1897 and 1900. This point is significant to this study, as it underscores the extent to which ''the cult of the habitant [and rural life] served an important function in helping [conservative Canada] confront the more 'palpable realities' of modern society, which was cosmopolitan, urban and disconnected.''[134]

Conservative Canada was not limited to an Anglophone population. Poet Laureate Louis Fréchette (1839-1908), author of *Christmas in French Canada*, was admired and respected for promoting "the French language and French thought among his compatriots."[135] Beyond a conservative and decidedly antimodernist ideology, it is difficult to imagine what else could have motivated him to enthusiastically write the introduction to *The Habitant,* and offer his full support and respect for Drummond's intentions, stating "en lisant les vers de M. Drummond, la Canadien-français sent que c'est là l'expression d'une âme amie; et, à ce compte, je dois à l'auteur plus que mes bravos, je lui dois en même temps un chaleureux merci."[136] Trépanier, however, contributes insight into this line of questioning, noting how "il faut rappeler que l'importance du rapport à la France et l'affirmation du caractère francophone caractérisent tout le milieu intellectuel canadien-français, quelles que soient ses positions, "regionalistes" ou "internationalistes", conservatrices ou modernes."[137] In other words, it is

[134] Wright, 138.
[135] Blais, Jacques, Fréchette Louis, Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume XIII (1901-1910) <http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/frechette_louis_13E.html>, consulted on June 19, 2014.
[136] Fréchette, qtd. in The Habitant, ix-x.
[137] Trépanier, 30.

possible to conceive that Fréchette perceived Drummond's publications as an underlying "affirmation du caractère francophone" that went beyond the characters' broken English. Drummond, a native of Ireland who moved to Montreal as a child, was a medical doctor who enjoyed writing stories about loggers he was acquainted with as a teenager when his family relocated to a nearby rural area following his father's death. His publications are based on traditional lumberjack tales and legends that were maintained and transferred from one generation of Quebec loggers to the next by engaging storytellers at the end of a workday as a relaxing pastime or source of entertainment in the lumber camps during the second half of the 19th-century. In Fréchette's publication *Christmas in French Canada* (1899), issued two years after Drummond's first edition of *The Habitant* (1897), he presents an English text to the nation's Anglophone population which touches on many of the same logging themes and French Canadian traditions Drummond invoked in his account. Fréchette's version of the same history, however, can be described as affectionate, sincere and nostalgic, whereas Drummond's seems satirical, affected and more suited to cartoons than to Coburn's earnest illustrations.

I want to emphasize here how this was the very socio-cultural climate that Coburn negotiated on a daily basis as an emerging Canadian artist. Initially as an illustrator and then as a painter, Coburn experienced the Eastern Townships' local populations, customs, and terrain firsthand. His illustrations for Drummond and Fréchette's publications relating to the French Canadian Habitant's lifestyle, traditions, and folklore are inspired by, if not directly sketched from, the people and places he encountered daily in that region. His paintings of the logging teamsters in winter, however, are idealized interpretations of the lumberjacks he regularly saw passing to and from the forest on their way to the region's many sawmills, frozen river beds, factories and railways in proximity to his home and studio in Richmond - signs of settlement and industry which the artist systematically omitted from his paintings.

## 2. Forest as National Resource

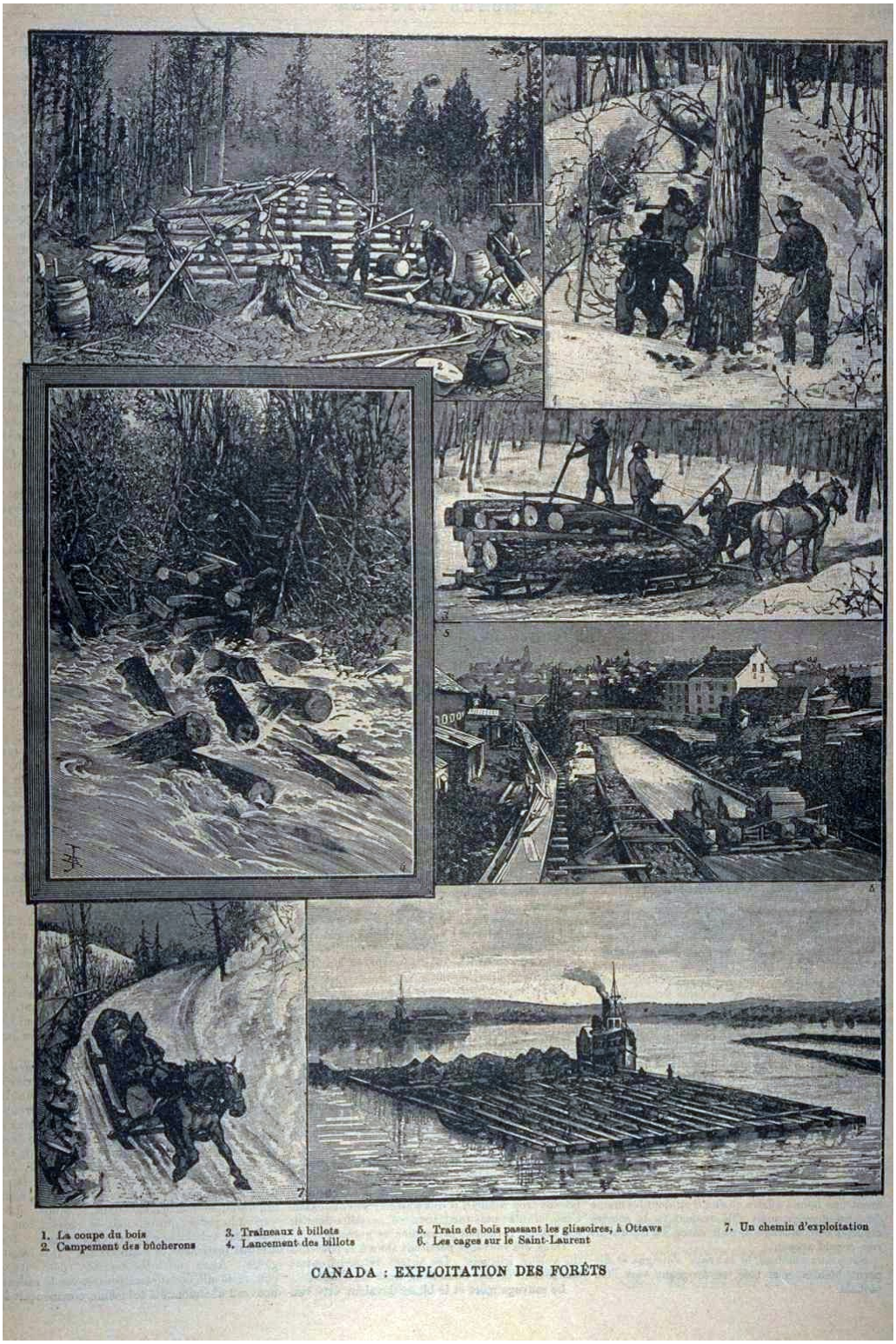


**Figure 4. Anonymous, *Canada: Exploitation Des Forets*, April 15, 1893, publication illustration, No 750 Le Monde illustré, vol. 9 no 467, p. 593, <http://bibnum2.banq.qc.ca/bna/illustrations/htm/d1891.htm?language_id=3>.**

In Canada, "the lumber trade was deemed a suitable subject"[138] for artists dating back to Cornelius Krieghoff's (1815-1872) time because the nation's earliest merchants made fortunes from the forests' natural resources, when the logging industry was often promoted through representations that circulated in various media and at diverse venues. Figure 4 is a montage of engravings that depicts various lumber industry processes and phases involved in the logs' transformative journey that began with forest extraction and ended in either domestic consumption or international export. This particular illustration appeared in the April 1893 edition *Le Monde Illustré*, a French newspaper that circulated during the modern era when the term "exploitation" had a positive connotation. The individual engravings and captions call attention to the forest as a natural resource. Additionally, in six out of the seven separate representations there is clear evidence of human resources, which is to say, men who are labouring hard to harvest the lumber for its owner. The montage includes several of the various stages and activities required to first extract and then mobilise the lumber along its commercial journey, while seeming to convey a positive and optimistic message pertaining to the nation's extraction of this natural resource -a message that resonates with the modern call for progress and prosperity. The faceless loggers, meanwhile, are represented as incidental figures in each one of these landscapes within a process that effectively reduces them and their labour to capital assets within this overtly industrial enterprise. Consequently their labour is, inadvertently or not, projected as a secondary resource within the commercial process of converting trees, a primary natural resource, into commodities.

Less than three decades earlier, Krieghoff, as a mature and highly popular painter, had produced a comparable montage of nine logging-themed landscapes that were assembled into one large, elaborately framed composition that was sent to the Universal Exhibition held in Paris in 1867 (fig. 5), in order to represent Canada. The titles of each of the nine paintings signal an intentionally placed

[138] J. Russell Harper, Krieghoff, 92.

emphasis on the nation 's invaluable lumber industry: the largest central panel is identified as *Timber Depot, Quebec,* which appears identical to Krieghoff's landscape painting entitled *Sillery Cove, Quebec,* dated to around 1864 (fig. 6). The center painting's surrounding eight vignettes include *Taking Parties to the Forest, Log House- Winter, Junction of the St. Lawrence and Ottawa River, Raft in Danger in Storm in the St. Lawrence, Jam of Logs at Low Water- Autumn, Evening in Log House, Drawing Timber, and Hewing Timber.*[139] Arlene Gehmacher has remarked that "the theme of the series celebrated that century's great Canadian logging industry, an industry that contributed to many of the nation's earliest fortunes."[140] She further suggests that "*Timber Depot, Quebec* with its entourage of vignettes was obviously appropriate for the Canadian Court at the Paris exhibition and [it] could only have been regarded as a calling card for Canada, a country represented by timber-rich Canada East ("Quebec" after the Constitution Act). The commercial activities depicted [...] presented Canada as a country eager to continue, indeed expand, its engagement in international trade."[141] The assemblage's luxurious and custom - carved ornate frame was made of Canadian wood, further showcasing and advertising the exquisite quality of the nation's abundant timber depicted in the artist's nine paintings. In a more subtle way, the intricate handcrafted frame reinforces the significance of the nine landscapes as artworks to be admired or valued as cultural objects or symbols, and distinguishes them from other categories of landscape representations, such as those in the newspaper montage shown in figure 4 for instance.

[139] Arlene Gehmacher, Canada in Paris, Krieghoff at the Universal Exhibition in 1867, 22.
[140] Gehmacher, 28.
[141] Gehmacher, 36

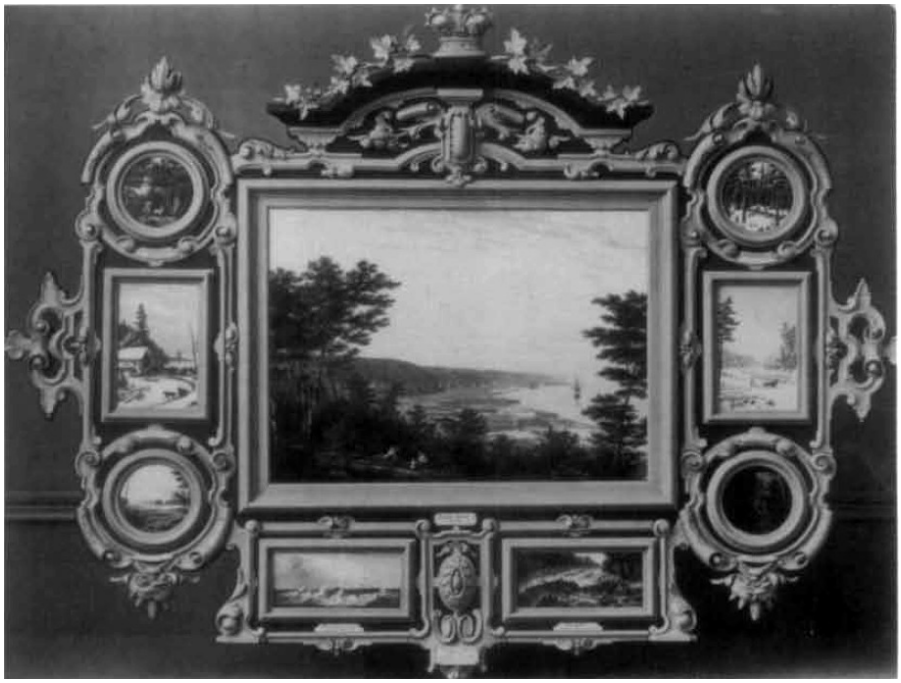

**Figure 5. Cornelius Krieghoff, *Timber Depot*, c. 1867, wooden framed oil painting montage, Journal of Canadian Art History, <http://www.google.ca/url?url=http://jcah-ahac.concordia.ca/pdf/download/jcah-ahac_24_gehmacher&rct=j&frm=1&q=&esrc=s&sa=U&ved=0ahUKEwjV7ef57orQAhVP_mMKHbwJCa8QFggcMAE&sig2=pNjTcn62VOdFhLmYaSs2iw&usg=AFQjCNGRE5vyIq9hIxBUqwoLP3ByZ1Qy3A>. Canada's submission to Paris' 1867 Universal Exhibition.**

**Figure 6. Cornelius Krieghoff, *Sillery Cove Quebec*, c. 1864, oil on panel, 55.4 x 114.3 cm, Art Gallery of Ontario.**

Fast forward to the early decades of the 20th-century and we realize how Coburn's winter landscapes with teamsters, popular works collected by Montreal art patrons, actually maintained a logging industry theme that had been a well - established tradition in Canada for generations before the Group of Seven's wilderness landscape paradigm became entrenched. The teamsters were the horsemen charged with transporting the piles of lumber along the logging trails from forest to water basin or railway. The public debate surrounding the Art Association of Montreal's 1913 Spring Exhibition suggests that inconsistencies and issues relating to modernism and tradition in Canada are fundamentally and deeply socially embedded in Canadian culture and inflamed by art in particular.[142] Lorne Huston has emphasized how, in Canada, "at the turn of the century, many of the most powerful conservative forces were associated with industry and Empire. Their most cherished hopes involved transforming the world, not keeping it as it was. Tradition was banished to the realms of folklore."[143] Paradoxically, the era's conservative elite embraced modernity and change when it came to business, yet the dominant taste for art in Montreal, and the rest of Canada, was conservative at the turn of the century, and remained so until the Group of Seven's post-impressionist landscapes gained attention during the 1920s. During the four decades between 1891 and 1931, an era that Benedict Anderson defines as "the Age of High Capitalist Nationalism." This era's sweeping trans-national tendency peaked in 1920 with the creation of the League of Nations "as custodian of a new world order."[144] The nation states were in collusion and competition with one another, and the need to establish national histories and identities was a priority to compete on an international level, culturally, economically, and politically. As a result, the heritage industry and tourism flourished during the century and contributed to a heightened "interest in sponsoring, financing, steering, vending, stimulating, planning, and

[142] Lorne Huston, The 1913 Spring Exhibition, 34.
[143] Huston, 37.
[144] Benedict Anderson, qtd. in Antimodernism and Artistic Experience, 98.

authenticating universally grounded particularity and originality."[145] These interests were capitalist activities, currently referred to as marketing strategies, that were, without question, firmly clasping hands with landscape. Coburn's career was at its height during these same four decades. His paintings of loggers with their teams of horses can be understood as products of this anti-modern modernist quest for " 'authenticity', 'roots', 'originality', and 'history' " by referencing Canada's largest primary industry, as it was steadily being overshadowed by new technology and the manufacturing industry. Coburn represented the teamsters as idealized, sentimental and nostalgic symbols of the nation's historical origins. In this way the artist's paintings challenge modern claims of "progress", by referencing the past in a visually harmonious and soothing leisurely way.

[145] Anderson, 98.

## 3. Frederick Simpson Coburn's Biography: Personal & Artistic

**Figure 7. Frederick Simpson Coburn, *Cloud Shadows St. Francis Valley*, c. 1924, oil on canvas, 66.5 x 80.4 cm. The National Gallery of Canada.**

F.S. Coburn enjoyed commercial success during his lifetime, and won many awards, distinctions and appointments throughout his lengthy career. His artworks are part of several prestigious collections including the National Gallery of Canada (fig. 7), the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, the Musée National des Beaux-Arts du Québec (figs. 8,22) , Library and Archives Canada, the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Sherbrooke (fig. 27) and Rideau Hall. During the early  century his works were collected by prominent Anglophone patrons including Sir William Van Horne, Henry Birks, Harry and Helen Norton, Lady Allan, J.A. MacDonald, and Quebec's Union Nationale's conservative, Francophone party leader Maurice Duplessis. He sold to various clubs and venues including the Bank of Montreal, the Seigneury Club at Château Montebello, the Mount Tremblant Lodge, and Montreal's Engineers Club. In his biography of

Coburn, Gerald Stevens provided a representative list of 112 individuals, institutions, and estates that own some of Coburn's works.[146] He was a prolific and versatile Canadian artist who is best known for his paintings and illustrations of rural scenery and people set within the Eastern Townships' landscape, most often in winter, although he also painted portraits, explored photographing dancers, and was a highly skilled draughtsman. He professed to being inspired by his childhood surroundings, as he grew up in the township of Melbourne, Quebec. Although he left home to study in Montreal, New York and Europe, Coburn regularly returned to Melbourne throughout his lifetime. He eventually died just down the hill from the house where he had been born 89 years earlier. His cherished, and perhaps most flamboyant luxury indulgence was a dark green Graham-Paige convertible that he drove throughout the region's landscape during the 1930s into the early '40s. The artist was often "seen driving with the top down and with one or more mature young women along Melbourne Ridge where, on an outcrop of ledge in a farmer's field, he'd had a stage built which served as a sort of photographer's prop."[147] This was the stage he used to photograph a series of dancers plein-air, with nothing but evanescent clouds in the background to accompany his subject in flight (fig. 8). The Richmond-Melbourne territory was a vibrant and busy region during Coburn's youth. After Montreal and Toronto, the rail yards in Richmond at the turn of the  century were reportedly the busiest in the country, according to one local historian.[148] Richmond station's volume of traffic was heavy due to it being the transfer point between Montreal and Quebec City, and Montreal and Portland, Maine.

Figure 7 represents a landscape painting that the artist created in 1924, and figure 8 shows a photograph of Carlotta, the dancer's professional name, which was taken by Coburn approximately twelve years later in 1938. The painted landscape features a series of hills that subtly ease into the horizon beneath a sky that occupies more than half of the picture plane. The wide open vista re-created

[146] Stevens, Frederick Simpson Coburn, 70.
[147] Nick Fonda, Hanging Fred, 116.
[148] Fonda, 111.

by the painter is a familiar view in the Townships that can be observed from many different vantage points due to how the region's terrain is naturally delineated by the Appalachian Mountain Range which passes through the Eastern Townships. When examining figures 7 and 8 together, the artist's passion for a sky densely filled with light and airy clouds becomes apparent. As a painter Coburn layered and shaped them into rhythmic, ephemeral monuments to the sky. The clouds imbue the composition with lyricism, while drawing the eye into the picture, forcing it to wander through the image in order to experience the textures, movement, and harmony he sought to convey. This comparison is made to emphasize Coburn's particular interest in movement. As an artist his attention to horses and dancers as subjects is connected to his interest in movement, musculature, and rhythm. Coburn had once explained to his physician and friend, Dr. Saine, how the rhythm in dance was critical to his understanding of the rhythm of the rolling hills in the Townships that he frequently painted, and he acknowledged how dance had influenced his painting.[149] Saine also fondly recalled how intently the artist studied horses and their movements, and how enthusiastic Coburn was when discussing their anatomy and musculature with him.[150]

**Figure 8. Frederick Simpson Coburn, *Carlotta Dancing*, 1938, photograph, 25.3 x 20.2 cm. MNBAQ Collection.**

[149] ETRC, FS Coburn Fonds, PO98/001.05/002.
[150] ETRC, FS Coburn Fonds, PO98/001.05/002.

In order to situate Coburn relative to his peers, a Montreal art critic, writing in the 1980s, compared the Group of Seven's "blend of symbolism and expressionism when painting Canadian landscape" to Coburn's "pastoral, naturalist, and impressionistic tendencies."[151] The author then put him in the company of Cornelius Krieghoff, Horatio Walker, Henri Julien, and Clarence Gagnon.[152] Throughout his career he was respected by fellow Canadian artists including Horatio Walker, Maurice Cullen, Albert Robinson, Clarence Gagnon, Marc - Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Côté, F.W. Hutchinson, Richard Jack, and Arthur Lismer.[153] When asked during an interview with Gerald Stevens in 1958, "Has the work of any earlier, contemporary Canadian artist influenced your technique or palette as applied to your favorite medium oil?" Coburn quickly replied: "Cullen. [One time when] we went up to Quebec we got the local carpenter to make a box, a paint box and the two, Cullen & I, marked colours that we would use on the palette and brushes, and he told me I could go out and paint in colour the landscape that I had drawn in black & white. Which I did. I came back and showed it to him and he said 'that's very nice, Coburn but you want to learn to put paint on the canvas, not on your clothes.'"[154] Stevens then asked, "Who in your opinion was the greatest of all the Canadian painters?" Coburn, after a long pause, responded "Well, I would say Cullen. At least, he influenced ME more than any other painter."[155] Although both painters had an affinity for landscape scenery in winter, Maurice Cullen's landscapes conveyed an intensity and luminosity in comparison to Coburn's more blended and diffused tones. Where Coburn composed his landscapes as an ensemble of natural elements, surrounding the logger with horses in order to present a relatively complete and scenic picture to the viewer, Cullen often placed emphasis on a close up detail or fragment of the chosen environment. His landscapes communicated a mood or weather condition which differed from Coburn's more story-like quality

[151] The Montreal Downtowner, Wednesday September 17, 1986. *Coburn's show at Klinkhoff*, Stuart Wilson, 18.
[152] The Montreal Downtowner, 18.
[153] Stevens, 24.
[154] ETRC PO98/001.05/002.
[155] ETRC PO98/001.05/002.

brought about by the image of a teamster travelling along the logging trails. In contrast, Cullen's interest was more directed towards light effects at night or on snow, and his treatment of paint was less restrained, more spontaneous and visceral than Coburn's apparent interest in representing a tranquil and harmonious environment. Where Cullen's sense of contrast is most evident through the juxtaposition of light and dark, Coburn achieves his through form, not color. Cullen's approach to his subject is essentially much bolder than Coburn's gentler treatment. While Coburn's antimodern-modernism offered desirable and imaginary escapes from industrial installations and congested urban environments, Cullen's modernism was more complex. Regarding technique, Stevens asked Coburn "You are a master technician in the application of paint. Do you not give that great importance?" The painter replied:

> I learned all about that in the Antwerp Academy. We had lectures there from a professional pigment-maker and he told us which colours to use that would not have a chemical reaction on each other, which was permanent and that was a great help. [He also taught us] which ones to mix that wouldn't deteriorate. [...] I've never heard that spoken in any of the other schools that I have attended. That was the only place and that of course was because he was a pigment manufacturer. Made the raw colours in the pigment.[156]

Throughout his practice, Coburn preferred to sketch, draw and paint figures from live models, although he also used photographs to refer to when working alone in his studio as well, as will be further discussed with reference to figures 25, 26, and 32 - three of several photographs kept by Coburn that were clearly transformed into his artworks. At one point during his interview with Stevens, the artist recalled how it was in Germany that he realized the importance of working with models:

> One day, I was sitting in the Slade School in London. Henry Tonks used to come along and he'd sit by each of the artists as they were around the model and talk with them or make some suggestions and finally, one day, he sat down beside me and he said do you know the charm of drawing is a sealed book to you- the charm of drawing - I don't want you to make an inventory of that model - I want you to interpret that model in lines and form, emphasize the form but don't make an inventory of it. Forget the trivia and from that day I learned to draw.[157]

[156] ETRC PO98/001.05/002.
[157] ETRC, PO98/001.05/002.

Coburn's parents had perhaps experienced mixed feelings and certain reservations about permitting him, at the age of sixteen, to move to Montreal, on his own ,in order to pursue his studies at le Conseil des Arts et Manufactures with C.S. Stevenson and René Quentin, while employed as an illustrator for the Sabiston Litho & Publishing Co.[158] Nonetheless, the decision quickly proved to be the right choice for the teenaged artist based on a favorable newspaper review that commended the "young English sixteen year old from Melbourne, near Richmond, whose admirable talents would indicate the most brilliant success for the future [...] the beauty of his ink drawings astonishes everyone. Even more noteworthy, the young Coburn seems to have a rich store of ideas; everything seems to suggest that this young man will become a painter of renown." [159] By 1889, at the age of eighteen, Coburn sailed to Germany and enrolled in the Berlin Academy. In 1892 he studied in Paris under Jean-Léon Gérôme at the École des Beaux-Arts. In 1896 and 1897 he attended the Slade School of Art in London where he learned from Frederick Brown and Henry Tonks who, as previously noted, Coburn personally credited for having introduced him to the drawing technique of capturing the "essence" of a model, beyond merely taking an inventory of one. From there the developing artist moved on to Antwerp's Royal Academy from 1897 to 1901. On December 21, 1897 he proudly wrote to Drummond, "I have passed the exam for the Institute here. Taking 1st in drawing composition & 2nd in painting out of a class of 30. I am working hard for the subsidy in the concours of May next. This will mean a free studio, models & costumes for 2 years."[160] The subsidy he was referring to was the Belgian Government award which he won over other international competitors. In a letter written by Coburn's father to Drummond during the summer of 1898, he proudly explained how the award provided free tuition and "gives him free access to one of the

[158] Elizabeth H. Kennel, Frederick Simpson Coburn Collection, 79.
[159] Qtd. in Coburn, 26.
[160] ETRC PO98/002.02/002 Correspondence W.H.Drummond 1897-1913, Letter from FS Coburn to WH Drummond, from Antwerp Belgium Dec 21, 1897.

best art libraries in the world & a start on a big picture for next year.[161] During the summers of 1896, 1897, and 1898 Coburn returned to Quebec and painted with fellow artists including Maurice Cullen, Edmond Dyonnet, and John H. McNaughton.[162] The pride and support he received from his family is clearly evident. His father, Newlands Coburn, collected reviews and articles throughout his son's career and kept them in a scrapbook that is now preserved at the Eastern Townships Resource Centre (ETRC). By 1906 Coburn was midway through his formative period and gaining confidence as a painter. In a letter written to Drummond from Antwerp that year, Coburn enthusiastically described his most recent breakthrough in his development as an artist:

> Did you ever notice the drive wheels of a locomotive slide around on slippery rails when starting off with a heavy load? After a lot of useless turns, finally, with a little sand, they get down to work & "grip" the rail in earnest -- well, I think I am getting into the sand with my painting. It is beginning to "pull" in the right way & I feel it "gripping" as it never did before. My work is now far away beyond where you know it."[163]

That same year was fondly remembered by William Watson as the year he made his first sale as an art dealer. The artwork he had sold was *Roses in a Glass Bowl*, a still life painted by Coburn .[164] Watson sold the painting while working at John Ogilvy's Montreal art gallery that had been established in 1897 as a hobby to occupy the wealthy merchant. [165] The sale of a Coburn in Montreal in 1906 is significant due to how Ogilvy and his peers found Canadian paintings in general during that decade "too noisy to mix with quiet Dutch pictures."[166] Watson recalled regretting how Ogilvy kept "very few Canadian paintings, for only those painted in the Dutch 19th-century tradition appealed to him even though he had approved of Coburn's still-life paintings."[167] Years later, Montreal art critic St. George Burgoyne commented on how

[161] Letter from Fred's father June 27, 1898 to Dr. Drummond. Frederick Simpson Coburn Fond: PO98/002.02/002, Correspondence W.H. Drummond 1897-1913.
[162] Kennel, 79.
[163] Etrc, PO98/002.02/002, letter written by FS Coburn to WH Drummond from Antwerp, Feb 1, 1906.
[164] Watson, 62.
[165] Watson, 5.
[166] Watson, 5.
[167] Watson, 6.

the popularity of Coburn's winter scenes of laborers hauling sleighs "tended to obscure his versatility."[168] That popularity was very clear to Watson given how once Coburn's winter logging scenes were displayed in his gallery's window "they would invariably sell on the same day."[169]

Coburn's many patrons included both French and English speaking Canadian collectors, as well as international buyers from the United States and abroad.[170] Between 1904 and 1937 the artist had 148 paintings on record, and many were regularly exhibited at venues including the Art Association of Montreal, the National Gallery of Canada, the Royal Canadian Academy, and the Ontario Society of Artists.[171] By 1975 *The Canadian Art Investor's Guide's* listed Coburn's paintings of horse teams in wintry landscapes in their "Most Desirable Works" category.[172] Figure 9 shows a press clipping profiling the Klinkhoff family's Montreal art gallery in 1994; in it we see one of Coburn's landscapes in the upper right corner, attesting to the enduring admiration and respect his work has earned by art dealers and patrons alike.


**Figure 9. Teco Church, *A portrait of the Klinkhoffs*, 1994, publication photograph, The Montreal Gazette, Monday, October 24, 1994, F 3. Note Coburn painting featured in upper right corner of the photograph chosen to promote Klinkhoff Gallery's collection of respected artists.**

[168] Qtd. in Stevens, 27.
[169] Watson, 62.
[170] Stevens, 70-72.
[171] Eastern Townships Research Center, Coburn fond: PO98/002.01.01
[172] The Canadian Art Investor's Guide Volume One, No.1 January-March, 1975, 8.

In her 1996 biography of her uncle, Evelyn Lloyd Coburn further described how the artist

> was never drawn into any organized group of painters and always avoided the politics of the art scene. [...] While he shunned artistic battles, which those like the Group of Seven fought out of principle, Coburn's personal convictions were no less strong. He had little time for other than his art and his dance, and he strongly believed in the sanctity of the artists' role. It was not to be taken lightly or tainted by political squabbles and fashionable trends. For him, painting was a continual solitary effort to wed his craft and his skills to the truth of his vision.[173]


**Figure 10. Frederick Simpson Coburn, *Logging*, 1928, oil on Canvas, dimensions na, River Brink Art Museum, Accession Number: 982.187**

Modern Art does not coincide with a fixed period so it can accommodate many various meanings, values and interests, however, for the purpose of this section, the modern period under

[173] Coburn, 134-5.

examination is post-confederation to the 1930s, which overlaps with Coburn's development as an artist. Although Coburn consistently returned to his preferred subject of a lone lumberjack accompanied by a pair of horses hauling logs throughout his career, it can be argued that the modernist aspect of this body of work shifted considerably over time. Circa 1905, when he was out in the woods plein-air sketching with Maurice Cullen, this subject-matter was a mere pretext for him to explore formal questions relating to colour, texture and, most notably the effects and patterns light had on snow. In his early works, Coburn adopted modern painting practices of thick, impasto applications of pigment, the use of vivid colors applied with organic fluidity, and a blurring of features and details. This set of formal preoccupations was shared by many modern artists (including Cullen) as well as Impressionist and Post-Impressionist artists in Europe. To the extent that he repeated variations of the same subject of horses and sleighs gliding through snowy trails, his practice can be compared to other Modern painters' extended focus on one particular motif: Paul Cézanne's fixation on Mont Sainte Victoire or Claude Monet's preoccupation with haystacks and water lilies, for example. Unlike these artists, however, Coburn's practice became more and more repetitive over the years, and he did not use that singular motif as the basis for continual formal exploration, as did these more assertively modernist artists.
In canvas after canvas Coburn clearly privileges color over line. His liberal use of white purifies the landscape and enables the artist to indulge in enchanting plays of light and shadow. However, the beautiful results of this painterly process have effaced the loggers' actual labour from the landscape as they plod along apparently picturesque logging trails delivering valuable resources in the service of wealthy lumber lords and companies. The following chapters in this section will address how these paintings could serve as antimodern symbols, could alleviate the owner/patron's sense of alienation that stemmed from his/her personal disassociation from the land, and could gloss over the working class' laborious engagement with the landscape by instead representing it as leisurely spaces for escape from urban and/or industrial modern environments. Significantly, by contemporary standards, it

requires an effort to recall how the felled logs we see in Coburn's paintings signal commoditized trophies of capitalism on their way to market, an unsustainable national logging industry, and an undetermined and underanalyzed ecological impact on the region's forests.

## 4. Labour & Industry in The Eastern Townships

**Figure 11. Frederick Simpson Coburn, *Cutting Logs*, 1942, oil on canvas, 55.9 x 71.1 cm, Eric Klinkhoff Gallery, <http://www.klinkhoffart.com/coburn-frederick-s>.**

By the 1890s, when Coburn was busily preparing illustrations and endeavouring to establish himself as a painter, "there were 24 pulp mills in Canada, most of them in Quebec."[174] By the mid-20th-century that number had risen to "130 mills consuming nearly nine million cords of wood each year."[175] In Quebec and Ontario alone, pulp and paper mills consumed approximately three million cords of wood each year throughout the early decades of the 20th-century. From 1913 to 1929 "Canada became the world's greatest exporter of newsprint." In fact, during Coburn's lifetime the lumber industry was one of Canada's largest national industries. Throughout his career logging interests in Canada, like other major

[174] Donald MacKay, The Lumberjacks, 32.
[175] Donald MacKay,33.

industries, symbolized prosperity and progress - not deforestation and environmental crisis. The lumberjacks' labour in the nation's forests merely represented the initial phases of a systematic series of work and human interventions that, ironically, yielded commercial products such as the ornately crafted wooden frames surrounding Krieghoff and Coburn's picturesque paintings. Those paintings showed only select moments of the various processes required to extract that very material from the forest in its rawest state. (See figures 5 and 27.) Donald Mackay's remarkable book, *The Lumberjacks*, documents visual and oral histories of these workers' various types and stages of gruelling and treacherous labour performed in order to harvest the forests that challenges the artists' representations of the lumber industry. The industry 's peak years in Eastern Canada were between 1870 and 1900, the period which corresponds to Fred Coburn's first three decades of life. Following this peak, there were still approximately 90 000 loggers labouring in the camps across Canada during the early 1920s.[176] This number does not include the scores of rural farmers who logged "between chore time and chore time once the snow fell."[177] The farming loggers would cut the timber from their personal properties and sell it to merchants like George Hurley in the Eastern Townships, whose "business was buying logs from the farmer and selling them to lumber companies." [178] Astonishingly, the timber often represented the farmer's best cash crop for the year. They would fell their own trees and deliver them to the depot at the local railway station to be weighed and priced. According to a senior Townshipper, Kathleen McLedd, whose parents operated a logging camp in the Townships during the first half of the 20th-century, "usually, two men worked together. The chosen tree was notched with a good sharp axe [...] A cross-cut saw, pulled back and forth by a man on either end would sink its long teeth into the wood [...] The tree would come down with a crash. Many an unwary man was laid low or even killed by one of the branches

[176] Donald MacKay, 93.
[177] Kathleen (Waldron) McLedd, A Squint-eyed view Of Logging, 1. Eastern Townships Research Center.
[178] McLedd, 2.

when he failed to judge the distance of their reach."[179] Figure 11 is a rare example of a Coburn landscape in which the loggers are pictured actually cutting a tree, in this case using the cross-cut saw method of manual labour described by Kathleen McLedd. The nostalgic painting features two figures in the foreground using this sawing technique on a felled tree, a method of cutting timber that was, by the time this painting was created in 1942, increasingly rare due to the unparalleled efficiency of industrially made mechanized tools that were easier and faster alternatives designed to replace the old - fashioned manual way. This antimodern modernist painting of Coburn's is also quite rare as there is an obvious human interaction between the figures in the landscape, as they work together as a team in order to guide the saw in a partnership that echoes his preferred formula of pairs of labouring horses hauling those same logs.

**Figure 12. Malak, *Breaking up a pulpwood jam with horse power,* 1948, photograph, in Donald Mackay's The Lumberjacks, page 140.**

[179] McLedd, 1.

Although some of the region's farmers managed to make a living from selling the trees that grew on their own properties, there were also many fathers and sons who were obliged to leave their homes following the fall harvest, as their poverty forced them to head to any one of the many lumber camps that were scattered throughout Eastern Canada. These men would often only return to their family farms in the spring. One lumberjack recalled how the horses used by teamsters were typically very big, and included "Clydesdales, Percherons, Belgians, each 1700 pounds or so , although smaller habitant horses working single instead of in teams were used in the Quebec pulp camps."[180] A sleigh usually loaded with 25 or 30 logs weighed approximately twenty tons.[181] Lumberjacks included choppers, sawyers, and skidders who worked throughout the fall to prepare the logs for the teamsters who later transported them to depots and frozen lakes and rivers during the winter. In the spring the *river drivers* guided or "herded" the logs along the waterways to mills for processing, or to ports where waiting ships loaded them for export. Although each stage of the process of extracting the tree from the forest was subject to all too frequent horrific injuries and grisly deaths, all agreed that the river drivers had the most dangerous jobs of all. The drivers "stamped the logs with the owner's brand, drove timber over falls, rode the logs down rapids, chased strays into flooded swamps and corralled them in holding booms at the mouths of rivers."[182] After working a fifteen - hour day in freezing water that often first required breaking through the ice, "a 'river hog', wading chest - deep after a maverick log, was prone to chilblains, arthritic 'black leg', and rheumatism when he rolled up at nine o'clock in damp blankets by the fire and slept."[183] This job was generally limited to strong, young men given its intense physical demands and perilously dangerous conditions, during an era when any type of workman's compensation was non-existent. Figure 12 shows a black and white photograph, from 1948, of Quebec river drivers working knee - deep in rushing water with a horse, as they collectively struggle to break up a pulpwood jam using

[180] Donald Mackay, 102.
[181] Donald Mackay, 102.
[182] Donald Mackay, 120.
[183] Donald Mackay, 120.

nothing more than harnesses, peaveys (long sticks), and muscle power. The photograph represents a small detail of a much larger labour - intensive landscape, where workers are at odds with the natural environment, struggling against nature to harness its power in order to extract its resources. Two of the four men have their backs to the jammed pile of logs, which, if it suddenly breaks, will immediately crush them. As far as the river drivers were concerned, log jams were the worst things that could happen. One lumberjack recalled how "sometimes it would take four or five days to get 10 000 jammed cords of pulpwood out of the river [...] Guys out there up to their armpits in water. It was the only way you could do it [...] Working down in the gap in front of a shaking wall of logs was a job for volunteers."[184] Foremen often sent men directly into the jam to locate the "key log" that would free the jam, rather than blasting it with dynamite "in order to save the wood."[185] According to one account, once that key log was freed and the jam broke the foreman would call " 'Leave her boys!', and the jam would 'break and go'. Sometimes one or two men went with it [...] The river drivers of Quebec and the Miramichi in New Brunswick were the best in the business."[186] Due to the critical nature of the river driver's labour, whose very life depended on his agility, his pride "was his shin-high boots, studded with sharp quarter-inch steel calks, pronounced 'corks', which anchored him to a floating log like claws of a cat. Those boots were a logger's caste mark, his weapon in high-kicking bar-room brawls where the wounds were called 'logger's smallpox', and his memorial in the days when a river driver was buried where he drowned and his boots nailed to a tree to mark his grave."[187] The drivers "had to be sure-footed. One mis-step meant certain death."[188]

[184] Donald Mackay, 131.
[185] Donald Mackay, 138.
[186] Donald Mackay,133.
[187] Donald Mackay, 122.
[188] Donald Mackay, 135.

**Figure 13. Anonymous issued by Abitibi Paper Co. Ltd., *Horses at a full gallop,* undated, photograph, in Donald Mackay's The Lumberjacks, page 107.**

In Canada's east however, "logging camps were horse camps and from Christmas until spring thaw the teamsters hauled great loads to the lakes and frozen rivers," and the winter sleigh haul was very much perceived as lively, manly work.[189] In the Eastern Townships, the logging industry supplied the region's growing number of sawmills and pulp and paper mills which Coburn never included in his landscapes. The teamsters were adept at reaching hard to access areas and travelling through irregular terrain. Although the teamsters' work resulted in less frequent deaths than experienced by the river drivers, they also faced extreme challenges from the natural environment's topography on a regular basis. Steep hills and tight bends were a constant concern for any teamster. In an undated black and white photograph of a team hauling pulpwood (fig. 13), the horses are captured in "full gallop to keep

[189] Donald Mackay, 99.

ahead of a sleigh load of pulpwood running down a small hill [...] On steep hills horses were sometimes crushed to death when sleighs got out of control."[190] This one photograph suggests a very different type of experience, one that challenges Coburn's romantic and idealised portrayals of the lone teamster's routine labour. I want to emphasize that virtually none of the dangers associated with the nation's logging industry are evident in any of Coburn's paintings or representations, even though he devoted much of his career to painting the teamsters who contributed to getting the logs from the forest to the mills. In contrast to the group of loggers pictured in figure 13, Coburn's teamsters were most often represented alone along the logging trails which wound their way through the forests and over the gently sloping hills - they were not pictured as groups of men working hard together, in support of one another to get both the logs and the team safely to the bottom of steep pitches and sharp curves. Coburn's teams of horses appear relaxed, as they leisurely plod along the gently winding trails - his trio in harmony with each other and at ease with nature amidst a pleasant, tranquil, and comfortable environment as represented in figure 9, the 1928 painting of Coburn's entitled *Logging*. Figure 14, a black and white photograph that was published in a 1906 edition of *Le Canada Pittoresque* shows an alternative, harsher, more challenging, and messier topography than the pleasant and tranquil idealized representations preferred by Coburn, and yet this is a kind of landscape commonly encountered in the Eastern Townships' forests: steep rocky cliffs, sharp and narrow inclines, a random scattering of large stone boulders, fallen trees that are precariously leaning against each other, shrubs and stumps intermittently littering the slippery mud - soaked ground, in essence a highly congested and irregular ground that is particularly difficult and dangerous to travel through during winter's freezing cold months due to deep and dense snow drifts, falling branches and icicles, or collapsing ice beds, especially for a heavy team of horses pulling a sled laden with timber. Dan Hill, a teamster, described a tragic incident that occurred in 1906:

[190] Donald Mackay, 107.

> Billie Breen met his death on a sand hill near Willan's camp [...] As the heavy load started down, the sleigh runners began alternately to grab the sanded surface of the road and to shoot ahead rapidly on the slippery spots [...] The team was helpless to steady it [...] Then the load broke into a threshing tangle of logs. Billie tried to jump clear, but he was thrown off balance by careening logs. As he fell he was brutally crushed between the logs. He died several hours later."[191]

Hill also recalled how, on a different occasion, "there was another hill, a sand-hill, three-quarters of a mile long and we had 28 sand hill men working on it. One fella behind me got a run and he got scared and jumped and the sleigh went right over the top of the horses and killed them. I [also] had some dirty old runs."[192] Although seasoned teamsters "swore it was a disgrace to leap off a runaway sleigh and leave the horses to their fate [...] most foremen urged new men to kneel, not sit, atop their loads so they could jump if they had to. 'One fella he jumped to the side and there was a crowbar standing in the snow and it went right into him. I saw that happen back on Blue Lake.' "[193] Despite these horrific accidents, Hill nonetheless found it "surprising, wonderful, [that]more men and horses didn't get killed."[194]

[191] Donald Mackay, 109-10.
[192] Donald Mackay, 108.
[193] Donald Mackay, 109.
[194] Donald Mackay, 109.


**Figure 14. Anonymous, *Le Canada pittoresque : défricheurs canadiens en forêt*, April 3, 1906, published photograph, No 4514 L'album universel, Vol. 22, no. 1145, p. 1477, <http://bibnum2.banq.qc.ca/bna/illustrations/htm/d1891.htm?language_id=3>.**

**Figure 15. E.W. Sear/Sears Studio, *The Industrial Specialty Manufacturing Co.*, c. 1918, photograph detail, Société Histoire de Magog.**

The Canada Paper Company had several mills in the Townships during Coburn's lifetime. He grew up in a region that was host to established logging trails in proximity to the nation's third - busiest railway station, multiple pulp and paper mills, countless sawmills, mining companies, many factories, and several emerging urban centres, although no trace of these industrial elements ever made their way into one of his paintings. Other than for pulp and paper, Canada's forests provided the raw material necessary to produce firewood, tools, ship masts, railway ties, buildings, furniture, and many other modern commodities that were exchanged on a daily basis. The farms which surrounded the small villages and parishes that emerged during the 19th-century were a mixture of neighbouring French, English, Scottish, Irish, and also American Loyalist families who had fled the United States during the American Revolution. Coburn's maternal grandfather was among those Loyalist families, and he eventually became the Melbourne/Richmond region's first notary. These bilingual communities indeed formed a unique blend of neighbours in contrast to larger urban centres like Montreal, where the two dominant cultures split the island into east (French) and west (English) sides at Saint-Lawrence Street, with immigrant communities spontaneously settling themselves throughout the city. During a 1980s interview with Arthur Jay Ross, who was born in 1900, the man fondly recalls how it was growing up on his family farm in one such area in the Townships, and he emphasizes the strong sense of community that characterized his childhood years: "Of course, another thing we weren't plagued with - was French and English, and Scotch and Irish - we all lived together, just like that." According to him, the farmers in those days got along with "no trouble at all. Anybody sick during the haying or something - we'd all get together and go put his crop in the barn- don't charge him at all, he's sick and can't work."[195] In the Townships', the rural working class population often identified with others more on the basis of social class than it did based on language. The same may be said for other classes in Québec, in light of writer and politician Louis Fréchette's apparent enthusiastic endorsement of doctor W.H. Drummond's poetry.

[195] Arthur Jay Ross, ETRC P163/001.07/002 Ian Tait Collection.

Fréchette, a Member of Canada's Parliament and award winning - poet, praised how Drummond "présente mes compatriotes illetrés [...] La peinture qu'en fait la poète est [...] sympathique et juste; et de semblables procédés ne peuvent que cimenter l'union de coeur et d'esprit qui doit exister entre toutes les fractions qui composent la grande famille canadienne appelée à vivre et à prospérer sous la même loi et le même drapeau."[196] In this particular context the *fractions* seem to refer more to class divides as opposed to linguistic or religious ones.

Ross further noted that farmers would cut their wood piles and get them out of the woods in the fall, and saw that during the winter, emphasizing how during "them times, they worked from daylight to dark - no question of time clocks or anything else- we got this job to do- we're going to do it. All these unions they've got in - keep working people worked up- never had any labour troubles, if he didn't want to work, he didn't eat."[197] He recalled how in winter, throughout his lifetime, hardwood and birch were being cut and squared to fit into boats and onto rail cars for export to England and the United States. During the era when Coburn painted scenes that celebrate the harvesting of forests, there is also alternative evidence of an awareness and concern for the extraction of lumber from the Townships' systematically shrinking forests. This concern was confronted by J. O. Donigan (1861-1959) who, as a young boy, arrived in Magog from Ireland with his parents during the second half of the 19th-century. As an adult he wrote many short poems (occasionally on birch bark), that reveal his preoccupation with the nation's forests and deep admiration for trees. His poem *Our Country's Trees,* first published in 1924, includes the following passage:

Our forest wealth we know 'tis vast,
It's worth almost untold,
For generations it will last
If what we have we hold,
This heritage is for our use,
Not to barter or throw away,
We must ignore interests abuse
And just pursue the safer way.

[196] Fréchette, qtd. in The Habitant, ix.
[197] Ross, ETRC.

Insist that they who have the care,
Of all our forests standing yet,
Decree our people's wishes are,
Foreigners from us no raw wood get.[198]

Donigan's poem underscores his concern regarding the extent of forest harvesting for profit, and advocates that more caution be taken in view of the potential impact these abusive interests may have for future generations. It further demonstrates how some individuals perceived the selling or trading of this natural heritage as a controversial practice.

Most villages and towns had a central point along a railway where the farmers would deliver the logs which were then loaded directly onto the trains for immediate export. Otherwise they were transported straight to the sawmills by teamsters throughout the winter. Large paper and sawmills were often strategically built along the rivers with direct access to railway tracks; this ensured that the logs could be sent to them from the forests by water currents in summer, and by teamsters or trains in winter. Figure 16, a large-scale diptych photograph commissioned by the Industrial Specialty Company, located on the northern shore of Lake Memphremagog at the intersection of the Canadian Pacific Railway and Cherry River, represents a panoramic view of such a lumber - dependent commercial enterprise. The factory was owned by the Montreal - based Dominion Textiles Company, which owned a much larger textile manufacturing installation located a short distance down the street from it. The Industrial Specialty Company supplied the textile factory with spindles, bobbins, and other wooden products used to produce its fabrics, in addition to supplying other markets with wood-based commercial materials. The pair of images can be understood as a representation of a prosperous, capitalist and efficient industrial landscape. The diptych was framed and, according to the Magog Historical Society, hung in the Dominion Textiles Company's executive offices until the plant closed. Created by the Sears Studio in Sherbrooke, Quebec, a firm of professional photographers, this

[198] J. O. Donigan, "Our Country's Trees", Reminiscences of my Old Home and other Poems, Sherbrooke: Les Productions G.G.C. Ltée, 2000, 37.

extraordinary visual document would have been made by overlapping several individually shot negatives into one wide panoramic image. The explicitly staged scene showcases the company's wealth of material resources: human, constructed, and raw. The naturally lit exterior environment conveys the company's significance to the community through a deliberate visual message that is reinforced by its apparent expansiveness, which has been carefully framed to show how the property dominates the horizon line at the very edge of Magog's city limits. The factory appears extensive and imposing in the foreground compared to the "majestic" Mt. Orford (as it is commonly referred to), now barely noticeable in the distant and faded background of the upper photograph. The densely packed piles of horizontal logs, planks, and boards neatly stacked around the factory emphasize how the natural environment has yielded to human interests, and they symbolize the stacks of currency into which they will ultimately be converted for the company's shareholders. By comparing the environments in figures 14 and 15, the formality of the later is strikingly apparent in its deliberate and efficient planning and layout. For example, we see the orderly line up of teamsters waiting to unload the recently felled logs at the factory, and how each one of the lumber piles is stored in a designated location according to its specific category.

**Figure 16. E.W. Sear/Sears Studio, *The Industrial Specialty Manufacturing Co.*, c. 1918, photograph (diptych panorama), 72.4 x 152.4 cm, Société Histoire de Magog. This photograph was originally framed and hung in Magog's Dominion Textiles Company's executives office - The Industrial Specialty's parent company.**

The planned industrial layout shown in figure 15 appears calculated, ordered and regulated in contrast to the irregular, organic, and cluttered natural environment seen in figure 14, a photograph of the Canadian forest. The efficiently designed and constructed brick building's west facade parallels the river which served as a practical and cost effective means to transport the logs directly from the immediately surrounding forests to the saws. The elongated, narrow, rectangular, two - storied, red - brick building was originally designed and built as an industrial furniture manufactory in 1916, which for unrecorded reasons, remained inoperative until the property was purchased in 1918 by the Dominion Textiles Company. The photograph shown in figure 16 was commissioned soon after, when the building was fully operational as the Industrial Specialty Company. This "sister company" was commonly referred to as the *Bobbin Shop* by its local workers, hired to transform the forest's raw material into a variety of wooden commodities. In one study of Quebec's cotton industry between 1890 and 1950, historian Gail Cuthbert Brandt examined how the province:

> was a particularly attractive area for cotton manufacturers because of the province's transportation system and natural and human resources. Montreal, as the main railway centre for the emerging trans-continental railway, provided access to an expanding market in the West while branch lines running into the United States facilitated the importation of raw cotton from that country. Moreover, there was an abundance of excellent water power sites in the province and a seemingly limitless supply of unskilled French Canadian labour resulting from an excess of population relative to the supply of arable land.[199]

As a professionally commissioned and corporate photograph hanging in the executive offices, the staged panorama could be admired by the company's directors as a symbol of both the natural and human resources which legitimized their personal and collective goals to accumulate wealth and develop the nation's economy. Such an industry's board members constituted the very same demographic that was simultaneously purchasing Coburn's paintings to hang in their private mansions and clubs during the early decades of the 20th-century. It is interesting to consider how this type of

[199] Brandt, Women in the Quebec Cotton Industry 1890-1950, 100.

labour-intensive and industrial landscape representation was ideally suitable for a richly and tastefully appointed corporate executive office in comparison to the romantic and picturesque rural landscapes that would have been hanging in domestic interiors and social spaces like clubs. This discrepancy underscores how different cultural norms, values and tastes can inform landscape representations. Given the placement and iconography of this photograph, it can be understood as a trophy commemorating a successful modern enterprise, with all the capitalist trimmings in attendance: prosperity, industry, and hierarchy with a company head prefigured in the foreground, placed at the very nexus of the composition surrounded by his assets and employees. The head of the company can be seen posing in figure 15, in the immediate foreground next to a man at his left, standing at attention. Directly behind him, his small, sporty black sleigh is hitched to a single, blanketed horse that is being held for him by an attendant. His ride appears luxuriously comfortable in contrast to the pile of logs the teamsters sit atop daily throughout the winter. This commissioned photograph was produced for posterity, to commemorate and reinforce the Dominion Textiles' influence and presence within Magog's urban landscape, while relegating the labourers' involvement in the scene to that of a passive human resource. There is little evidence of the actual labour operating within and surrounding this industrial landscape, as the teamsters wait to be unloaded before returning to the logging trails, with the expectation of completing as many round trips as possible throughout the day. In this staged context the teamsters are mere accessories in this mis-en-scène, manpower on display amongst the company's other resources- a necessary sprocket that contributes to turning the corporate wheel as it systematically endeavours to convert thousands upon thousands of forested acres into commodities that are ultimately transformed into shareholder dividends. At the time this photograph was taken, the Dominion Textiles Company owned atleast 3 000 acres of forested land adjacent to the city of Magog, according to the company 's recruitment booklet ( fig. 17). During this era the working class exchanged their labour for some form of remuneration, as the merchant class owned and controlled the capital and

natural resources required for industry - and this fundamental division is manifest in each class' everyday experience of the landscape. In this way, in addition to the diverse other ways that will be addressed further in this thesis, landscape is profoundly linked to people's widely varying needs, interests, preoccupations, and values.

Cuthbert Brandt has acknowledged how cotton companies in Quebec used the Slater system of recruitment that was based on "the family method of recruiting workers, and the practice of sending agents into the countryside to persuade entire families to move to the mill centres continued into the 1920s." [200] In August 1917, the Dominion Textiles Company issued a small bilingual booklet featuring a picturesque landscape of *Modern Magog* on its cover, while advertising "an opportunity for 100 families in Magog", in order to recruit workers (fig. 17). Accordingly, the booklet's twelve illustrated pages are devoted to promoting the advantages and benefits of relocating to "Magog: a busy town of happy homes situated in a district noted for its beauty", according to the quaintly framed caption printed on the booklet's first page. The text describes the town's abundant natural resources, respectable schools and churches, and state - of - the - art modern amenities. For example, on page 3 the company emphasizes how "Magog is situated at the outlet of Lake Memphremagog [...] The name it bears comes from the Indians, who named it after the unusually clear water [...] Magog is noted for the good health enjoyed by Magog people, and this is partly due to the splendid, clear water they drink." The company offers steady work, a clean mill, and a 55 - hour work week, and notes that "a man can always get work at good wages in Magog, and there are also places open for the whole family who are able to work."[201] Significantly, Magog had *La Crèche,* an early form of daycare or nursery run by Catholic nuns, which the recruitment booklet noted had "accommodation for some 200 children who are too young to attend school. Here, mothers who go out to work may leave their little ones in safety."[202]

[200] Cuthbert Brandt, 101.
[201] Modern Magog, 6.
[202] Modern Magog, 5.

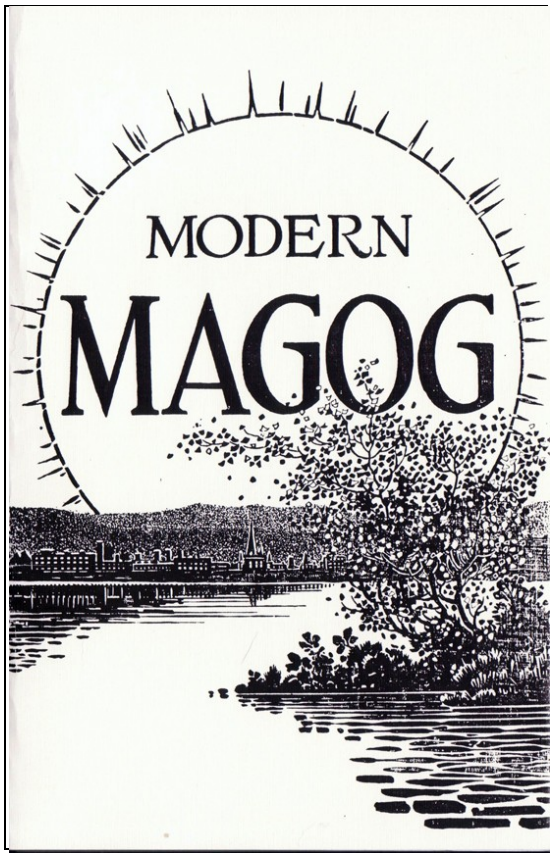


**Figure 17. Anonymous, *Modern Magog*, 1917, print, 21.6 x 14 cm, Dominion Textile Co. Limited (SHM). This illustration serves as the cover page for a 12 page employee recruitment booklet issued by the textile company formerly located in Magog, Quebec.**

One of the remarkable aspects of this illustrated booklet that was conceived to advertise employment opportunities, though, is how any representation of actual labour or industrial machinery is omitted. It does, however, emphasize that it "owns some 3 000 acres of land and it is gradually placing this land under cultivation [...] This year the Company has thirty acres of land under cultivation in potatoes and beans, which will be sold at the cost of producing, and contracts are out for the cutting of 2 000 cords of wood for the coming year. Last year the Company cut and delivered from its farm land to its employees 1 200 cords of wood at $1.50 per cord."[203]The illustration on the booklet's cover (fig. 17) is a landscape print that neatly integrates Magog's urban and built environment with the surrounding natural environment's elements that include a tree, vegetation and lake in the foreground, church and factory in the middle ground, and a substantial hillside in the background, all situated beneath the

[203] Modern Magog, 7-8.

glowing ball of light illuminating "Modern Magog." Although the Catholic church is respectfully placed at the very center of this landscape, the factory installations occupy much more of its space. This visually strategy effectively "naturalizes" industry as a partner to, and permanent fixture within the modern landscape, and it symbolically aligns itself with the church by placing itself right next to it, and on even ground with it. The factory was actually located along the Magog River downstream from Lake Memphremagog, and the St.-Patrice church, pictured here, was situated uphill from the factory at the very edge of Main Street. The choice of print as medium legitimizes standardized mass production - based industries and their cost efficiencies, and has reduced the environment to a uniform, tidy, and moral modern landscape which privileges the church and factory , clearly printed in black on white. Beyond the cover page, the company does show its prospective employees a glimpse of Lake Memphremagog and a few notable buildings other than the factory and the St.-Patrice church, including schools, banks, Protestant churches and the post office - and finally on the very last page an official and impressive - looking image of the factory's exterior is offered. The two peopled illustrations are photographs that suggest leisure and recreation- not labour. The titles of the photographs are : *A Saturday Afternoon's Catch at Lake Memphremagog* (fig. 18), and *Deer shot near Magog* (fig. 19). While the company invested deliberate effort into putting this recruitment booklet together to attract much needed factory workers, it seemingly went to equal lengths in order to omit any overt signs of actual labour. The deliberately selected iconography it deployed to "promote" working in Magog corresponds to the dominant class' tastes and interests in classical architecture that was showcased in the buildings represented in the employment booklet which featured columns, towers, and pediments, while the natural environment was described as a bountiful site for sportsmen, leisure activities including "good fishing and hunting" grounds that were heralded as "always close at hand and this suits the young men." Astonishingly, the booklet also included a photograph of the company Club House situated a short distance from the factory on upper Main Street that boasted "reading and recreation rooms for its

employees." Under what circumstances would a pre-WWI factory worker, whether frame - tender, spinner, or weaver have occasion to enjoy such leisurely access to a corporate club house, given their weekly wages were based on a minimum 55 hour work schedule? Clearly, the dominant shareholding class' ideals and perceptions of good taste were deemed as hegemonic and universally standard, without conceding that perhaps the labouring class pursued alternate leisurely interests that differed from their own. Ultimately though, the Dominion Textiles Company's recruitment booklet is a material expression of the extent to which modern landscape representations could go hand in hand with capitalism, given how these images were intentionally invoked to draw families from the rural countryside into an urban production-based manufactory in order to operate its machinery.


**Figure 18. Anonymous, *A Saturday afternoon's catch at Lake Memphremagog,* 1917, photograph, 21.6 x 14 cm, reprinted in Modern Magog, page 10.**

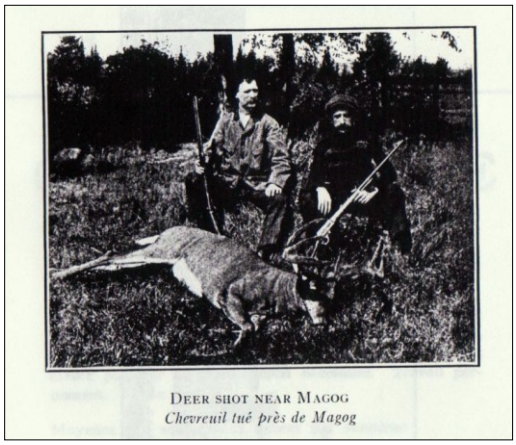


**Figure 19. Anonymous, *Deer shot near Magog,* 1917, photograph, 21.6 x 14 cm, reprinted in Modern Magog, page 11.**

**Figure 20. Anonymous, *sprinkler sled for ice roads*, undated, photograph, North Country History with Rob Burg. <http://www.northcountryhistory.com/horse-power-michigans-lumber-industry.html>.**

Beginning in early December ice roads were made for the teamsters' sleighs to travel on by men who worked throughout each night driving water tank sleighs to ensure that "level stretches were plowed and flooded to a glassy surface with two deep ruts so the sleighs would not slide off [...] By spring an ice road might be 12 inches thick."[204] The Sprinkler Sled was used to keep the ice roads well maintained during the winter logging season, enabling a team of horses to haul ten times their own weight. Figure 20 is an undated historical black and white photograph of a working landscape - a representation of the industrial machinery and human labourers employed to keep such roads in good working order throughout the winter. It is an un - romanticized and non-picturesque winter landscape that represents one of the teamsters' daily routines, and highlights the actual type of labour required to maintain the logging trails, that Coburn devoted much of his career to painting, in optimal condition. This job was a small part within a much larger capitalist enterprise that led to converting trees into commodities as efficiently and expediently as possible within a commercial/culture cycle that has been

[204] Donald Mackay, 113.

identified as the 'social life of things' by Arjun Appadurai. He notes how "it is quite clear that capitalism is itself an extremely complex cultural and historical formation, and in this formation commodities and their meaning have played a critical role."[205] Appadurai opposes "the view that things have no meanings apart from those that human transactions, attributions, and motivations endow them with," and argues rather that the meanings of the things themselves "are inscribed in their forms, their uses, their trajectories."[206] This photograph representing one of the teamsters actual and routine activities juxtaposes Coburn's idealised vision of their experience of the landscape. Additionally, as also apparent in figures 12 to 15, the three labourers posing in figure 20 underscore how regularly these teamsters did not, in fact, work in isolation as Coburn preferred to paint them. The artist's poetic tendency to transform actual labour into apparent leisure is further reinforced through such comparisons, and the extent to which his docile and pleasant representations of the landscape is complicit in this transformation becomes clearer. For example, the icicles dripping from the sprinkler sled in figure 20 suggest a coldness that is not conveyed through the painter's use of soft, warm colours and deep shadows projected by the sun's rays. Rather than appearing in harmony with nature and at ease in their environment the individual men positioned atop this industrially produced machine appear to stoically endure the freezing temperature, not to bask in it the way Coburn's generic and faceless teamsters appear to. In this photograph, the machine's metallic mass overwhelms the landscape and it appears ominously menacing within the natural environment. One man recalled how in March the teamsters were occasionally forced to hot - log in order to fulfill their annual quotas before the snow melted. He described how this meant getting up at "three a.m. with the moon shining bright and the stars snapping and we never got back until one A.M. We'd leave the harness right on them in the stable and we did that for a week."[207] It was not at all uncommon for lumberjacks to work fifteen hour days. Another

[205] Arjun Appadurai, The social life of things: Commodities in cultural perspective, 49.
[206] Appadurai, 5.
[207] Donald Mackay, 116.

labourer boasted that he had worked 57 years without having ever been fired from a job, and had often worked "seven days a week from six in the morning sometimes to nearly midnight." [208] As elsewhere, through various opportunistic responses to modernity's call for progress and prosperity, human labour contributed significantly to the gradual and systematic transformation of the Eastern Township's landscape.

The modern era's process of converting resources into commodities for trade in Canada has been compellingly documented through landscape representations that include paintings, photographs, drawings and prints which circulated in the form of various media for purposes that include for example, promoting, collecting, advertising, recruiting, and documenting. Each subsequent generation's labour contributed to altering the landscape that was forcibly made to adapt to shifting cultural priorities and values. It therefore becomes evident that Coburn's paintings and illustrations of Quebec's Eastern Townships' rural places and working people effaces such traces of labour from the landscape during an era in post confederate Canadian history that was subject to two world wars, depression, industrial innovations, the advent of mechanization, tremendous immigration, and an explosive transition from rural-agrarian to urban-industrial living. It is easy to forget "that in the first quarter of the  century the entire population of Canada, geographically the second largest country in the world, was roughly the same as that of greater London, the imperial capital."[209] World War I had a significant impact on the nation of Canada's economy: "between 1914 and 1918, industrial employment increased by more than a third, and between 1913 and 1920 the value of exports more than tripled."[210] The Dominion Textiles 1917 recruitment booklet is evidence of such sudden growth, as the company sought to employ 100 families in its Magog factory alone. Due in large part to industrialization, during the forty year period between 1891 and 1931, Quebec's population nearly doubled rising from 1.5 to 2.9 million people, and

[208] Donald Mackay, 113.
[209] Anderson, qtd. in Antimodernism, 97.
[210] Anderson, qtd. in Antimodernism, 97.

the proportion of urban dwellers in the province rose from 28 to 60%.[211] Coburn's artistic career peaked during the same four decades that were characterized by such growth and urban development. Although his native rural Quebec way of life was transforming before his eyes, the painter neglected to overtly address those changes in his work. Throughout the decades he continued to record on canvas a traditional and routine method of travelling through the landscape in winter during the very era that it was gradually being replaced by machines. By the 1940s, for example, bulldozers could cut roads deep into the forest, "enabling trucks to haul direct from stump to mill."[212] The teamsters whose job it had been to haul those logs from stump to mill, and who were painted by the artist throughout his career, were disappearing from the landscape before his eyes.

[211] R. Fortier (ed.), Villes industrielles planifiées, 17.
[212] Donald Mackay, 141.

## 5. Coburn's Illustrations of Lumberjacks and Locals

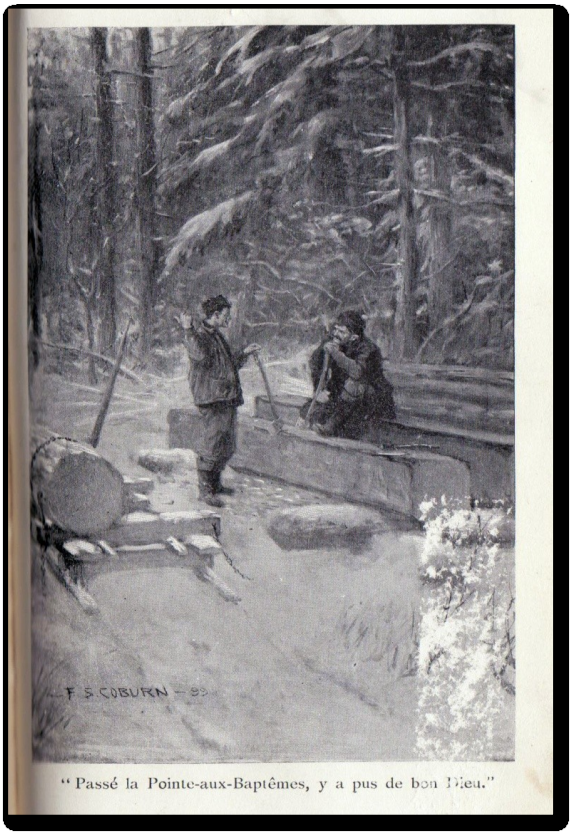


**Figure 21. Frederick Simpson Coburn, *Passé la Pointe-aux Baptêmes*, 1899, printed reproduction of oil painting, Louis Fréchette's La Noel Au Canada, p.233.**

According to Gerald Stevens, Coburn is "the leading Canadian illustrator of the early 1900s."[213] In addition to collaborating with William Henry Drummond and Louis Fréchette, Coburn also created illustrations for several other writers including Oliver Goldsmith, Anna Fuller, Washington Irving, Charles Dickens, Edgar Allan Poe, Alfred Lord Tennyson and Bayard Taylor, in addition to many images produced for newspaper and magazine articles and advertisements.[214] His illustrations were made using a diverse range of material that included oil paint, pen and ink, watercolour, sepia wash, pastel and charcoal on canvas, board, and paper. He produced more than 135 illustrations during his career as illustrator, 27 of which were for Drummond's *Habitant* and 15 of which were for Fréchette's *Christmas in French Canada*. It becomes clear through reading the letters exchanged by Coburn and Drummond, and Coburn and

[213] Stevens, 64.
[214] See Elizabeth Hamilton Kennell, 212-238.

Fréchette, that the painter's relationships with each one of these poets evolved from a professional one into one of friendship based on mutual values and shared interests which connected them intellectually. Their bond was further forged by their nostalgic, sentimental and romantic yearning for a type of existence that was more immediately engaged with the natural environment, as opposed to the era's spreading industrial and urban environments. Their collaborations were published during the few years immediately surrounding the turn of the  century. As discussed earlier in this section, a growing antimodern sentiment circulated at that time which was not founded on a full scale rejection of modern life, but rather an almost inevitable or necessary accommodation with it. Lynda Jessup writes that "the antimodern response constituted a great variety of personal and collective quests for innocence, for authenticity, and for simpler, safer premodern spaces within the broader borders of the modern world."[215] I contend that Coburn, Drummond and Fréchette associated these values and notions with the Habitants population and landscapes found in rural Quebec. Fréchette did so with sincerity, enthusiasm, humor and warmth, while Drummond's association was founded on parody and caricature as he sought to emulate a French Canadian's accent when speaking English. Coburn's perspective is made clear in the following excerpt from an eight page handwritten letter he wrote to Fréchette on January 12, 1900:

> [...]There are, as I said in my last, in these stories just those elements which appeal most strongly to my imagination, my sympathies and, above all, my heart. They deal with a people and a history that I have always determined to treat eventually in art as you have in literature, not with the same power I mean, but with the same motives. I have only been waiting until I had acquired that technical equipment that would serve me as a lever, and if I lose this excellent opportunity it will come again, I am sure, when the light is turned on Canadian history & the Habitant as a yet unexplored field of highways & byways. This time is not far off, if I can read the signs of the times aright. It only needs some one who has the key and is powerful enough to turn on that light and point the direction. I am positive you have it in your hands to do this and therefore my last word is - do it well.- Believe me, Yours faithfully F.S. Coburn[216]

[215] Jessup, Antimodernism, 6
[216] FS Coburn, qtd. in Kennell, 318.

Benedict Anderson describes how, as nationalism spread, many had concerns about "the asphyxiation of Québécois 'peasant originality' through [...] commercialization and standardization," noting that "the end of 'traditionality' in Quebec [implied] a real challenge to Anglophone Canadian hegemony."[217] These concerns shed light on the Anglophone population's apparent interest in publications like Fréchette's and Drummond's, in that they celebrated French Canada's traditions, rural life, countryside, and old 'habitant' lifestyle, as if it was a foreign culture. Works such as Drummond's *Habitant* and Fréchette's *Christmas in French Canada*, although unique and new to Canadian literature, were, as Janet Brooke emphasized, "motivated by an international trend in the arts that sought to preserve traditional values in the face of radical social change, urbanization, worldwide immigration and industrialization."[218] Significantly, in the following excerpt from the preface to his 1899 publication, Fréchette conveyed those very values and interests while informing his readers that:

> My objective was to do something to popularize, among exclusive English readers, this portion of the American soil called French Canada, with the characteristic features that she borrows from her sui generis climate, and especially from her people, whose language, manner, customs, traditions, and popular beliefs bear an exceptional stamp, and must thereby be invested with a peculiar interest in the surrounding populations. I have tried to convey some idea of the wild rigor of our winters, by putting, in turn, face to face with them, our valiant pioneers of the forest, our bold adventurers of the North - West, and our sturdy tamers of the floes, whose exploits of the past are gradually being forgotten in the presence of invading progress. I have endeavored to evoke some of the old legends, to bring back to life some picturesque types of yore, whose idiom, habits, costumes, and superstitious practices have long ago disappeared, or are disappearing rapidly.[219]

Although Fréchette does not once use the term Habitant throughout his extended four page preface, he does refer to 'picturesque types' that include 'settlers', 'farmers', and 'villagers'. He then concludes with a special thanks to Coburn for his "ability to interpret the different national Canadian types."[220] What is most relevant to this study of landscape is the prevalent, although understated, connection between

[217] Anderson, qtd. in Antimodern, 102.
[218] Brooke, 14.
[219] Fréchette, Christmas in French Canada, vii-viii.
[220] Fréchette, Christmas, x.

these people and the natural environment. One particular aspect becomes strikingly clear when considering Coburn's illustrations of 'picturesque types' in relation to his later picturesque landscape paintings of loggers, and that is how the emphasis shifts from the depiction of detailed individual traits of people in the illustrations, to the near generically painted, faceless teamsters of the paintings, who seemingly represent any man. In his canvases, the human presence is subordinate to the surrounding natural environment and the team of horses, and this serves to draw the viewer's attention to nature, while minimizing the person's role within the carefully framed and cultivated landscape.

At the turn of the  century drew near, Coburn grew increasingly intent on treating Canadian history as a subject. In a letter addressed to Fréchette on October 31, 1898, the artist expressed this interest:

> "La Légende d'un Peuple" I have read from cover to cover, some of the poems many times over. After reading it I am more determined than ever to devote myself to painting the early history of Canada. I shall guard that volume jealously for there is in it subject for many pictures- an ever ready theme of inspiration-I only wish I could express to you the delight & enthusiasm it has afforded me. [...] I have the honor to remain respectfully yours F.S. Coburn.[221]

Figure 21 shows a black and white oil painting Coburn created as the basis for an illustration to Fréchette's *Christmas in French Canada* publication. This playful representation is ironic due to how it pictures two lumberjacks engrossed in a discussion while supposedly at work - they are distracted to the point of forgetting about their job, which is to hew or square the logs in preparation for transport. The two men appear as casual, relaxed and comfortable as they might be if they were sitting in a local pub somewhere exchanging stories, rather than situated in a snow covered forest near some lumber camp. The title suggests that the two men are discussing the details of a traditional French Canadian legend relating to the Chasse - galerie. Because the lumberjacks often spent Christmas in the lumber camps far from home, they concocted stories about "magical" canoe rides that could get them home in time for Christmas, and back again to camp before work resumed the next morning. Typically, these men left

[221] PO98/002.03/001, letter from FS Coburn to Fréchette Oct 31, 1898.

their farms in the fall, worked at the camps throughout the winter, and only returned home in the spring in order to cultivate their allotted land. Lumberjack lore in Quebec was based on French Canadian traditions and superstitions that were passed on for several generations. In figure 21 we note how the two men are situated in the very centre of this image, placing emphasis on their exchange rather than on the landscape. Their relationship to this landscape is in a labour context, although they are represented during a moment of rest, the engrossing tale being told by the gesturing man on the left, while the other seated figure on the right listens attentively, if not skeptically.

**Figure 22. Frederick Simpson Coburn, *Lumber Camp Scene*, 1900, oil on canvas, 58 x 88.2 cm. MNBAQ.**

*Lumbercamp Scene* (fig. 22) is a polychrome oil painting that was completed by Coburn in 1900 as an illustration for Fréchette's intended publication entitled *The Iron Skeleton*. The painting is currently part of the MNBAQ's permanent collection. The work depicts lumber camp labourers assembled in front of a cabin looking on as two men engage in a discussion. The painter brings to this canvas a composite array of figures that are strikingly similar to those he had studied and illustrated for Drummond's and

Fréchette's earlier publications. His emphasis, as with figure 21, is again placed on the characters and figures that occupy this autumn logging camp landscape. The space represented in this painting is very much a social space in contrast to the ones he creates for his solitary teamsters travelling along snow covered trails in winter with undulating hills, forests and mountains in the background. Within this group of men one recognizes the habitant and voyageur figures he had studied so closely for his other Quebec illustrations. Those men represented the nation's lumberjacks that were featured in the writers' publications, as they both, each in their own way, documented the labourers' legends, songs, folklore, values, and beliefs. Here, Coburn genuinely attempted to convey each one of the figures individually – having often sketched the local men in the Eastern Townships. For example, the elderly looking white haired and bearded man standing in the group (to the right of the man bending over to pick up his hat) bears a striking resemblance to the man who appears in figure 22 to represent Drummond's *Philorum* character. Each figure in the painting is individualized through distinct physical attributes and varied items of clothing, yet the viewer senses, through the figures' expressions and body language, that they are to varying degrees, rallying around the largest figure with outstretched hands who occupies the right foreground. This key figure is earnestly communicating with the stern looking darkly dressed figure facing the viewer. He bears a striking resemblance to Coburn's illustration of "the Hunter" on page 60 of Drummond's *Johnnie Courteau* book published in 1901. The large man with his back to the viewer has a small corked bottle neatly tucked away in his back pocket. Although alcohol was strongly discouraged if not prohibited in the camps, Mackay notes that "the bolder bootleggers even managed to get into the camps where liquor had been more or less banned since the mid-1800s. The ban had been imposed [...] on the grounds that a crowded bunkhouse or a rumbling load of logs was no place for drunks."[222] In Quebec, the lumberjacks had a preference for gin, however they often resorted to making "*chien* from almost anything lying around: oats, potato peelings, raisins, prunes, molasses, and they matured it for

[222] Donald MacKay, 363.

eight days in an old salt pork barrel behind the stove. Diluted with cheap wine it became *caribou*."[223] Fréchette introduced his character named Tom Cariboo to his readers in *Christmas in French Canada*. In his story Tom Cariboo was described to the lumberjacks by another popular lumber camp character named Fiddler Joe or Joe Violon.

Donald Mackay notes how "there was little to read in a pine camp and few who knew how in the old days and a good story teller was almost as welcome as a good cook."[224] In Quebec, those storytellers were referred to as *conteurs des contes*, famous for how they "spun yarns of the *voyageurs*, of the *bûcheron*'s hero Joe Montferrand, and of the *loup-garou*, the werewolf who travelled hundreds of miles in one night through the great north woods," all agreed, however, that "the liveliest storyteller of all was Joseph Lemieux, known as 'Joe Violon'."[225] It was through the voice of this legendary figure, Joe Violon, that Fréchette humorously presented Tom Cariboo to his readers as follows:

> As for this fellow, boys, he was not exactly what may be called a drunkard: when he happened to come face to face with a demijohn, or when his lips met those of flask or bottle, he was no longer a man, he was a funnel. He came somewhere back from Three Rivers. His real name was Thomas Baribeau; but as our foreman who was Irish, had always some difficulty over this French name, we had nicknamed him "TOM CARIBOO."[226]

An anonymous newspaper article, which appeared in Montreal's *La Patrie* on April 27 1901, reported that *Scène de Chantier* (fig. 22) illustrated an encounter between Joe Violon, the tall figure in partial profile in the foreground with outstretched hands, and the darkly dressed camp foreman listening intently to yet another one of Joe's ludicrous stories. The other lumberjacks gathered around for the pure pleasure of listening to Joe retell the incredulous story.

[223] Donald MacKay, 263-4.
[224] Donald MacKay, 33.
[225] Donald MacKay, 243.
[226] Fréchette, Christmas, 205.


**Figure 23. Frederick Simpson Coburn, *Philorum*, 1898, frontispiece print, Phil-O-Rum's Canoe and Madeleine Verchères by William Henry Drummond.**

Phil-O-Rum's Canoe
(Philorum to his canoe) O Ma ole canoe, wat's matter wit' you, an' w'y was you be so slow?
Don't I work hard enough on de paddle, an'
still you don't seem to go-
No win' at all on de fronte side, an' current
she don't be strong,
Den w'y are you lak' lazy feller, too sleepy for move along? (1)
(Canoe to Philorum) Dat's way, Phil-o-rum, rheumateez she
come, wit' pain ronnin' troo' ma sie,
Wan leetle hole her, 'noder beeg wan dere,
dat not'ing can never hide,
Don't do any good feex me up agen, no matter
how muche you try,
For w'en we come ole an' our work sh's done, bote man an' canoe mus' die. (4)

Even though Coburn spent several years studying abroad, he often returned home to Melbourne during the summer months. In one particular situation relating to a live model for one of his illustrations, Coburn described his progress to Drummond regarding his sketches for the Philorum

character in *Phil-O-Rum's Canoe and Madeleine Verchères*, published by G.P. Putnam's Sons in 1898. (Fig. 23):

> My dear Dr. Drummond. I have just got back from Ste. George de Windsor whether I was hunting up "Philorum". He was sick in bed but got up & dressed & posed when I told him 25 000 people were clamoring for his picture. I've been working like the Devil and although none of the drawings are positively completed still if necessary I could let you have three next week finished."[227]

When reading Drummond's accompanying verse beneath Coburn's illustration, it is apparent that Drummond's story is a nostalgic exchange between the old man and his canoe, one that suggests better, simpler and easier earlier days, thereby further reinforcing the poet and artist's mutual antimodern sentiments as the canoe and old man fondly reminisce about the past. Drummond's verse, however, conveys Philorum as a pathetic and ignorant old man, an imagined perception that contrasts with Coburn's figure who is represented as a serene, contemplative, and well travelled independent old man who has experienced many seasons throughout his lifetime, sitting alone with his canoe by moonlight. Just three months later, Fred's father wrote to Drummond in order to give him an update regarding the model's health:

> Poor old Philorum was buried here on the 3rd November. They had to send him to the R. C. Hospital in Sherbooke just two weeks after Fred got him for his last sitting. He was very feeble then & it took Fred 2 days to get the painting done. He could only sit up for a few minutes at a time. Fred heard he was ill so he started at once & had to drive 12 miles back of Windsor Mills & he feared very much that the old fellow would not sit outside long enough, but a big package of tobacco had a stimulating effect - & they managed it."[228]

In 1900, the same year that *Lumber Camp Scene* was painted, twenty of Coburn's paintings for Drummond's *The Habitant* were exhibited at the Art Association of Montreal, and later sent to Sherbrooke for further exhibition. In July of that same year, Coburn also had works on exhibit at his

[227] Etrc, PO98/002.02/002, letter written by FS Coburn to WH Drummond, Sept 8, 1898.
[228] Etrc, PO98/002.02/002, letter from Newlands Coburn, Fred's father to WH Drummond Dec 10, 1898.

school in Antwerp.[229] He, like Henri Julien and William Brymner, was one of Quebec's well respected "black & white artists."[230] In as much as Coburn recognized Cullen as his greatest influence as a painter, he also expressed a deep admiration for Julien's artistic ability which he conveyed to Fréchette on February 12, 1900 as follows:

> There are, for instance other & greater elements in illustration than the faithful rendering of the actual circumstances of an event or the actual topography of a landscape. This is nothing without that inner form, the spirit which differentiates between mere drawings & that deeper subjective mood which characterizes all really great work. Now how few possess this & how varying are the attempts to realize it!.[231] I know of but one man in Canada who possesses this "inner" insight, this subjective spirit, coupled at the same time with an intimate knowledge of the characters & theatre of this book & that is M. Henri Julien. He has grace, sound judgement & technical ability of a very high order.[232]

[229] The Frederick Simpson Coburn Collection, 80.
[230] Lawrence Sabbath. Art. page c-5. The Gazette, Montreal, Saturday, September 13, 1986.
[231] Etrc, PO98/002.02/002, letter written by FS Coburn to WH Drummond, Sept 8, 1898.
[232] Coburn qtd. in Kennell, 315.

## 6. Four Solitudes: Antimodernism, Modernism, Artist, and Patron

**Figure 24. Frederick Simpson Coburn, *The Logging Trail, Eastern Townships*, 1937, oil on canvas, 44.5 x 55.9 cm, Alan Klinkhoff Gallery, <http://www.klinkhoff.ca/gwk/home/gwkexhbrowse.asp?WID=1006&artist=31&lrg=y>.**

**Figure 25. Anonymous, untitled, undated, photograph, 9 x 15 cm, Eastern Townships Research. This photo was kept in a notebook by Frederick Simpson Coburn in his studio.**

Although individual, identifiable, local working people were introduced into the illustrations Coburn created as a young man, his practice as a landscape painter eventually shifted his attention towards nature, and away from such close attention to the people. Once he began applying Cullen's recommendation of incorporating more color into his practice, he soon favoured a basic color palette that included: cerulean blue, viridian green, cobalt blue, burnt sienna, light red, rose madder, cadmium yellow, french ultramine blue, transparent golden ochre, flake and/or zinc white.[233] His early work as a painter was characterized by a thick impasto that was gradually refined over the years into a technique that consisted of "a lay-in allowed to dry thoroughly, a thinner secondary painting and a final "highlighting" kept to a minimum- and a complete avoidance of all types of mediums."[234] Stevens identified four distinct and overlapping periods that have categorized Coburn's lifetime career as an artist: (i) the formative period (1895-1915) during which Coburn transitioned from a professional illustrator to an emergent painter, (ii) the development period (1913-1925) when the artist's greatest attention was "given to depicting spring and summer in the Eastern Townships. Although by 1923 a number of winter scenes had been painted and eagerly acquired by collectors,"[235] (iii) the full recognition period as a Canadian painter (1923-1935) at which time "the theme of these paintings was horses and sleighs and the Canadian winter. Horses and sleighs loaded with logs plodding along country roads [...] And carioles and pungs and sleighs, manufactured by carriage makers or "home-made" by the habitant dashing about the Canadian countryside."[236] It has been remarked that the closing decades (1930-1953), or fourth and final period, developed into a "a documentary type of painting [...] The titles of paintings produced during this time suggest the trend: *Christmas Morning, Politics, Returning from Mass, The Old Pierce Homestead, The Ice Cutters, The Country Store*, etc."[237] It is questionable whether

[233] Stevens, 68.
[234] Stevens, 18.
[235] Stevens, 20.
[236] Stevens, 21-2.
[237] Stevens, 22.

these are indeed documentary however, in light of how they omitted all signs of the region's busy towns, tourists, architecture, railways, industries, and businesses such as those promoted in the Dominion Textiles' 1917 recruitment booklet, for example, discussed in chapter 4 (fig. 17).

**Figure 26. Anonymous, untitled, undated, photograph, 8 x 14 cm, Eastern Townships Research. This photo was kept in a notebook by Frederick Simpson Coburn in his studio.**

**Figure 27. Frederick Simpson Coburn, *The Last Load*, 1916, colour etching and aquatint on paper, 33 x 57 cm. Sherbrooke Museum of Fine Arts.**

In his treatment of landscapes throughout these four periods one feature remained consistent. Coburn always offered viewers some type of visual cue or a clear entrance/exit point from which to enter or leave the landscape; this signature feature is particularly noticeable in figures 10, 24, and 29. Stevens emphasizes how Coburn's compositions always "provided some such avenue of "escape"; some handling of light or terrain which subtly leads the eye and mind of the viewer outward, not only from the room in which a painting hangs but also from the painting itself."[238] As a painter, he rarely resisted the lure of a trail bend which gradually curved throughout tall clusters of pines and cedars; trails that were travelled on by muscular and primed pairs of contrasting horses set within expansive and picturesque sceneries of undulating hills, often occupied by a lone figure within the landscape, riding along the ice trail beneath a broad sky of rolling, dense clouds that often occupied more than half of the picture plane. The diminishing curves create what Stevens has referred to as a "whiplash" vanishing point that link the escape points on the canvas, while enhancing the composition's dynamism, fluidity, and sense of rhythm that Coburn personally associated to dance. Figure 24, Coburn's *The Logging Trail Eastern Townships* (1937), reinforces Stevens' description of this whiplash curvilinear effect as viewers can virtually enter into the canvas' foreground and then wind their way around the curves, through the snow, skirting the dense field of frozen vegetation, before tracing their path around the mountain base all the way to the back of the snow covered and centered mountain peak situated beneath a broad and open sky. The artist's compositions, regardless of the subject, were influenced by his preference for lines that formed fluid, organic curves in contrast to more rigidly angular or rectilinear angles. The energy and movement that subsequently radiate from Coburn's canvases are enhanced by the thick colours he applied with spontaneous bursts of pigment and rapid unblended brushstrokes. His trademark "whiplash" curves are invigorating for the viewer as they impose a sense of movement that requires the eye to wander through the landscape along the winding trail. The painter's formal rapid-fire treatment

[238] Stevens, 36.

of paint and choice of pigments are modern and progressive, although his preferred subject and method of representing labourers in a leisurely context was by then a long established western landscape tradition. The clear points of escape on the horizon line and in the foreground are both literal and figurative, as the viewer is encouraged to enter the frame and travel through the pleasantly crisp, picturesque environment where humans exist in an ideal harmony with nature. While Coburn's loggers with their teams of horses are at ease within their environment as they casually travel through the landscape, a distinct sense of repetition is also reinforced through the well trodden paths that were beaten into the ground by countless sleighs and hooves, as the loggers routinely travelled along the established networks of lumber trails, or ice roads, loaded down with logs. Such was the cycle for teamsters from December until March - one that was repeated throughout the day, every day - an ordinary routine that began before dawn and ended after dusk.

Coburn was clearly inspired by the actual teamsters he saw from his studio window in Upper Melbourne travelling along the ice roads to the region's nearby log depots, railways and sawmills.[239] Besides regularly sketching his surroundings, he also took or kept photographic records in order to document various poses, compositions, and scenes that he later incorporated into his paintings. (Figs.25,26, 33) I discovered these archival photos amidst some of Coburn's personal documents now kept at the Eastern Townships Research Centre. When examining the landscape photograph in figure 25 in relation to Coburn's painting *The Logging Trail, Eastern Townships* (fig. 24), the influence the region's natural topography had on his paintings is evident. We can see gently fading hills in the backgrounds of both photo and painting, in addition to the placement of the trails in relation to the trees in each composition. The ratio of sky to land in both is also consistent at approximately 50/50, as is the relative evenness of each landscape's horizon line. The wooden fence posts lining the curving trail is present in each representation. This photograph undoubtedly served Coburn well as a reference while he painted

[239] Saumier, The Frederick Simpson Coburn Collection, 40.

these familiar landscapes in his studios in Melbourne or Montreal. While such subjects and considerations reflected his interest in preserving traditional values, Coburn's painterly treatment of them was nonetheless modern, which appealed to his post war Montreal patrons that were willing to embrace vigorous new techniques and bold bright colours, while clinging closely to the familiarity of traditional and conservative values, respectable themes and regional subjects. If the subject of Coburn's paintings is "Canada", as past art historians, critics, and the artist himself have stated, I argue that it is not merely the charm of the sunny bright winter scenery that makes them so, but rather it is their theme of the logging industry, in addition to the impact the lumberjacks' labour has had on shaping the nation's landscape, that were actually very much a part of Canada's early industrial history.

Coburn's usually bright, cheerful and rhythmic canvases contrast considerably with his 1916 etching entitled *The Last Load* (fig. 27). The artist informed Stevens that the etching was inspired by his beloved, generative painting which he referred to as "the great - grand - daddy" of all his paintings, a work that he consistently refused to sell and kept faithfully on display in his home studio.[240] It is instructive to compare that print with a black-and-white photograph he kept of a similar topic (fig. 26). The similarities are striking on several levels: we can see the same placement of the lighter horse on the logger's left in each representation, and the teamster's posture that has his body turning away from the viewer as he sits atop an almost identical pair of snow covered logs. The details of the horses' straps and harnesses, in addition to the ropes binding the logs are remarkably similar, as are the sleds' skies. The flatness of the trails and the starkness of the surrounding environments echo one another, and in each representation the horizon line is higher on the left then gradually descends as it shifts to the right. There are, however, some important differences between this photograph and painting. For instance, the trio (man and horses) in the *Last Load* (fig. 27), appear tired and old in contrast to the upright man and vigorous horses pictured in the photograph. Additionally, Coburn replicates the dark horse's bent

[240] Stevens, 42.

right leg seen in the photograph, although in the etching it is used to reinforce a sense of weariness in contrast to the dynamic effect it has in the photograph. The coloured print (fig. 27) features a weary teamster sitting sideways, curled forward in a gesture that suggests resignation, or perhaps to protectively shield himself from the cold by turning his back to the wind. The contrasting colored pair of horses pull the logs and labourer along, heads hanging low as they strain forward beneath a darkening sky. These horses' hooves barely leave the ground. The trio appear to lack the strength or energy to keep their heads up during this journey, their last load. This image reads as an antimodern allegory that anticipated impending change: man and horse soon to be replaced by machine, on the very eve of industrial progress, their last load a nostalgic symbol of a fading era. The team is unhurried to complete its journey, unable to keep pace with the new century's rapidly changing environment. As the sun sets beyond them, they ease into twilight as Coburn anticipated the imminence of the teamsters' inevitable last load. The artist's etching, *The Last Load,* suggests that in 1916 Coburn foresaw this inevitability that would gradually transform the teamster's livelihood, as the lumber industry shifted from relying on traditional manual labour and horsepower to technologically innovative industrial machinery.

By the time WWI had been declared, Coburn had returned home to Quebec where he alternated between his home studios in Montreal and Melbourne. During this period he was increasingly immersed in, and preoccupied with, Canadian themes. He had emphasized this point in a letter addressed to Mrs. Drummond, c.1915: "I am busy now on half a day on winter things, all essentially Canadian & dealing with logging and life in the woods."[241] One photograph shows the artist working outside, sitting directly in the spring snow surrounded by maple trees, in order to observe firsthand the natural light effects on snow. (Fig. 28) In another undated letter written by Coburn during the First World War, again to Mrs. Drummond, the artist conveyed the extent of his earnestness and motivation towards the study of natural light effects on snow:

[241] Coburn qtd. in Kennel, 280. Date of letter unknown but likely written during WWI as in the next paragraph he added: I have "dropped" worrying about the war & the fate of my friends in Belgium.

I broke the sabbath yesterday by going out to the woods & painted two snow effects (the first time in my life I have painted on a Sunday). The day was so beautiful & the snow effects so unusual that I knew it was a question of getting a document then or perhaps never.[242]


**Figure 28. Anonymous, *F S Coburn working in a sugar bush*, undated, Eastern Townships Research Centre Coburn collection.**

Breaking Sabbath according to Christian tradition signifies working on a Sunday, the so-called Lord's day, a designated day of rest. From Coburn's perspective painting was his life's work, and he was earnestly committed to excelling at his job. In the photograph shown in figure 28, the painter becomes the labouring subject within the landscape, as he works to document information that is pertinent to his artistic practice. One can notice the metal buckets hanging on the trees within this same environment, signalling that this is a working agricultural landscape; someone was charged with placing each bucket on the Maple trees- a first step in a systematic process of converting the tree's sap into a wide range of maple sugar products. There is a certain sense of irony and déjà-vu in seeing the solitary figure working

[242] ETRC P098/002.02/003, Mrs. W.H. Drummond (1914-1918)

amidst a forest of trees, unconcerned with being observed at his work, but at the same time detached from other forms of labour. The artist wields a specialized implement for his task - a wooden handled brush directed by his hand. On another occasion, Coburn wrote about actually working in a hayfield near his home and studio, commenting that "I am so sore to-day that I can hardly walk. Really a hay fork is a heavier thing to wield all day than a paint brush."[243]This anecdote makes apparent Coburn's personal knowledge and awareness of his rural neighbors' physically strenuous labour, and yet no traces of that exerting type of work make their way onto his canvases. The painter is intent on purifying the landscape of signs that suggest hardship, industry, or strenuous physical labour-all of which are ordinary signs of everyday life in the Eastern Townships.

**Figure 29. Frederic Simpson Coburn, *The Edge of the Wood,* 1928, oil on canvas, 38 x 47 cm, liveauctioneers, <https://new.liveauctioneers.com/item/2856526_important-fs-coburn-canadian-painting>.**

[243] Coburn, qtd. in Kennell, 269.

In Hugh MacLennan's novel *Two Solitudes,* the writer addressed Quebec's French-English cultural dynamic, with emphasis on the Catholic Church and the prosperous merchant class' socio-political power and influence. The story unfolds in Montreal and its rural surroundings from 1917 to 1939. Although published in 1945, the author refers to the very landscapes and people Coburn and his peers were preoccupied with studying and painting since the turn - of - the - century. Significantly, MacLennan inserted Coburn's signature style of landscape painting, which was well respected and admired throughout Montreal's art scene and abroad by the mid-40s, into his work of fiction. At one point in the story that stretched from Montreal to rural Chambly to Lake Memphremagog between World Wars, the author describes how one of his main characters, Janet, "had a recurrent dream in which she entered General Methuen's library in the big house on the side of Mount Royal and saw her father-in-law sitting very straight in his leather armchair next to the red draperies under the gilt-framed landscape in which a French-Canadian farmer drove a white horse and black horse through the snow."[244] In the story, General Methuen's fictitious character represented the very heart of Anglophone power in Montreal, and through MacLennan's description and details, it is easy for the reader to think of Methuen as Montreal's influential Golden Square Mile merchant Sir Hugh Allan, ensconced in his library at Ravenscrag, the most commanding estate and mansion on the mountain. Figure 29 shows one of Coburn's paintings that matches MacLennan's precise description of the one hanging in the general's library. It further reinforces Coburn's affinity for pairing a white horse with a dark one in his paintings, as he apparently delighted in the contrast that he found ultimately yielded a greater pictorial balance than could be achieved by teaming horses of similar tones. This popular affinity is documented in a letter written by Maurice Cullen to his stepson Robert Pilot in 1922: "no luck at the spring show didn't sell a thing. Coburn was the only one. He sold two pairs of horses, one pair per picture, one black & white per

[244] Hugh MacLennan, Two Solitudes, 169.

pair."[245] Cullen's message underscores how sought-after Coburn's teams of contrasting colored horses were by collectors during the 1920s. When examining figure 29, we are reminded of how, as viewers, the point of entry into this Coburn landscape collides with the logger's designated exit, allowing us to temporarily escape from our actual environment into a tranquil and pleasant forested space. It is unsurprising that MacLennan chose Coburn's signature style landscape to convey to his readers how a prestigious Mount-Royal mansion's library would appear, given their popularity amongst Montreal's art patrons during that era. In 1917 the artist had also sold two such paintings at the AAM exhibit: *The Lonely Road*, and *Logging-The Creek Road*.[246] In *Recollections of a Montreal Art Dealer*, Watson recalled how Coburn "favoured the Eastern Townships near Melbourne, where he was born, and more than half his pictures are winter logging scenes painted entirely in his studio. He began painting such pictures about 1910. They became so popular that someone said, 'it looks as if every house should have a piano and a Coburn'."[247] Figure 30 is a black and white photograph of the Norton family's sitting room in their summer residence at Coaticook, in the Eastern Townships, details of which were introduced earlier in this section and shown in figures 1 and 2. The large Coburn panoramic painting of a team of black and white horses returning home at night is visible above the mantel of the fireplace, along with a baby grand piano nestled between a pair of chairs by the windows in the background. The unframed painting, shown in color in figure 31, appears strikingly incongruous in the luxuriously appointed room amidst Norton's delicate crystal and porcelain vase collections, book filled glass cabinet, bouquets of flowers, fine tapestry furnishings and elaborately patterned rug, and the ornately carved hardwood mouldings and furniture. The painting's humble iconography and emphasis on wide open space are incompatible with the modern lighting and crowded, deliberately arranged commodities, many of which are wooden products that were made from similar logs to the ones the teamster in the painted landscape just

[245] Antoniou Sylvia, Maurice Cullen: 1866-1934, 46.
[246] Eastern Townships Research Center (ETRC), Frederick Simpson Coburn Fond, PO98/002.01.01.
[247] Watson, 62.

finished transporting throughout the day before "returning home by moonlight." Coburn had previously treated this theme thirty years earlier in 1900 as an illustration for *Curé Calumet*, the frontispiece for Drummond's 1901 publication *Johnnie Courteau*. When comparing the colorful moonlit painting (fig. 31) to the black and white photograph in figure 32, we again see how closely Coburn worked with live models or photographs of them as references for his artwork. In the painting, the figure's posture, raised arm and crossed legs are precisely the same as the man's who is posing in the photograph. The landscape, full moon, and nearby warm and inviting rustic cabin are however, romantic tropes that convey a tranquil, harmonious, picturesque and antimodern natural environment that is far removed from the modern trappings that surround the painting in the Norton's family room.

**Figure 30. George Nakash, *Sitting Room Norton's Coaticook Residence*, 1942, photograph, courtesy of Le Musée Beaulne.**

**Figure 31. Frederick Simpson Coburn, *Returning Home by Moonlight*, 1930, oil on canvas, 66 x 170.8 cm, La Galerie Walter Klinkhoff. <http://fscoburn.com/pictures_f/pic21.html>.**

**Figure 32. Anonymous, untitled, undated, photograph, 12 x 15.5 cm, Eastern Townships Research. This photo was kept in a notebook by Frederick Simpson Coburn in his studio.**

## SECTION II. Places, People and Postcards of the Eastern Townships, Quebec

### 7. Visual & Material Culture Paradigms and Postcards


**Figure 33. (L)Frederick Simpson Coburn, *Sunlight and Shadow in the Woods,* 1920, oil on canvas, 71.1 x 99 cm, <http://www.klinkhoff.com/office/images/frederick-simpson-coburn-4413.jpg.ashx?maxwidth=800&maxheight=600>.**
**Figure 34. (R) M.J. Palmer publisher, *Old Wooden Bridge, Richmond, Que.*, c. 1905, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

The previous section analyzed how F. S. Coburn's landscape paintings presented an idealized antimodern image of the Eastern Townships during the first half of the 20th-century. His, what I term, "winteresque snowscapes" featuring the region's loggers were presented as beautiful, picturesque, peaceful, and harmonious environments that responded to a "romantic notion of nature, which placed emphasis on solitude, privacy, and an intimate, semi-spiritual relationship."[248] Such scenery was necessarily uncontaminated by the modern era's encroachment on the land which was manifest through spreading urbanization, expansive mills, industrial manufactories, and the spreading web of steel rails inserted into the landscape. The success of these types of undertakings relied principally on the territory's diverse array of natural resources including waterways, forests and mines. These industries also capitalized on human resources, which is to say that a growing number of people were compelled, for diverse reasons, to exchange their labour for wages. The popularity of Coburn's picturesque landscapes during his career attests to his patrons' inherited aesthetic interests and values which migrated along with their ancestors to Canada from Europe throughout the previous centuries. John

[248] Jessup, The Group of Seven and the Tourist Landscape, 147.

Crowley explains how "in Canada, as elsewhere in the empire, representations of picturesque [...] scenes in British colonies mitigated the forthrightness of their conquest and/or military rule [...] the familiar picturesque style of these imperial landscapes diverted attention from the controversies surrounding them."[249] This earlier tradition for turning to the picturesque to "divert attention from controversies" during the colonial era also suited the ambitions of modern captains of industry and art patrons who turned to such landscape paintings, as either a means of diversion or escape from controversies that emerged from exploitative capitalist initiatives in the name of progress. For instance, in addition to romanticizing the loggers' actual experience of dangerous labour and harsh living conditions while separated from their families for months at a time, picturesque views of the Townships also omitted all traces of the region's growing number of mills and factories that employed entire families, including women, men and children, according to the Slater system[250] - a system that was conceived to recruit "unskilled" rural populations into expanding urban centres for the purpose of fulfilling the physically demanding and repetitive labour required to operate industrial machinery.

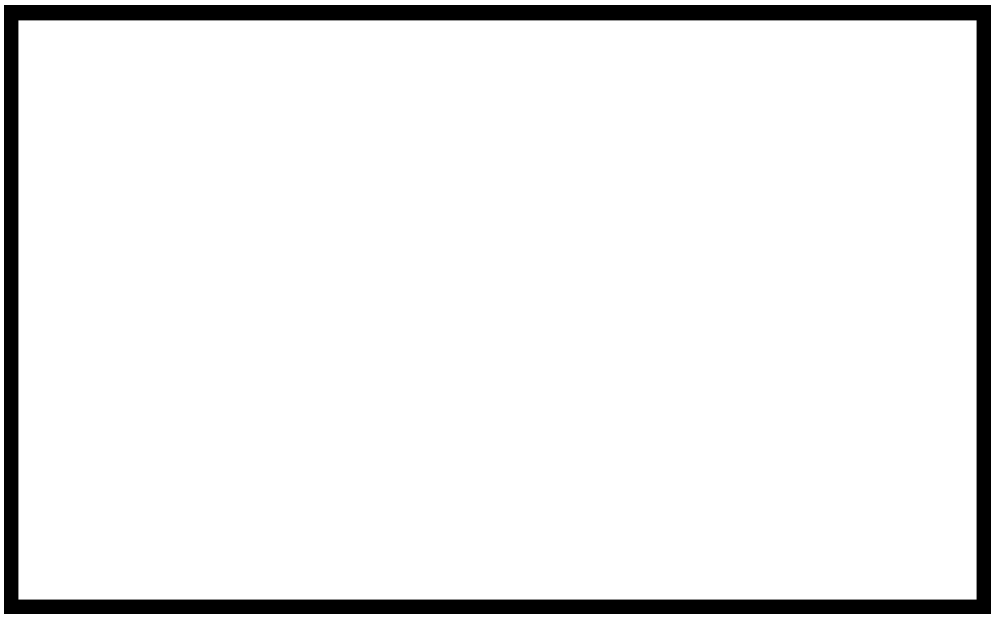

**Figure 35. Anonymous, *Richmond station*, 1905, photo-mechanical print postcard. BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

[249] John Crowley, 'Taken on the Spot', 28.
[250] Cuthbert Brandt, 101.

In contrast to Coburn's idealized and culturally homogenous landscape imagery, the photographic postcards of this same region that circulated during the artist's lifetime offer a more complex representation of natural environments, urban environments, industrial workers, women, children, and various classes. The postcards present a richly diverse socio-cultural mix of interests and activities that unquestionably contributed to transforming the region's landscape. Where Coburn's paintings were rhythmic, colorful, idealized landscapes of loggers in harmony with nature (fig. 33), postcards often show an alternate, mundane, congested, or somewhat darker side to the landscape (fig. 34). As previously mentioned in section I, Coburn was born and raised in Melbourne, which was adjacent to Richmond, and he eventually died at home a short distance down the road from the house in which he was born. While the scenes he painted were largely inspired by the region's surrounding forests (fig. 33), he would have had to regularly cross Richmond's *Old Wooden Bridge*, as seen in this early postcard (fig. 34), during his ordinary travels to and from home. Melbourne and Richmond are separated by the St. Francis River; other than by train, the covered bridge was Melbourne's quickest land-link to the rest of the Eastern Townships and beyond. The massive build-up of felled and split logs shown in this postcard next to that bridge indicates that there was a sawmill in close proximity, and Coburn would have necessarily encountered the logging industry's huge and sustained accumulation of logs, along with the actual human resources needed to process that lumber, as all of this was clearly and conspicuously present in the region's towns throughout the artist's lifetime. Figures 35 and 36 feature picture postcards of Richmond in 1905 and 1906 that circulated when Coburn was 34 and 35 years old. During that time Richmond was a key railway junction and had been since 1855 when the Grand Trunk Railway opened a line from Richmond, connecting Montreal to Quebec City. By the 1860s Richmond had developed into an important centre and remained so until the 1930s when railways began losing their socio-economic importance due to the combined influence of the automobile and the Depression. Coburn was personally aware of the region's culturally-complex landscape when painting his

snowscapes decades after the postcards were printed and mailed, yet, as noted earlier, he deliberately did not incorporate such signs of modern transportation, urban living or industry into any of his canvases. Significantly, his generically painted and faceless loggers belied the individual characteristics and qualities he had so compellingly conveyed through his illustrations of Townshippers for Drummond and Fréchette's publications. He knew his neighbors well, having used some of them as studies or models in his artworks, yet his vision of the Townships' landscape as an artist was of a forested territory surrounded by rolling hills and vast horizons characterized by the region's indigenous trees. The first photographic postcards to show the same region that Coburn was painting, however, convey a very different sort of landscape and communicate a range of messages that are rather different from the antimodern, masculine ones that the artist created through paint. In Coburn's representations of loggers, the teamsters appear relaxed and at ease, some perhaps even tired, although they all quietly plod along the logging trail in solitude. Pictured on the postcards in figures 35 and 36, in contrast, both women and men are crowded together in urban settings, as a result of train schedules in one, and unexpectedly confined by a flash flood in the other- in each instance these peopled scenes represent temporary communities formed by independent and random circumstances based on commuting in one, and extreme weather in the other. What is evident with such postcards is that the modern era brought people together more regularly and from further afar, both physically and communicatively, as technology contributed to altering perceptions of distance and time. This was an era that was characterized by unprecedented speed, tremendous technological innovation, enhanced mobility, and heightened gender and class interaction in public spaces. As linguistics professor Julia Gillen has noted, "the early postcard represented a new epistolary space, one which suited the turn of the 19$^{th\text{-}century}$ into the  with its greater than ever social and physical mobility [...] These cheap and attractive objects seemed appropriate to a newly mobile age, in which people were moving about far more quickly, easily

and frequently than before."[251] Postcards provide convincing cultural evidence of technology's significance in terms of modern practices of communicating, whether pictorially or textually. This section of the thesis thus examines postcards of the Eastern Townships that circulated between c.1900 and the 1930s, and focuses on technical, economic, cultural and aesthetic aspects of these visual artifacts. As will be seen, these postcards re-position landscape representation relative to prevalent modern interests and priorities during the early  century.

**Figure 36. M.J. Palmer publisher, *Richmond, Que. under water, Jan 24, 06*, 1906, photo-mechanical print postcard. BAnQ, Magella Bureau fonds.**

Going beyond a postcard's specific image, this section also apprehends the postcard as a material object that often conveys any combination of the following marks and information: stamp and postmark, location, destination, name of recipient, name of sender, type of image, identification of technology used, caption, message, name and location of photographer, country of origin, editor, and/or publisher. As noted in one recent study "each of these features uncovers a certain aspect of

[251] Julia Gillen, Writing Edwardian postcards, 489-490.

production, movement, imaginaries and communication of postcards. These elements are further connected to various social practices and systems."[252] Jordana Mendelson and David Prochaska, editors of a recent book on postcards, argue that it is precisely this "rich contextual description within which postcards gain their meaning."[253] This section thus examines the multiple cultural levels and technological ways that "the postcard emerges as a mediator of modernity."[254] As a meaningful, playful, informative, or otherwise communicative method called upon to transfer experience and perceptions from one person to another, the picture postcard became an internationally preferred medium of exchange throughout the  century's early decades. During the first decade of the  century German issued cards dominated most postcard markets, and one scholar described how during this era "hundreds of companies in Germany were producing billions of cards each year."[255] Although this great number of postcards were printed in Germany, many of them were ordered by retailers and distributors from around the world, and were often based on photographs taken by regional or local photographers. An example of this is shown in figure 63, a postcard that features Richmond's steel bridge which was photographed by "Pinsonneault Frères" who had a photography studio located on Strathcona Square in Sherbrooke during the early decades of the 20th-century. Their large, three story red brick building featured an ornate panel placed near the roof advertising "Illustrated Postal Cards". The extent of the postcard's omnipresence and popularity during this era underscores the modern world's fascination with "the power and ubiquity of media technologies."[256] The postcard's highly accessible multimodality, specifically in terms of its affordability, availability, and portability, was enabled by technological advances in photography, printing, and transportation that, in hindsight, can be understood as the forerunner to today's contemporary "media-rich environment, in which digital technologies are

[252] Andriotis Konstantinos and Misela Mavric, Postcard Mobility, 22.
[253] Konstantinos and Mavric, 22.
[254] Prochaska et al, xii.
[255] Woody, Delivering Views, 32.
[256] Bolter & Grusin, Remediation, 3.

proliferating faster than our cultural, legal, or educational institutions can keep up with."[257] The billions of postcards that circulated during the first decades of the 20th-century are a testament to that era's worldwide achievement in mobilizing people and things on an unprecedented scale, with, arguably, unparalleled efficiency. For example, postcards were regularly delivered the day after being posted, and many even arrived on the same day that they were mailed. The postcards' newly shortened messages were often no more elaborate or personal than any one of today's briefest tweets or texts. As Gillen writes, "the Picture Postcard was an extraordinarily popular innovation at the beginning of the  century in Europe, enabling writers to send brief, multimodal messages through a cheap communications channel, in a 'culture of speed'. With several deliveries a day, this could be experienced as closer to the synchronicity of the digital communications than vernacular written communications in the intervening period."[258] Significantly, during the Edwardian period (1901–1910) as is true today, rapid changes in technology, globalization, communication systems, and social issues "dominated conversations and newspaper articles; then as now, cultures of mass consumption stamped their mark on the time; then as now, the feeling of living in an accelerating world […] was overwhelming."[259]

The image, featured on the picture postcard's recto often contributed to the sender's message. In some instances the connections between the image/text and sender/recipient was quite direct, such as expressed through the often sent "wish you were here" category of card. Alternately, the relationship between the image and message was seemingly unrelated- with some messages even written in encrypted language or secret code. Such examples underscore the postcard's earliest use as a means of quick communication as opposed to functioning merely as emblems of tourism, or having been purchased in order to enhance collections. Indeed some of the cards included here were expressly sent as brief informational messages, similar to texting today, or as an affordable and efficient means for

[257] Bolter & Grusin, 4-5.
[258] Gillen, 488.
[259] Gillen, 489.

friends and acquaintances to stay in touch through ordinary exchanges within their social network. For instance, the following message was mailed locally from Sherbrooke to St.-Malo Quebec, approximately 50 kilometres away (fig. 37):

> Oct 8 1907,
>
> Un Bonjour de Sherbrooke et Lillian
> P.S. Give Maggie a kiss for me. L-[260]

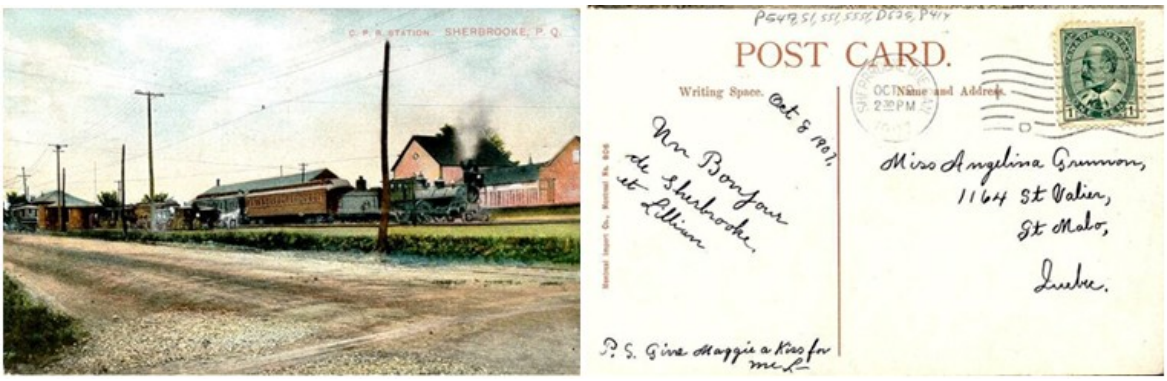


**Figure 37. Montreal Import Co., *C.P.R. Station, Sherbrooke, P.Q.*, 1907, photo-mechanical print postcard. BAnQ, Magella Bureau fonds.**

Figure 37's image, at a glance, suggests how Lillian's regards to Angelina in St. Malo would arrive by train, passing through Sherbrooke's C.P.R. station as indicated on the card. This particular postcard, however, is interesting on several other levels as well. For instance, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company typically favored more imposing and dynamic images than the one shown here to represent its corporate image to the public and to its competitors. This image of the company's Sherbrooke station is not a conventionally picturesque or otherwise pleasing view to look upon, nor does it suggest how vital the station was in the heart of a busy urban Eastern Townships centre, such as Sherbrooke was during that period. The image represents a rather industrial and mundane space that on the one hand suits the casual and ordinary content of Lillian's message, reinforcing the everydayness of this particularly routine postcard. Additionally, the train, dirt road, and railway pictured on the card visually convey the

[260] BAnQ, Fond Magella Bureau; P547S1SS1SSS1D675P414V.

underlying theme of connectivity between places and people that is the very impetus for Lillian's message. These transportation networks offer the physical means to connect her (Sherbrooke) to Angelina (St-Malo), while the postcard becomes an emblem of that spatial link. On the other hand, the image's emphasis on an industrial and technological iconography that features locomotives, hydroelectric poles and lines, and public or commercial architecture is incongruous with the intimate nature of the message that performs as a personal, domestic, and female space. The casual bilingualism of the message further suggests that both the sender and recipient are familiar with colloquial English and French. In a recent article by Konstantinos and Mavric, the authors argue that although "literacy was still limited at the time, postcards were seen as a medium for which one did not need to possess perfect language skills. Writing down a few words, or simply saying "greetings" was enough, and the front image would compensate for the lack of words."[261] The postcard represented in figure 37 reinforces how quickly and accessible an ordinary greeting, kiss or simple "Bonjour" was made due to technology.

Due to their ubiquity during the years surrounding the turn of the century, postcards may now be apprehended as emblems of everyday life, communication, travel, tourism, collecting practices, industry, technology, and mobility. As Naomi Schor points out: "from the backs of these cards we hear of aches and pains, the weather, safe arrivals, unexpected delays, upcoming plans- in other words 'millions of minute transactions, the grain of everyday life' [...] In re-reading these cards, one is placed in the position of 'eavesdropper on everyday life'. "[262] Konstantinos and Mavric however, note how, beyond functioning as practical and playful everyday communications media, "postcards and their images started globalizing the gaze, enabled places to travel, and changed the way people saw the world."[263] In this sense they also represent an early form of global social-media, as "unofficial" images of foreign culture practices and traditions circulated around the world. The images featured on early

[261] Konstantinos and Mavric, 32.
[262] Naomi Schor, qtd. in Ephemeral Histories of Modernity, 21.
[263] Konstantinos and Mavric, 30.

postcards ranged from natural disasters and accidents to comic scenes to executions to exotic nudes to train stations to main streets, and from world fairs to vernacular architecture, and from famous hotels to ordinary inns. Postcards featured both the ordinary and extraordinary people, places, and events that characterized a rapidly changing modern way of life.

Picture postcards, as image-objects, can be understood as remediated visual cultural artefacts that often call upon pre-existing representational conventions, strategies, and traditions- most notably established through painting, drawing and photography- in order to illicit a reaction or communicate an ideal or message. In using the term "remediated" I am drawing on the scholarship of Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin. These authors have argued that "remediation did not begin with the introduction of digital media. We can identify the same process throughout the last several hundred years of Western visual representation."[264] Within the context of this study, the concept of remediation refers to the modes in which postcards refashion older or traditional modes of pictorial representations such as printing, photography, painting, and illustrating. Their theory outlines three sub-categories, which I will return to later in this section: (i) immediacy - the medium is transparent or immersive, (ii) hypermediacy - discontinuities are clearly noticeable, (iii) remediation - the content of the medium is always another medium. While Bolter and Grusin do not explicitly refer to postcards, I want to argue that their theory is extremely pertinent for my project. For example, in 1913 Canada's National Gallery director Eric Brown wrote to the Chairman of his Board "regarding the sale of reproductions of the National Gallery pictures which I believe will materially advance the value and importance of the National Gallery throughout the Continent... I believe there would be a ready sale in the book stores throughout Canada of both postcards and 5 x 7 reproductions in the Vandyck process."[265] In 1914 the proofs and plan were approved by the board, and Brown was urged to proceed as soon as possible. Thus by 1915 "the Gallery

[264] Bolter & Grusin, 11.
[265] Zemans, qtd. in Beyond Wilderness, 306.

obtained [...] 5000 postcards of eighteen different subjects."[266] Furthermore, I want to argue that even though technology continuously transforms the production and material form of images, traditional compositional strategies and pictorial formulas for representing landscapes endure through the treatment of perspective, cropping, framing, texture, colour, and contrast for example. Indeed, as recently noted by historian Paul Deslandes, visual-culture specialists working with the evocative and communicative images on postcards during the early  century are well positioned to "view the intricate representations, senses, and emotions that make up visual culture as a complex system."[267]


**Figure 38. Valentine & Sons' Publishing Co., Ltd., *Arrowhead, B.C., from C.P.R. Steamer*, c. 1910, photo-mechanical print postcard, 9 x 14 cm, private collection.**

[266] Zemans, 306.
[267] Paul R. Deslandes, Visual Victorians, 476.

**Figure 39. Canada Post Card Co., *Loading Our Catch, Knowlton , Que.*, 1943, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ, Magella Bureau fonds.**

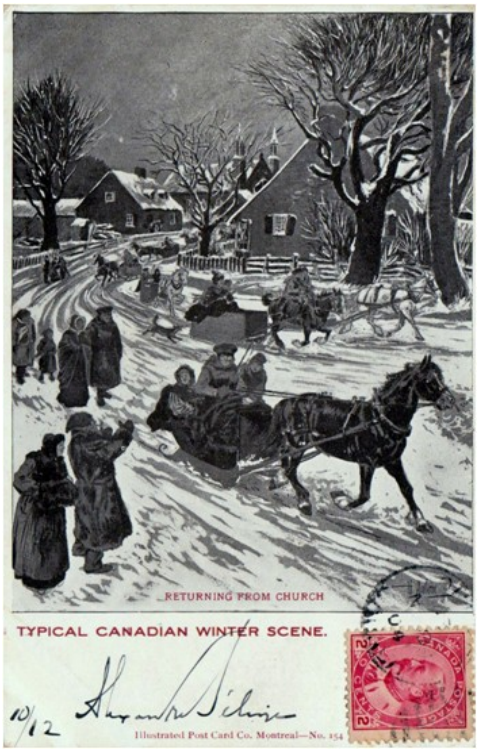


**Figure 40. Illustrated Postcard Co. Montreal, *Returning From Church: typical Canadian winter scene*, c.1904, photo-mechanical print postcard, 14 x 9 cm, private collection.**

Accordingly, this section responds to Deslandes' suggestion to consider visual culture as part of larger cultural processes, and advances Bolter and Grusin's argument that no single media event, in this

case postcards, "seems to do its cultural work in isolation from other media, any more that it works in isolation from other social and economic forces."[268] As an art historian working in the 21st century, I am aware that it now seems inadequate to study "high culture" artworks to the exclusion of visual culture's ever-growing corpus of images, or without recognizing the scholarship advanced through interdisciplinary studies. Postcards may now be apprehended as one of the most widely circulated forms of imagery that have performed diverse socio-cultural functions. In order to understand the socio-cultural and historical significance of the picture postcard, we must also consider the various uses and meanings they had for their early users, and the multiple ways those people responded to them. An analysis of the modern era's communication practices through the exchange of picture postcards will contribute to a deeper understanding of the power of images, and how that power stems from their ability to communicate in addition to the emotions they elicit.

David Freedberg finds that it is our responses to images that are genuine, and which enable them to be real- not their attempts to re-present reality. In *The Power of Images*, Freedberg advocates "recognition of the deep cognitive potential that arises from the relations between looking- looking hard- and figured material object."[269] He argues that it does not suffice to just look at images with intellectual eyes, we must also allow ourselves to respond to all images, both high and low, emotionally. Freedberg's aim "to democratize response" has subsequently done much to broaden the scope of visual culture studies by insisting on including emotional responses to all images, whether they were created according to high art ideals or to be circulated on the street. Postcards are thus now studied as commercial products of modernity that "epitomize the complex history of visual culture" and "straddle the by now largely obliterated line between 'high' and 'low' art, between an earlier modernist art history and more recent work in visual culture."[270] I am therefore interested in how picture postcards are

[268] Bolter & Grusin, 15.
[269] David Freedberg, The Power of Images, 432.
[270] Lebovics, qtd. in Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity, np.

equally indebted to high-art's specializations and achievements, and to industrial and technological innovations, in addition to people's response to them. As such this section insists, as Bolter and Grusin have, that "what is new about new media comes from the particular ways in which they refashion older media."[271] One of the fascinating things about postcards is how, through their diverse 'pictured' scope, they operate according to all three of Bolter and Grusin's media categories: immediacy, hypermediacy, and remediation. Figure 38, a postcard identified as *Arrowhead B.C., from C.P.R. Steamer*, exemplifies the theory of immediacy, which strives to remove visible traces of the medium, or by invoking other strategies to facilitate the viewer's entrance into the image. As a viewer looking upon this landscape, it is easy to situate oneself behind the other passengers in order to contemplate and consume the picturesque scenery through our shared and collective gaze, although the typeset printed on the image's upper left corner and the publisher's logo on the lower left corner remind the viewer that this is a remediated color photograph. Figure 39, *Loading Our Catch*, embraces the concept of hypermediacy as an image that takes pleasure in, and insists upon the medium. The image features four well dressed men as they busy themselves with strapping larger than life fish to the roof of a car in this playfully surreal, collaged, photographed, then printed picture postcard. Figure 40, *Typical Canadian Winter Scene*, offers a good example of remediation- repurposing images, texts, and uses which, according to Bolter and Grusin, "always operates under the current cultural assumptions about immediacy and hypermediacy."[272] The stamps, postmarks, and inscriptions often added to postcards further emphasize notions of hyper-mediacy, all of which are present on this particular card's recto interface. In this instance the black and white image is a reproduced artwork signed at the bottom right by Canadian painter, illustrator, and cartoonist Henri Julien (1852-1908) whom Coburn so admired, entitled *Returning From Church*; this postcard conforms to the hypermediacy concept due to the remediated picture and the other markings including typeset printed text, handwritten numbers and signature,

[271] Bolter & Grusin, 15.
[272] Bolter & Grusin, 21.

postage stamp, and the circular ink stamped postal details. During his lifetime, Julien was a well reputed Canadian artist recognized for his black and white paintings of rural Quebec. The painting represented on this postcard is of an evening rural scene in winter that features a curving road which dominates the foreground. The road then quickly narrows to the right as it is squeezed between buildings before it disappears into the distant sky line occupied by a pair of the parish church's symmetrical bell towers pointing heavenward. The snow covered street is animatedly populated by small groups of people and several horse drawn carioles all traveling in the same direction away from the church, presumably returning home following an evening mass. Julien made no attempt to conceal his application of pigment due to the gestural and spontaneous quality of its application. The contrasts evident in this representation are sharp and clear, without any indication of aspirations for creating illusory effects. The postcard, in turn, incorporates printed text and pictorial framing, thereby deliberately showcasing how the remediated image published by Montreal's Illustrated Postcard Co. entitled "Typical Canadian Winter Scene" was a reproduction of an original work signed by Julien.

Bolter and Grusin insist that what is new about "new media", as quoted above, not only "comes from the particular ways in which they refashion older media", but also comes from "the ways in which older media refashion themselves to answer the challenges of new media."[273] As an artist who also worked as an illustrator, like Henri Julien, Coburn often created paintings destined to become illustrations. The paintings he prepared for Fréchette at the end of the 19th-century were made in shades of black, white, and grey to ensure that their subtly nuanced tints and tones would not be lost to typesetting once printed without color and published by George N. Morang & Company , Limited in 1899. In this way Coburn refashioned the traditional art of painting in order to adjust to the challenges of print media- as the contrast in colored paintings would not be as striking when converted to black and white print. Current visual culture paradigms enable researchers to examine a wide range of images that

[273] Bolter & Grusin, 15.

were largely overlooked in the past, based on their medium. Additionally, visual culture has "broadened the study of visual artifacts, including postcards, from images per se to the more densely woven context of their production and reception."[274] Interdisciplinary studies and theories of remediation have opened a Pandora's box of possibilities and complexities for scholars. The picture postcard's growing momentum as a pictorial artifact (commencing in the late 19th-century) was part of a significant cultural shift whereby images were liberated from their traditional and insular confines that included private mansions and galleries, elite clubs, sombre museums, and illustrated books- and were catapulted into mainstream circulation for sale and display on ordinary street corners, busy train stations, and local shops that ranged from drugstores to shoemakers. Within the broader category of picture postcards, those that represent landscapes and places are key; as Schor notes: "topographicals or view cards [are] the largest and most popular category of postcards representing familiar places."[275] According to J.B. Jackson, all landscapes retain some sense of familiarity, despite having various elements that may appear foreign or other, due to his understanding of landscape as, ultimately, a community's "visible manifestation [which] is simply the by-product of people working and living."[276] As a material and visual cultural legacy postcards are at once public and personal, intimate and formal, purposive and whimsical, and can seem uncannily familiar as they are re-read and re-viewed, in many cases more than a century after they were originally posted. Artist Timothy Van Laar has addressed the complicity between postcards and familiarity, explaining how:

> Postcards use the traditions and conventions of art to do work in addition to best exemplifying a place; [...] we either recognize the place because it clearly represents something or some kind of thing with which we are familiar, or we recognize the worthiness of the image, and therefore the place, because we are familiar with its artistic conventions of beauty and the like.[277]

[274] Lebovics, qtd. in Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity, xii.
[275] N. Schor, qtd. in Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity, 8.
[276] J. B. Jackson, Discovering, 12.
[277] T. Van Laar, Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity, 196.

# 8. Remediation and Worthy Landscape Traditions

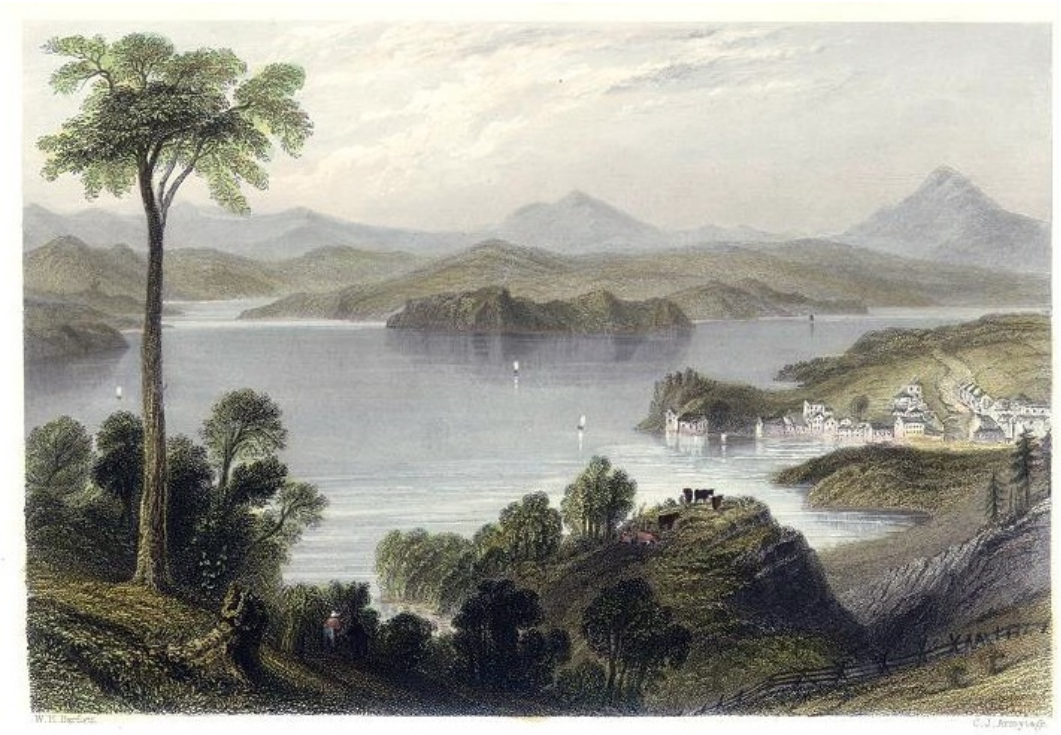

**Figure 41. J. C. Armytage after a picture by W.H. Bartlett, *Lake Memphremagog,* 1842, steel engraved print, 15 x 18 cm, private collection.**


**Figure 42. Richardson Studio, *Lake Memphremagog Newport V*t., c. 1920, photograph, 9 x 14.2 cm, private collection. View looking north towards Eastern Townships, Qc.**

Through a visual analysis of two images (figs.41 and 42), I want to argue that the practice of maintaining traditions when representing landscapes often forsakes authenticity in favor of familiarity, such as described by Van Laar. This analysis reinforces how the notion of familiarity is maintained through the use of artistic traditions and conventions over time, despite shifts in medium. In "Word and Image" Foss notes how, during the 19th-century, "North American landscape was associated, in novels, poetry, travel narratives and tourist guides, with picturesque aesthetics informed by established European conventions that encouraged viewers to idealize, poeticize and appreciate landscapes as works of art."[278] The place, in each representation (figs. 41, 42), is made familiar as it takes the form of a vast, harmonious, and settled landscape which surrounds a central sinewy lake, while the image encourages the viewer to follow its curves further into the space, which gradually gives way to a fading mountain range that spreads across a distant horizon. Figure 41 is not a postcard, but rather an engraving published in *Canadian Scenery Illustrated* in 1842 which was, according to Foss, "the first significant overview of Canadian landscape for a mass audience"[279]; based on a drawing by William Henry Bartlett (1809-1854) it depicts Lake Memphremagog in the Eastern Townships. Bartlett was a British born artist who travelled to Upper and Lower Canada in 1838 specifically to sketch the territory's topography. His picturesque "on-the-spot sketches and watercolours" were then worked into "sepia drawings that were later transformed into steel engravings by two dozen artists,"[280] and printed in *Canadian Scenery.* Foss notes how interest in Bartlett's Canadian illustrations "was secured by his close observation and unfailingly picturesque approach to landscape and to the human activities that took place within it", and adds that "despite Bartlett's loyalty to the specificities of individual locales, his North American scenes show a considerable similarity of viewpoints and composition with his hundreds

[278] Foss, Expanding Horizons, 177.
[279] Foss, Expanding Horizons, 177.
[280] Foss, Expanding Horizons, 177.

of representations of European landscape."[281] Additionally, by this time, Britain had already been sending topographic landscape artists, most of whom were in the military, to the Canadas for close to a century. In *'Taken on the Spot',* historian John Crowley remarks that, "during the British invasion, occupation, and colonization of New France, artists appropriated the conquests visually with topographic renderings of the empire's new landscapes."[282] He notes how, following the Treaty of Paris, "artistically inclined imperial agents represented the new British province as a place of natural beauty with a picturesque indigenous culture. They sent a visual message - to the king, ministers and aristocrats, parliamentary politicians, fellow officers and officials, their families, the viewing public at exhibitions - about a landscape whose scenic attractions and rustic tranquillity mitigated its appropriation by conquest."[283] In light of how early Canadian topographic landscape pictures were initially commissioned to accurately represent a pleasing place with promising economic and political potential, the extent to which their familiarity and continuous appeal for future generations that identified with particular national or cultural visions deeply rooted in that place's history becomes clearer. Crowley notes how, according to such 18th-century representations "the sublime aspects of Canada's scenery confirmed the grandeur of the imperial project against New France, while the picturesque landscapes of towns, farms, and shorelines promised an easily governed population readily subject to British improvements."[284]

Figure 42 is a black and white real photo postcard that was posted in 1920 and also pictures Lake Memphremagog. This photograph was taken from Newport, Vermont looking North towards Magog, Quebec. The picturesque tradition is fully maintained and altogether familiar in both figures 41 and 42, in part due to each image's division into three equal and progressive parts according to British artist John Thomas Smith's compositional rule of thirds, outlined in his 1797 publication *Remarks on*

[281] Foss, Expanding Horizons, 177.
[282] Crowley, 1.
[283] Crowley, 1.
[284] Crowley, 2.

*Rural Scenery with twenty etchings of cottages from Nature and some observations and precepts relative to the pictoresque*.[285] Smith wrote: "I should think myself honored by the opinion of any gentleman on this point ; but until I shall be better informed, shall conclude this general proportion of two and one to be the most pictoresque medium in all cases of breaking or otherwise qualifying straight lines and masses and groupes."[286] The horizon line is strategically placed where the middleground and background converge, while the linear perspective draws the viewer's eye to a vanishing point that is designated by the convex mountain peak in figure 41, and the concave valley in figure 42. In each picture the perspectival vanishing point is reinforced by an emphasis on atmospheric perspective as colour saturation progressively fades into the distance. The elements are also carefully and deliberately framed in both to optimize variety in shapes and textures and to thereby further enhance the picturesque quality of the landscape. Water, mountains, architecture, trees, clouds and paths offer viewers a richly organic and constructed variety of elements to view. Within each composition the human settlements are nestled into the landscape's embankments along the water's edge, on the right in figure 41 and on the left in figure 42. In each instance however, the built environments are minimized in contrast to the vastness of their respective surrounding natural vistas in a most familiarly pleasant and non-threatening manner. The land, in each, encloses the water beneath the sky, creating a soothing sense of self-containment that radiates tranquility and presents each community dwelling peacefully within their respective environments, amidst an abundance of natural resources. Arguably, the sense of familiarity experienced when looking at postcards is more prevalent when the picture on the card features a landscape, whether natural, urban, or rural. This prevalence is in no small part due to how

[285] John Thomas Smith, in Remarks on Rural Scenery, London: 1797 also wrote: "Analogous to this "Rule of thirds ", ( if I may be allowed so to call it ) I have presumed to think that, in connecting or in breaking the various lines of a picture, it would likewise be a good rule to do it, in general, by a similar scheme of proportion ; for example, in a design of landscape, to determine the sky at about two-thirds ; or else at about one-third, so that the material objects might occupy the other two : Again, two thirds of one element, ( as of water ) to one third of another element ( as of land); and then both together to make but one third of the picture, of which the two other thirds should go for the sky and serial perspectives", 16.
[286] Smith, 17.

landscape, according to W.J.T Mitchell, as an instrument of power, compellingly "naturalizes a cultural and social construction, representing an artificial world as if it were simply given and inevitable,"[287] regardless of how earnestly its producer has striven to achieve visual authenticity.

One of the most prevalent ways of conveying the visual authenticity of landscape was the production of black-and-white real - photo postcards. These cards "were actual photographs produced from negatives directly onto photographic, postcard-size stock."[288] The brand name of this standardized photosensitive paper is indicated on the postcard's verso, and it often framed the space designated for the stamp. Popular Kodak brands include Velox, Azo, Solio, Artura, Aristo, and Kodak. Other non-Kodak owned brands are Rotograph, Defender, Kruxo, and Cyko.[289] Photo cards were produced in smaller quantities than the printed ones, often by "local photographers who sold them in their own shops or placed them for sale with local merchants, hotel owners, and roadside businesses, [290] such as the ones discussed below by Richardson of Newport, Vermont and R. Ethier of Magog, Quebec. (Figs. 43-46) In addition to the images' sharp, monochrome quality, their site specificity and familiarity made them popular in rural areas early on. Such cards added a photojournalistic dimension to the postcard's broad range of subjects, due to how local photographers were on hand to capture unusual or newsworthy events on camera such as floods (fig.36), fires, train wrecks, or pageants - and then reproduce those images as postcards for public circulation or private collection. In contrast to color print cards that could take months to produce and ship from international ports, locally developed "photoprint cards were taken, developed and ready for sale in a day's time."[291] The real photo card emerged amidst "a flowering of [North] American consumer culture from 1900 to 1920; a time defined by the mass production of

[287] Mitchell, Landscape, 2.
[288] R. Snow, qtd. in Exposing The Wilderness, 43.
[289] R. Bogdan and T. Weseloh, Real Photo Postcard Guide, 218.
[290] Bogdan, 7.
[291] Woody, 29.

inexpensive standardized goods, including new, more affordable, and user-friendly cameras."[292] Their popularity peaked in Quebec between 1910 and 1915,[293] although they remained popular until just after WWII when a renewed interest for color eventually prevailed.

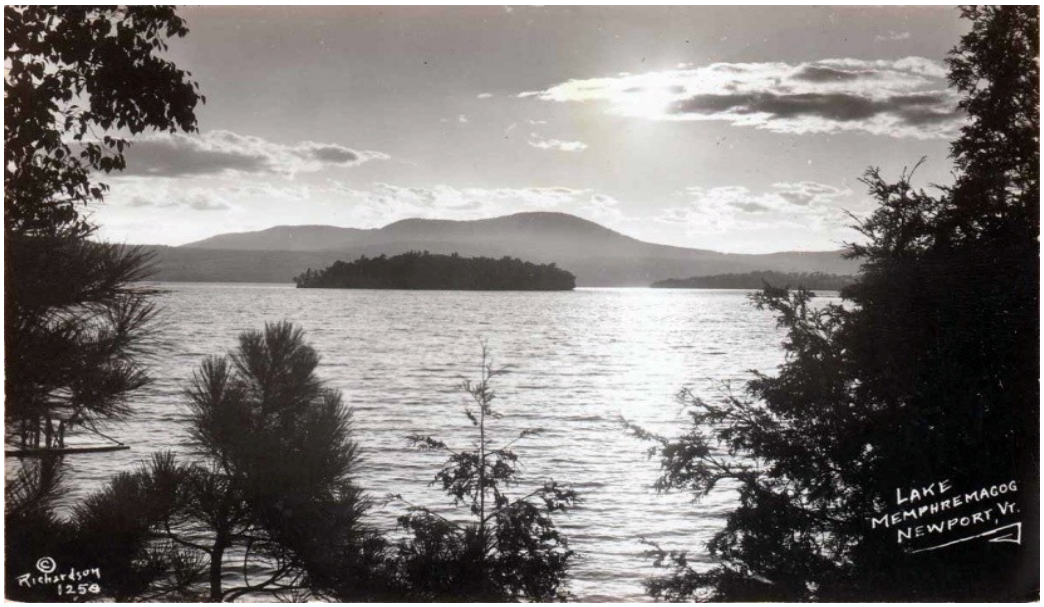


**Figure 43. Richardson Studio, *Lake Memphremagog Newport Vt.*, c. 1930, photograph, 9 x 14.2 cm, private collection. View looking north towards Quebec.**


**Figure 44. Richardson Studio, *Lake Memphremagog Newport Vt.*, c. 1930, photograph, 9 x 14.2 cm, private collection. View looking north towards Quebec.**

[292] Bogdan, 43.
[293] Jacques Poitras, La Carte Postale Québécoise, 61.


**Figure 45. R. Ethier, *Owl's Head Mountain Lake Memphremagog, Magog, Que.*, c. 1940s, photograph, private collection.**


**Figure 46. R. Ethier, *Lake Memphremagog, Magog, Que.*, c. 1940s, photograph, private collection.**

Not all publishers or photographers produced the same quality images; collectors consequently rated cards as " 'excellent' if they showed many details and numerous subtle tones. 'Good' ones have

several distinct, clear details, while 'average' and 'poor' ones present few or limited details. "[294] Figures 42-44 are examples of real photo postcards that feature Lake Memphremagog near its southern shore that were produced by Harry Wendell Richardson (1894-1960). According to the *Real Photo Postcard Guide: The People's Photography*, Richardson began making postcards in his shop located in Newport, Vermont beginning in 1918, and most of his cards pictured Northern Vermont.[295] Figures 45 and 46 are also examples of real photo postcards that picture Lake Memphremagog, however these cards represent the lake's northern shore region that surrounds Magog from the Canadian side of the border. The Magog region's cards are produced by R. Ethier, a local photographer who was active during the mid-20th-century, although none of the local or regional historical societies or archives have information pertaining to his career. These postcards underscore how not all publishers or photographers produced the same quality of images. Richardson's photos adhere more faithfully to traditional picturesque strategies of framing and composition than Ethier's do. Ethier's photos lack the variety in textures, tints, and tones that Richardson offers the viewers as his deeply saturated pigments in the foreground fade progressively into the distance. Ethier, on the other hand, begins with lighter saturation in the foreground and captures darker subjects in the background which divides the image into three flattened portions that range from low to high as opposed to placing emphasis on depth perception created by gradually fading grounds from fore to back. The details and numerous subtle tones captured by Richardson differ from Ethier whose images seem more interested in documenting a specific place, than in representing a beautiful space. The frost fence that cuts diagonally across the foreground of Lake Memphremagog in Ethier's photograph (fig. 46) serves to limit actual and imagined access to the water, and thus prevents the viewer from visually "entering" the landscape. Although Richardson also includes various contrasting and textured screens within the foreground of his landscapes, they are organic screens that have an effect of making the water appear more inviting as opposed to limiting for the

[294] Woody, 16.
[295] Bogdan, 252.

viewer. The diagonal frost fence that stretches across the foreground, harshly disrupts the landscape's horizontality, as opposed to subtly framing it for the viewer with elements from its natural environment. Additionally, the starkness in Ethier's composition of Owl Head' Mountain (fig. 45) is uncomfortably isolating as it offers a large stretch of relatively rough water to cross before reaching what appear as two impenetrable land masses in the form of a densely forested islet, and its neighboring pyramid shaped mountain. The dullness of this landscape is due to limited pictorial variety that includes only three elements: water, islet, and mountain- and differentiating each element with its own shade of grey. The sky above or beyond the mountain is unremarkable enough to be overlooked with ease. The landscape's considerable expanse of tumultuous water is too regular to be sublime, as the viewer's senses are numbed to the fear of drowning by the picture's unspectacular plainness.

## 9. A Cultural Landscape Case Study of Coaticook, Qc.

**Figure 47. Rumsey & Co. Ltd., *Coaticook, Que.*, c. 1910, photo-mechanical print postcards, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds. These are 11 of 12 postcards I have rearranged according to the numerical sequence indicated by their sender, Emile.**

Postcards have played a central role within the development of tourism in the Eastern Townships, as elsewhere, and this will be addressed more directly later in this chapter. It is important to reiterate, however, that early postcards were not used solely by tourists and travellers, nor were they produced exclusively for that industry. When studying the landscape imagery on postcards in a non-touristic sense, an analysis of those images stands to gain much from cultural landscapist perspectives

which draw on Henri Lefebvre's theories on everyday life in the modern world, as well as J.B. Jackson's understanding of landscape as a material and visual culture agent. Jackson, a scholar of history and literature, founded cultural landscape studies in America during the mid - century in order to reverse the nation's "visual illiteracy", which he attributed to people's inability "to consciously notice their everyday environments."[296] In order to achieve his goal, he published the first issue of *Landscape* magazine in 1951 to promote an interest in the "ordinary American cultural environment" and "the humanistic endeavour that he called cultural landscape studies."[297] Jackson's insistence on "seeing" vernacular landscapes parallels Lefebvre's recognition of ordinary life, as each seeks to advance an awareness of the socio-cultural ambiguities and dichotomies imbedded within routine practices of labour and leisure that characterize modernity's everydayness. As the founder of cultural landscape studies, Jackson's priority was to awaken an appreciation for the ordinary visual and material experiences people encountered on a daily basis. An everyday landscape is an interdisciplinary and material landscape that differs from the art historical and aesthetic fields' understanding of landscape, which have traditionally privileged the scenery's visual qualities measured against standards of taste related to picturesque, beautiful, romantic, or sublime ideals. Jackson understood landscape as "a concrete, three - dimensional shared reality."[298] He argued that because the word landscape's etymology is a human construct it "is not a natural feature of the environment but a *synthetic* space, a man-made system of spaces superimposed on the face of the land."[299] Over the course of his career, geographer Denis Cosgrove has found the term landscape conceptually ambiguous and difficult to define, given that in order for a landscape to materialize it must first be seen. He has insisted that "from a cultural perspective, the pictorial dimension of landscape has frequently been charged with duplicity,"[300] citing, for example, how

[296] Jackson, qtd in Understanding Ordinary Landscapes, 1.
[297] Jackson, qtd in Understanding, 2.
[298] Jackson, qtd in Understanding, 5.
[299] Jackson, qtd in Understanding, 8.
[300] Denis Cosgrove, "Modernity, Community and the Landscape Idea", 51.

the representation often contains a hidden agenda to reinforce particular cultural values or myths. He questions the curious and persistent nature of "landscape's capacity to 'naturalize' social or environmental inequities through an aesthetic of visual harmony."[301] Cosgrove refers to landscape as a 'hegemonic tool' that evolved into a 'landscape idea' which references the pictorial and spatial way of "connecting the individual to the community."[302]

I want to argue that postcards contributed significantly to reversing the modern world's visual illiteracy, well before Jackson introduced the concept of cultural landscape studies to America during the mid  century, and well beyond the United States. As such, their function as visual and material resources that enrich cultural studies is imperative to this study on landscape, labour and leisure in the Eastern Townships. Each individual card contributes to a broader modern cultural landscape while facilitating ordinary life's social transactions. Postcards provide a greater understanding of the landscape as a territory that harbors a collection of identities. It is worth reiterating here how Jackson advocated that "no landscape can be exclusively devoted to the fostering of only one identity,"[303] and insisted that "when we talk about the importance of *place*, the necessity of belonging to a *place*, let us be clear that that place means the people in it, not simply the natural environment."[304]

Mindful of Jackson's insistence that place is contingent on people, and in order to investigate how postcards can evoke the complexity of ordinary and quotidian landscapes, I would like to focus on an intriguing group of eleven postcards which are now part of BAnQ's Magella Bureau collection located in Quebec City. (Fig. 47) M. Bureau was an employee of Quebec's ministry of agriculture who, during his lifetime, amassed an astonishing personal collection of over 200 000 postcards produced between 1890 and 1965. The unique group of cards under consideration here allows for a close examination of the postcard's interconnections between image and text. The sender of these postcards is identified only as

[301] Cosgrove, 51.
[302] Cosgrove, 51.
[303] Jackson, Discovering, 12.
[304] Jackson, Discovering, 155.

Emile, while the unidentified recipient shall hereafter be referred to as "XY". The label seems an appropriate one, given that the individual's gender is unknown. XY may well be Emile's sibling, as he concludes his message on card # 12 with "des gros becs pour maman de toute la famille." Emile enumerated each card to make sure that they were placed in the sequence he intended, and to ensure that the message would be organized coherently for his reader's sake. I have arranged the cards in figure 47 sequentially, beginning with #2 in the upper right corner and descending from left to right to # 12 in the lower right corner, according to the precise order established by Emile. This playful and interactive series of postcards is transformed into a personal and intimate space shared between Emile and XY. Although each card is a standard shape and size, the unique image printed on each one sheds light on the routine environment of one man's everyday life. This case study of Emile's personal engagement with postcards of his home town acknowledges Jackson's urging to consider the people who inhabit a landscape, in order to better understand that landscape.

Emile's series is a rare example of a typed, as opposed to hand written, postcard script that shifts from a brief postcard message to a visual and textual narrative which the author drafted and assembled as a means to communicate the essence of his daily life experiences with XY. Emile deliberately numbered the cards to direct XY's attention to the specific places he mentions throughout his account. The first card in the series is missing from the set although, based on Emile's description of it in card number #9, we know it featured an image of Coaticook's Grand Trunk Railway station: "Le # 1 te montre la station et le train qui viens de Québec, remarque la belle plateforme en ciment." (Fig. 47) On the same card (#9) he explains "Pour que tu connaisse la place quand tu viendras, je t'écris sur ces cartes qui te donneront une idée de la place." This group of cards emphasizes how postcards are uniquely individualized as each writer not only arranges, as Jay David Bolter points out in *Writing Space,* "verbal ideas in a visual space,"[305] but also reinforces how individuals creatively and optimally arrange

[305] Bolter, 15.

words to fit the postcard's limited space. In this instance Emile calls upon his selection of images to supplement his verbal ideas in order to provide XY a more detailed "idée de la place" within a very compact space. Through his structured use of the postcard's compact space, and the unique methods he chose to communicate ideas of a given place, we the readers are also given 'an idée de la personne.' We know, for instance, that Emile is an educated, married man who has a strong sense of family life and values. He writes well and is articulate as he conveys his day to day life to XY in order to persuade that person to visit him and his family for a prolonged, undetermined length of time. For example, on cards # 5 and 6 he typed "viens donc passer l'hiver ici avec nous autres; cela te fera du bien, un changement d'air..." Later, on card # 12, as part of his typed message he indicated "le No 12 c'est une maison pres de la notre en hiver ce qui te rappelle que nous sommes pas en Floride par ici. Donc tu connais la place et tu vas venir." In a final entreaty on this last card Emile reiterated his earlier invitation by adding a final note handwritten in ink: "Ecris moi au long- et surtout si tu ne fais pas la classe arrange tes fluttes pour venir passer l'hiver ici." Given that Emile's home is near the wealthy Norton family's residence, introduced in section I and represented here on card # 12[306], we gain a stronger sense of him as a successful and educated professional who lives in an affluent residential area located in Coaticook. He is perhaps a dentist, lawyer, doctor, notary, accountant or judge who places much emphasis on his family's education, likes to type, enjoys car rides, and has an office that he refers to in card # 4 when informing XY how "Clara qui a travailler pour moi dans le bureau cet été encore..." He casually refers to taking summer vacations and describes, cards # 2 and 3, taking leisurely pleasure drives with his children in his recently purchased Ford that he particularly enjoys on summer evenings and on Sundays.

[306] The former Norton Coaticook mansion is now the Musée Beaulne. It is recognizable due to its uniquely eclectic architecture which has been maintained since the early 20th-century when it was constructed and as it appears on this postcard.

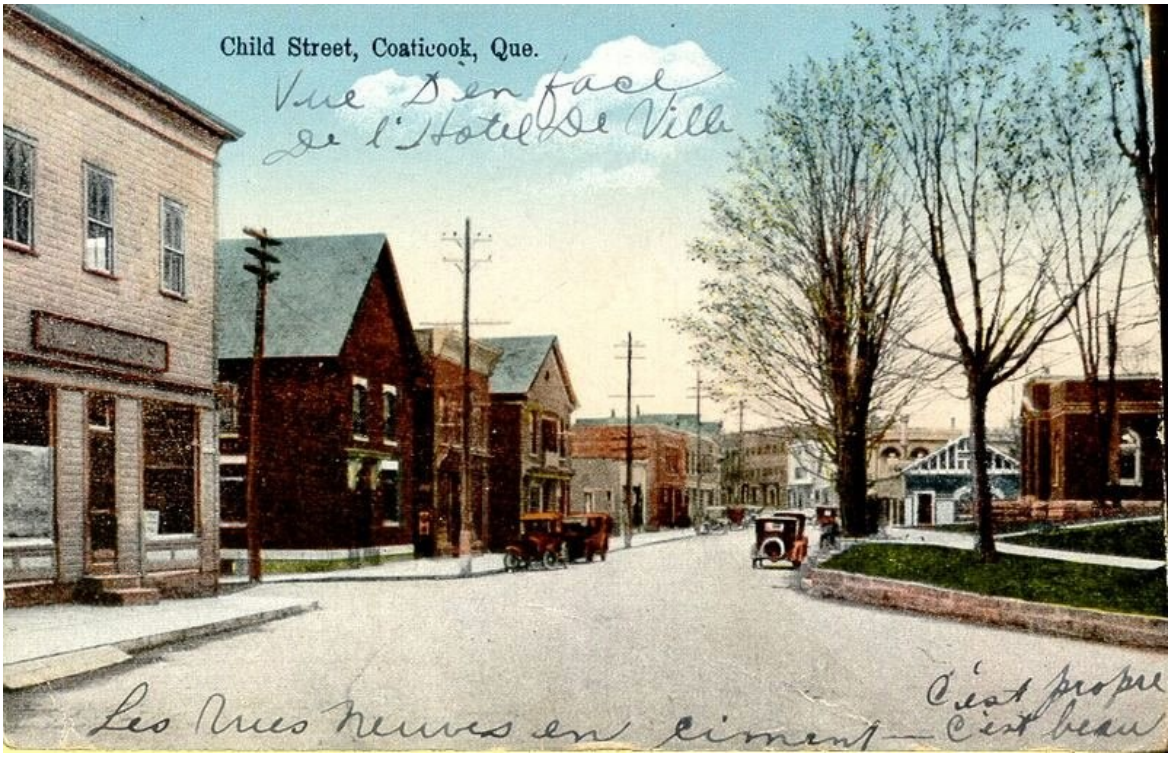


**Figure 48. Novelty Mfg. & Art Co. Ltd., *Child Street, Coaticook, Que.*, c. 1910, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**


**Figure 49. Novelty Mfg. & Art Co. Ltd., *Child Street, Coaticook, Que.*, c. 1910, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

Emile's enthusiasm for modernity's innovations, social interests and machinery is clearly apparent in the images on his chosen cards and reinforced by his text which emphasizes the railway station's new "beau plateforme en ciment", employment and education opportunities for women, the enjoyment of his automobile, and his decision to type rather than handwrite his message. A handwritten postcard of Coaticook's Child street, also sent and signed by Emile, further reinforces the modern interests he manifests in this typed series. (Figs. 48 recto, 49 verso) In figure 48, *Child Street, Coaticook, Que.*, it is possible to note that Emile, having used black ink, inscribed on the card image's upper portion, just beneath its typewritten and printed title *Child Street, Coaticook, Que.*: "vue d'en face de l'hotel de ville", and then described and qualified the image's foreground as "les rues neuves en ciment- c'est propre c'est beau." Based on his thorough and personal commentary in the typed series, his inscription prompts the following question: Is the 'view seen from city hall' one that Emile is particularly familiar with, one that he perhaps encounters on a daily basis from his own work place, and therefore wishes to identify in such a personal manner? Similarly his description of 'the nice and clean new cement roads' reflects his appreciation and perception of modern amenities as progressive, in view of how the image on the card pictures a pleasingly familiar, clean, orderly, well structured, efficient and prosperous looking place. The buildings' shapes, colors, and materials afford visual variety in textures, tints, and tones as their regular and careful alignment along the gently curving and well paved street instills a reassuring sense of order and community. The new generation of regularly spaced and identically carved wooden power poles on the left appear to confront their spared, older and organic counterparts lining the right side of the street- creating an interesting juxtaposition that paradoxically symbolizes change and continuity, or progress and tradition. This quaint view would have been particularly familiar to Emile, whether he routinely encountered it in the context of work or not, as Child Street is a highly commercial and well travelled street in Coaticook.


**Figure 50. The Heliotype Co. Ltd., *Gare G.T.R. Station, Coaticook, Que.,* c. 1908, photo-mechanical print postcard, hand colored, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

Figure 50 shows a hand colored divided-back postcard of Coaticook's Grand Trunk Railway Station, the station that Emile referred to in his series as card #1, the one that is missing from the group. Through the images on Emile's chosen cards and his discussion of them, we realize the impact cement had on making the landscape a cleaner, safer, and easier one to circumvent. We also recognize the extent to which Emile appreciated good order, structure, and clearly organized elements that were well represented in harmoniously composed and peacefully picturesque images. Although the typed series bears no postmarks branding the time, place and date the cards were mailed, through a process of elimination it is possible to establish for certain the cards could not have been sent prior to 1912, the year the Chateau Norton's construction was completed- the home in winter represented on card # 12 in figure 43. The residence was commissioned by Harry Norton's industrialist father Jack Norton. The distinctively designed building now houses Coaticook's Musée Beaulne, a locally run cultural center which conserves a portion of the Norton family's archival documents including photographs and various

personal artefacts as introduced in the first section in the context of Coburn's wealthy patrons. Ten of the series' eleven cards were printed by Ramsey & Co. Ltd., Toronto, a company that sold pennants, hats, flags, postcards, and various other novelty items through its catalogue issued annually beginning in 1905. Judging by the type of printing, coloration, as well as certain iconographic motifs in the cards, it is likely this series of cards was sent at some point during the decade following 1912. Card #10 pictures Coaticook's *Eglise St-Edmond,* and as illustrated in figure 47 left it is the only card out of the eleven found that was printed by another company. Based on the montage of images figured above, which I have regrouped into one figure (fig. 47 verso left/recto right) according to the order outlined by Emile, it is clear that he was fond of institutions and admired industrial innovations, engineering, and architectural achievements. As is noted when looking at figure 47, the postcards show signs of having been adhered to another surface after Emile had typed his message onto them. The significance of this is twofold: it highlights the power images hold as preferred methods of communication, given that at some point during the postcards' journey someone elected to sacrifice Emile's message in favor of the pictures, while also signaling some of the stages that contribute to their ongoing "social life"[307] as objects. Additionally, the series reinforces how the postcard's writing space becomes what Bolter describes as "a metaphor for the human mind as well as for human social interaction."[308] Emile's volley of postcards required XY to first physically interact with the cards by placing them in the sequential order he had pre-determined by typing a number onto each one. The act of enumerating enables XY to easily identify the images on the cards' verso that Emile refers to numerically throughout his message as it unfolds. The images pictured on each card enable Emile to communicate much more information and detail about Coaticook to XY, while remaining textually concise. In these ways Emile and XY are not only interacting with one another communicatively through text and image, they are also physically and playfully interacting with the materiality of the cards.

[307] Appadurai, 17.
[308] Bolter, 13.

Eight of Emile's twelve chosen postcards represent the region's natural environment. Cards numbered 2, 5, and 6 feature topographical views that situate the viewer at an elevated and distant vantage point in order to represent a broad visual scope of the landscape. As addressed earlier in this section, in Canada this way of creating landscape imagery dates back to a British tradition that is part of Canadian art history's colonial heritage, whereby natural features, including mountain ranges, fields and waterways, along with its manmade additions such as roads, bridges, architecture and enclosed settlements were privileged as militarily strategic information and/or to promote the region's economic potential for the empire. We note from Emile's choice of topographic postcards that they are framed in such a way as to convey a pleasingly docile and picturesque sense of place - each one a domesticated natural environment that maintains emphasis on roadways, waterways, mountain ranges, and settlement. Cards 3, 7, 8, 9, and 12 are what can be categorized as familiar picturesque landscapes given how, to quote Van Laars again, "we recognize the worthiness of the image, and therefore the place, because we are familiar with its artistic conventions of beauty and the like."[309] Picturesque landscape tropes include clearly presented entrance points to enable access for the viewer's virtual circumvention of the landscape, whether by boat, road or path, and also include a well defined distant horizon line that encourages the viewer to pass through the scenery; distant linear and perspectival vanishing points; reflective surfaces such as water or snow; natural or constructed pictorial screens that include trees, shrubs, cliffs, rocks or structures; the use of contrasting textures and lines, and a deep range of light and shadow to enhance the image's illusion of three-dimensionality. A combination, if not all, of these qualities are evident in the five cards listed above. These picturesque landscapes are humanly intended instances of natural and constructed environments that are naturalized through harmony and balance. The remaining three postcards are examples of the town's religious architecture: St.-John's Evangelist Church (card # 4), Église St-Edmond (card # 10), and Coaticook's convent (card # 11). Card # 12 illustrates

[309] T. Van Laar, qtd. in Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity, 196.

an example of domestic architecture in the middle ground, however the composition places more emphasis on the surrounding natural scenery than it does on the actual building, so I categorize it as a domestic landscape in winter. The image printed on the missing card # 1 is a representation of the town's railway station - as suggested by the substitute postcard I introduced in figure 50, although the image featured on that postcard is not necessarily the one Emile sent to XY. Whichever version of the railway station he added to his series, it served as an example of commercial architecture and industrial engineering that symbolized, as it did for most emerging rural towns during the decades surrounding the turn of the 20th-century, the community's nexus of mobility, trade, and communication - in essence its connection to other parts of the world.

In each of the eight landscape postcards the natural environment has yielded to human intervention. The streets are neatly lined with near identical trees that appear to have been planted at carefully measured intervals in cards 3 and 7. The arched cement bridges represented in cards 6, 7, and 8 recall those first introduced by Roman engineering which excelled at creating efficient environments that epitomized an era of stability, prosperity, ingenuity and civil order. In card # 2, aptly named *Pleasant Street*, the trees are in line with the walkway, which in turn aligns with the road, in the service of providing the residents a natural foliated shield that separates their private homes from the public street. In this image, the various natural and manmade elements are neatly regrouped into respective clusters in the service of human interests that include, in this case, comfort and convenience. Gazing at the image we hear echoes of Emile's pleasure regarding "une belle rue large"(#11), or his pride in "la belle plateform en ciment"(#9), and the new cement road in figure 14 that he describes as "beau et propre." He further draws XY's attention to the image on card #7, noting in particular "le pont de ciment qui traverse la riviere et l'ecluse ou se fait l'electricite." Emile's admiration for the landscape is entwined with his enthusiasm for modern innovations. His modern aesthetic is far removed from the antimodernist's romantic perspective of the natural environment. Rather than seeking to return to

nature as an escape from modern life, Emile seems to embrace nature as a welcome accessory to progress, one that not only yields material resources- but one that can be arranged and designed to comply with a well structured, orderly, and pleasing everyday aesthetic. Based on the cards he compiled for this series, it is possible to describe Emile's view of landscape as a picturesque everyday place where nature is arranged by man. In every image traces of human authority have been imposed on nature in a picturesque manner that naturalizes the process, presenting it as a desirable enhancement and legitimate intervention.

The landscape images Emile presented to XY offer rational and picturesque single viewing point perspectives. His choice of images reflects his intellectual and reasoned admiration for order. It can be remarked that the visual sense of place produced by the postcards lacks the emotional or personal familiarity that Emile reveals while tenderly discussing his children and routine domestic life on the postcards' versos. His series offers a unique opportunity to examine "communicative practice so as to uncover signs of social identities, institutions and norms as well as the means by which these social formations are established, negotiated, enacted, and changed through communicative practice."[310] Through an understanding of cultural landscape, it becomes evident that postcards did not merely function as emblems of tourism, they must also be recognized as modern agents of communication and sociability.

Emile uses the postcards' recto/verso surfaces interactively which has the dual effect of providing XY the opportunity of hearing about the significance each place holds for him within his ordinary life, in addition to seeing each one of those places. He pieced together fragments of Coaticook's landscape in order to give XY a sense of that place according to the social standards and values he identified with, and deliberately chose to share with the recipient. Emile used the images to acquaint XY with Coaticook's local surroundings that he and his family encountered on a regular basis. He shows his

[310] Gillen, 491.

reader where his children go to school, the church his family attends, the bridge and the roads he travels over during his regular summer evening and Sunday pleasure drives taken with his kids. Emile's text does not conceal his enthusiasm for education, for his family life, nor for his balanced routine that involved working at his "bureau" and leisurely tending to his garden. His positive and optimistic disposition is reflected in his choice of postcard images which he intentionally selected in order to represent his everyday life's surroundings. The images on Emile's chosen postcards celebrate modern technology, industry and engineering in a manner that is entirely different from the antimodernist values and interests discussed in the first section. What they do have in common however, is how each includes carefully selected elements and topographical features that best represent and conform to their respective socio-cultural vision and ideals. The postcard series underscores modernity through the cards' iconography, their type-written script, the references to cars, trains, and modern building materials such as brick and cement; this is in accordance with Naomi Schor's following comment about postcards: "it is not unusual in these resolutely modernist cards to find emblems of progress piled one on top of the other."[311] Even Emile's selection of postcards picturing churches and a convent do not evoke an antimodern sense of anxiety or nostalgia experienced in the wake of an enhanced loss of spirituality, rather they represent traditional religious architecture built with modern materials - professionally designed and well constructed monuments that communicate authority, community ties, and good social order. The variety of churches constructed within close proximity to one another reflects the nature of the Eastern Townships' bilingual English/French population, and the extent to which religion contributed to the region's turn of the 20th-century cultural landscape. Due to this extraordinary use and treatment of one town's postcards during the early 20th-century in Coaticook, this chapter has offered an intimate glimpse into one man's ordinary life framed within a miniature mosaic of the Eastern Townships 's much broader cultural landscape. This analysis attests to the significant

[311] Naomi Schor, qtd. in Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity 19.

extent to which landscapes are products of human interactions with the natural environment, in addition to the ways which people's priorities and interests inform their perceptions of landscape. The everyday landscape is indeed a multi-dimensional, organic, cultivated, and heterogeneous space in which the reality of daily living unfolds, and calls attention to how Lefebvre perceives the quotidian as the humble and virtuous "ethics underlying routine and the aesthetics of familiar settings."[312]

[312] Lefebvre, Everyday, 24.

## 10. Everyday Life, Landscape & Labor

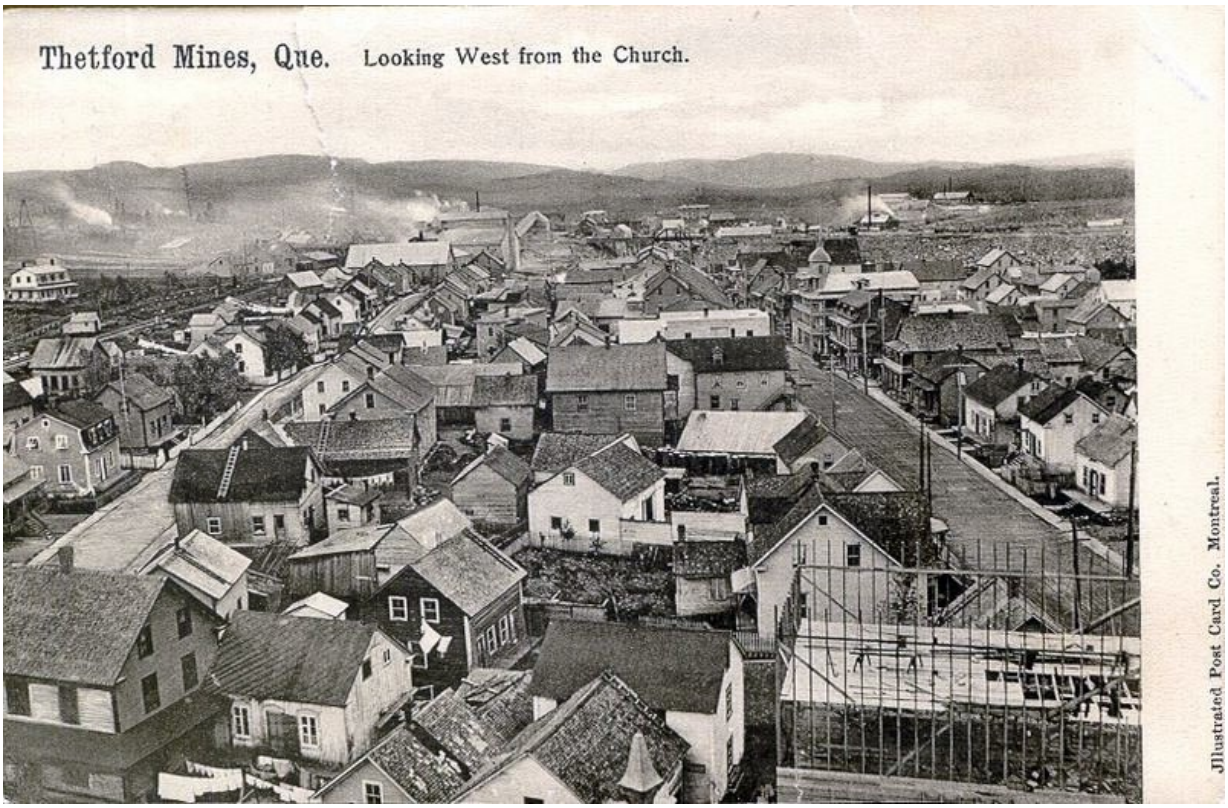


**Figure 51. Illustrated Post Card Co. Montreal, *Thetford Mines, Que. Looking West from the Church*, 1906, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

Henri Lefebvre's theories regarding everyday life place emphasis on the circumstances of modern life as experienced by working class people, pertaining to both labour and leisure. He insists that individual creativity has the potential to reinsert human purpose and value into routine and repetitive production-based daily living, stating: "only when considering the life of the working classes- and by redeeming and extolling their creative ability- did it become clear that there was a power concealed in everyday life's apparent banality, a depth beneath its triviality, *something extraordinary in it very ordinariness*."[313] He underscores how the dignity underlying the unique and special quality of labour, prior to modernity' introduction of repetitive and regulated technology, has been lost by modern man and woman's labouring classes. Lefebvre takes exception with how "past '*labours of skill*' have been

[313] Lefebvre, Everyday, 37.

replaced by commercial '*products',*"[314] and how the monotony and routine imposed within the modern industrial workplace generates the personal yearning for escape through something extraordinary. The laborers quotidian routines contributed to transferring the working class' attention to leisure as a means of escape from daily routines and everyday life's ordinary patterns. I now want to transfer the discussion approximately 100 kilometers to the south- east of Coaticook, where one encounters a "darker side" of the Eastern Townships' cultural landscape in Thetford Mines.

Many of the postcards representing this industrial region contrast significantly with Emile's presentation of his pleasant and picturesque hometown nestled within its spacious, orderly and wholesome environment. A quick glance at a postcard's bird's eye view of the town of Thetford Mines *Looking West from the Church* (fig. 51) offers an altogether different perspective of everyday domestic circumstances than the one portrayed by Emile. The landscape pictured in this postcard appears dismal, congested, and disorganized due to the randomly oriented buildings that are tightly packed together between the two parallel dirt roads. One senses that space and land are limited in this densely inhabited part of town, despite the breadth of gently sloping hills visible in the distant background - a familiar type of broad, flowing mountain range Coburn often applied to his horizon lines, as seen in figure 7. In contrast to Coburn's painted views of the Eastern Townships however, trees, shrubs, or other signs of vegetation are scarce in this postcard image of Thetford Mines; it is difficult to determine where the era's much needed private vegetable gardens could be planted in such a built up space. The streets appear to extend towards a stone embankment which intercepts them horizontally, while beyond that embankment, and the residential limits, the buildings and structures thin out towards the mountain range, shrouded in what seems to be a haze of smoke. A small scattering of tall vertical poles and towers are barely seen as they fade into that distant haze, which is not solely caused by smoke but is, actually, also toxic dust spraying from the surrounding asbestos mines and factories. The residential structures

[314] Lefebvre, Everyday, 38.

featured in the foreground of this image are occupied by the labourers, and their families, who were employed by the region's influential and privately owned mining companies.

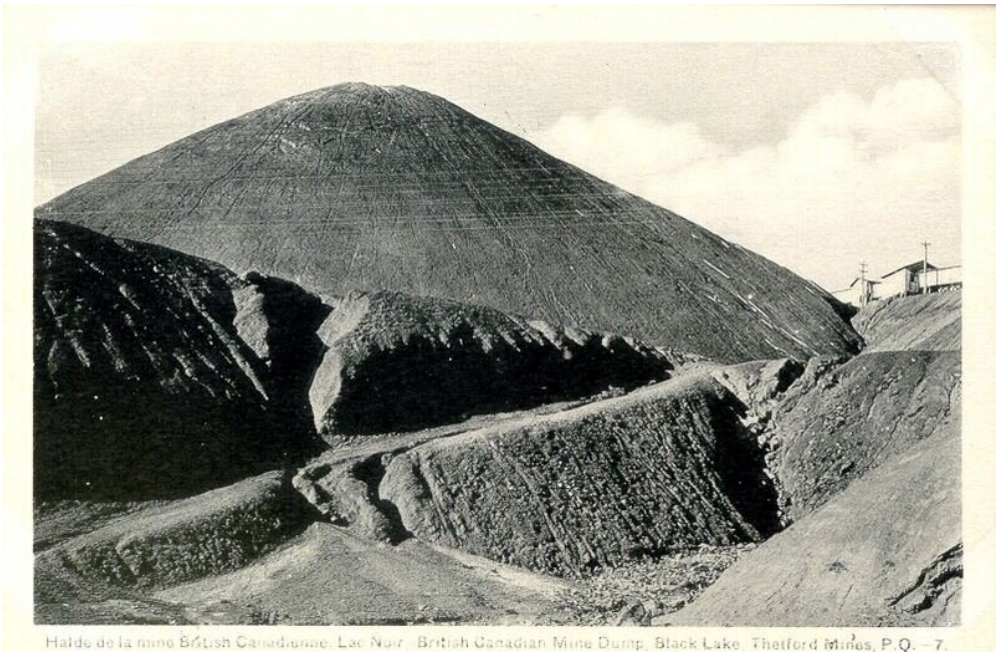


**Figure 52. Photogelatine Engraving Co. Limited (PECO), *British Canadian Mine Dump Black Lake, Thetford Mines, P.Q.*, c. 1935, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

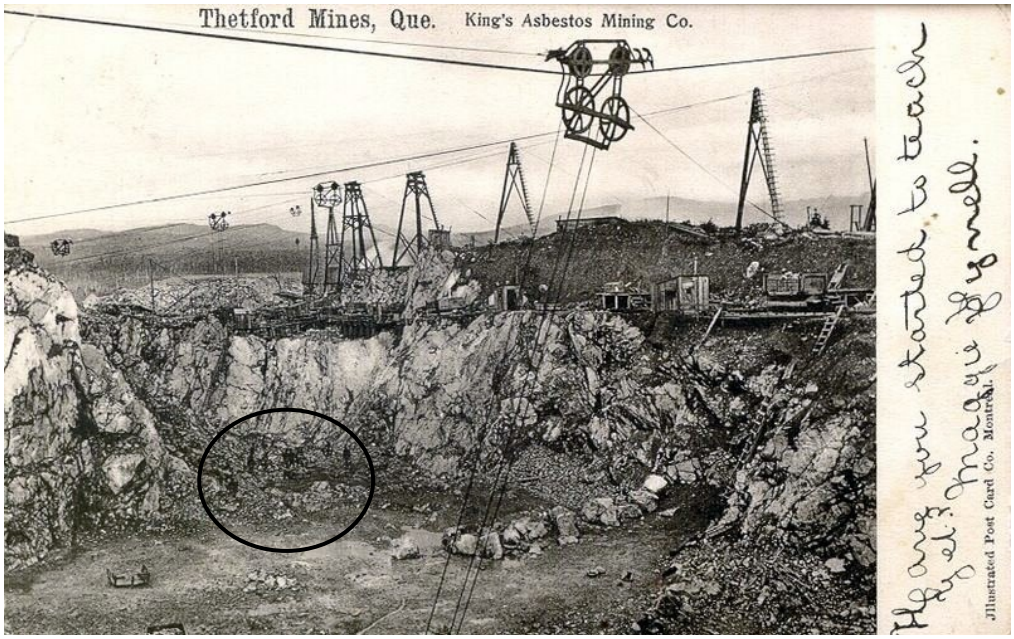


**Figure 53. Illustrated Post Card Co. Montreal, *Thetford Mines, Que. King's Asbestos Mining Co.*, 1906, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

The broad landscape that surrounded these comparatively compact and congested domestic spaces was an industrial one that differed significantly from the majority of the agricultural, touristic or manufacturing terrain that characterized the Eastern Townships during the early 20th - century, despite sharing aspects of human intervention with them. The Thetford Mines postcards, however, make no attempt to portray a harmonious balance between nature and culture, nor do they convey any sense of concern or regard for the natural environment by the mining companies as they aggressively and competitively exploited that environment to extract its ore. Mining towns like Thetford Mines and Black Lake were surrounded by endless miles of heaping, snaking tailings and mountainous dumps, such as the one featured on the postcard entitled *The British Canadian Mine Dump Black Lake, Thetford Mines* shown in figure 52. We can observe the scale of this stark and peculiarly smooth man-made peak that emerges above the ground level in this image, and how it dwarfs the structures near its base to the right. This dark mountain of rubble was merely one of countless others that gradually reconfigured the region's landscape as a result of harvesting natural resources for profit. The monumental sized heaps gradually emerged and multiplied as a result of waste accumulation generated by sustained practices of digging and dynamiting into the earth's surface in search of asbestos ore, as the miners laboured deep beneath ground level in caves and pits similar to the ones that can be seen in figure 53, a company issued postcard branded with the name *King's Asbestos Mining Co.* The landscape represented in this postcard is a dismal and even fearsome one due to its harshness. I have drawn a circle around a group of workers to ensure that they do not get overlooked given their diminutive scale relative to the other elements and equipment in this work place. Other than the small crew of labourers, there are no other traces of living organisms that can be seen in this pit, whether related to vegetation, animal, or water. It is a foreboding and starkly apocalyptic industrial site that shows signs of extreme devastation. Here man has dug into the earth's core for the purpose of extracting a singular resource, leaving behind deep stone pits, a convoluted maze of caves, and large mountains of dumped tailings that emitted toxic

residues. The resulting environment can be summarized as a terrible, darkly sublime and dystopian space, that was actually an everyday work place for several generations of laborers in the Eastern Townships.

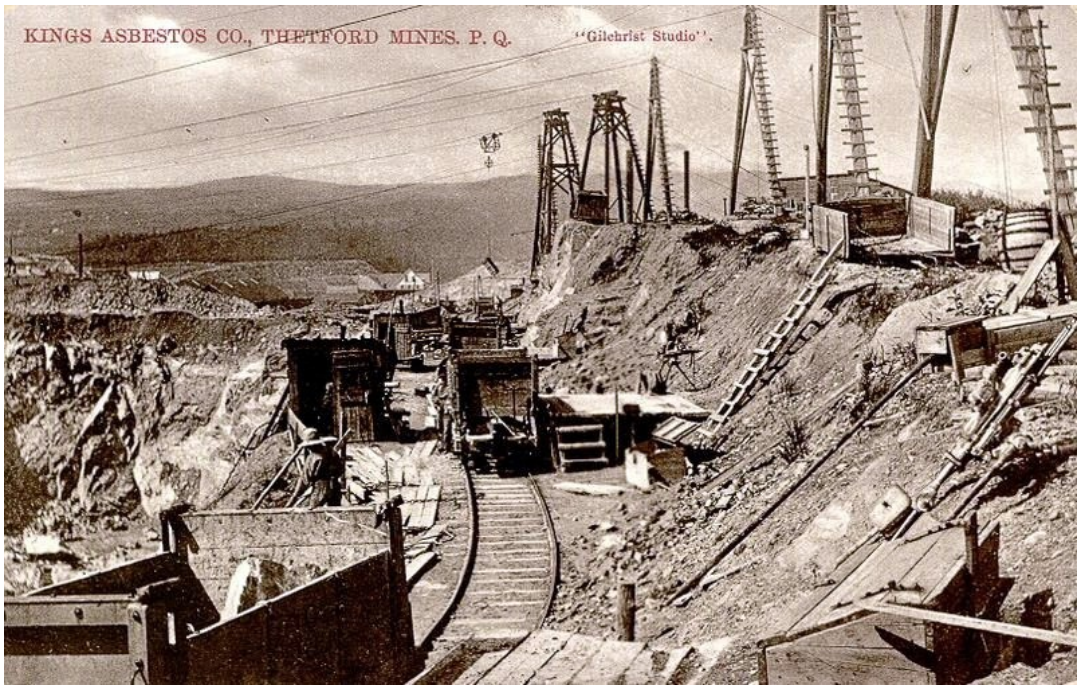


**Figure 54. Gilchrist Studio, *Kings Asbestos Co., Thetford Mines P.Q.*, c. 1907, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

In order to assess the significance of these postcard images, it is important to address the history of asbestos mining in this region. Due to the vast amount of asbestos rock buried within the ground in the region that encompassed the towns of Thetford Mines, Black Lake, East Broughton and Asbestos, one report written during the 1960s claimed that "le sous-sol du rectangle des Cantons de l'Est renferme plus d'amiante que celui de toute autre région du globe."[315] These towns sustained mining practices for well over a century, and the asbestos industry's traces of labour have physically reconfigured the area's natural topography to this day. The rock's fibers were first exploited for commercial use in the region during the late 1870s, following Joseph Fecteau's discovery of asbestos in Quebec's Thetford township in 1876. It was Robert Grant Ward, a holder of logging rights from the

[315] Frère Fabien, s.c., L'Amiante, 168.

government, who later purchased the site of the discovery in May 1878, the same year mining of asbestos by large companies began. Following the arrival of the railway in 1879, the region's existing installations and labour intensive activities relating to mineral extraction grew rapidly and regularly until it ceased completely in 2012. By 1885 seven open pit mines were in full operation in the region, employing 350 workers.[316] A report issued in 1969 claimed that since 1876 "hommes et machines ont arrachés à la terre plus de 30 millions de tonnes du minéral fibreux."[317] During that industrial era, the Eastern Townships was considered "[Le] Plus Important Producteur Des Fibres D'Amiante Du Monde Libre."[318] The town of Thetford Mines was originally named Kingsville, after an influential mine owner William Kingsley.[319] Figures 54, 55 and 56 are postcards that were commissioned by King's Asbestos Co. and photographed by "Gilchrist Studio". The images showcase the railway and mining industries' well established insertion into the surrounding landscape by the turn of the 20th-century, as their infrastructures appear permanently embedded into the natural environment, which simultaneously suggests, legitimizes and reinforces industry's authority over nature. By the 1890s the asbestos pits were already deep, however in 1906 the extremity of their depth prompted one reporter from *Le Soleil* to share his impressions of an asbestos mine. He described how the excavations

> are two or three hundred feet deep, and the men that can be seen working down below look no bigger than rats. It is impossible to make out their features; all that can be seen is that they are moving, coming and going, and that they seem to inhabit another world. [. . .] These poor fellows go down in the morning and come back up at night. [. . .] Here and there, leading from ledge to the next, rickety stairs, ladders, or carved-out steps can be seen [. . .] It is terrifying to think that human beings can be condemned to go up and down perpetually this way.[320]

[316] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," <http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca/en/keys/webtours/VQ_P3_11_EN>, consulted on June 7, 2016.
[317] Frère Fabien, 169.
[318] Dave MacDonald, qtd. in L'Amiante, 120.
[319] Thetford Mines, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/thetford-mines/>, consulted May 30, 2016.
[320] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," consulted on June 7, 2016.

The image presented on the postcard identified as *La descente dans les "pits" à 800 pied* (fig. 57) reinforces the reporter's description pertaining to the pit's scale and abysmal environment. It is indeed difficult to make out the darkly shadowed human forms that "look no bigger than rats" amidst the pit's harshly textured surfaces and jagged debris. The figures are camouflaged by the rocky terrain, and their presence in this place is minimized in comparison to the tall towers and long steel cable systems that traverse the pit and periodically drop deeply into it in order to retrieve the bins filled with several tons of ore or spoil. The workers too were transported in these bins on a daily basis, as they were lowered into the pits in the morning and hauled back out again ten hours later, six days a week. The towers, called cable derricks, were in operation from the turn of the 20th-century until the 1930s, serving as an efficient means to extract the ore from the ever deepening pits. The system was, however, dangerous for the miners, as the cables and wooden bins travelled overhead carrying up to four tons of rock and debris that regularly spilled out of the bins from above, landing on the miners below. Additionally, on occasion "the suspension cable broke. Many injuries also occurred as bins were being loaded at the bottom of the pit or unloaded at the top. For example, if the derricks were operated carelessly, the bins could go back down too fast and crush the workers below."[321] The various hazards for mining workers were indeed numerous and very much part of their routine work environment. In a newspaper article published by *Le Soleil* on June 13, 1904 it was reported how:

> A terrible accident occurred here on Saturday. A young man from Sacré-Coeur de Jésus, in the Beauce, Joseph Drouin, aged sixteen, had come looking for work from the King brothers, who are mine owners. After obtaining what he sought, the young man went walking around the company property. At about 9:30 a.m., he was seen on the railway tracks. Small cars full of rock from the various pits travel constantly along these tracks. These cars and their contents weigh approximately five or six tons. The poor unfortunate was struck by one of these cars and literally cut in two.[322]

[321] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," consulted on June 7, 2016.
[322] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," consulted on June 7, 2016.

Between 1912 and 1931 the number of accidents in the Quebec asbestos industry continued to rise. At Thetford Mines alone "an average of five people a year lost their lives in mining accidents. Starting in 1918, there were over 100 people injured each year. These accidents had many different causes: rock slides, mistakes operating the cable derricks or handling explosives, out-of-control cars. Even in the shops, workers were surrounded by moving gears, pulleys, belts and drive shafts: wearing loose clothing could be fatal."[323] At the Bell Mines in Thetford Mines, for instance, a single rock slide crushed seven men to death in December, 1938.[324] The Quebec Mining Law of 1892 stipulated that boys under the age of 15 could not be hired to work underground, a law that did not apply to open-pit asbestos mines. Upon close examination of figure 57, *La descente dans les "pits" à 800 pied*, it is possible to make out a small cluster of tiny figures at the bottom, center of the image. It is also possible to distinguish the outline of three darkly shadowed people. The figure on the left appears to be kneeling or squatting with arms extended, ready to scoop up the smaller figure facing him, perhaps a child who will be loaded into the bin located diagonally to the group's right. Further to the right and slightly above that bin, we see a loaded container suspended in mid air by gables in the process of being extracted from the pit. The pit appears as a discomforting, severe and dangerous industrial environment riddled with hard, jagged remnants, or spoil, from its last blast of dynamite. The engineered systems of cables, pulleys and towers needed in order to extract the resources from the land are reminders of modern man's extreme willingness and efforts to remove from the earth whatever was deemed of value. In his report written in 1894, the Quebec mining inspector wrote "I have already mentioned that children of eight to ten years of age are employed to sort some kinds of ore, especially asbestos, but I have ascertained that they work with their brothers, only during holidays, and within their capabilities. In any case, there is nothing contrary to the Mining Law or harmful to the children's health in this practice."[325] In Canada, the

[323] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," consulted on June 7, 2016.
[324] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," consulted on June 7, 2016.
[325] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," consulted on June 7, 2016.

prohibition of child labour was not enacted until the 20th-century, therefore prior to that boys and girls from working class families under the age of 15 years old were commonly employed in mines and factories. When looking at the postcard in figure 53, the viewer gets a good sense of the open-face mines' depth, in this case dug 800 feet down, although pits were also dug almost twice as deep, sometimes measuring 1 500 feet beneath the ground level.[326] To give a sense of scale, a standard ratio for modern highrises is approximately 10 feet per floor, therefore an 800 ft. deep pit's depth is comparable to the height of an 80-story skyscraper.


**Figure 55. Gilchrist Studio, *Kings Asbestos Co., Thetford Mines P.Q.,* 1907, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

The Eastern Townships' landscape in the asbestos region is an industrial one that is defined by its monumental dumps, or spoil heaps of waste which have been dug from the land since the late 19th-century, right up until the mines closed in 2012, in order to access its ore beneath the ground. As each pit grew deeper over the years, the heaps of waste scattered across the landscape developed into mountains of tailings. The miners' labour steadily transformed their local surroundings as each day they

[326] Frère Fabien, 166.

added 90% of what they extracted from the ground to the piles.[327] If we recall that by the late 1960s more than 30 million tons of fibrous minerals had been extracted from the ground, then we can estimate that by that same time there had been approximately 270 000 000 tons of tailings excavated from the ground and dumped into mountainous heaps in the region. The tailings, also called mine dumps or refuse, represented a significant negative and material impact on the local landscape that resulted from asbestos mining, and underscores the extent of environmental waste generated from mining. The traces of labour left in the form of steel tracks laid, wooden towers erected, and ravished open-face mines featured in the pair of sepia toned postcards (figs. 54, 55) leave no doubt of human activities and mining interests in this hazardous, industrial space. Ladders, pulleys, and pipes litter each landscape' foreground with evidence of the worksite's reliance on manual labour. In both of these images, the lone human labourer pictured is minimized by the railway machinery represented, appearing as a generic secondary human resource overshadowed by the company's material property. Given the text that identifies the site's owner and location, it can be further established that these two postcards were issued after 1905, the year that the town of Kingsville was renamed Thetford Mines. Figure 54's verso, although unposted and without a stamp, bears a handwritten message and is dated "9 Juil, 1907". Figure 55's verso bears the following stamped postmark: Thetford Mines AM.JUL.20.07.QUE. The handwritten message on this card informed a sister of her brother's safe arrival at Thetford Mines, and indicates the next stop on his journey:

> Chair soeur, Je me suis rendu heureusement. J'ai débarqué à 6hrs 1/2. J'ai bien du plaisir je part pour Lac Weedon lundi matin. Au revoir a mardi probablement. Des amitiés a tous. Ton frère affectioné A.G.[328]

Examined together the three postcards photographed by *Gilchrist* (figs. 54-56) convey the message that this is very much a labour intensive, material landscape - one that privileges man's dominion over the

[327] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," consulted on June 7, 2016.
[328] BAnQ, Magella Bureau Fonds, Thetford Mines.

natural environment. The fibrous thread, or asbestos, that was scraped from the green colored stones was incombustible, rendering it a highly valued resource to mine. Additionally, the growing railroad industry "was among the first to make extensive use of asbestos and asbestos-containing products. The demand for the product increased as railroad engineers began to use asbestos materials to line refrigeration units, boxcars and cabooses; it was especially useful for insulating pipes, boilers and fireboxes in the steam locomotives of that era."[329] As the railway tracks continued to inch their way throughout the region during the late 19th and into the early 20th-century, the demand for asbestos continued to rise steadily, as did the mountainous mining dumps.

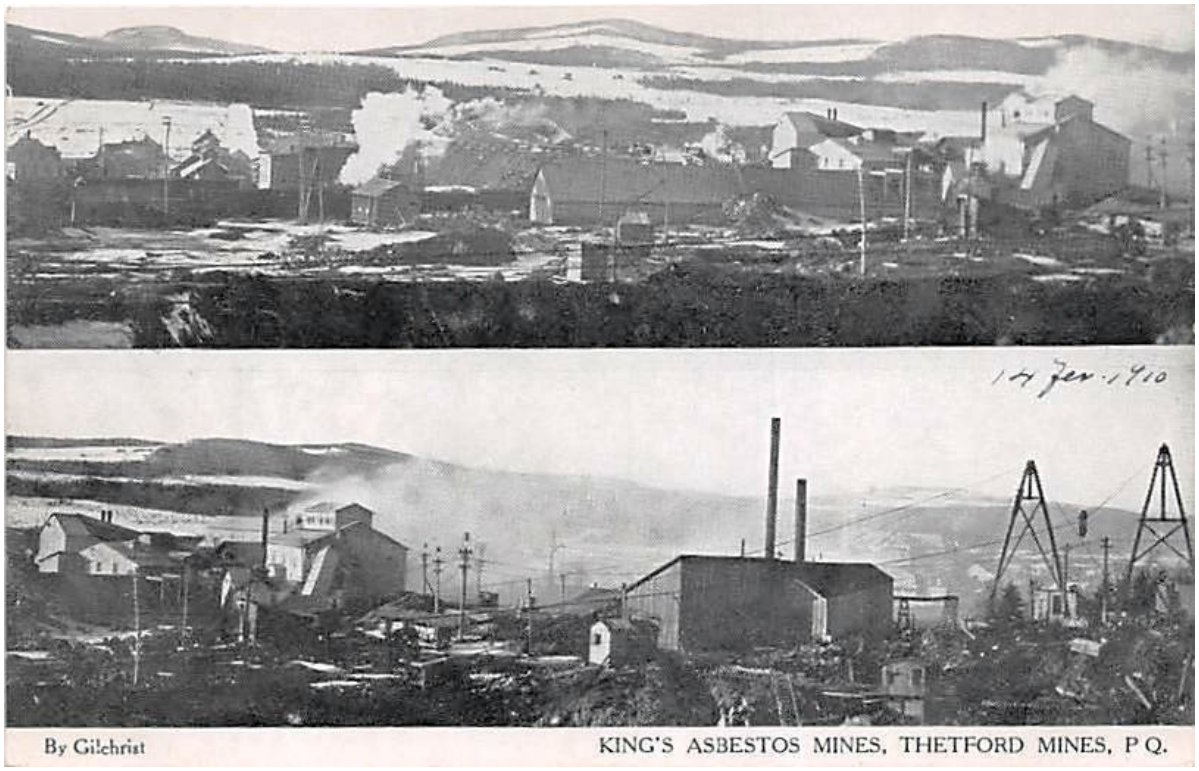


**Figure 56. Gilchrist, *King's Asbestos Mines, Thetford Mines P.Q.*, 1910, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

[329] F Habashi, "Historical Metallurgy: History of asbestos", *CIM Magazine*, November 2011, np. <http://www.cim.org/en/Publications-and-Technical-Resources/Publications/CIM-Magazine/November-2011/history/historical-metallurgy.aspx>, consulted on May 25, 2016.


**Figure 57. Illustrated Post Card Co. Montreal*, Mines de Thetford Mines. La Descente dans les "Pits" à 800 pieds de profondeur du niveau de la Ville,* c.1906, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

By the early 20th-century, "researchers began to notice that a large number of lung problems and deaths occurred in asbestos mining towns. In 1917-1918, several studies indicated that asbestos workers were dying at a young age."[330] In a letter written by Pamphile Couture thanking the Compagnie Médicale Moro for their "wonder drug", the miner from Thetford Mines explained "I felt sure that one day I would be carried out dead from the mine, and every day I wondered if I would have the strength to go back up top. When I got to the top of the stairs, I felt weak, I could no longer breathe. And the unbearable pains in my back, the outbreaks of [. . .] boils. That is all over now, thanks to your wonderful

[330] Habashi, consulted on May 25, 2016.

Moro pills."[331] Within a decade, medical journals were publishing articles that linked asbestos to lung cancer and other breathing related illnesses. Figure 58 shows an un-mailed postcard that represents an elevated view of a portion of Thetford mines' residential area, with mines visible in the background, situated on the other side of an embankment that is in fact a slag heap, or tailing, that stretches from the left side of the image to the right, and beyond. The area features densely packed rows of connected buildings with little or no space separating one structure from the next. There is a conspicuous absence of trees lining the streets to shade the homes, with no visible signs of grass lawns or gardens within this picture postcard's frame. The whole community was engulfed by the growing mountains of tailings residue generated by the Beaver, King, Bell, and Johnson mining companies that conducted open pit and underground mining operations. This town deferred to the mining companies' needs, and oriented its everyday domestic living space accordingly, in order to accommodate those needs. For example, due to the mining companies' land rights and their continuous need to expand outward as they dug deeper, by the 1950s "a major part of downtown was relocated to enlarge the King mine."[332] Once a pit became too deep, it was expanded in circumference to gain access to the rock. Such initiatives were presented by the companies as necessary to benefit the workers, as the following two examples suggest. One company explained: "on a drainé l'eau d'un lac pour permettre aux mineurs d'atteindre le minéral."[333] Another described how "des édifices, dont des écoles, des magazins, et des maisons ont dû être deplacés pour permettre d'étendre l'exploitation de la richesse du sol, créatrice d'emplois."[334] The unstamped card introduced above was nonetheless addressed to Mlle Jeanette Gérard and perhaps mailed in an envelope. It was sent from her father who playfully wrote (fig. 58):

[331] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," consulted on June 7, 2016.
[332] Jean-Marie Dubois et Pierre Mailhot, "Thetford Mines", *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, July 13, 2015. <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/thetford-mines/>, consulted on May 30.
[333] Frère Fabien, 165.
[334] Frère Fabien, 166.

ma bien chère Jeanette. Si jamais tu fais une bonne petite religieuse je ne te souhaites pas de venir dans le couvent de Thetford il y a trop de poucière d'amiante ici: c'est trop malsain. Je voudrais que tu vives vielle vieille pour que je puisse en ce temps la te parler de tes petits caprices j'ai l'intention de vivre vieux vieux vieux. Papa qui veut rire avec toi et t'embrasse avec amour.[335]

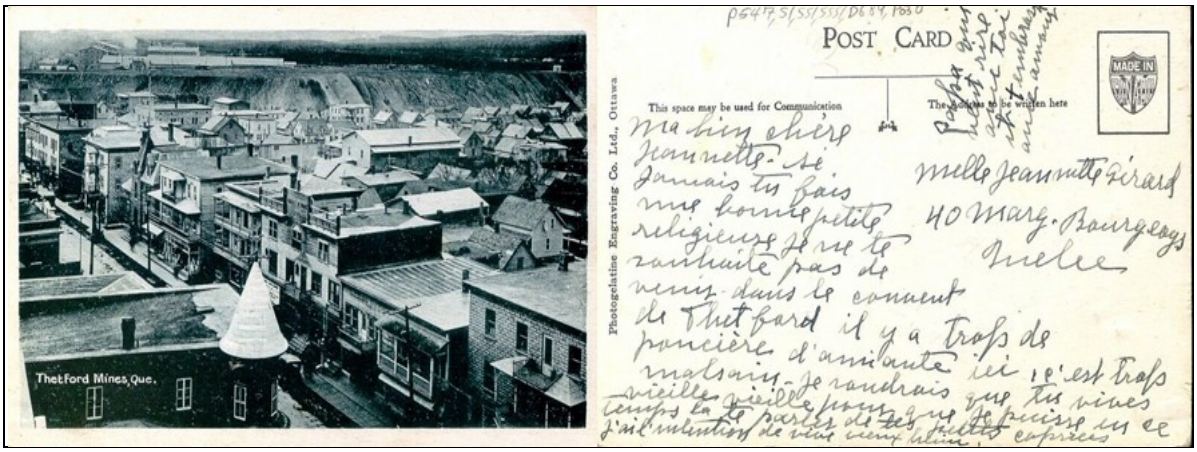


**Figure 58. Photogelatine Engraving Co. Ltd. (PECO), *Thetford Mines, Que.*, c. 1935, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

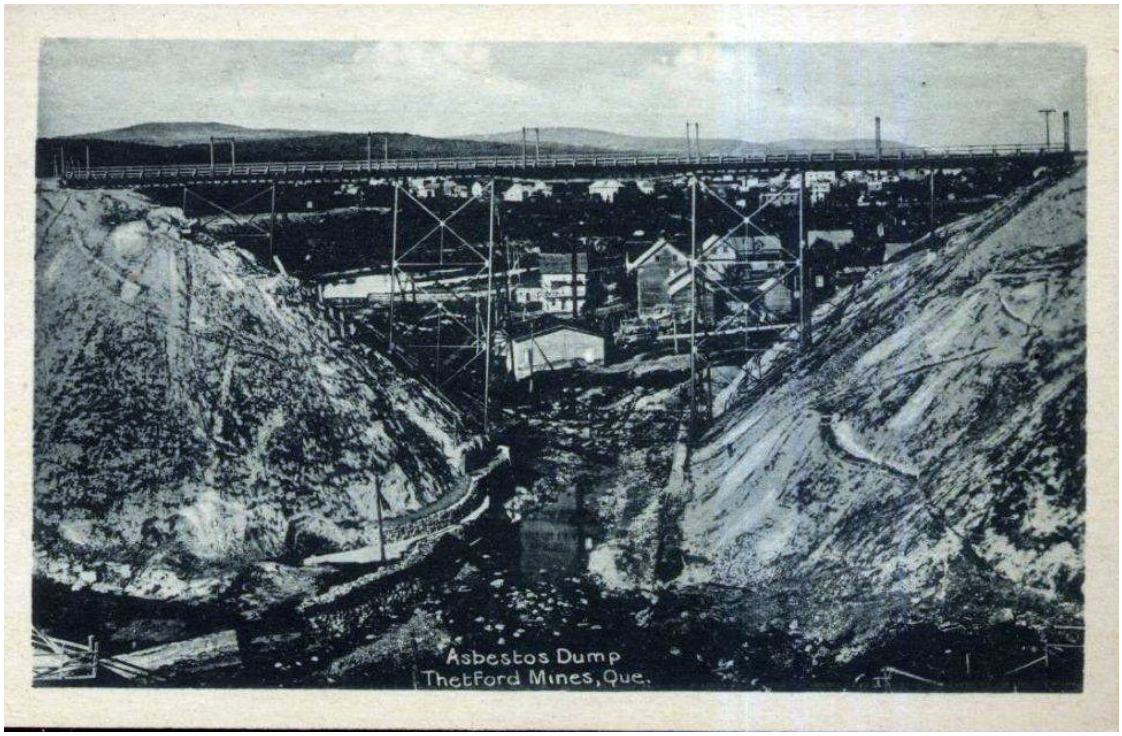


**Figure 59. Unidentified, *Asbestos Dump, Thetford Mines, Que.*, c. 1930, photo-mechanical print postcard, private collection, <http://www.ebay.com/itm/POSTCARD-THETFORD-MINES-CANADA-ASBESTOS-FACTORY-DUMP-BIRDs-EYE-AERIAL-VIEW-1930s-/321761599717?hash=item4aea7c60e5:g:ckoAAOSwl8NVV58>.**

[335] BAnQ, Magella Bureau Fonds, Thetford Mines.

Although the father was affectionately teasing his daughter in this example, his message underscores how the living conditions in Thetford Mines were unhealthy due to the town's poor air quality caused by mining dust. The image on the card further reinforces just how closely the town's residential area was in relation to the mines, the tailings and the asbestos dust seen rising well above the buildings in the not so distant background.

The postcard titled *Asbestos Dump, Thetford Mines, Que* (fig. 59) provides another view of the monumentality of waste generated by the area's mines. The two heaps in the foreground can easily be mistaken for mountains at first glance. They are separated by a running stream in the center, and connected by a wooden bridge engineered to accommodate the continuous traffic of cartloads filled with heaps of tailings sent to be dumped onto the growing piles of waste. It is possible to note how the mountains of tailings hem the existing buildings in and systematically overshadow the structures while gradually impeding the residents' visual and physical access to their surroundings. The waste matter consisted of an accumulation of particles that were comparable in scale to a granule of sand, chunks of blasted stone, and water that inevitably drained into streams which formed at the pile's base. Seen from a distance the spiraling ascending tiers of waste resemble ancient Greek theatres that featured stone seating carved directly into the mountainsides. In a 2001 article written for *The Globe and Mail,* reporters John Gray and Stephanie Nolen describe Thetford Mines' topography as "weird geography. The huge open-pit mines were once the largest pits in the Western hemisphere. The massive rounded hills of tailings seem to have been dropped onto the landscape from above. Except for the trucks spiralling ever downward in the pits, you might figure you're on the moon."[336] On any given day there would be little to shield the town's residents from dust blowing off the spreading maze of tailings that wound their way around, and through, the community's streets. Gray and Nolen reported how "for

[336] John Gray and Stephanie Nolen. "Canada's chronic asbestos problem", *The Globe and Mail,* Nov. 21, 2011, last updated Jun. 27, 2014, p.1. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/rob-magazine/canadas-chronic-asbestos-problem/article4184217/?page=all>, consulted June 16, 2016.

more than a century asbestos dust in the air was as omnipresent as the air itself. If you left your shoes on the floor near an open window, they'd be outlined in dust when you picked them up in the morning."[337]

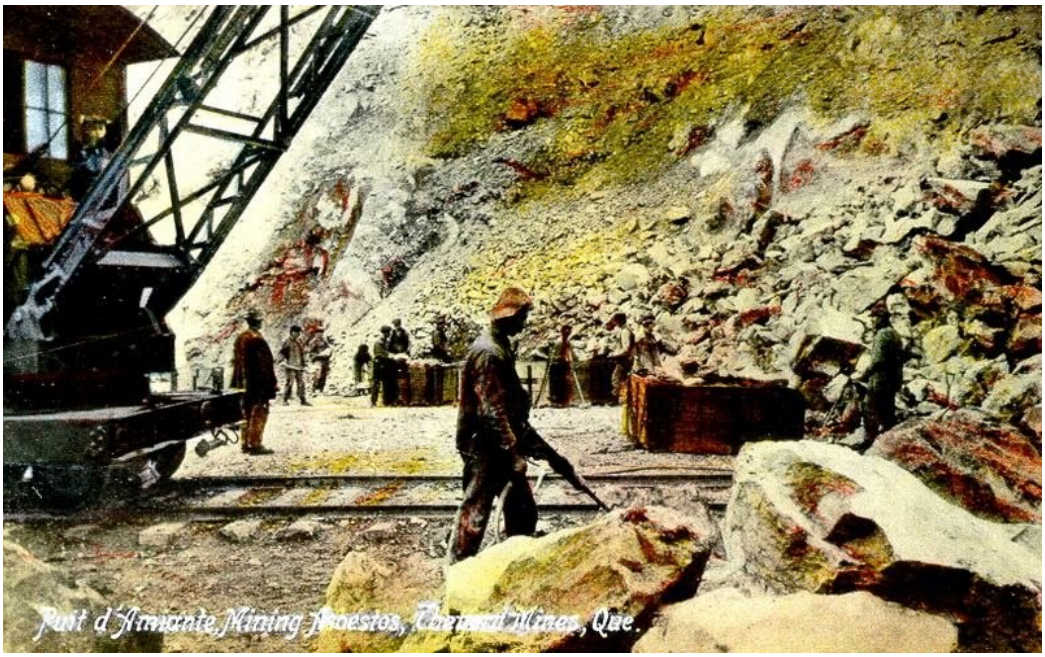


**Figure 60. Novelty Mfg. & Art Co. Ltd., *Puit d'Amiante, Mining Asbestos, Thetford Mines, Que.*, c. 1930, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

Historian Valérie Ouellette also wrote about the asbestos dust problem, noting how "vers les années 1910-1920, les méthodes de forage se sont améliorés avec la venue des foreuses hydrauliques surnommées "la tueuse de maris" dû à la poussière qu'elles dégageaient et qui étaient source de nombreux maux."[338] One U.S. government study conducted in 1918 reported that "in the practice of American and Canadian life insurance companies, asbestos workers are generally declined on account of the assumed health-injurious conditions of the industry."[339] In the center foreground of figure 60, *Puit D'Amiante, Mining Asbestos, Thetford Mines, Que.,* a driller is pictured using the pneumatic drill, or

[337] Gray and Nolen, 1.
[338] Valérie Ouellette, "Évolution des mines et des conditions des mineurs à travers le siècle", Université de Sherbrooke: April 16, 2004. <http://www.bilan.usherb.ca/bilan/pages/collaborations/8513.html>, consulted on June 6, 2016.
[339] Qtd. in Gray, John and Stephanie Nolen, 1.

"tueuse de maris" described by Ouellette. In this eerily colored card that is dominated by patches of acid yellow and other hues that were perhaps chosen to underscore the toxicity of the worksite, the workers have descended into the terraced pit to break up the mineral after strategically placed explosives have blasted it into relatively manageable blocks. The drills were then used to break up the remaining larger chunks into rocks, which were further broken up by hand using sledgehammers, as seen held in the hands of other workers standing behind the driller at the base of the stone wall in figure 60. Some of the men are holding their heavy sledgehammers in both hands, as others manually load the bins with the recently broken stones. From there the loaded ore was sent up to ground level for further processing in the different sheds. This picture was taken after the 1930s, when the derrick cable system used to transport the bins was replaced by mechanized crane-like machinery, as can be seen in the foreground to the left of the driller. Throughout the 1930s various laws were passed to improve the ventilation in areas where people came into contact with the mining dust. Incredibly though, "despite its known affects on health and the environment, the use of asbestos was at its highest from the 1940s to 1970s."[340] During those decades asbestos was used in an estimated 3 000 industrial applications including, for example, insulation, textiles, cement, paper, plastic, flooring, ceiling tiles, and asphalt. As is noticeable when examining *King's Asbestos Mines, Thetford Mines, P.Q.*, dated by hand 14 Fev., 1910 (fig. 56), the mines were fully operational throughout the winter months, as we see by the gently sloping hills bearing long strips of snow in the background. The card's verso was not postmarked, it was however page number 3 of a handwritten and mundane message sent to an unidentified person. One source indicated that by 1910, 3 000 labourers were "working day and night and the cobbing sheds were at a peak production."[341] The cobbing sheds were where young, often female, workers further hammered the smaller asbestos rocks by hand in order to expose and separate the asbestos fibres from the stone. From there the fibres were sent to bagging rooms, where they were sorted according to

[340] Habashi, consulted on May 25, 2016.
[341] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," consulted on June 7, 2016.

length, and packaged by hand into 100 lb. bags for distribution. Figure 56, *King's Asbestos Mines*, is a postcard of a professionally photographed panoramic diptych that promotes the King company's prominent industrial installations, which are framed in order to make the company appear as though it dominates the surrounding landscape. The image reinforces the company's authority in the region as a well established industry and employer, and resonates with the large scaled Industrial Specialty Manufacturing Company's diptych panoramic photograph introduced in section 1 (fig. 16). It is easy to imagine such a large-scale original version of this tiny postcard's image professionally-framed and hanging in a boardroom, or on an executive's well appointed office wall, a commissioned self-aggrandizing corporate trophy to symbolize the company's sway over the region and its competitors. Such business issued postcards further promoted the company as hand-sized roaming advertisements, based on a similar practice that was established in Great Britain and Germany during the 1870s, when advertising cards began circulating. In Canada, private business postcards without illustrations had been approved for circulation in January, 1895.

The asbestos industry in Quebec experienced its first strike on October 18, 1915 at Thetford Mines.[342] In large part, it was the heightened demand for asbestos during World War I that contributed to the miners' dissatisfaction with their lowered wages from the previous year, in light of how the companies continued to hire more workers to meet their growing production needs. The fiber was used in the production of, for instance, war vessels including ships and submarines, and various other products that ranged from gloves worn when handling guns to gas-mask filters. Due to this heightened need for asbestos, the workers realized their bargaining power, and seized the opportunity to object to their 14 % wage reduction from the previous year.[343] Consequently, approximately 2,500 mine employees took part in the initial strike, and "the other workers of the town were getting ready to join them. But on October 20, company executives, 'to avoid further delay in this matter', gave in to the

[342] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," consulted on June 7, 2016.
[343] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," consulted on June 7, 2016.

demands of most of their employees, whose wages were brought back to the levels of August 1914."[344] The labourers' victory contributed to the formation of two separate unions in 1916. Then, on April 23, 1923 employees of the Asbestos Corporation of Canada once again went on strike, this time out of protest for the arbitrary firing of two senior employees by the company's assistant manager, C.H. McNutt. According to reports, the strikers "seized McNutt and forced him onto the Sherbrooke train. Two days later, McNutt returned to Thetford Mines escorted by forty armed policemen, but the strikers were not intimidated. The local member of the legislative assembly and local police had to intervene to prevent a riot."[345] Although that was considered a significant victory for the workers, it was the later strike of 1949, which lasted for five months from February 13 to July, that had a lasting impact on Quebecers' collective consciousness and social history. Many attributed that strike as awakening the spirit of solidarity and confrontation that fuelled Quebec's *Quiet Revolution* or *Revolution Tranquille.*[346] The tension stemmed from the workers' insistence on how " l'entreprise possède une nature sociale et non seulement économique", and called for union representatives to obtain rights to contribute to the management of the companies. Additionally, "les syndicats réclament une augmentation de 15 cents l'heure, l'élimination de la poussière d'amiante et la retenue à la source des cotisations syndicales."[347] Once the company representatives rejected the workers' demands during the winter of 1949, 2 000 miners from Asbestos went on strike, soon followed by 3 000 more from Thetford Mines. These 5 000 asbestos workers from the Eastern Townships were favorably supported by the province's press, clergy and public alike, even though the strike was deemed illegal and resulted in violent clashes between the miners and 'strike breakers' who required physical protection from Quebec's Provincial Police.

The groups of postcards presented thus far in this chapter have addressed the postcard's ability to operate communicatively through both image and text, even when the messages conveyed though

[344] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," consulted on June 7, 2016.
[345] "White Gold Pioneers: Asbestos Mining," consulted on June 7, 2016.
[346] Gray and Nolen, 2.
[347] Ouellette, consulted on June 6, 2016.

the two mediums are unrelated. These postcards have demonstrated how landscape, as a subject, moves well beyond its visual and aesthetic qualities into the much broader domain of everyday life. As this mining series has shown, landscapes represent much more than harmonious and soothing sites for recreation, leisure, pleasure, or escape. Not all landscapes are carefully designed, cultivated, nurtured, or admired for their exoticism, beauty, or mystery. The Thetford Mines postcards present landscapes that are literally beneath the ground line, dug under and into the earth's surface, effectively enclosing the miners below with impossibly high stone walls. These landscapes are dirty, harsh, confining, hazardous, and toxic. Some of the images represented on these postcards' surfaces were clearly conceived to be used promotionally by competing mining companies in the region, while others seemed to suggest (hu)mankind's dominion over the natural environment and entitlement to its resources at any cost. What becomes evident looking at these postcards today, is that the gruelling hardships of the working class and their collective manual labour has contributed significantly to physically reshaping the landscape we inhabit today.

## 11. Technology, Mobility, Space and Time

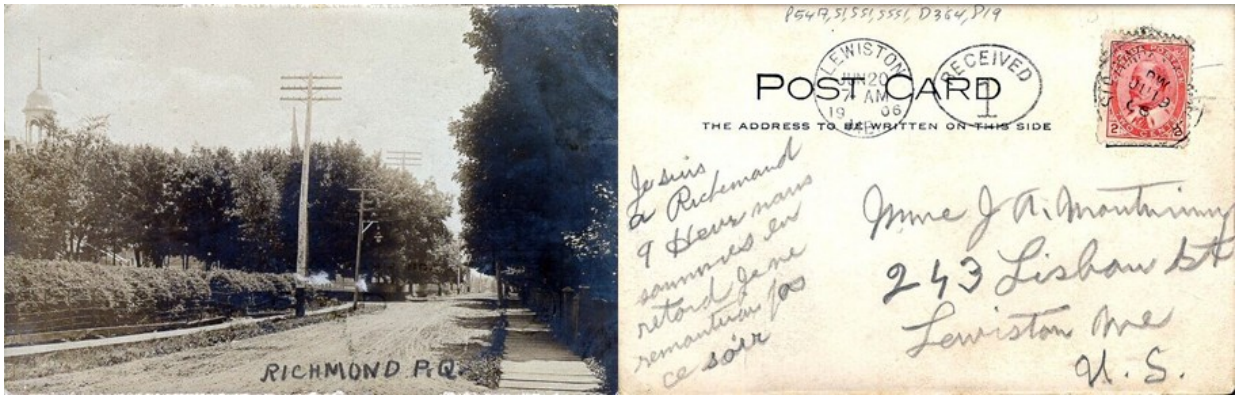


**Figure 61. Anonymous, *Richmond P.Q.*, 1906, photograph, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

As the previous two case-studies have shown, the landscape can harbour traces of each subsequent generation's cultural priorities, social preoccupations, and material interventions that are woven into the very texture of the natural environment's surfaces. At the same time the postcard, as a cultural object, has the potential to alter the meaning of landscapes. Timothy Ingold addresses how "one of the outstanding features of human technical practices lies in their embeddedness in the current of sociality."[348] The current cultural preoccupation with, if not addiction to, electronic messaging and social media sharing resonates with the early 20th-century's social practice of exchanging postcards as a quick, brief, and illustrated means of communication. In hindsight, people's desire to stay "in touch" through messaging has continued for well over a century in Canada, dating back to 1898 when the nation's first private postal cards began circulating.[349] With illustrated postcards the message was only part of the communication; the illustrations themselves quickly became objects of popular interest on an international scale. Today exchanging pictures has reached epic proportions through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, e-mail and texting. The most obvious difference is a technological one; today's images and messages are exchanged virtually rather than materially via postcards. The

[348] Tim Ingold, "The temporality of the landscape", 195.
[349] Poitras, 17.

postcard's popularity peaked during the period that dates from the turn of the  century to 1914.[350] This period is referred to as the *Golden Age* of postcards, an era when people exchanged cards with others from both near and far, and with both acquaintances and strangers alike. Consequently, social circles broadened as well , as postcard enthusiasts (carto-philes) introduced one another to each other in order to expand their network of contacts.

In order to further examine postcards within a broad and modern system of social networking, I want to now weave together themes and issues relating to technology, mobility, space and time by studying another group of postcards relevant to the Eastern Townships. In particular, consideration will be given to how landscapes were transformed in the wake of calls for progress and prosperity. As mentioned earlier, it was not uncommon during the first decade of the  century for postcards to be delivered the day after being posted, and they frequently even arrived on the same day that they were mailed. The industrial era's quickening pace greatly affected people's perception of distance and space. For instance, the railway came to be regarded as the annihilator of both time and space according to Wolfgang Schivelbusch;[351] he argues that people's capacity to perceive spatial distance was lost in the wake of mechanized travel due to machinery's constant and uniform regularity, in contrast to, most notably, the organic gait of a horse drawn carriage. The Eastern Townships' proximity to the United States has historically encouraged a high volume of train traffic across the border. Many of Quebec's labouring class factory workers immigrated to New England throughout the 19th-century to seek employment in the neighbouring country's prosperous manufacturing industry. As an example of the scale of New England's production output, by 1850 there were 156 textile mills in Vermont alone "that never produced more than 5% of the total New England production."[352] In *Postcards from Vermont*, Allen Davis refers to a turn of the century postcard of a textile mill in Winooski that "employed more

[350] Poitras, 18.
[351] Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: Trains and Travel in the 19th-century,* 13.
[352] A. Davis, *Postcards from Vermont,* 55.

than 400 people, at least half of them women of French-Canadian background."[353] On June 19th, 1906 a postcard was mailed in Richmond, Quebec and arrived the next morning in Lewiston, Maine at 7 a.m. on June 20th. (Fig. 61) The inscribed message is brief and to the point:

Je suis a Richmond 9 Heur nous sommes en retard Je ne remonterai pas ce soir[354]

This mundane message underscores the vital role postcards played during the early 20th - century as a practical means to communicate basic information. The ordinariness of the image printed on the card's recto is largely inconsequential to this particular communication, although it does reflect the everydayness of the message's content. The sender needs no signature or initials, as he/she knows that Mme. J. A. M. will know who has sent it. This message was strictly informative as it pertained to a railway passenger's unexpected delayed travel plans, and suggests the extent to which distances were no longer communication barriers during this time of increased mobility. In a broader socio-historical context however, the informational indexes recorded on this card's verso arguably allude to the working class' heightened mobility during this industrial era, as a result of North America's growing manufacturing labour needs.

Postcards were a preferred method for regular and speedy communication during this modern era, as messaging systems and expanding communication networks became increasingly efficient due to technological innovations and enhanced mobility. The postcard interjects itself between the sender and the recipient as an ordinary medium of communication; it connects them as a means to counter the spatio-temporal effects of mobility that are actually separating them. Consequently postcards, like the railways' technological operations and increased speed, served to disorient traditional perceptions of space by causing distance to diminish on the one hand due to speed, while paradoxically broadening people's horizons in terms of heightened accessibility to more places and further distances than could

[353] Davis, 71.
[354] BAnQ Magella Bureau Fonds, P547, S1, SS1, SSS1, D364, P19V.

be covered earlier. The modern era has demonstrated the correlation between heightened mobility and practices of communication, and the tremendous impact technology has had on these socio-cultural phenomena, just as contemporary circumstances continue to do so. Postcards emerged during an era of worldwide acceleration in conjunction with a growing commodities based market which were both enabled by enhanced mobility. The particular traffic that ensued was the physical manifestation of both human and product circulation. The postcard became an important and highly accessible commercial product in terms of affordability and availability, one that was routinely circulated within this rapidly growing traffic exchange. From that historical point forward, people's relationship to the landscape became more mobile, less intensive and less auratic.[355] Travel, for many people and purposes, became an ordinary and integral part of everyday life. This modern everyday reality is often apparent, if not literally expressed through messages hastily written on postcards, and suggests the extent to which rail travel had become mainstream by the turn of the 20th - century. As a means to speed the process of mailing postcards along, "many trains had a postal car where mail was sorted and stamped while the train was in motion."[356] The cards often replaced lengthier letters that required more time to write and cost more to mail. The postcards' abbreviated messages were occasionally no more elaborate or personal than any one of today's briefest tweets or texts; they were clearly a faster and cheaper method to send messages - another tangible sign of the industrial era's quickening pace and emphasis on efficiency.

Modernity is often linked to a belief in progress, which in turn implies a future condition. For instance, throughout modern art and visual culture we find a spatio-temporal vision that casts an eye on the future, whereby the goal of progress and prosperity is accompanied by ambitions for change. Mitchell touches upon this phenomenon as he explains the link between progress and imperialism which, he writes, "conceives itself precisely as an expansion of landscape understood as an inevitable,

[355] Schivelbusch, 184.
[356] Davis, 12.

progressive development in history, an expansion of 'culture' and 'civilization' into a 'natural' space in a progress that is itself narrated as 'natural'. Empires move outward in space as a way of moving forward in time; the 'prospect' that opens up is not just a spatial scene but a projected future of development and exploitation."[357] Conversely, anti-modern perceptions arose in the early 20th - century, as was discussed in Section I. Although postcards offer visual and material reflections of an era which developed at a pace that grew increasingly precipitous with each new innovation - a time when many celebrated progress and prosperity on the one hand, many others yearned for a return to former ways. Andreas Huyssen addresses how "ever since Western civilization entered the throes of modernization, the nostalgic lament for a lost past has accompanied it like a shadow that held the promise of a better future."[358] Unsurprisingly, not everyone embraced postcards as quick substitutes for letters, nor did they share in the enthusiasm for the dynamic and new pace of modern life. Nostalgic impulses are easily associated to temporal longings, although as Kim Sawchuck notes, "the antimodernist's longing for another place and time was not only a desire for simplicity or premodern pasts, the serenity of paradisial places," it was also "a search for an alternative space-time relation to that being inaugurated in the name of Progress."[359] A clear example of this is how, on August 19 1905, an anonymous journalist penned a pointedly disapproving article in Montreal's weekly *l'Album Universel* which resonates with a nostalgic yearning for an alternative space-time relation:

> Par ces temps de villégiature, la carte postale est souveraine. On ne s'écrit plus! On s'envoie des images. L'impression que l'on recueille de telle ville visitée, de telle construction admirée, on la retrouve imprimée chez le marchand du coin, dans les gares, les bateaux, partout. Plus d'effort! Même aujourd'hui on ne se donne plus la peine de visiter ni la ville ni le monument. Aussitôt débarqué, le voyageur pressé fait sa provision de cartes qu'il enverra à ses parents et amis...[360]

[357] Mitchell, Landscape, 16.
[358] Andreas Huyssen, qtd. in Antimodernism and Artistic Experience, 155.
[359] Kim Sawchuck, qtd. Antimodernism and Artistic Experience, 7.
[360] Poitras, 45.

Key to this journalist's wistfulness was his fundamental objection to the modern space-time cultural shift that transpired in the name of progress, underscored by his disdain for postcards in particular that he objected to as a form of image-based shorthand communication.


**Figure 62. Novelty Manufacturing & Art Co. Ltd., *Main Street, Magog, Que.*, c. 1910, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

As mobility became increasingly mechanized, the travel experience became less organic, and more regulated and uniform. Schivelbusch notes that "as the natural irregularities of the terrain that were perceptible on the old roads are replaced by the [...] linearity of the railroad, the traveler feels that he has lost contact with the landscape."[361] The experience of travelling by rail became less immediate than other forms of transportation, due to how the traveler by train necessarily perceives the landscape as it is filtered through what Schivelbusch terms 'the machine ensemble'. He further insists that "the speed and mathematical directness with which the railroad proceeds through the terrain destroy the

[361] Schivelbusch, 25.

close relationship between the traveler and traveled space."[362] When examining the image presented on the postcard of *Main Street, Magog, Que* (fig. 62), the viewer becomes aware of that close relationship between space and traveler that Schivelbusch refers to. This particular picture contains several traditional methods of traversing the land, other than by train - including: by foot, by horse drawn open-carriage, by hard top and open top automobile, and by bicycle. Other than by foot, they are all mechanized means of travelling through the landscape that offer each traveler a mediated relationship between themselves and the publicly travelled space. Each individual must adapt to the pace or speed at which they will travel, and to the route that they will take while travelling. They may rush across Main Street in a single shot, or make several stops along the way. Still, these travelling individuals will encounter others along their journey, however they are at liberty to stop and chat, or to continue on with a courteous nod, or to proceed with eyes focused straight ahead. The streetscape is a vibrant and active ordinary space in which the business and pleasure of turn of the 20th - century everyday life unfolds. The street lights, hydro lines, and cement sidewalks that line Main Street in figure 62 are all modern products of the era's growing industries and evolving technologies that enhance, to varying degrees, people's experience of circumventing the landscape. Many found that the train, on the other hand, had disrupted this close relationship between traveler and space, and one source noted how it was "experienced as a projectile, and traveling on it, as being shot through the landscape - thus losing control of one's senses."[363] In 1844, for example, an anonymous European author described how "travelling on most of the railways, the face of nature, the beautiful prospects of hill and dale, are lost or distorted to our view. The alternation of high and low ground, the healthful breeze, and all those exhilarating associations connected with 'the Road,' are lost or changed to doleful cuttings, dismal tunnels, and the noxious effluvia of the screaming engine."[364]

[362] Schivelbusch, 58.
[363] Qtd. in Schivelbusch, 58.
[364] Qtd. in Schivelbusch, 58.

There were clearly many early train travellers who perceived themselves as little more than parcels projected through space, and lamented how the loss of landscape affected all their senses including sight, smell, and sound. Due to the speed at which the trains travelled, the earliest passengers could no longer visually apprehend the scenery's details in the foreground as anything other than a blurred or evanescent landscape as they found themselves "flying" through it. This industrially caused loss of detail and altered perceptions during the early to mid - 19th - century, along with the growing familiarity with encountering new and more distant places, undoubtedly contributed to the picture postcard's subsequent popularity towards the end of that century. When travelling by pre-industrial and organic means, Dolf Sternberger notes how "the foreground enabled the traveler to relate to the landscape through which he was moving. He saw himself as part of the foreground, and that perception *joined* him to the landscape, included him in it."[365] From the train 's interior however, the traveler moving through the landscape is detached from it, and becomes an observer of the passing environments rather than a participant within them. The implementation of railway networks created a new spatio-temporal panoramic landscape, one that Benjamin Gastineau qualified in 1861 as a choreographed landscape, due to how "the motion of the train shrinks space, and thus displays in immediate succession objects and pieces of scenery that in their original spatiality belonged to separate realms."[366] As will be discussed shortly, I suggest, however, that picture postcards enabled several generations to leisurely review the minute details enclosed within these portable and affordable remediated spaces that fixed both banal and monumental moments in time, as a pleasurable and personal means that enabled people to come to terms with the steadily escalating sense of urgency and preoccupation with time that permeated everyday life.

In light of the growing commercial importance train and boat schedules had on fuelling business and international trade, it is unsurprising that time was standardized in keeping with the by now familiar

[365] Qtd. in Schivelbusch, 65.
[366] Qtd. in Schivelbusch, 63.

adage 'time is money'. As a result "the standardization of time to the pulse of the twenty-four -hour clock was adopted in 1883 by the United States, in 1885 by Europe, and in 1886 by Canada."[367] Suddenly, as far as the general public was concerned, "standardized time zones were imposed, and the introduction of new technologies made it possible to cover greater distances quickly - all of this transformed space-time relations."[368] As many pictorial and textual examples reveal, train schedules were often the subject of postcard communications during an era when railroads spread across the continent covering greater distances at record breaking rates. In figure 63, for example, the sender wrote on the recto that it was 2:20 pm, and they were "waiting on my train." The message on the card's verso includes a precise account of the times and reasons why they decided to leave so abruptly. The image on the postcard features the new steel bridge that linked Melbourne to Richmond, attesting to the towns' enhanced prosperity and use of new technology which was made possible by the heightened railway traffic Richmond experienced during that industrial era. Despite the standardization of time to a 24 hour clock, the variety of local times zones regularly "caused confusion with scheduling, accidents, and passenger irritation. No one could easily determine when a train would arrive at a particular station, and worse, trains crashed because of shared lines."[369]

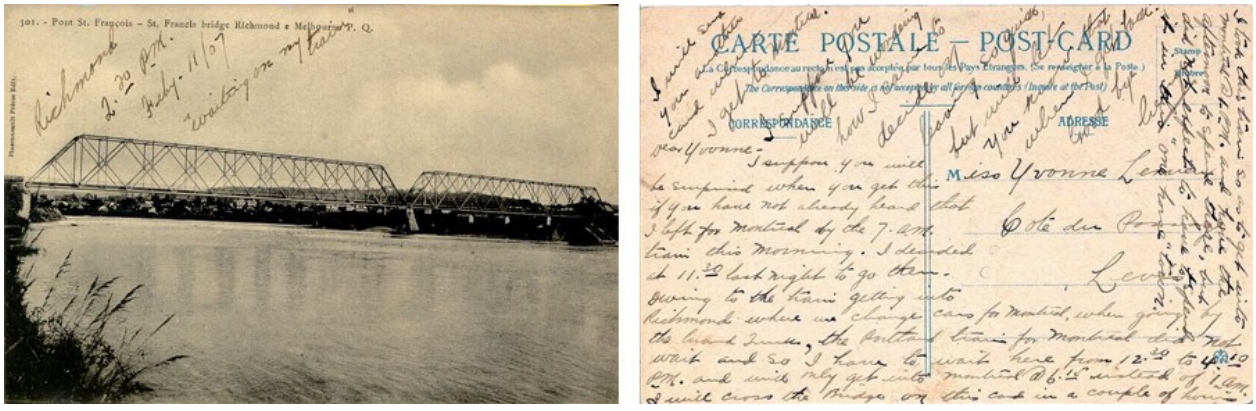


**Figure 63. Pinsonneault Frères Edit., *Pont St. François - St. Francis bridge Richmond e Melbourne P.Q.*, 1907, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Magella Bureau fonds.**

[367] Sawchuck, 156.
[368] Sawchuck, 156.
[369] Sawchuck, 157.

In Davis' study of postcards from Vermont, he notes how "the photo postcard in a variety of ways represented the accelerated pace and the visual nature of [North] American culture in the century."[370] The postcard written in Richmond, Quebec - while "*waiting on my train*" (fig. 63) - underscores this sense of urgency regarding time, and documents the sender's obvious obsession with time which is, in this instance, directly linked to the notion of regulated train schedules. As Stephen Kern acknowledges, there are many " 'causes' of changing ideas about time and space, such as the scheduling requirements of railroads that directly necessitated the institution of World Standard Time."[371] He further notes how there were approximately 80 different railroad times operating simultaneously in the United States alone in 1870,[372] which greatly impacted the Eastern Townships region due to its close proximity to the border and its connecting lines. Even though the railroads imposed a uniform world time on November 18, 1883,[373] coordinating train schedules proved to be a challenging task that did not always function according to plan even decades later, as described by the passenger below. Addressed to Miss Yvonne Lemieux in Levis, Quebec from Richmond station Qc. at precisely 2:20 pm on February 11, 1907, the waiting passenger/postcard sender wrote:

> Dear Yvonne -
> I suppose you will be surprised when you get this if you have not already heard that I left for Montreal by the 7. am. train this morning. I decided at 11.[30] last night to go then. Giving to the train getting into Richmond where we change cars for Montreal when going by the Grand Trunk, the Portland train for Montreal did not wait and so I have to wait here from 12.[30] to 4.[10] pm. and will only get into Montreal @ 6.[15] instead of 1_pm. I will cross the Bridge on this card in a couple of hours- I took this train so as to get into Montreal @ 1_pm. and have the afternoon to spend there, but did not expect to have to spend it in this "one horse" town. I will send you another card when I get to Montreal. I suppose you will be wondering how I came to decide on leaving so quick but will let you know that when I get back. Goodbye, [signature][374]

[370] Davis, 13.
[371] Stephen Kern, The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918, 2.
[372] Kern, 12.
[373] Kern, 12.
[374] BAnQ Magella Bureau Fonds, Richmond.

*St. Francis bridge from Richmond & Melbourne P.Q.* (fig. 63) underscores the extent to which postcards manifest spatio-temporal concerns, and also reinforces their significance as visual and material mediators of technology, mobility, and communications. Both the images and texts appearing on these cards represent cultural signifiers that embodied an era's perception of progress and prosperity, as well as space and time. When looking at the printed photograph of the St. Francis bridge in figure 63, we can appreciate the sense of immediacy, the foreground's close-up details, and the distant features that are particularly compelling in the then relatively new medium. As a viewer, it is easy to situate oneself within the landscape, standing on the embankment right next to the photographer. Heins Buddemeier found that the 19th - century public initially became fascinated "not by the taking of a picture of any specific object, but by the way in which any random object could be made to appear on the photographic plate. This was something of such unheard-of novelty that the photographer was delighted by each and every shot he took."[375] He enthusiastically described "how intensely the first photographs were scrutinized, and what people were mostly looking for. For instance [...] tiny, until then unnoticed details are stressed continuously: paving stones, scattered leaves, the shape of a branch, the traces of rain on the wall."[376] This commentary seems particularly relevant to the postcards' miniature scenes which are held in the hand, tilted one way and the other, then peered at closely. Viewing the St-Francis Bridge postcard, one is struck by the dark and detailed plant stalks bending organically towards the river in the foreground, and the extent to which they contrast with the carefully engineered and calculated regularity of the bridge's diagonally criss-crossing manufactured metal trusses that cut across the middle ground. Beneath and beyond the bridge tiny white buildings highlight the distant shoreline, offering evidence of settlement and community. This particular image gives every indication that the prevalent enthusiasm for photographed minutia and details of random

[375] Qtd. in Schivelbusch, 65.
[376] Qtd. in Schivelbusch, 65.

objects referred to above, were carried forward into the picture postcard era, and undoubtedly contributed to the postcard industry's unprecedented social mania in the wake of new technology.

Postcards clearly functioned "as symbolic and material connections"[377] that represented an important element in a complex system of expanding social relationships that resulted from heightened mobility due to technology. Schivelbusch emphasizes how the railway was perceived by progressive thinkers "as the technical guarantor of democracy, harmony between nations, peace, and progress. According to them, the railroad brings people together both spatially and socially."[378] Postcards, also products of technology, likewise brought people together spatially and socially-however as a virtual experience rather than as a physical one, despite the amount of time or distance separating them. Kern notes how between 1880 and World War I "a series of sweeping changes in technology and culture created distinctive new modes of thinking about and experiencing time and space."[379] Most of the innovations he lists specifically relate to methods of travelling through the landscape or communicating. It is unsurprising then, that the Golden Age of postcards fell within this time frame. The social and industrial cultural climate of the time transformed the private postcard into an ideal means of communicating, through text and image, that transcended former spatial and temporal barriers. The postal service's efficiency set these picture-messages into motion, successfully connecting people faster than ever before. Strangers began exchanging them solely for the pleasure of collecting them, and the shared experience of trading them. This essentially generated a new kind of social network that transformed the dimensions of everyday life.

New modes of apprehending time can be compared to the temporal scope of the postcard. For instance, Kern describes how a machine in service since 1890 "stamped an employee's card with the time he entered and left. Though he was paid in dollars, the time-stamped tape determined the

[377] M. Greary and V. Webb, Delivering Views, 4.
[378] Schivelbusch, 73.
[379] Kern, 1.

amount."[380] In working class neighbourhoods the blast of a factory whistle signaled a change in shifts. Regularized time can thus be understood as an artificial means devised by production based industries in an attempt to regulate the natural environment's organic cycles to optimize shareholders' profit. During the modern era then, just as landscape and capitalism are hand in hand, so too are time and capital firmly clasping hands. Within such capitalist socio-economic structures, the labourers were situated as necessary human resources for the production of manufactured industrial things. Due to industrial innovations, the experience of landscape also shifted from an organic to a mechanized spatial and temporal one, given how travelers perceived that they were "flying" through space aboard a train. This new perception of the landscape was related to the time it took to circumnavigate the land, in conjunction with the method chosen to travel from point A to point B. Fear of flying, claustrophobia, motion sickness are just a few examples that reinforce the extent to which travel methods affect the experience of movement through space. As Kern observes, "the perspective of time was not some concrete change inherent in an object but merely a consequence of the act of measuring."[381] Likewise, landscapes do not represent "some concrete change inherent" in the land, but rather they represent a variety of cultural perspectives and interpretations of that space as a consequence of human acts that range from dwelling to framing. Malcolm Andrews insists that land is raw material and landscape is always already artifice, given that "the frame literally defines the landscape."[382] Others, however, find that landscape too is in a constant state of flux, like any other aspect of culture. Timothy Ingold argues for landscape's fluidity and ability to change in terms of what he describes as "a 'dwelling perspective', according to which the landscape is constituted as an enduring record of – and testimony to – the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in so doing, have left there something of

[380] Kern, 15.
[381] Kern, 18-19.
[382] Andrews, 5.

themselves."[383] Adhering to this view, one must concede that landscape not only represents but also "enfolds the lives and times of predecessors who [...] have moved around in it and played their part in its formation. To perceive the landscape is therefore to carry out an act of remembrance."[384]

By way of concluding this chapter, the reader will be guided into a landscape through an adaptation of Ingold's "dwelling perspective." The landscape in question is a postcard of North Hatley, a quaint and relatively secluded town overlooking the shores of Lake Massawipi in the Eastern Townships. The single postcard chosen for this purpose is *View on Massaweppi Lake, Regata day, North Hatley P.Q*. (Fig. 64) This postcard can be analyzed in such a way as to convey a unique visual narrative, containing various layers and particular moments which link up to a much older and more complex history. Ingold has insisted that "spatial differentiation implies spatial segmentation. This is not so of the landscape, however. For a place in the landscape is not 'cut out' from the whole, either on the plane of ideas or on that of material substance. Rather, each place embodies the whole at a particular nexus within it, and in this respect is different from every other."[385] This perspective of Ingold's regarding the landscape applies well to postcards, given that each card is a fragment of the modern era's broader cultural landscape, occupying a particular nexus within it, one that is individualized by a series of interventions that include, for instance, photographer, image, place, message, sender, date, stamp, vendor, producer, time, and recipient. Any postcard purchased from a vendor's display rack becomes "that" postcard the moment it is inscribed upon or otherwise marked by some form of human intervention. Space and time converge upon postcards in unique ways, although each one that is used is noticeably different from all others. All postcards, however, encapsulate a brief and specific instance that links up to a far greater international and complex communication nexus.

[383] Ingold, The temporality, 189.
[384] Ingold, The temporality, 189.
[385] Ingold, The temporality, 192.

According to Ingold's "dwelling perspective", the landscape is conceived as "the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey along the paths connecting them."[386] He notes how within any landscape "the distance between two places, A and B, is experienced as a journey made, a bodily movement from one place to the other, and the gradually changing vistas along the route."[387] He insists that "neither is the landscape identical to nature, nor is it on the side of humanity against nature. As the familiar domain of our dwelling, it is *with* us, not *against* us, but it is no less real for that. And through living in it, the landscape becomes a part of us, just as we are a part of it."[388] Just as any "place owes its character to the experiences it affords to those who spend time there – to the sights, sounds and indeed smells that constitute its specific ambience,"[389] so too can one "sense" the passage of time, through the musty scent of a long-stored book, or while hearing a whistle blow, or by feeling a welcome breeze pass over warm skin, and when admiring the drying, flame colored leaves in autumn. Ingold insists that "human beings do not, in their movements, inscribe their life histories upon the surface of nature as do writers upon the page; rather, these histories are woven, along with the life-cycles of plants and animals, into the texture of the surface itself."[390]

Ingold's case-study for developing this methodology is Pieter Bruegel the Elder's painting *The Harvesters* (1565). Bruegel was a Renaissance artist from the Netherlands who was regarded as a pioneer for painting genre scenes of "ordinary" peasants within the landscape. *The Harvesters* is a painting of autumn, commissioned by a wealthy merchant, and is thought to be part of a thematic series that includes each one of the four recurring seasons within an annual cycle. Ingold's choice of a 450 year old landscape painting to analyze as a means to emphasize landscape's temporality, further reinforces that temporality due to: the actual age of the painting, the very nature of the painting's theme as one

[386] Ingold, The temporality, 193.
[387] Ingold, The temporality, 191.
[388] Ingold, The temporality, 191.
[389] Ingold, The temporality, 192.
[390] Ingold, The temporality, 198.

season within a continuously recurring annual cycle, and due to how such temporal cycles transform the appearance of a place so gradually and imperceptibly throughout a routine and daily cycle, only becoming apparent in hindsight. Ingold notes how "we are accustomed, by the conventions of modern society, to describe our experience of landscape as though we were viewing a picture."[391] Consequently, he challenges his readers to imagine themselves in the very landscape depicted instead, to try and hear, feel, and smell it too as part of a more complete phenomenological experience. Upon entering the landscape he invites his readers to "look all around, imagine the feel of the temperature and breeze, hear the surrounding sounds, and roam through that place, as "movement is the very essence of perception."[392]

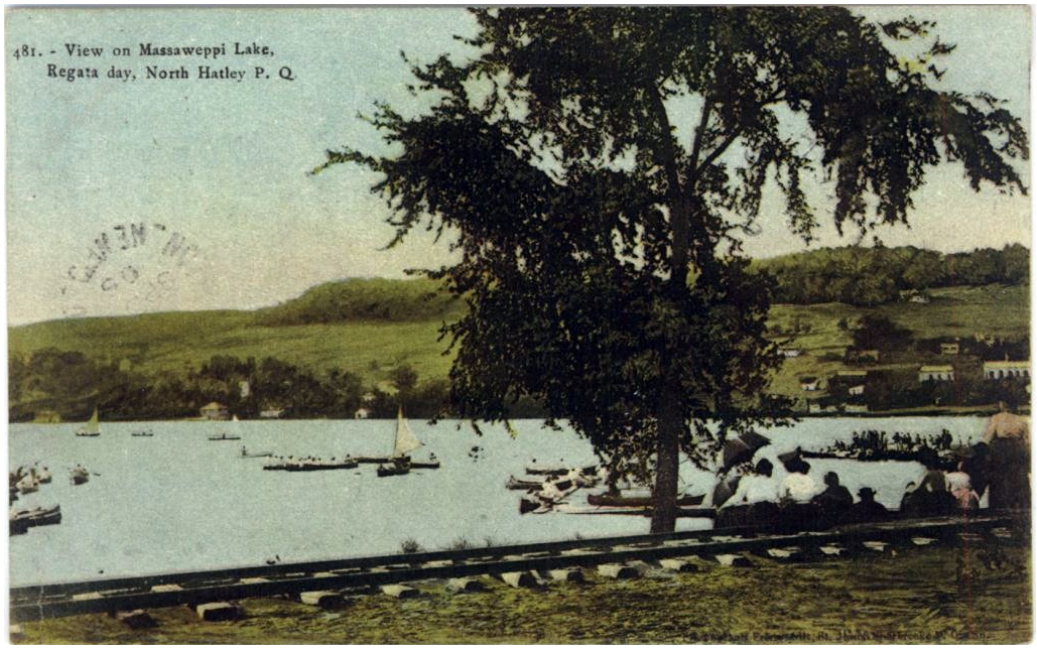


**Figure 64. Pinsonneault Frères, édit., *View on Massaweppi Lake, Regata day, North Hatley P.Q.,* 1906, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ IMAGES, No de notice: 0002646363, <http://collections.banq.qc.ca/ark:/52327/11048>.**

Accepting this invitation, I will now adapt Ingold's analysis of the Breugel painting to the postcard *View on Massawepi Lake, Regata day*, in order to interpret the landscape's temporal qualities. Let us begin with the diagonal railway tracks in the foreground of figure 64. In this landscape the tracks

[391] Ingold, The temporality, 203.
[392] Ingold, The temporality, 203.

must first be crossed in order to join the group of spectators attending North Hatley's Regatta day. The tracks were laid years earlier by teams of laborers who gradually progressed along the steel line, connecting villages to towns, towns to cities, and cities to other nations. Suddenly passengers could travel through this expanded landscape with unparalleled speed, along predetermined routes and according to regularized schedules. Journeys became faster and more common, as a newly mobilized generation of people rolled through the landscape in large industrially manufactured metal machines. For those leisurely sitting under the tree by the tracks, the day's gentle rhythm would have been interrupted by jarring whistle blasts, as regularly scheduled trains approached the local station according to their predetermined itinerary. Train whistles were blown regularly throughout the day, every day, during this era, interspersed with the routine ringing of factory and church bells, all of which served to remind the public that it was time to be somewhere else. In reference to Winslow Homer's 1871 painting *The Old Mill*, also called *The Morning Bell,* Foss describes how "the only part of the more recent building, visible just above the roof of the abandoned one, is a bright, shiny bell, the ringing of which embodied the new tyranny of timed labour: "the most distinctive fixture and defining attribute of the new mills"."[393] The railway tracks inserted into this postcard's landscape underscore Ingold's perspective that "movement is embodied [...] on the side of the landscape, in its network of paths and tracks."[394] If we leap forward to today, although trains have vanished from North Hatley's landscape, the imprint from their original tracks remain, and have been transformed into an elaborate network of bicycle paths that guide cyclers through much of the Townships' landscape, returning to a renewed individual and organic rhythm that contrasts with the regularized industrial experience of train travel.

Once the track is crossed in the image, the viewer joins the group of seated spectators clustered together strategically in a shaded spot, beneath the fanning branches of a mature tree. It is not clear who these people are: factory workers or labourers enjoying a fun day off at the lake? Groups of day

[393] Foss, Homer Watson, 61.
[394] Ingold, The temporality, 204.

tripping white collar workers from the town's surrounding local shops and businesses? Or perhaps summer residents, or villégiateurs, who preferred the pleasure of North Hatley's lakeshore, a well known retreat for wealthy Boston and Montreal families to escape from the unbearable urban heat. But, as Ingold suggests, returning now to the tree, "this is not *any* tree. For one thing, it draws the entire landscape around it into a unique focus [...] by its presence it constitutes a particular place." This shaded place "was not there before the tree, but came into being with it."[395] Additionally, the shade generated by that specific tree "is what gives it its particular character and identity." [396] As an aged and tall tree that stretches into a broad canopy of dark green, fully formed leaves, we know that this landscape moment occurred at the height of summer. We also realize how this particular tree was intentionally spared from the ax, as it took root prior to, and grew just beyond, the railway's carefully measured and optimally imposed trajectory. "Moreover, unlike the hills and the [lake], the tree has manifestly grown within living memory. Thus its temporality is more consonant with that of human dwelling."[397] On the one hand this tree presides over the passage of human generations, while it also "resonates with the life-cycles of insects, the seasonal migrations of birds, and the regular round of human [...] activities."[398] Just as the spectators beneath the tree once experienced, so too do today's eyes wander over the water's surface from boat to sail, and back again, resting occasionally just to fixate on a specific spot. We note how the sails have caught the wind, and propel their boats forward on the water in a fluid gliding motion, while others are filled with people who time their strokes to row in tandem towards the finish line. From the lake our eyes shift to the middle ground's gently sloping hillside that gradually rises beyond the shoreline. With our eyes we wander over the curves and through the fields, adhering to the slopes' natural contours, descending once again to the shoreline and into the trees, only to rise once more over the fields and then back down and across once more, over and over again:

[395] Ingold, The temporality, 204.
[396] Ingold, The temporality, 204.
[397] Ingold, The temporality, 204.
[398] Ingold, The temporality, 204.

> Through the exercises of descending and climbing, and their different muscular entailments, the contours of the landscape are not so much measured as *felt* – they are directly incorporated into our bodily experience. But even if you remain rooted to one spot, the same principle applies. As you look across the [lake] to the hill on the horizon, your eyes do not remain fixed: swivelling in their sockets, or as you tilt your head, their motions accord with the movement of your attention as it follows its course through the landscape. [399]

Like the tree and the railway tracks, the buildings across the lake are, according to Ingold's view, "monuments to the passage of time [that] from the perspective of dwelling [...] emerge within the self-transforming processes of the world itself."[400] The form that each constructed structure takes embodies a "developmental or historical process," one that is "rooted in the context of human dwelling in the world." [401] The few scattered buildings across the lake are signs of rural settlement in the Townships, in as much as the grassy pastures are the result of human labour and endeavours to cultivate that land, first by clearing the trees, and then by either planting or herding.

When interpreting a place, Ingold insists "you do not only look, you listen as well, for the air is full of sounds of one kind and another."[402] In this place on Regatta day, it is possible to imagine the spectators' lively laughter and banter as they cheer for friends and family. We hear the echoes reverberating from the lake as the competitors call to one another from their boats, enthusiastically strategizing or taunting each other. The judges and organizers sound their bullhorns as they monitor the race. Bees suddenly buzz by, just as birds swoop past, calling to one another as they soar through the sky. The tree's leaves gently rustle as a delicate breeze sporadically swipes their surfaces just after the air languidly flows through and around their branches in a soothing motion. These are all examples of the sounds of the passage of time at a specific moment in a particular place. As Ingold suggests, the landscape "is not a totality that you or anyone else can look at, it is rather the world in which we stand in taking up a point of view on our surroundings. And it is within the context of this attentive

[399] Ingold, The temporality, 203.
[400] Ingold, The temporality, 206.
[401] Ingold, The temporality, 206.
[402] Ingold, The temporality, 206.

involvement in the landscape that the human imagination gets to work in fashioning ideas about it,"[403] thus, as he concludes, the landscape is not so much an object as it is the domain of our being.

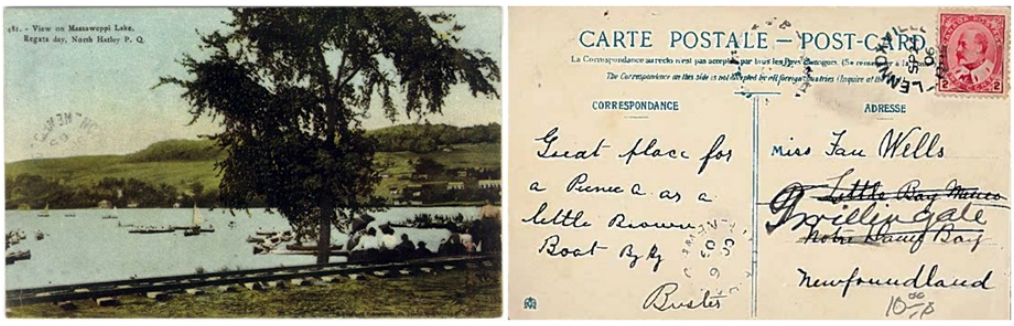


**Figure 65. Pinsonneault Frères, édit., *View on Massaweppi Lake, Regata day, North Hatley P.Q.,* 1906, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ IMAGES, No de notice: 0002646363, <http://collections.banq.qc.ca/ark:/52327/11048>.**

Based on this card's message (fig. 65): "Great place for a picnic (?) as (?) little browse Boat", written over a century ago on September 2(?), 1906, it is worth recalling how the images on these cards facilitated communications for those with limited time for longer letters or basic writing skills. This landscape representation of *Regata day* performed as a virtual meeting place that was shared by Buster in Lennoxville with Ms. Wells in Newfoundland, and that imaginary social experience was mediated by the picture postcard. Whether Buster and Ms. Wells were relatives, friends, lovers, strangers or acquaintances, the landscape pictured here facilitated their connection and adds another layer to the ways which "place owes its character to the experiences it affords to those who spend time there."[404] This postcard's picture of a leisurely place, and Buster's vision of it as a great place for a picnic, conjures an earlier 1898 poem of an idyllic picnic spot quoted in "A Day with Nature":

> It seems to me I'd like to go
> Where bells don't ring, nor whistles blow,
> Nor clocks don't strike, nor gongs don't sound,
> And I'd have stillness all around.[405]

This chapter has endeavoured to make apparent how the interplay of technology, mobility, time, and space affect and reflect people's perceptions of landscape.

[403] Ingold, The temporality, 207.
[404] Ingold, The temporality, 192.
[405] Qtd. in Foss, Homer Watson, 61.

## 12. The Commercial & Complicitous Nature of Tourism and Landscape

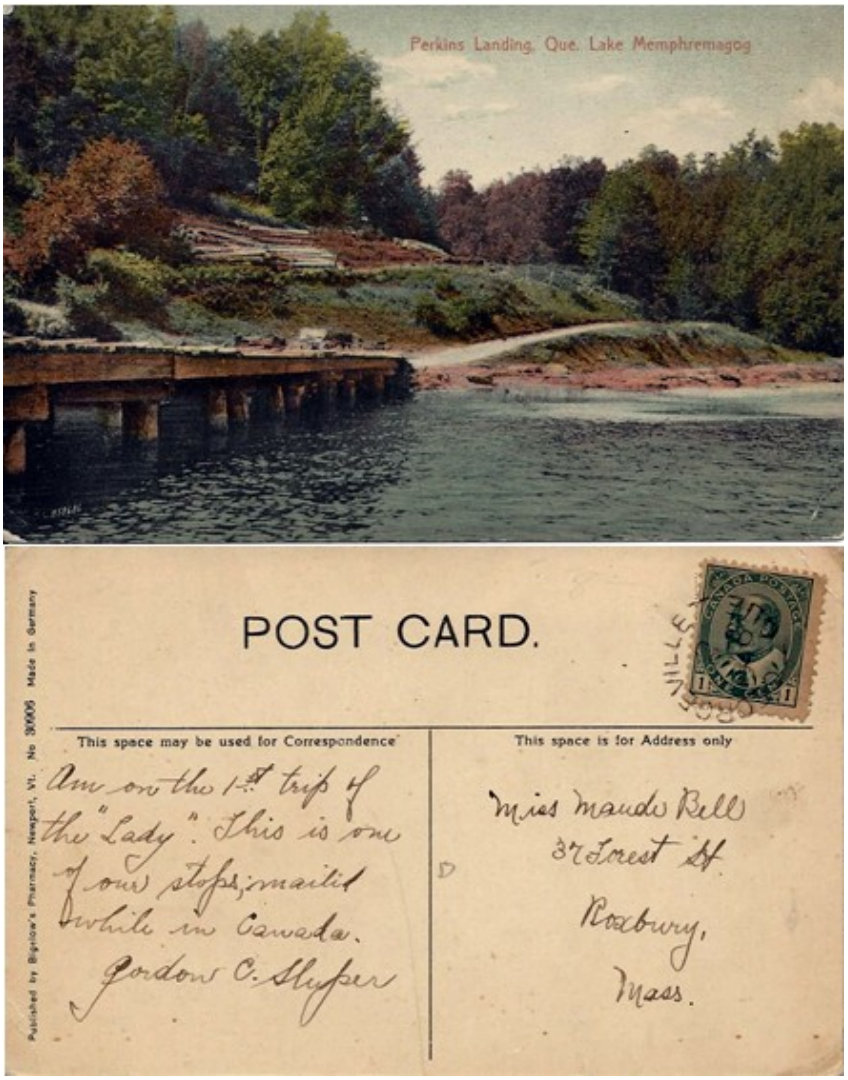


**Figure 66. Bigelow's Pharmacy, *Perkins Landing, Que. Lake Memphremagog*, 1908, photo-mechanical print postcard, 9 x 13.9 cm, private collection.**

This chapter continues with the themes of technology, communication and greater mobility relating to postcards that were addressed in the preceding chapter, however its emphasis now shifts to the tourism industry in the Eastern Townships. Historically, the postcard eventually became closely identified with tourism, not just in the Townships but in its worldwide iteration. The explosive, and exploitative, development of tourism in the region had an enormous impact on landscape representations. The tourism industry clearly produced a taste for travel, a desire to consume, and a

yearning for cultural experiences. In Canada during the second half of the 19th - century, Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) promoted the nation's landscape in order to influence the public's desire to experience the newly connected country from East to West by land, along its recently laid railroad tracks. The landscape became something to be consumed, and tourism guided people through that act of consumption. In his introduction to *The Tourist: A New Theory of The Leisure Class*, Dean MacCannell specifies that he uses the term tourist literally, to identify mainly international middle-class sightseers, but also figuratively as a model for modern man in general.[406] He focuses on the labouring class, and argues that since the 1960s it has become increasingly apparent that leisure is displacing labour from the center of the modern social structure. He acknowledges that his research is framed by Lefebvre's everyday theory. As a scholar who has written extensively about tourism, MacCannell observes how "the commodity has become an integral part of everyday life in modern society because its original form is a symbolic representation (advertisement) of itself which both promises and guides experience in advance of actual consumption."[407] In this context the term commodity can be understood as encompassing the commodified landscape that has been arranged to suit the tastes of sightseeing travellers, and the touristic experience as well. This understanding overlaps with Schivelbusch's view of the 20th-century tourist's commercialized experience for whom, he writes "the world has become one big department store of countrysides and cities."[408] MacCannell's analysis includes on the one hand the leisure class' touristic practices, and also the tourism industry's production of resorts and parks which he describes as "tourist factories."[409] He emphasizes how his theory of cultural experiences necessitates "two basic parts which must be combined in order for the experience to occur. The first part is the representation of an aspect of life [...] I call this part the *model,* using the term to mean an embodied

[406] Dean MacCannell, The Tourist: A New Theory of The Leisure Class", 1.
[407] MacCannell, 22.
[408] Schivelbusch, 188.
[409] MacCannell, 164.

ideal."[410] He then describes the second part of the experience as "the changed, created, intensified belief or feeling that is based on the model. The second part of the experience I call the *influence*."[411]

Within the context of this study on landscape and tourism, landscape fulfills the criteria MacCannell establishes for his "model"- that is the representation of an aspect of life as "an embodied ideal." The second part of the cultural experience is based on the influence the model has on those who experience it; in this case, how landscape influences the traveler's perception of land or place as spaces of recreation, labour, leisure, or identity. A *medium*, MacCannell writes, "is an agency that connects a model and its influence."[412] In this instance, the medium is the postcard which connects the model (landscape) and its influence (tourist's impression) as a cultural experience. Lastly, MacCannell insists on how the model "must appear to be disinterested if it is to be influential, so that any influence that flows from [it] can appear to be both spontaneous and based on authenticity."[413] I argue that because landscapes of nature commonly represent the natural environment's objective elements including trees, fields, mountains, lakes, rivers, and the sky for example, they harbor a deceptively authentic quality that conveys disinterestedness, which in turn reinforces the landscape's effectiveness as an influence within the cultural experience; the tourist's impression, when viewing a landscape, believes that what she is seeing is natural, which is therefore by extension spontaneous and authentic. Postcards that picture nature are thus well suited as mediums to influence the tourist's experience of a given place's landscape (model). MacCannell labels the combination of "a cultural model, its influence, the medium that links them, the audiences that form around them, and the producers, directors, actors, agents, technicians, and distributors that stand behind them, a *production*."[414] Cultural experiences, according to him, are therefore cultural productions that are produced by governments and private stakeholders alike.

[410] MacCannell, 23-4.
[411] MacCannell, 24.
[412] MacCannell, 25.
[413] MacCannell, 24.
[414] MacCannell, 24.

Cultural productions can include phenomena such as advertisements, elections, parades, marathons, festivals, historical monuments, spectacles, and holidays. MacCannell argues that ultimately, exploiting people's leisure time drives the economics of cultural production.[415]

As previously discussed, the CPR company aggressively promoted the travel experience and even developed elaborate European Chateau- inspired luxury hotels and plain, minimalist rustic cabins to stay at along the railway line as part of the journey. Under Van Horne's direction, the Canadian Pacific Railway company commissioned a wide range of visual images to mediate the experience: landscape paintings and photographs by some of the country's prominent artists including Lucius O'Brien, William Notman, John Fraser, and William Brymner; a multi-volume series of illustrated printed publications entitled *Picturesque Canada* that showcased these artworks of spectacular views seen along the line; an extensive variety of picture postcards that focused on the Canadian landscape (figs. 37, 38) conveniently sold as thematic booklets or individually; as well as countless professionally designed posters and advertisements that appeared in multiple venues and various print formats and scales. The totality of this visual material was meant to reinforce the country's emerging national identity model, and promote a privileged high-culture experience founded on landscape, travel, and leisure. Just as Van Horne and his partners were developing a westward-oriented tourist industry, local and regional investors in the Eastern Townships were similarly scrambling to establish tracks and stations in their communities in order to secure their personal business interests and potential for future development. During the second half of the 19th - century, towns and villages in the Townships, as elsewhere, either prospered or vanquished depending on their proximity to a railway and a station. From this historical point forward the circulation of people and things became a routine part of burgeoning modern economies. Within

[415] MacCannell, 28.

this economic context travel is seen as "a commodity, a service performed, transportation purchased in the form of a ticket."[416]

Looking at landscape, travel, and postcards together is important in order to understand how the commoditization of place pointed to a new cultural experience, which is to say, a new industry based on tourism. Within this tourist paradigm the destination or place itself became a new type of commodity. Postcards can be understood as important players in the industrial conquest of space for their efficient and quick means of communicating, but also due to the extensive circulation of images that represented particular places. Touristic postcards articulate a particularly specific kind of relationship to place. For example, a postcard identified as *Perkins Landing, Que. Lake Memphremagog* (fig. 66) represents the landscape from a tourist's point of view, one of the docks along the lake's shoreline that extends from Newport, Vermont to Magog, Quebec. The postcard was mailed in 1908 by Gordon who sent the following short message to Maude in Roxbury, Massachusetts:

Am on the 1st trip of the "Lady". This is one of our stops, mailed while in Canada.


**Figure 67. Livingstons Pharmacy, *The Wharf on Lake Memphremagog, Newport, Vt*., c. 1906, photo-mechanical print postcard, 9 x 13.9 cm, private collection.**

[416] Schivelbusch, 186.

The postcard shown in figure 66 underscores how postcards enabled individuals to share even minute details of their personal experiences despite distances without requiring a telegraph office to do so, or the time needed to compose a conventional letter. Accordingly, as Gillen and Hall note, "the early 20th-century postcard mobility meant an incredible change in the way people communicated and imagined the world. Although most people could not travel, they were nevertheless affected by those who did."[417] The postcard facilitated Maude's experience of imagining herself next to Gordon, admiring the landscape from the dock at Perkins Landing and, depending on which other cards Gordon may have also sent her, she may have also had the opportunity to picture the experience of traveling across Lake Memphremagog aboard the steamer *Lady Of the Lake* (fig. 67) as he mentions. This paddle wheel steamer was the property of Montreal's shipping magnate Sir Hugh Allen. The *Lady* was a grand iron steamship that measured 167 feet in length and could comfortably accommodate over 650 passengers, travellers and vacationers between Magog and Newport as it stopped at villages and various landings along the way.[418] It was launched on Magog's Lake Memphremagog in 1867 amidst a spectacular celebration, therefore Gordon's reference to the *Lady*'s first trip in his 1908 message to Maude must have referred to that particular season's first voyage. The boat sailed from Newport twice a day stopping at the Owl's Head Mountain House Hotel (fig. 68), Perkins Wharf, and Georgeville from Tuesday to Sunday. On Mondays the boat made a single round trip that crossed the full length of the lake. An 1891 timetable issued for "The Fine Iron Steamer" noted how on Mondays the boat arrived in Newport" at 3.45 p.m., in season to connect with the express train for Montreal, via the Canadian Pacific Railway. The advertisement emphasized how the boat sailed among many beautiful residences "making a trip of 75 miles, affording ever - changing views of Lake and Mountain Scenery." The ad also promoted the boat's first-class restaurant that served "nice warm meals at all hours," and offered fine cigars,

[417] Qtd. in Konstantinos and Mavric, 21.
[418] Matthew Farfan, Township Heritage Magazine. <http://townshipsheritage.com/article/steamers-lake-memphremagog-part-1>, consulted June 15, 2013

confectionary, and views of the lake on sale at its news stand. [419] Allen also owned two private yachts that toured Lake Memphremagog during his lifetime, *The Orford* also built in 1867, and *The Ormond*. By the turn of the century one admirer of the area wrote how "no lake in Northern Vermont, or along the Canadian Frontier, is more beautiful in appearance, attractive in scenic effects, better suited to the wants of the tourist, or is more accessible by highway or rail than is Lake Memphremagog, or the 'Geneva of Canada', as it is frequently and appropriately called."[420]

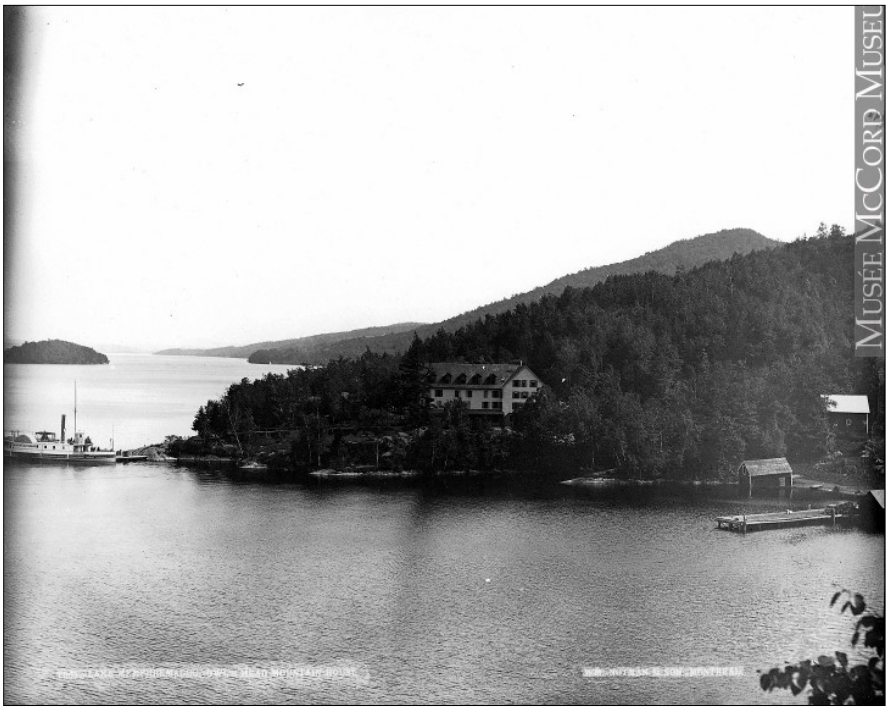


**Figure 68. Wm. Notman & Son, *Owl's Head Mountain House Lake on Lake Memphremagog, Qc.*, c. 1887, photograph, 20 x 25 cm, McCord Museum VIEW - 1961.**

Figure 68, *View of Mountain House Hotel and Lady of the Lake on Lake Memphremagog,* is a panoramic photograph of a beautiful, romantic landscape. It is a representation of a place that fully naturalizes the steamer and hotel's harmonious integration into the natural environment. The view conveys a refreshingly docile and pleasant setting where man's built material (boat & buildings) are subordinate to nature and all the pleasures and resources that nature promises in summer: an abundant

[419] Nelson, Images of America Around Lake Memphremagog, 89.
[420] D. W. Hildreth, Beautiful Memphremagog, np.

supply of fresh fish, game and produce, clean water to bathe in, refreshingly cool canopies of shade beneath the trees, and an extensive amount of forested space for tourists to leisurely explore. The environment shown here contrasts profoundly with the one encountered in Thetford Mines, a mere 135 kilometres away. Although not a postcard, this photograph was chosen because it reinforces how discreetly and intimately landscape, leisure and travel were woven together during the 19th - century within representations of the natural environment that were produced commercially by professional photographers as various media, including postcards. It also calls to mind Gagnon's essay on the forest and the sublime. Although he expressly notes that photographers are more honest than painters in their transference of nature to picture, he underscores how "nothing is less innocent that the idea of the landscape. It arose with individualism and thus with the right to own property."[421] He writes that "the gaze cast upon nature [...] is a gaze of possession and exclusion, of exploitation and privilege [...] on the other hand, when the sublime enters the picture, the notion of possession is forgotten, and the experience is transformed into something mystical, transcendent and flattering for the viewer."[422] Gagnon concludes that "the sublime is no more found in nature than beauty - we put it there [...] the field of the sublime tends to shift with technology. Technological conquests are willingly accompanied by an extension of the sublime that, creating a sense of euphoria, makes us less aware of its grip and the destruction that comes with it."[423]

Without question technology greatly impacts perceptions of the landscape, in addition to its ecosystems. One local Townships historian recalled how the *Lady* 's construction "took place on two continents and involved dozens of labourers. Her engine and two boilers were built in Montreal, but her hull was manufactured in Scotland and had to be shipped in sections across the Atlantic. Upon arrival, these sections were transported by railway to Sherbrooke, and from Sherbrooke by teams to Magog,

[421] Gagnon, 33.
[422] Gagnon, 33.
[423] Gagnon, 36.

where all the parts were finally assembled by crews from Montreal and Scotland."[424] Although his enthusiasm for technology falls short of being europhic, it does nonetheless convey a certain sense of awe or wonder regarding the technology and manufacturing intricacies involved in the boat's fabrication. The *Lady* was subsequently purchased by the *Connecticut and Passumpsic Rivers Railroad* in 1885, and continued to provide its excursion tours to the railway's passengers staying at select hotels such as the *Memphremagog House*, a luxury hotel in Newport Vermont. Figure 69 shows a postcard that features Lake Memphremagog's southern shore. The photograph was taken before May 7, 1907 - the day *Memphremagog House* was destroyed by fire. The hotel is the most imposing structure in this landscape, situated at left in the background at the water's edge, easily accessible by boat or bridge. The hotel was built in 1838, although it underwent progressive expansions as it changed hands during the next two decades, at which time it was purchased by the *Passumpsic Railroad* in 1861. The railway company incorporated a train station and ticket office into the hotel's basement.[425] This landscape is compelling due to its serenity, balance of light and dark, and assortment of varying textures to engage the eyes. In this landscape, nature has been domesticated: the hillside encompasses a community, and the lake works as a holding boom for logs. The diagonal fence cutting across the foreground adds dynamism to the composition which would render the view less engaging without it. In this image, the built and natural environments appear as equal and compatible partners in a subtle and harmonious way that further emphasizes the domesticity of the landscape. What is particularly fascinating about this representation is how two of the region's most important industries, lumber and tourism, are naturalized within this landscape and successfully masking how nature is being exploited. The logs floating in their pen in the foreground enrich the image and reinforce a sense of prosperity as does the large, distinct white hotel that commands the tip of the point where the town meets the port. *The Lady*

[424] Farfan, Township Heritage Magazine, <http://townshipsheritage.com/article/steamers-lake-memphremagog-part-2>, consulted on June 30, 2016.
[425] Nelson et al, 32.

*of the Lake* was eventually purchased by the *Canadian Pacific Railway* which had the boat's schedule synchronized with its train arrivals and departures in Newport and Magog.[426] The paddle wheeler remained in service until 1915. It was later towed from Newport to Magog in 1917 where it was dismantled for parts shortly thereafter. Historian Matthew Farfan concludes that "the decline of train travel, big hotels, excursion tours, and the rise of the automobile, ensured that a large steamer like the Lady would not remain profitable -at least not on a lake the size of Memphremagog.[427] Industrialization's steam engine technology contributed to revolutionizing perceptions of the landscape by enhancing its accessibility and expanding its horizons to new and diverse ways of producing cultural experiences.

**Figure 69. Anonymous, *Newport Vt.*, c. 1906, photograph, printed in *Images of America Around Lake Memphremagog*, p. 33.**

[426] Farfan, Township Heritage Magazine, <http://townshipsheritage.com/article/steamers-lake-memphremagog-part-2>, consulted on June 30, 2016.
[427] Farfan, Township Heritage Magazine, <http://townshipsheritage.com/article/steamers-lake-memphremagog-part-2>, consulted on June 30, 2016.


**Figure 70. A.Z. Pinsonneault, photo, *Lansdowne Market. - SHERBROOKE (Canada)*, c. 1905, photo-mechanical print postcard, BAnQ Quebec, Magella Bureau fonds.**

The postcard of *Lansdowne Market* (fig. 70) represents a place located in Sherbrooke at the turn of the 20th - century that embodies several themes relating to postcards addressed so far. Going to market during that era was very much a social experience and event that brought people together from various distances for the purpose of commodity exchange. The human figures pictured in this image are either on the move or gathered together closely in conversation; this marketplace was a commercial site that reflected mobility and facilitated communication, in essence a cultural production similar to the postcard's. The market was where people and products circulated within a produced space; one that can be understood as a practical site or destination created for consumption. Although the image does not represent a landscape of nature, it is very much a commercial and everyday landscape. The human traffic at the marketplace is generated in the context of a leisurely experience that is driven by a consumption based behaviour directed towards commodities and the social experience itself. Symbols of technology are embedded in the image's materiality and represented in its iconography through: its

photographic reproduction of a place, the printed image and typeset, its architecture, the hydroelectric poles, and the railway tracks in the foreground. Lansdowne Market, like the postcard it is pictured on, is a commodified social space that mediates communication, production/consumption exchange, and mobility within a cultural landscape context.

By leaping forward approximately seventy years, we become aware of the extent to which such cultural productions are hyper-mediated by postcards and socio-commercial patterns alike when examining *Lennox Gift Shop Bienvenue.* (Fig.71) With this photograph of a gift shop we are made aware of how the mere acquisition of a souvenir becomes the cultural experience, with no regard for authenticity; the experience of a place or culture is transmuted into a thing. Tourists no longer have to travel abroad to consume memorabilia from distant places, as the products are increasingly brought to them. Commodities, in this way, substitute their place of origin as cultural experiences. *Lennox Gift Shop* offers consumers Irish linens, Indian Slippers, Handicrafts, Antiques, Eskimo Art, Bone China, and Maple Products - all promoted as SOUVENIRS from, presumably, Lennoxville Quebec where the shop is located. The only potentially authentic commodities on that shopping list of international products sold in Lennoxville are the maple products and perhaps a few of the antiques. The souvenirs in this respect, are nothing more than commodified symbols of a consumption based experience that reflected a new category of tourists labelled as 'day trippers'. As Catherine Gudis points to in *Buyways,* cars and highways opened up the countryside for all types of businesses and leisure pursuits.[428] The excessive signage pictured on this postcard reinforces how the landscape was adapting commercially to accommodate a growing "auto-oriented consumer landscape, where drivers were encouraged to window shop right through the windshield."[429]

[428] Catherine Gudis, Buyways, 1.
[429] Gudis, 6.


**Figure 71. W. Schermer, *Lennox Gift Shop Bienvenue*, c. 1985, mechanical print postcard, 13.9 x 9 cm, private collection.**

According to Gudis, due in part to automobiles and advertising, tourism developed into "a simple commercial means by which drivers could consume the landscape and places beyond the billboards."[430] Significantly, it was during the golden age of postcards that the transition from horse drawn carriage and trains to the auto-mobile commenced. Lynda Jessup describes how "North Americans had defined automobility in direct opposition to the perceived authority of the rail-hotel complex, which was thought, among other things, to channel movement along collective, monopolized

[430] Gudis, 4.

lines at invariable speeds determined by rigid schedules and standardized time."[431] By the century's second decade automobiles had largely replaced animal drawn carts and buggies on urban and rural roads. Initially, many embraced this new technology from the start, while others preferred the reliability and familiarity of a horse drawn sleigh. In due time however, the automobile became a trusted commonplace addition to the landscape, after its novelty as a luxury machine had worn off and the vehicles became more dependable and affordable with time. Warren James Belasco suggests how "the car was the New Freedom." Just as the railroad represented a modern industrial achievement for many, others preferred the car as they felt it "embodied a rejection of the values associated with the modern; camping, careening around the mountains, wearing old clothes and living according to one's own schedule was to defy the perceived formality of the hotel and the restrictions of train travel."[432] Although private enterprise had been financially investing in tourist infrastructures since the 19th-century, Ian McKay points out that until the 1920s "it had not been a permanent part of state policy either to attract tourists or to coordinate various aspects of local culture and society as part of the 'tourism plant.' After that decade, however, the state aggressively intervened in civil society to construct such a plant by paving highways, developing hotels, inventing new ethnic and sporting traditions, and monitoring the steady advance of the 'industry'."[433] This new tourism industry, in turn, contributed to explosive growth in the fledgling souvenir industry: "by the early 1930s, tourism, by road and by boat, had become Quebec's biggest business and it continued to grow."[434]

In 1937 painter and art critic John Lyman nostalgically lamented that there was once a time "one could go into almost any [French Canadian] farmer's home and acquire a few rugs, which, if not remarkable, had atleast a naïve decorative charm," in contrast to what he described as the "monstrous

[431] Jessup, The Group of Seven and the Tourist Landscape in Western Canada, 154.
[432] Qtd. in Jessup, Lynda, The Group of Seven, 154.
[433] Qtd. in Jessup, Lynda, The Group of Seven, 152.
[434] Lora Senechal Carney qtd. in, Antimodernism and Artistic Experience, 110.

rag pictures" the women were making by that year.[435] Lyman further objected to how such rugs, or tapis murals as they were known in French, "were displayed on fences and clotheslines along the tourist routes and had 'turned the trip from Quebec to Montreal into a nightmare'."[436] What concerned him most of all, however, was how the real villains, namely the handicraft organizations and the Quebec government, were making matters much worse by "leading astray the unwitting country folk with programs and exhibitions that rewarded entirely the wrong things."[437] According to Lora Senechal, Lyman, "like so many other Western cultural theorists and critics in the first half of the century, lamented the destruction of folk art by modernization,"[438] while others argued that folk art "was merely a rural or pre-industrial conceptual opposite to 'high art' [that] is always 'framed and represented by something other than itself,' endlessly reshaped in the minds of elites according to their particular needs and desires'."[439] Lyman's perspective aligned with others from his era who were advocates of an antimodern ideal that insisted folk art must be " 'authentic', innocent of debasing modern life and the capitalist marketplace."[440] A capitalist marketplace that, as Senechal notes, saw the value of Quebec's manufactured goods rise "from about $150 million in 1900 to more than $1 050 million in 1920."[441]

The cultural production and commercialization of authentic experiences was well underway during the early decades of the 20th-century. A 1927 Canadian Pacific Railways advertisement for Quebec City's Chateau Frontenac hotel underscores this phenomenon that invited guests to "be happy this spring [...] among people who still dwell in a romantic age."[442] During that same period the Chateau Frontenac, paradoxically located in the heart of Quebec city's urban core, offered guests the opportunity to indulge in an authentic and rural culture culinary experience by ordering items from its specialized

[435] Lyman qtd. in, Antimodernism and Artistic Experience, 104.
[436] Lyman, 105.
[437] Lyman, 105.
[438] Carney, 105.
[439] Carney, 105.
[440] Naremore and Brantlinger, qtd. in, Antimodernism and Artistic Experience, 105.
[441] Carney, 106.
[442] Carney, 106.

traditional Habitant Menu served in its main dining room (fig.72). This sensual cultural experience was further reinforced by a picturesque color print image that featured a "typical" Quebecois village in winter to admire while contemplating the menu's selections. Ironically, the hotel succeeded in catering to its guests' desire to consume an authentic rural Quebecois cultural experience, in spite of the fact that the hotel is located in the very heart of the province's oldest city.


**Figure 72. Copyright Chateau Frontenac, *The "Habitant" Menu Chateau Frontenac Quebec*, c. 1930, menu booklet, <http://www.ebay.com/itm/The-Habitant-Menu-The-Chateau-Frontenac-Quebec-Canada-1930s-/192097792308?hash=item2cb9ebb134>.**

The underlying motivations governments at all levels had for supporting the growing interest tourists had for the history, customs and identity of their respective cultural landscapes was based on how tourists were supposedly attracted to "authentic" cultural products and, more importantly, tourism promised economic growth. Postcards and other media including hooked rugs, wood carvings, recipes, stories, songs, paintings and illustrations that characterize the habitant's everyday life abound. Such cultural productions underscore the extent to which identities were marketed within the tourism industry as commercially viable symbols of authenticity - ripe for consumption. The role of landscape in framing these identities cannot be overlooked; it would become a complicitous agent within this commercialized authenticating process, while the postcard's role in circulating, thus perpetuating, such stereotypes on a regional, national and international basis, must not be overlooked. A diverse series of

postcards entitled "Habitant Life Studies" was produced, purchased and set into circulation by Quebec residents and transient tourists alike. For example, figure 73 shows a postcard's recto/verso from one such Habitant series. This card was sent by Laura from Quebec City to Madame Gouin in Victoriaville on March 22, 1909. Laura cordially wrote:

> Bien Chère
> Je t'écrirai longuement une autre fois.. ce soir je suis trop fatigué. Je m'amuse toujours bien mais je n'oublie pas les Amies. Ecris moi si tu peux. Amitiés [?] a ton cher et a toi affectueux baiser Laura.

Significantly, Carney emphasizes how odd it is that Lyman "should have presumed, in 1937, to find French Canadians living in a mythical pre-industrial past," especially given that "he mentioned the trip from Quebec to Montreal because Trois-Rivières, a town along the north shore between the two cities, had, in addition to other manufacturing, the largest paper mill in the world."[443]


**Figure 73. The Valentine & Sons' Publishing Co. Ltd. *The Bread Oven Habitant Life Studies*, 1909, mechanical print postcard, 9x 13.9 cm, private collection. This postcard was mailed from Quebec city to Victoriaville Qc.**

[443] Carney, 111.

**SECTION III. Magog's Marshland: Between Environmental Activism and Ecotourism**

## 13. An Introduction to Le Marais de la Rivière aux Cerises' History

**Figure 74. Anonymous, untitled, c. 2005, photograph, <http://www.environnementestrie.ca>. This aerial photograph was issued by LAMRAC's director Stephanie Houde in her report to CREE. I have added the red line to the original photo in order to delineate Le Marais' boundaries and to situate the ecopark's territory relative to the city of Magog and Mt. Orford National Park.**

The first two sections of this thesis focused on examining various ways that landscapes, and their wide range of meanings, were formulated during the industrial era in the Eastern Townships through an emphasis on everyday labour practices, although leisure and tourism were not overlooked as extensions of modern life. Attention was placed on human interventions that have clearly impacted the region's natural environment due to industries that include logging, manufacturing, mining, and tourism. Those industries were influenced by, and in turn greatly influenced technology, machinery, communications and mobility: socio-industrial developments that affect the experience of landscape. The invention of the automobile, for example, altered people's mobility which in turn led to the exploration and discovery of new places and communities according to personal schedules. One of the

consequences this changing vehicular technology had on the landscape and environment was related to, as Kern vividly describes, how "the petroleum industry began to supply combustible fuels on a large scale for the automobiles, and power stations distributed electricity to light up the night and drive electric motors. It was the reverse of the current energy crisis, since alarmists were generally concerned about a surfeit of new energy sources and its possible nefarious consequences. There was little talk of running out."[444] According to him, the pre-WWI period's corporate concern for an overabundance of available natural resources, which would drive down market prices was, on the other hand, perceived optimistically and enthusiastically by consumers.[445] The general public's optimistic outlook towards carefree consumption habits, which fostered a 'more for less' consumer mentality during that modern era, contrasts dramatically with post-modern concerns regarding the current worldwide environmental crisis that stems from the knowledge that we are, in fact, running out of natural resources.

Whereas sections I and II looked to Lefebvre's critique of everyday life in the modern world to frame their discussion about the intimate link between landscape and capitalism in the west, here I turn to Félix Guattari's critique of what he calls "Integrated World Capitalism" (IWC) in order to reinforce my discussion of landscape, ecotourism, and ecology. These categories will be addressed in relation to the particular area that is outlined in red, shown in figure 74, a territory that is situated between Mont-Orford National Park and the city of Magog at the point at which Cherry River converges with Lake Memphremagog, mere feet away from the heart of the city's urban core. Guattari's IWC is summarized as a post-industrial capitalism that exercises control over multiple aspects of contemporary life including "media, advertising, opinion polls, etc. - subjectivity."[446] He opposes this system and advocates , on the other hand, for "a reconstruction of social and individual practices" leading to an "ecosophy" which

[444] Kern, 9.
[445] Kern, 9.
[446] Guattari, 32.

takes into account three ecologies "social ecology, mental ecology and environmental ecology."[447] For Guattari these three ecologies are inextricably linked, accordingly, environmental issues must be considered in relation to social and psychological states of being. Although *Le Marais* is a three dimensional organic landscape of shifting perspectives, diverse organisms, and seasonal transformations that characterize a panoramic terrain which encompasses just over 925 acres, it is important to acknowledge that this wetland is not entirely naturally-occurring. In fact, this landscape can be considered as a cultural space that has evolved in temporal terms in tandem with Magog's industrial history. This current ecopark is thus very much a constructed landscape, one that is compellingly unique as a historical landscape.

**Figure 75. Anonymous, untitled, photograph 2007 (left), 1930 (right ), <http://www.environnementestrie.ca/imports/pdf/activites/ppt/houde.pdf>. These two aerial views of *Le Marais*' territory show the extent of urban sprawl over the 77 year period. The two arrows on the right point to the original railway tracks (far right) and current tracks (upper left).**

A portion of this ecological environment is the unintentional result of human activities that commenced during the late 18th-century's industrial era, when the Township of Magog's first dam was

[447] Guattari, 28.

erected in 1797, at the lake's northern outlet.[448] The human circumstances which contributed to the wetland's creation relate to Guattari's 'ecosophical logic' that insists on "an ethico-political articulation between the three ecological registers (the environment, social relations and human subjectivity)."[449] Magog's Le Marais de la rvière aux Cerises, hereafter referred to as Le Marais, is linked to humanly initiated events that occurred during a period of capitalist expansion, an era that Guattari targets for having disrupted "the delicate symbiosis between ourselves and nature, with largely unforeseeable results."[450] Indeed, a combination of factors contributed to the unforeseen creation and unplanned history of this heterogeneous territory following the Township of Magog's first dam. For instance in 1877 railway tracks were laid by the Magog & Waterloo Railway Company in order to connect Waterloo to Magog. The tracks cut right through the heart of *Le Marais'* current ecopark. An arrow has been added to the 1930 aerial photograph of Le Marais (fig.75, right), which points to an outline of those first tracks laid in 1877, and are still visible in the 2007 aerial photograph (fig.75, left). In order to adequately level the tracks, the company had to properly reinforce them by creating huge embankments of landfill. The Canadian Pacific Railways subsequently shifted the tracks to the south in 1887 due to concerns regarding the marsh's fluctuating water levels. Those tracks, pointed to by the arrow above and to the left of the other one, can be seen in close proximity to the older ones in both aerial views, and are still in use today. Also, in 1883 the Magog Textile and Print Company completed the construction of its first dam, causing the lake's water levels to rise which in turn spilled over to the wetland bordering Rivière aux Cerises. Then, in 1897 the municipality of Magog in partnership with the textiles manufacturing company jointly built its first hydroelectric dam which caused the marshland area to double in size. After a 60 ft. length of the original stone and wood dam collapsed following heavy rains in 1915, a stronger

[448] This information regarding *Le Marais* is issued by *LAMRAC* in an unpublished and non-paginated document titled "Le Marais de la Rivière aux Cerises" written by Benoît Vaillancourt based on information he retrieved from La Société d'Histoire de Magog.
[449] Guattari, 19-20.
[450] Guattari, 3.

concrete dam and new brick hydroelectric facility, still in use today, were completed in 1920. Eventually, the lake's water level gradually stabilized, and by 1930 the marshland reached, and has ever since, maintained its current water level even though, since then, the territory's overall surface area has decreased by 30% due to urban development.[451] This effect gradually occurred over a period of 75 years, and is clearly documented in figure 80 through two aerial view photographs of Le Marais and its immediate surroundings. The extent of urban development is particularly noticeable in the 2007 photograph's lower and left-hand sections in comparison to the 1930 version, as the buildings and roads push up against and spill over into the wetland zone. It is worth noting that Le Marais' website does refer to how industry contributed to the ecopark's current stable water levels due to factory needs, railway embankments, laid tracks, constructed dams, and how the current boardwalk's course traces the area's first railway tracks. The website does not however, provide any details or historical images referencing the city's influential textile and lumber manufactories or the generations of manual labourers and workers who contributed to this history, as was examined in the first section of this thesis. The railway's linear markings, shown in figure 75, are indelibly implanted in the landscape and literally outline how directly and significantly this particular environment's appearance is affected by industry.

Although much of the Eastern Townships' manufacturing industry has left the region (as part of the post-modern industrial migration towards the global south), tourism, agricultural, specialized and service based industries continue to operate. The city of Magog was promoted as "La Place à Famille" up until the late 1990s, and this was because employment in the large textiles factory and its subsidiaries was still viable. Today, the city is more suited to what I refer to as "La Place aux Retraités", or retirement place. Assisted living apartment complexes are on the rise, as are small condo communities. In contrast to the city's near constant cycle of small to mid-size businesses opening up only to shut down a short

[451] Stéphanie Houde. Le Reflet du Lac (journaliste : Vincent Cliche), 18 février 2010. « *LAMRAC* lève le voile sur son Centre d'observation et d'éducation ». <http://www.tourisme-memphremagog.com/blogue/news/LAMRAC-leve-le-voile-sur-son-centre-dobservation-et-deducation/>. December 15, 2010.

time later, Magog's two funeral homes are thriving; they were both renovated and extended in 2016 in order to accommodate the rising number of deaths related to the municipality's aging population. As per the Canadian government's 2011 census, Magog's population over 65 years old was 21.7% in comparison to that demographic's national average of 14.8%. Magog's median age was 48, Canada's was 40.6. Magog's largest increase reported in 2011 measured against the 2006 census figures was again the 65+ category, which had risen by an astonishing 31 % within those five years. During that same five year period, children aged 0-14 in Magog actually declined, reporting at -5.9%. The fact that young families are currently retreating from this post-industrial environment signals a significant social change in contrast to a century earlier, when Magog 's textiles factory pro-actively sought an additional 100 families to move into the area in order to satisfy its growing employment needs, as advertised in the company's recruitment booklet introduced in section I of this thesis. (Fig. 17) This demographic shift is reflected in the landscape that is also gradually transforming in tandem with the change in population, from a majority of labourers, merchants and families, to an increasingly leisure and recreation seeking group of retirees and aging seniors. This final section thus contributes to this thesis as a study on how the function and/or character of a place has transformed over time. In this case, it is not only Magog that has undergone relatively recent changes; Le Marais' documented transformation from an unintentionally reinforced wetland environment, to an unofficially designated local garbage dump, into a well attended ecopark also attests to a place's potential for change. It is important to underscore how each one of these identities are associated to various categories of industry including: manufacturing, railway, waste management, and tourism. The humanly caused variations to Le Marais terrain over time reinforce how "there can be little doubt that around the world increased pollution, global warming, deforestation, desertification and the loss of biodiversity are anthropogenic, or that the motor of this generalized impoverishment of the biosphere is capitalism."[452]

[452] Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton, translators' introduction to *The Three Ecologies*, 3.


**Figure 76. Anonymous, untitled, 2016, photograph, screen capture image of the Marais de la Rivière aux Cerises' electronically mailed info letter. This message was emailed to subscribers on November 26, 2016 in order to celebrate its recent rating of "No1 things to do in Magog on Trip advisor".**

In order to get to Le Marais from Magog's Main Street (Rue Principale), visitors can walk, drive or bike past this urban hub's local art galleries, boutiques (à louer), banks, antique stores, bars, barbershops, optometrists, restaurants, and vacant buildings (à vendre) until reaching the ecopark's entrance closest to La Pointe Merry and Lake Memphremagog's municipal beach. This entrance leads the visitors along a narrow and relatively short dirt path that quickly connects to the ecopark's boardwalks and lookouts that were constructed in order to enable pedestrian access to the park's

wetland terrains. Alternately, visitors arriving from Highway 10 will first travel a short distance along Route 112, which runs parallel to the northern shore of Lake Memphremagog, before turning left onto Chemin Roy in order to access *Le Marais*' main entrance to the park, its Centre d'Interpretation du Marais (CIM, a portion of the building visible in the background of figure 76), and a large "L" shaped gravel parking lot. In order to get to the boardwalks from this point of entry, visitors must first choose one of various dirt paths that snake through the park's extensive forested ecosystem. The park is open to visitors by trail throughout the year, and by water using non-motorized methods (canoe, paddle-board, kayak) on a seasonal basis. Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing are permitted, however bicycling is forbidden within the park's boundaries although there are several racks and places to park and lock them.

On their website, Les Amis du Marais de la Rivière Aux Cerises (*LAMRAC*), Le Marais' custodians, proudly promote how the ecopark offers "le plus long réseau de sentiers sur pilotis au Québec et le seul milieu humide offrant un site entièrement accessible à l'année", and describe Le Marais as "une destination de choix pour la population locale et touristique."[453] It is therefore unsurprising that the boardwalk is regularly featured in many of the images that serve to mediate this place (figs. 76, 77, 78). The trails and boardwalk were designed by a biologist and a geographer who intentionally adapted their trajectory to the natural environment's diverse elements, in order to minimize their trajectory's impact on the park's fragile ecosystems. Without the boardwalk, most of the site would be inaccessible due to the density of vegetation and depth of water in areas surrounding the river, confirming how, as Richard Smardon noted in the early 1980s, "man-made elements in the wetland micro-landscape, such as a boardwalk on a bog mat […] may even promote visual, recreational, and educational values by providing access to an otherwise restricted and extremely delicate area.[454] Le Marais' human-made boardwalk,

[453] <http://maraisauxcerises.com/LAMRAC/amenagement/en-photos-v15-61.php#plan>, consulted on February 17, 2012.
[454] Smardon, The Future of Wetlands, 11.

interpretation centre, trails and other amenities underscore how this ecopark is a built environment similar to other designed spaces like parks or gardens.

**Figure 77. Anonymous, untitled, undated, photograph, *Le Marais*' website <https://maraisauxcerises.com/img/Marais-IMG-Entete-04.jpg>. This panoramic landscape photograph shows *Le Marais*' boardwalk with benches and panel in summer.**

Although my emphasis here is on the material aspects of this territory's micro-environments, it is important to note that the park's landscape is highly mediated using a range of traditional and new media visual culture methods. While people are encouraged to visit the site's diverse landscapes and ecosystems in person, Le Marais' organization also relies on a wide range of visual materials to make this ecopark familiar and accessible to the public: these include diagrams (fig. 79), illustrated pamphlets, maps, and information panels strategically placed and interspersed throughout the park (figs. 77, 80), displays of specimens, a current exhibit of wooden carved birds that are threatened with extinction in Québec, a website (fig. 78), photographs that circulate via electronically mailed information letters (fig. 76), and other social media platforms. The extent to which landscape representations are called upon to promote this "green" environment is apparent by looking at the very small sample of various media chosen for this section and shown here (figs. 76-80). For example, the instructional panel erected in the park itself (fig. 80), includes a romantically-illuminated photograph of a landscape at sunset, alongside information about flora and fauna. Thus visitors to Le Marais are provided with both framed landscape representations on-site or on the website, together with an actual three dimensional landscape if the individual encounters the panel in person while strolling across the boardwalk. The boardwalk provides

an even path and a practical, convenient, and accessible way of experiencing the wetland by foot, wheelchair, quadriporteur, or stroller rather than by boat through the swamp. The benches encourage visitors to have a seat and absorb the surroundings, and another panel is usually nearby to inform them about one of the park's many interesting details or particularities. In the summer and fall, the ecopark's dense vegetation shields the visitor's view of the surrounding urban environment; people can actually smell the fresh flowers' and plants' fragrances in the breeze due to their high levels of concentration throughout the park. Visitors can hear that breeze brush over the plants and leaves as it fades into the nearby calls and croaks from the park's band of creatures. This natural environment's array of textures, colors, shapes and sounds are permanently on hand to experience, and never present themselves identically from one visit to the next. The panoramic landscape photograph shown in figure 77, which appears on the website, reinforces the ecopark's spacious and environmental aesthetic, and shows a few of its amenities including the boardwalk, benches and information panels that make experiencing the park a comfortable and accommodating experience - qualities that are often sought and valued by tourists. The screen image captured from Le Marais' website (fig. 78) underscores the level of importance the park's administrators place on landscape to mediate and promote the site. It is worth noting that each one of the six small photographs uploaded on the webpage are conventionally picturesque views of Le Marais' landscape, chosen to convey a sense of the scenery available to consume from various vantage points situated throughout the park.

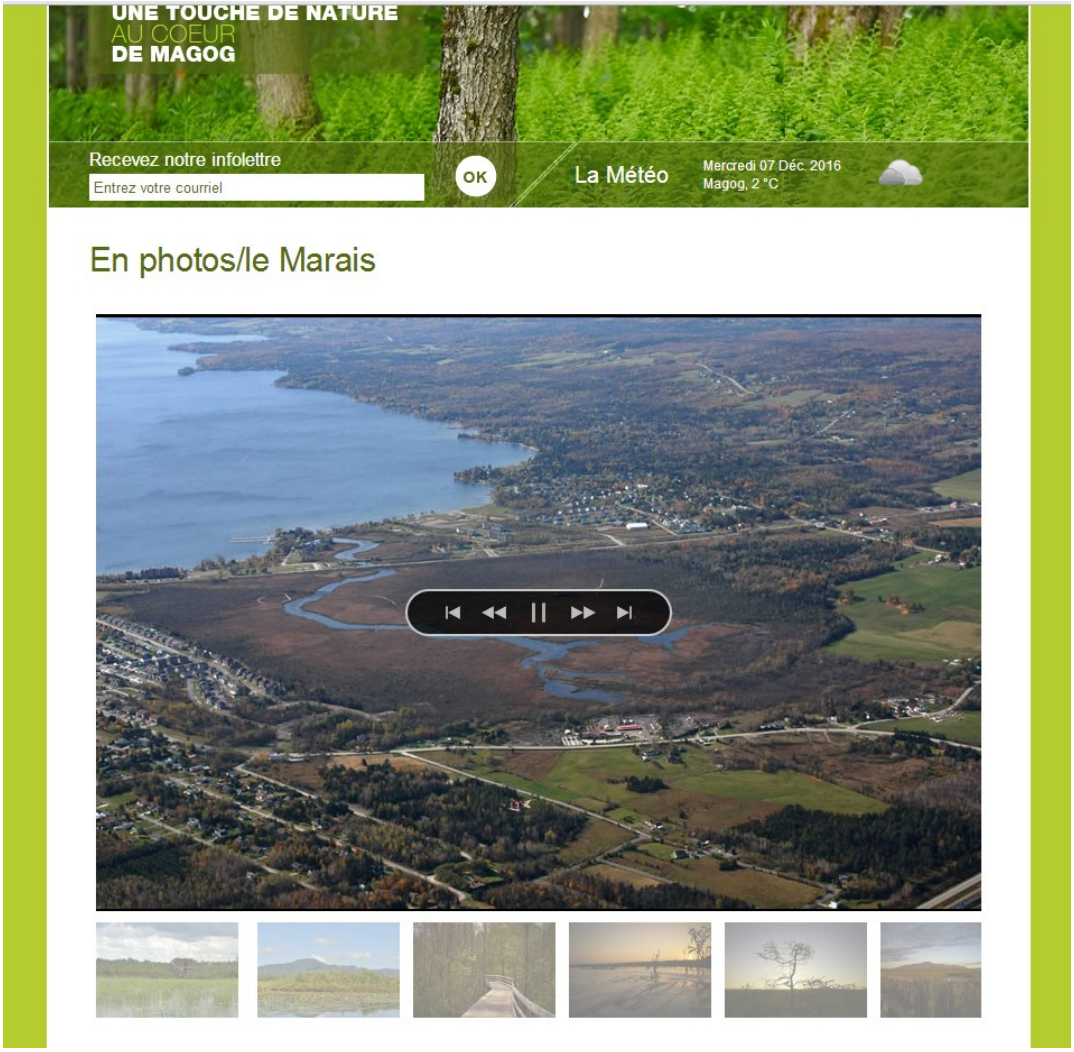


**Figure 78. Anonymous, screen capture image from *Le Marais*' website, "En photos/*Le Marais*", <https://maraisauxcerises.com/>.**

As a virtual space and physical place that is freely accessible to the public and devoted to the care, study and display of nature, it is a healthful environment that offers leisure and learning opportunities to residents and tourists alike. Its educational mandate is disseminated through the use of various materials that include specimens, images and textual based information. These informational materials offer the public a general sense of the place's overall spatial layout and many of the specific qualities relating to its indigenous vegetation and wildlife. They not only assist in helping people to recognize what types of plants, animals, and other organisms occupy the various ecosystems, they also explain their significance to those environments, and suggest what is at stake in the wake of their

extinction. Clearly, Le Marais is not intended as a site designed for resource extraction and production, nor is it intended as a site of consumption in the conventional touristic sense -as ecotourism sets itself apart from mass tourism in principle atleast, if not always in practice. In Le Marais' case, it is a museumified, ecologically designated place that evidently stands apart from its surrounding environments, as can be seen by examining the large aerial photographs shown in figures 74 and 78. As noted the ecopark is physically situated between the city of Magog and Mount-Orford National Park, the former a commercial and residential oriented urban environment, the latter a provincially legislated nature preservation territory that is strictly protected, by law[455], from any further development within its boundaries: a legally guarded nature fortress. As a result, the ecopark is literally situated between two highly conflicting and contested contemporary agendas: economic development strategies and nature conservation imperatives.

Recently, many local and regional initiatives, such as undertaken by LAMRAC in collaboration with various governmental agencies, are demonstrating favorable indications that since the late 20th and early 21st centuries, perspectives regarding the natural environment are shifting towards a rather more promising, sustainable and restorative approach that seems to be gaining momentum with each new decade. The contemporary discourse about environmental sustainability suggests how people's perceptions of nature are shifting away from it being taken for granted and exploited in the short term, and opening up towards an awareness and greater concern for the entire planet's future well being. It is important to ask, however, how Le Marais and its custodians (LAMRAC) balance ecotourism with sustainability, and environmental sensitivity with economic viability. I want to thus call attention to how Le Marais, as an ecotourism "site", promotes the region's landscape materially (ecopark) and visually (website), while examining its recent initiatives in light of environmental issues, opposing/overlapping ideologies, and conflicting agendas.

[455] Preservation indicates legislated protection; conservation is protecting and guarding without legal sanctions.

Scholar Rosaleen Duffy suggests how "ecotourism is often thought to provide a resolution to conflicts over the reservation of land for national parks, because it enables local communities and private businesses to derive financial benefits from engaging with conservation."[456] In light of Le Marais' proximity to the highly regulated and closely monitored Mt. Orford National park, and all the litigated limitations that accompany that status, it is reasonable to conceive that the ecopark serves as a partial resolution to the region's recurring policy conflicts between developers and conservationists. According to Duffy, "in many ways ecotourism is being proposed as a tool for negotiating complicated relationships between these potentially conflicting interest groups."[457]The legislations, mandates and vocations that are ascribed to each one of these very different landscape environments (national park, urban centre, residential area, ecopark, recreational park) highlight the tensions, ambiguities and paradoxes that confound the term "landscape", just as those anomalies are concealed and, worse, normalized by the seemingly harmonious and tranquil nature of landscape representations such as the one pictured in the photograph shown in figure 74.

[456] Rosaleen Duffy, A Trip Too Far: Ecotourism, Politics & Exploitation, ix.
[457] Duffy, ix.

## 14. Dual Ideologies: Ecotourism and Guattari's Three Ecologies

Le Marais is ambivalently positioned between economic and environmental priorities. This point reinforces how landscape continues to be, to this day, influenced by capitalist based, profit-oriented interests even though the stakeholders no longer necessarily have the same profile that they did during previous generations. For example, as an industry, according to one recent study, "nature tourism is the fastest growing sector in the $3.5 trillion global annual tourism market."[458] David Fennel points out, however, that ecotourism can be qualified as "low impact nature tourism which contributes to the maintenance of species and habitats either directly through a contribution to conservation and/or indirectly by providing revenue to the local community sufficient for local people to value, and therefore protect, their wildlife heritage as a source of income."[459] This definition leaves little doubt that ecotourism policies and projects are precariously positioned somewhere between environmentalism and 'green-greed', a term coined by Duffy to suggest the underlying profit motives driving nature tourism. In 2008 and again in 2012, Le Marais was the recipient of awards from "Les Grands Prix Du Tourismes Québécois."[460] Such recognition by Quebec's tourism association generates skepticism regarding the ecopark's environmentalist mandate and its ties to the region's entrepreneurs and politicians. One study optimistically describes ecotourism as a category of tourism founded "on the concept of sustainable development, which, while problematic, ideologically and politically, still provides a platform on which different stakeholders in tourism can interact, negotiate and reflect on their actions' consequences and the environment."[461] As a case study, Le Marais presents a unique opportunity to further examine this ideological and political problematic.

Ecotourism studies raise awareness regarding the current environmental challenges faced by communities and cultures around the globe since becoming a thriving economic industry in both

[458] qtd. in Ecotourism, 58.
[459] David Fennell, Ecotourism: An Introduction, 58.
[460] Marais de la Rivières aux Cerises, <https://maraisauxcerises.com/>, consulted on September 16, 2016
[461] Owen, Swain and Convery, 271.

developed and less developed nations around the world. Fennell emphasizes how his collaborative text on ecotourism was published in order to address the "inconsistencies" in the philosophical basis of the field, and how that field has reached a critical juncture in its evolution. The case studies presented in the text cover a diverse range of issues relating to "government involvement in ecotourism, aboriginal interests, partnership and training, tourist demand, structural differences between developed and developing countries, policy and regulation, ethics and responsibility, and so on."[462] The text confronts some of the serious problems and challenges that arise as a result of ecotours including "instances where tourists endured swimming in water with human waste; guides capturing sloths and caiman for tourists to photograph; raw sewage openly dumped into the ocean; mother cheetahs killing their cubs to avoid the harassment of cheetah-chasing tourists; and an ecotourism industry under-regulated with little hope for enforcement."[463] In Duffy's text, she argues that "ecotourism, as a subset of the global tourism industry, is firmly embedded in green capitalism, where the individual bears responsibility for environmental conservation or degradation rather than governments or private industry."[464] Ultimately, she questions whether ecotourism is truly an environmentally-sustainable tourism, or if it should instead be regarded as what she terms "green-greed." These ambiguous agendas are proving difficult to reconcile, and perhaps even harder to distinguish from various political, social and economic policies. Ecotourism is loosely defined as nature tourism which implies travelling around to admire and experience a location's scenery, vegetation, wildlife, and the region's broader surroundings including its cultural characteristics which can be experienced through music, cuisine, sports, art, festivals, etc. Le Marais de la Rivière aux Cerises' ecopark is surrounded by such diverse cultural attractions including: Le Centre d'Arts Orford (music), Mt. Orford National Park (sports and plein-air), Centre d'Arts visuels de Magog (visual arts), 40 kilometers of bicycling trails within its city limits, regular festivals held at the

[462] Fennell, preface.
[463] Fennell, preface.
[464] Duffy, 10.

lakefront park La Pointe Merry, including La Fête des Neige and Le Vendange in addition to many other annual and seasonal festivities. In fact, in 2012 city officials rebranded Magog's image by adapting the slogan and accompanying banner 'Magog, créative de nature' placing additional emphasis on promoting the area's creative culture and nature in an ill concealed strategy to promote ecotourism in the wake of its declining manufacturing industries.

Eco-tours in Canada date back to the 1970s, at which time they "were centred around the Trans-Canada Highway and were developed on the basis of different ecological zones found along the highway."[465] The tours "were developed at a time when the Canadian government felt it important to allow Canadians and foreign travellers to appreciate the human - land relationship in Canada, through the interpretation of the natural environment."[466] A parallel can be drawn to the nation's Canadian Pacific trans-Canada railway which arguably served as a model for these federally initiated eco-tours on two levels: literally, the highway's charted and paved trajectory paralleled the railway's line, and ideologically as each initiative promoted the country's natural landscape as a tourist attraction. Aldo Leopold suggests how "we abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect." [467] Although Le Marais' land is no longer abused as it once was while serving as a garbage dump, LAMRAC's mandate is nonetheless positioned somewhere between these two polarized perspectives of land as commodity on the one hand (ecopark), and community (ecological environment) on the other. This conflict arises from externally applied pressure from groups and individuals seeking to promote different agendas. As a case study, Le Marais serves well as a platform that addresses many themes and issues relating to modern and post-modern landscape traditions, while considering the complex and often conflicting social, cultural, political and economic priorities that influence those traditions. As an officially

[465] Fennel, 17.
[466] Fennel, 17.
[467] Aldo Leopold, qtd. in Fennel, 38.

designated public park it is important to note however that, despite some similarities, Le Marais is a more environmentally oriented and organic place in contrast to other carefully planned and designed urban leisure spaces of nature such as gardens or parks like Magog's La Pointe Merry for example, that is host to several public event productions and festivals organized throughout the year in order to attract tourists to the region and boost the local economy. This study invokes Duffy's fundamental question regarding ecotourism as either an environmentally -sustainable form of tourism or by-product of 'green-greed' in order to examine the various players and complex ways which, as she suggests, the "decisions regarding the environment are politically, socially and economically informed."[468] Whereas Duffy makes it perfectly clear that she regards ecotourism as "a part of a global capitalist system rather than any kind of challenge to it"[469], I wish to emphasize how initiatives such as undertaken by LAMRAC, at the very least, raise awareness about the tension between such conflicting profit-based/environmental agendas by reclaiming a relatively small parcel of land where nature is enabled to thrive once again. Duffy insists on how "the debates surrounding ecotourism have masked the important ideological content of ecotourism as a development strategy. The way in which the environment is defined determines the policies that are used to manage or conserve it; the 'environment' is negotiated using sets of competing ideas."[470]

Almost three decades ago Guattari objected to how we have imposed ourselves on the planet Earth to the point of destruction, and warned that the impact and effects were so varied and sustained that it was difficult to know how to stop the devastation. According to him, the "intense techno-scientific transformations" that are threatening the continuation of life on earth are compounded by the progressive deterioration of "human modes of life, both individual and collective."[471] In *The Three Ecologies* he objects to how "the increasing deterioration of human relations with the socius, the psyche

[468] Duffy, 2.
[469] Duffy, xi.
[470] Duffy, 2.
[471] Guattari, 19.

and 'nature', is due not only to environmental and objective pollution but is also the result of a certain incomprehension and fatalistic passivity towards these issues as a whole, among both individuals and governments. Catastrophic or not, negative developments are simply accepted without question."[472] During the industrial era, systems were implemented to extract, process and produce, therefore it necessarily followed that the resulting products had to be consumed in order to offset the costs relating to the production process. For governments and for privately-owned companies, the financial result or profit resulting from that process was more important than its ecological impact. It was in opposition to this capitalist ethos and with remarkable prescience that Guattari advocated in 1989 how:

> now more than ever, nature cannot be separated from culture [...] our television screens are populated, saturated, by 'degenerate' images and statements. In the field of social ecology, men like Donald Trump are permitted to proliferate freely, like another species of algae, taking over entire districts of New York and Atlantic City; he 'redevelops' by raising rents, thereby driving out tens of thousands of poor families, most of whom are condemned to homelessness, becoming the equivalent of the dead fish of environmental ecology.[473]

Although Guattari's above statement underscores how there certainly remains an imperative for much greater activism in order to effect fundamental change (especially in light of the 2016 presidential election in the USA), many of today's models for interacting with the natural world are increasingly sensitive to their ecological impact, as environmental, ethical, and social issues are now addressed alongside economic priorities. For example, more of today's consumers consider what has been done, what is being done, and what will be done by various industries and companies before choosing to purchase their respective products. Such heightened consumer awareness is pointing the way to new categories of cultural practices and industries, and this is reflected in the growing number, and varieties of, ecotourism initiatives.

LAMRAC's current mission, in collaboration with various government agencies, demonstrates the benefits that can be realized when individuals and collectives respond to environmental

[472] Guattari, 28.
[473] Guattari, 29.

degradation. I believe LAMRAC's initiatives respond to Guattari's notion that "the reconquest of a degree of creative autonomy in one particular domain encourages conquests in other domains - the catalyst for a gradual reforging and renewal of humanity's confidence in itself starting at the most miniscule level."[474] As an example he called attention to how his own essay, in its own way, sets out to counter a pervasive atmosphere of dullness and passivity.[475] Ultimately, the dullness and passivity Guattari identifies may be interpreted as a social side-effect of everyday living under capitalism. He argues that "individuals are 'captured' by their environment, by ideas, tastes, models, ways of being, the images that are constantly injected into them, and even by the refrains that go round and round in their heads. In fact [...] it is difficult to know where, or rather, who 'we' are, especially when the most dominant refrains are provided by IWC's ideological arm, the mass media."[476] I want to draw attention to how collective initiatives like LAMRAC's attempt to disrupt such mass hypnotic routines, just as they play into them through a proliferation of images that circulate via social media. On the one hand, as part of its mission LAMRAC values innovation, creativity, and respect for the territory's natural environment. The association's mandate is to manage the wetland's many activities, nurture its wildlife and landscapes, and maintain its buildings. It also endorses social responsibility and engagement through a commitment to several educational programs. On the other hand, LAMRAC also strives to promote and preserve the wetland's overall terrain while, according to its website, it pursues further development of Le Marais' ecological, cultural, and tourism interests.[477] This dual agenda is ambiguous at best, and it is strikingly similar to others that inform many contemporary ecotourism initiatives. As Duffy notes "a key strand in the argument is that ecotourism creates both positive and negative impacts,"[478] as it is positioned between 'green greed' and environmentalism. According to Le Marais' website, the ecopark

[474] Guattari, 45.
[475] Guattari, 45.
[476] Guattari, 5.
[477] <http://maraisauxcerises.com/*LAMRAC*/general/association-du-marais-de-la-riviere-aux-cerises.php>, consulted on June 11, 2013.
[478] Duffy, x.

welcomes more than 120 000 visitors per year, the majority of whom are identified as residents of Magog-Orford, although "les touristes de passage, des familles notamment, constituent également une masse non négligeable des visiteurs."[479] Arguably then, since it first opened in 2000, this ecopark has developed into a public everyday park and a popular ecotourist site. In its transformation beyond a purely wilderness or untamed nature and a humanly designed nature, this landscape, like other parks and gardens, constitutes what Ian Thompson describes as "a 'third nature' in which nature and culture are deliberately mixed."[480] According to this principle the 'first nature' is wilderness, the 'second nature' is cultural landscape, and the " 'third nature' is different in that the outdoor places human beings make specifically for their pleasure are designed with aesthetic intent, though they often employ mimesis, borrowing features both from first nature and from second nature."[481] Le Marais' ecoscape, which in its current state is a pleasure for the senses, has derived from a combination of organisms and accumulated human interventions, reinforcing how, as Thompson notes, landscapes "often provide communities not only with a place for recreation and contact with nature but also with a repository for collective memories."[482]

[479] <http://maraisauxcerises.com/*LAMRAC*/general/association-du-marais-de-la-riviere-aux-cerises.php>, consulted on June 11, 2013.
[480] Ian Thompson, Making Sense of Place, 159.
[481] Thompson, 160.
[482] Thompson, 160.

## 15. Le Marais' Complex Ecology


**Figure 79. Anonymous, untitled, diagram of Le Marais' territory, <http://www.environnementestrie.ca>. This diagram, issued by LAMRAC's director Stephanie Houde, illustrates the ecopark's various ecosystems.**

In its current phase as an ecotourism park, Le Marais consists of diverse ecological systems co-existing within the same climatic conditions. I refer to the park's four ecosystems as ecoscapes, as each one is a distinct landscape that is characterized by its particular spatial variations, but when combined into one delineated territory, they each contribute to the ecopark's uniquely heterogeneous environment. These four categories include swampland, marshland, forest, and peat bog as identified in figure 79, a map that indicates where the various ecosystems are situated within the ecopark. The distinction between swamp, bog, or marsh is simply based on the water's depth in a given area. Each

one of these four different environments is suitable for a broad variety of species and organisms to thrive; Le Marais is currently home to 363 kinds of plants, trees and flora, 151 types of birds, 14 species of reptiles and amphibians, 24 types of mammals, and 23 varieties of fish.[483] Note the slogan printed on the top left of the screen capture shown in figure 78, printed among the trees and lush green ferns: "UNE TOUCHE DE NATURE AU COEUR DE MAGOG", and how well framed and positioned the ecopark is, quite literally at the center of this landscape. The park's limitations correspond quite nearly to the white roadways that are surrounding it in this photograph. By branding the territory as a touch of nature in the heart of the city of Magog, Le Marais' administration is identifying the park as a specific category of ecotourism, and that category is "urban ecotourism." One study finds that "by its nature, tourism has facilitated the process for capitalism to achieve further growth in new sectors and in new places."[484] Accordingly, in 1996 Blackstone Corporation summarized how:

> it is interesting to note an emerging focus on ecotourism in urban regions. This phenomenon may be defined as travel and exploration within and around an urban area that offers visitors enjoyment and appreciation of the city's natural areas and cultural resources, while inspiring physically active, intellectually stimulating and socially interactive experiences; promotes the city's long-term ecological health by promoting walking, cycling, public transportation; promotes sustainable local economic and community development and vitality; celebrates local heritage and the arts; and is accessible and equitable to all.[485]

In light of Le Marais' prime location in close proximity to Mt.-Orford National Park (snowshoeing, skiing, golf) and walking distance to Lake Memphremagog (water sports), La Pointe Merry (beaches, amenities, roller-blading, skate park, bike paths), and Main Street's commercial sector (restaurants, shops, theatres, galleries), the ecopark is clearly well positioned to indeed offer 'visitors enjoyment and appreciation of the city's natural areas and cultural resources'. Additionally, some of the listed "logical

[483] <http://maraisauxcerises.com/*LAMRAC*/amenagement/en-photos-v15-61.php#plan>, consulted on February 17, 2012.
[484] Fennell, 78.
[485] Blackwell Corporation, qtd in Ecotourism, 78.

places for urban ecotourism" include parks, ponds, and landfill and waste disposal sites.[486] Significantly, in light of how Le Marais was once commonly used, although unofficially, as a municipal garbage dump for decades, several studies on tourism have shown how "municipalities have reclaimed mines as well as waste disposal sites and turned these into green belts, including parks and golf courses. These have become important sites for native flora and fauna."[487] Such studies suggest that "many groups have made significant contributions to conservation through the restoration of natural areas which have been degraded by human intervention, making ecotourism in the urban environment an option."[488] As is the case with Le Marais, nature and landscape are, quite literally, the tourist attractions - a nature themed park with an educational twist that comes complete with a gift shop located in its interpretation centre, right next to the parking lot. Figure 76 shows a screen capture image of the ecopark's info letter that was distributed by electronic mail to its subscribers on November 26, 2016 celebrating its recent "Trip Advisor" status as the public's No1 choice of things to do and/or see in Magog.

Since the 1980s wetland have been a subject of interest for scholars from various fields that have recognized their visual as well as educational potential. Notably, environmental studies scholar Richard Smardon's compilation of empirical case studies assessed "visual perception and the visual quality of wetland and their landscape contexts."[489] The studies supported the environmentalist's hypothesis that recreational, aesthetic, and educational values are strongly interconnected, leading him to assert that "for all perceptual and experiential modes and at all geographical scales, wetland have high visual and educational values relative to other types of landscape."[490] Approximately 10% of Quebec's overall territory, amounting to 170 000 $km^2$, is currently categorized as wetland terrain.[491] The provincial government has recently acknowledged, in accordance with global standards, that wetland,

[486] Fennell, 78.
[487] Fennell, 79.
[488] Fennell, 79.
[489] Smardon, 5.
[490] Smardon, 5.
[491] <http://www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/eau/rives/milieuxhumides.htm>, consulted on June 15, 2013.

once perceived as virtually useless wastelands during industrialization, now play an equally important economic role as agricultural land and forests do- in other words, as desirable natural resources that contribute to the economy. Additionally, government officials advocate that "les biens et services écologiques qu'ils procurent à la société représentent indéniablement un moteur pour l'économie locale, régionale, nationale et mondiale. Il est donc primordial de conserver ces milieux, particulièrement dans les régions où les développements urbains ont contribué à leur dégradation ou à leur disparition."[492] Such an officially issued and sanctioned endorsement of wetland potential value to local and world economies, as opposed to emphasizing their positive impact on the natural environment, reinforces Duffy's argument "that ecotourism is firmly locked into notions of 'green capitalism', and thus it cannot provide radical sustainable development, contrary to its supporters' claims.

Magog's Rivière aux Cerises, or Cherry River, pours directly into Lake Memphremagog from the north as can be seen in figure 78's broad aerial view photograph. Lake Memphremagog is a rather narrow lake that is approximately fifty kilometres long and irregularly shaped. It is reputed to have "the longest stretch of navigable water in the Eastern Townships."[493] Due to its length, the lake is a favourite amongst boating enthusiasts who eagerly race their twin engine turbo boats across the water's surface in summer, dripping pollutants along the way as they transform the lake's relaxing and tranquil surface into a dangerous, congested and noisy speedway on water. The majority of the lake's overall surface area is located in Quebec, although it is recognized as an international body of water because its southern shore is situated in Newport, Vermont where four state rivers pour into it, providing 71% of the lake's inflow. Magog's Cherry River supplies the remaining 29%. The Quebec government has recently confirmed that "Lake Memphremagog is the largest body of water in the Estrie region. Its water

[492] <http://www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/eau/rives/milieuxhumides.htm>, consulted on June 15, 2013.
[493] Matthew Farfan, " Steamers of Lake Memphremagog, Part 1", Townships heritage web magazine. <http://townshipsheritage.com/article/steamers-lake-memphremagog-part->, consulted June 15, 2013.

quality is a major regional concern due to the fact that this lake is the source of drinking water for nearly half of the region's population and offers a unique potential for recreational and vacationing use in Québec."[494] This official government issued statement is troublesome due to how it confirms that the water quality is a concern, given it is a major essential resource for a large portion of the region's inhabitants, yet it is also prized for its unique [economic] potential for tourism. This dual vocation of providing a fundamental natural resource to the region's residents measured against its commercial appeal for tourism, therefore the local economy, presents a volatile conundrum faced by people and policy makers around the globe: how to balance environmental sustainability with economic viability. Le Marais is a vital agent to both the environmental and economic imperatives. A portion of the ecopark's wetland is directly linked to Lake Memphremagog, as it first intercepts the water flow from Cherry River before draining into the lake. A section of the lake appears at the upper left corner of the large landscape photograph shown in figure 74, right above the marshland situated in the centre of the image. A marsh, such as Le Marais' which intercepts a river before flowing into a lake, acts as the water's natural purifying filtration system that contributes a favorable and functional ecological value to its significant aesthetic and economic values. Because the marshland is situated between the lake and Cherry River, and contiguous to both, it functions as a vital organ that enhances the region's well being by processing its main water supply. Essentially, the marsh filters the water that flows from the river before it funnels into the lake. Most would agree that Le Marais' function as a natural filtration system for the lake basin is a positive, cost effective (free) and ecological imperative - except that the lake's water is perpetually contaminated by recreational vehicles: motorboats and seadoos in summer and skidoos in winter. In a paradoxical twist, Cherry River's water influx is supplied by two lakes: Stukely and Fraser, both closely monitored and environmentally protected bodies of water located within Mt.-Orford National Park's preserved domain. Because these lakes are within the National Park's territory,

[494] < http://www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/eau/eco_aqua/memphremagog/index-en.htm>, consulted on February 17, 2013.

motorized vehicles of any kind are strictly prohibited on these two provincially protected lakes. The irony is that the water pouring into Le Marais' Cherry River is protected by government legislation, and is consequently cleaner than the lake water that is the source of drinking water for a large regional constituency. Regrettably for that constituency, that source of drinking water is also a preferred recreational destination for environmentally unfriendly, yet economically beneficial, tourist activities. In this instance, tourism interests in Magog prevail over environmental impacts. Even though the drinking water is filtered through state of the art filtration systems before it is drunk, locals and tourists alike eat the fish caught from that lake, and also swim and play in the water throughout the summer. During summer heat waves, Lake Memphremagog's municipal beaches are intermittently closed due to poor water quality readings.

The delineated section in the center of the aerial photograph (fig. 74) that appears on the Conseil Regional de l'environnement de l'Estrie's (CREE) website, a non-profit organization which was founded in 1989,[495] calls attention to the parameters of Le Marais' ecopark, which encompasses approximately 925 acres of land. Presumably taken from an airplane or helicopter, this perspective is unlike any of the landscapes seen in this thesis thus far, as it positions the viewer high above ground level, offering a broad bird's eye view of the various terrains, natural elements, and constructed infrastructures in relation to one another, and that characterize this specific place - all of which is framed within a singular compact space. The framing strategy deployed by this photographer places *Le Marais* at the very center of this heterogeneous, yet well balanced landscape which shows signs of humans living in harmony with nature. The residential area and roadways seem to minimize their infringement on the ecopark's territory as they appear to line its boundaries, when in fact human activities have reduced the wetland's overall surface by 30% over a 75 year period due to urban

[495] http://www.environnementestrie.ca/

development.[496] The extent of this urban sprawl is particularly well documented in the aerial photographs contrasting the same space in 1930 (right) and 2007 (left) as seen in figure 75. The more detailed and panoramic aerial view (fig. 74) situates the ecopark relative to route 112 and Lake Memphremagog to the left of the delineated area, Highway 10 that stretches along the base of Mt. Orford in the background, and a diagonal patch of the city of Magog in the foreground. The outlined area roughly demarcates Le Marais' total territory. It is situated between agricultural farmland to the North and a sprawling urban and residential development to the South. The long narrow structure in the foreground that intersects with Route 112 is the former Industrial Specialty factory discussed in Section I, and pictured in figure 16. The landscape photograph shown in figure 74 juxtaposes the natural and built environments in that the fluidity and irregularity of the first (mountain and waterways) contrasts with the more linear and organized plan of the constructed elements (roads, railway and buildings). The perspective offers a good vantage point from which to see how the sinewy and irregular curves of Cherry River wind their way towards the lake, which is barely noticeable in the photo's extreme lower left corner. What I find most compelling about this aerial photograph, however, is how it evokes Guattari's ecosophy stemming from his *The Three Ecologies* through the social, mental, and environmental relationship between living things. Human traces relating to agricultural farmers, industrial labourers and residential urbanites (social) are evident, as are elements of the natural world and signs of the conditions and influences of people and things relating (environmental). The third ecology (mental) is sensed through the community's projection of a stable, prosperous, productive and well organized environment. The landscape's domestic and natural traits are harmoniously framed within this photograph that excludes much of the surrounding area's less picturesque details, according to a traditional compositional strategy that undermines and even conceals a darker side of this place's

[496] Stéphanie Houde. Le Reflet du Lac (journaliste : Vincent Cliche), 18 février 2010. « *LAMRAC* lève le voile sur son Centre d'observation et d'éducation ». <http://www.tourisme-memphremagog.com/blogue/news/*LAMRAC*-leve-le-voile-sur-son-centre-dobservation-et-deducation/>. December 15, 2010.

past, which was certainly less fertile, more marginalized and exploited as will be discussed in the next chapter.

**Figure 80. Anonymous, untitled, photograph, <http://www.reseaunature.ca/themes/education/fiche_50.html>. This is a photo of one of the information panels located along *Le Marais*' boardwalk. It is interesting to note the panel's featured sunset landscape image on the left, within the landscape photograph, within the ecopark's landscape.**

## 16. LAMRAC & Environmental Aesthetics

**Figure 81. Anonymous, untitled, undated, photographs, <http://www.environnementestrie.ca/imports/pdf/activites/ppt/houde.pdf>. These photos were issued by *LAMRAC*'s director Stephanie Houde in order to show some of the contaminated area that was used as a municipal garbage dump between 1950 and 1971, prior to the clean-up campaign.**

According to LAMRAC, although human activity inadvertently contributed to the expansion of the wetland's various ecosystems in 1877, between 1950 and 1971 the area accessed by Chemin Roy was commonly used as an unofficial municipal garbage dump by its local residents, effectively reducing the wetland to a literal wasteland for just over two decades. The two undated photographs shown in figure 81 are posted by LAMRAC's director, Stéphanie Houde, on Environnement Estrie's website. The photos show how Le Marais was once a toxic and hazardous landscape through their emphasis on the pollutants that contaminated the territory's vegetation and threatened its wildlife. The extent to which this natural environment is littered with industrial products including rubber tires, metal drums, and rusted debris is striking. We see that waste has infiltrated the surrounding water systems, and how the contaminated soil has affected the surrounding vegetation, which in turn generates a devastating ripple effect that negatively impacts the space's entire complex ecosystem. Guattari's earlier cited comments regarding the passivity of citizens faced with pollution are relevant here. In 1989, the same year that Guattari's text was published, the Conseil régional de l'environnement de l'Estrie (CREE), an independent group of citizens, was founded. They, like Guattari, recognized the need to put an end to passivity, and actively sought, and eventually obtained, support from two local municipal governments and sufficient provincial funding from the Fondation de la Faune du Québec in order to purchase 562.5 of the wetland's total 925 acres. The acquired land was classified as a "public park."[497] This designation is significant because it is much less restrictive than the protective Provincial or National Park status that neighbouring Mt-Orford has carried since 1938. By 1997, LAMRAC was organized and entrusted to manage that public park; the association's foremost and urgent objective was to decontaminate the area that had served as Magog's local garbage dump for 21 years. Echoes of Guattari's call for collective actions are present in LAMRAC's mandate that privileges human interaction with nature in a collaborative rather than exploitative way, and endeavours to contribute to the enrichment of people's

[497]<http://maraisauxcerises.com/*LAMRAC*/general/association-du-marais-de-la-riviere-aux-cerises.php>, consulted on June 11, 2013.

lives on various levels. Le Marais is currently an ecological place where leisure and educational activities are guided by an environmental management program that is the least burdensome as possible to that place's natural environment. The site's aesthetic transformation from an unsightly, polluted and even toxic environment into a vibrant, thriving and beautiful place is a form of spatial beautification that, on some levels, parallels the artist's desire to carefully arrange, omit, organize and represent the natural environment as a pleasing and beautiful landscape. The ecopark only opened to the public in 2000 because it took the association over two years to remove approximately sixty tons, and 21 years worth, of accumulated waste from the land, a tiny sample of which is represented in figure 81. During the fall of 2012, over ten more tons of garbage, 80% of which was recyclable, were further extracted from the area by a group of volunteers. The pollutants included industrially produced everyday household materials including tires, glass, metal and large appliances.[498] Recent estimates predict that it will take between five and ten more similar cleaning campaigns to fully restore the wetland's natural ecosystem in the targeted area.

**Figure 82. Caroline Beaudoin, untitled, 2010, digital photograph, private collection.**

[498] <http://maraisauxcerises.com/*LAMRAC*/amenagement/en-photos-v15-61.php#plan>, consulted on February 17, 2012.

In 2007 LAMRAC began planning the construction of CIM (Centre d' Interpretation du Marais), a state of the art eco-friendly cultural center with an educational mission.[499] The centre was needed to accommodate a steadily increasing volume of visitors to the ecopark, and in order to respond to the public's heightened interest in learning about and addressing ecological issues. In keeping with LAMRAC's environmental mandate the association chose the architect Marc Dufour to design a "green" center that would integrate well into the park's landscape. CIM's conscientious design features demonstrate a broad concern for sustainable development and environmental integrity issues, with noticeable emphasis given to minimizing the building's effect on the surrounding environment. The architect's efforts to assimilate the structure with its immediate natural environment are apparent in the three photographs showing different perspectives of the building in figure 83. Inspired by the wetland's richly diverse vegetation, Dufour described how his plans emulate the irregular form of a plant cell:

> Comme la cellule, la construction permet les échanges avec l'extérieur tout en étant bien protégé des agressions. La partie nord est constituée de murs aveugles et d'une toiture réfléchissante. Elle abrite par ailleurs les fonctions plus privées du CIM : bureaux, salle mécanique, entreposage, etc. La partie sud, pour sa part, forme un lieu d'échange avec la communauté et avec la nature. Vitrée et lumineuse, avec une toiture végétale et un mur solaire, cette zone est imprégnée des bienfaits du soleil et d'une magnifique percée sur le milieu naturel.[500]

As part of the building's completion and inauguration in 2011 LAMRAC, in association with the City of Magog, hosted a photography competition under the theme of "Les Mystères du Marais" to coincide with the city's annual Semaine de la Culture. This is interesting in light of how Smardon has emphasized that "human uses that treat wetland as a visual-cultural resource include activities such as canoeing, hiking, and outdoor classes in natural history," and further stressed how photography can become a

[499] <http://www.lerefletdulac.com/Societe/Education/2010-02-18/article-916766/*LAMRAC*-leve-le-voile-sur-son-Centre-dobservation-et-deducation/1>. December 10, 2010.
[500] <http://maraisauxcerises.com/general/le-centre-dinterpretation-du-marais.php>, consulted on June 14, 2013.

prominent and complementary way of interacting with wetland, serving as a "visual-cultural resource."[501] Photographs of Le Marais have certainly contributed to its popularity and as an effective way of interacting with the wetland, given the large number of photos of the ecopark which now circulate on the internet and via other forms of social media. The competition was open to the public and promoted on Le Marais' website and in Magog's local newspaper, *Le Reflet.* Interested participants were encouraged to submit a maximum of three 8 x 10 photographs to a committee of three judges. The photos had to be taken on the spot at Le Marais and draw inspiration from the contest's specified "mystery" theme. The committee received more than 180 submissions from a population of amateur photographers who represented and interpreted the ecopark's landscapes or wildlife. The organizers' choice of a mystery - themed photography competition coincides with Hammitt's theory regarding the appeal of wetland, as he emphasized how "people like to experience a mixture of open bog mat and wooded screens, which provide 'mystery' or intrigue about areas yet to be explored."[502] In light of how Magog's CIM was constructed more than three decades after Hammitt's 1978 study was conducted, it is reasonable to infer that, on some level, a connection exists between mystery and wetland that arguably links up to the much earlier tradition of attributing a sublime mystique to the landscape, in addition to the picturesque one. This contest advanced an accessible, community based vernacular approach to landscape representations that prioritized a visual culture perspective in order to promote the park and its infrastructures. Figure 82 shows an untitled digital photograph that I took - and was selected by the competition's appointed jury to be displayed in the new center during its opening month. It was taken from one of the park's wooden platforms that extends over the water in a bog. Because the water is so shallow, the vegetation beneath its surface appears as if being examined through a microscope - small details that would normally go unnoticed are suddenly amplified by the camera's lens, recalling Buddemeier's observation regarding how people, during the 19th-century, were fascinated by "random

[501] Smardon, 5.
[502] Hammitt, qtd. in The Future of Wetlands, 10.

objects" and "tiny, until then unnoticed details, "[503] that were suddenly discovered by examining photographs. The clouds reflected on the water in figure 82 seem to blend with the vegetation beneath its surface, creating an impression of synthesis between land and sky. The darker lower half of the picture contributes a sense of mystery to the image overall, as it suggests that there may be some unknown, creepy thing lurking underwater concealed within that darkness. CIM's educational orientation and inaugural photo competition support Smardon's conviction that wetland are favourable visual-cultural resources for photography, and valued site's for learning about nature.

Ecologist Pierre Dansereau emphasizes that "knowledge of ecological and cultural processes will enhance aesthetic appreciation of the landscape."[504] Similarly, environmental aesthetician Allen Carlson argues how "appropriate aesthetic appreciation is not simply a matter of looking; rather, it is looking with an eye and mind informed about the nature, history, and function of the object of appreciation."[505] He insists that a resident's aesthetic experience is multi-dimensional in contrast to the tourist's primarily visual one. A tourist or traveller, according to Carlson, is prone to look upon a natural landscape as a scene, which stems from a tradition that began with the eighteenth-century's taste for scenic views attributed to the notion of the picturesque. He suggests that the resident's aesthetic experience is more complex when appreciating a local environment, which does not necessarily make the experience any more authentic than the traveller's, although it thickens it with various layers of meanings and multiple contexts. The resident perceives the environment as a familiar "setting", a place or space where everyday life unfolds. Whereas a scene, as experienced by the tourist, is fleeting and is most often consumed as a site, viewed under exceptional circumstances, the resident's setting is more stable as an ordinary place, and that place's characteristics and qualities are registered over time, using all the senses. Carlson notes how the transient, or just passing through, person's "way of thinking involves only

[503] Qtd. in Schivelbusch, 65.
[504] Smardon, 5.
[505] Allen Carlson, Nature & Landscape, 78.

one common and traditional conceptualization of the environment. As suggested by [...] the word 'scene', it is the conceptualization of the environment as *landscape.*"[506] He further advances that "a landscape is, in one sense, essentially a view or a scene composed by the appreciator [...] not unlike the more conventional images of a landscape painting and photography."[507] Carlson insists on how "through environmental aesthetics confronting the natural world becomes an experience in appreciating its true nature in addition to admiring its beauty,"[508]an experience that I contend is facilitated and encouraged at Le Marais. He also notes how "prior to its emergence, aesthetics within the analytic tradition was largely concerned with philosophy of art. Environmental aesthetics originated as a reaction to this emphasis, pursuing instead the investigation of the aesthetic appreciation of natural environments [...] and the aesthetics of everyday life."[509]

**Figure 83. Caroline Beaudoin, *CIM*, 2013, digital photographs, private collection. These photos represent three views of the centre's design features.**

In Amanda Bingley's study entitled "Health, People and Forests", she addresses how, according to the 'Attention Restoration Theory' (ART), in order for space to be restorative, four main elements must be active:

> 'being away ' from one's usual or current environment, enjoying a change of space; 'fascination' with the landscape being viewed or visited, as diverse natural spaces are more likely to hold one's attention and reduce mental fatigue than a similar time spent in a uniform built space;

[506]Carlson, Nature, 83.
[507] Carlson, Nature, 84.
[508] Carlson, Nature, 37.
[509] Allen Carlson, "Environmental Aesthetics", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/environmental-aesthetics/>. Consulted on January 25, 2013.

> sufficient 'extent' and variation in the landscape to sustain interest and attention; and a sense of 'compatibility' or ease with the landscape.[510]

What is significant in relation to Le Marais' educational mandate however, is how Bingley further indicates that "these core elements are regarded as inherently therapeutic and, depending on the activity or individual circumstances, in an educational context the presence of these core elements are shown to bring about enhanced learning."[511] Bingley's study then turns to forests and woodlands which, as noted earlier, are one of Le Marais four ecosystems. She suggests that "forests and woodland landscapes are found to strongly match the four restorative elements of ART."[512] Concepts and theories such as ART, originally presented in 1989, cast a new light on the early 20th-century's art patrons' appreciation for paintings of wooded landscapes, and reinforces the arguments presented in Section I that suggest how such idealized environments offered therapeutic alternatives or retreats from the perceived ill effects of urbanization and industrialization. Bingley further emphasizes the forest's therapeutic, sensual nature, describing how "woodland is an ever-changing scene of flora and fauna, with extraordinary seasonal and daily variations in light and colour , together with a myriad of other sensory stimuli: sounds, smells and touch."[513] Le Marais, as an ecopark, differs from the higher maintenance schemes required by public parks and gardens, in that its natural environment is merely monitored rather than tightly controlled. Interventions are minimal, and most often limited to ensuring that health and safety norms are respected, or in order to assist any wildlife in distress. It is a place that stresses how, as Bingley concludes, "some landscapes naturally hold our attention and acquire a reputation for being places that enhance healing, rest, enjoyment and well being."[514] When looking at a landscape representation, viewers are afforded the opportunity to imagine the surrounding sensory

[510] Amanda Bingley, qtd. in Making Sense of Place, 109
[511] Bingley, 109.
[512] Bingley, 109.
[513] Bingley, 109.
[514] Bingley, 110.

stimuli relating to smell, touch and sound as experienced through their eyes. Strolling through *Le Marais,* however, the landscape triggers an awakening of those same senses, rendering the experience multi-sensorial.

In light of Le Marais' growing popularity it is encouraging to note how, amidst today's global and virtual world, there is nonetheless a keen interest in focusing on the particular, the singular, and the minutiae contained within local environments that contribute to enhancing the quality of, and our appreciation for, everyday life. Ingold advocates how "the landscape is neither identical to nature, nor is it on the side of humanity against nature. As the familiar domain of our dwelling, it is *with* us, not *against* us, but it is no less real for that. And through living in it, the landscape becomes a part of us, just as we are part of it."[515] LAMRAC's initiative has resulted in the successful creation of a place that encourages people to reconnect with nature and redefine their relationship with the natural environment as nature's custodians as opposed to its exploiters. Le Marais' ecology is a distinctive one that ties fresh air, learning, physical and emotional restoration, nature, and sociability to a sense of community determined to thrive for generations to come. Although this ecopark's landscape has been abundantly re-presented through photographs on the internet, information panels, newspapers, and pamphlets - it is clear that no single representation of this environment can convey the complexities of any one person's or community's relationship to nature. This landscape is optimally experienced through an immediate encounter with the place, not through framed and fragmented representations of its space scrolled through on a screen. When we think of landscape as environment, it is best to engage all of our senses.

Based on Le Marais' most recent and sustained efforts, it is clear that the 21st century recognizes the enormous need and collective potential to create methods and strategies devised to minimize, if not reverse, the harm done to physical spaces and the various species inhabiting such

[515] Ingold, The temporality, 191.

landscapes which have been aggressively exploited for many reasons, to profit too few, since colonization. In Magog's case, as it was throughout much of North America during the modern era, industrial factories and mills, and mining and railway companies reconfigured the landscape for the benefit of its shareholders in the name of the "Nation's" best interest. Guattari's *Three Ecologies* opposes the insufferable social inequality and environmental abuse for personal and national profit, and calls for cultural and social priorities to rise above economic interests amidst the current post-industrial Integrated World Capitalism system. Sites such as Le Marais and efforts undertaken by associations like LAMRAC, confirm that collective initiatives do exist, and are struggling against the "ever- widening rift" that David Lowenthal believes exists "between the wilderness that created us and the civilization that we created."[516] Guattari advances creativity as a means to liberate humanity from its debilitating and destructive social patterns, and insists that it is up to individuals to assume their importance and potential by breaking away from the collective in order to ultimately benefit the collective. He advocates individuality and creativity as the keys to true progress. LAMRAC's initiative demonstrates such individuality and creativity through its collaborative commitment as guardians of Le Marais' vital ecosystems, one of which served, not too long ago, as a literal wasteland.

[516] David Lowenthal, Environment as Heritage, 207.

## CONCLUSION

Landscapes can be spiritual, disturbing, relaxing, invigorating, domesticated, healthful, mundane, threatening, personal, collective, exploited, etc. They can also encapsulate difference and familiarity, people and industry, culture and business, ideals and practices, or routine and escape for example. Landscapes are negotiated, controlled, organic, heterogeneous, designed, imagined, cultural, or natural spaces that contribute meaning to people's lives. W.J.T. Mitchell underscores how landscape "exerts a subtle power over people, eliciting a broad range of emotions and meanings that may be difficult to specify."[517] The landscape is, for better or worse, the setting in which histories unfold and where traditions are cultivated. Mitchell insists however, that "whatever the power of landscape might be, and of its unfoldings into space and place, it is surely the medium in which we live, and move, and have our being, and where we are destined, ultimately, to return."[518]

By researching the Eastern Townships landscape, this thesis has examined some of the meanings and understandings that can emerge when traditional landscape representation ideals converge with ordinary and heterogeneous cultural landscape environments. It has engaged with art historical questions as well as with broader, interdisciplinary issues including public space, land ownership and uses, industry, cultural identity, ecology, remediation, and ecotourism. This thesis thus contributes to the art - historical discussion on landscape through an interdisciplinary approach and by invoking both visual and material culture methodologies; landscape has been addressed in relation to 'the everyday' as part of a discussion about labour and leisure in relation to the discourse on tourism and industry. Looking at leisure and labour practices, I have examined landscape's role in promoting and sustaining those practices – although it is also very clear that certain categories of landscape representations have historically been thoroughly successful at camouflaging or masking traces of human labour in order to favourably promote certain ideals or particular agendas. I have questioned the

[517] Mitchell, Landscape, vii.
[518] Mitchell, Landscape, xii.

distinctions and similarities between art historical canonical landscape representations and other mediagenic landscape images circulating on postcards, newspaper and text illustrations, photographs, a recruitment booklet and a website, for example. I have examined the correlation between landscape as art and landscape as commodity. This thesis has thus responded to the question of how the circulation of diverse landscape images has contributed to a greater understanding of the Eastern Townships' complex identity as it has transitioned from the industrial modern era to its current post-industrial phase. Coming up to the present day, I therefore examined the impact of ecotourism, as part of a broader social transformation, as the city of Magog seeks to stimulate its local economy in the face of its near-obsolete manufacturing industry and aging population. Finally, my analyses have demonstrated the many ways that landscape and everyday life are inexorably connected to capitalism during a modern century. Lefebvre's critique of everyday life was particularly instrumental to this thesis due to its emphasis on ordinary and routine modern practices of labour and leisure, practices which I have demonstrated are present, and represented in the culturally constructed landscapes which are included in this study of the Eastern Townships, from Confederation to the present day. Although the Eastern Townships retains a relatively low profile within the scholarly contexts of Canadian art history or Canadian studies, it can be argued that this case-study is particularly resonant at the present time, as many places across the North American continent struggle to reorient themselves, and establish a post-industrial identity. Landscape's role in constructing that new identity must not be overlooked.

This thesis tells the modern story of this specific place through its landscape, as everyday life unfolds in the landscape's multiple incarnations. Throughout the thesis it became apparent that landscapes could be antimodern spaces that offered an escape from industrialization and urbanization; sites that promoted elite ideologies of ownership and prosperity; evocations of industrialized labour; temporal moments in history, spaces for communicating personal messages; projections of post-industrial ecological stability. Emphasis was placed on dialectical processes of labour/leisure and

production/consumption, even when such activities were well concealed within modern landscape representations. I was particularly mindful of this paradox, and of the complex issues that motivated such concealment. I have argued that landscape, like one's sense of place, is profoundly tied to competing and complex notions of identity which ambiguously embody familiarity and difference, an ambiguity that Lefebvre celebrates as potential - an ever present potential to discover the "something new and unforeseen that introduces itself into the repetitive: difference."[519]

The research undertaken in this project has considered landscape's agency relative to capitalist productions of labour and leisure, calling upon Henri Lefebvre and Félix Guattari's critiques of capitalism's impact on modern life (Lefebvre), and on the state of the world's post-industrial ecology (Guattari). I have questioned what the term landscape has now come to imply measured against social tensions relating to economic and environmental imperatives and class differences. Like Lefebvre, Guattari too has emphasized the potential empowerment of difference, through individuality, stating how: "at every level, individual or collective, in everyday life as well as the reinvention of democracy, it is a question in each instance of looking into what would be the dispositive of the production of subjectivity, which tends towards an individual and/or collective resingularization, rather than that of mass-media manufacture, which is synonymous with distress and despair."[520] Guattari's concept of three interconnected ecological systems has been crucial for this thesis, enabling me to reinforce how landscape, as a cultural agent and medium of communication, has the power to naturalize or promote diversity, ambivalence, and conflicting agendas.

I have also been attentive to the ways that landscape is never entirely a spatial question, but also involves time. In an attitude that resonates with Ingold's 'big picture' perception of landscape's temporality, John Urry reflects on how "human beings are fundamentally temporal and find their meaning in the temporal character of human existence. Being is made visible in its temporal character

[519] Convery, Corsane and Davis, 5.
[520] Guattari, 23.

and in particular the fact of movement towards death. Being necessarily involves movement between birth and death or the mutual reaching out and opening up of future, past and present."[521] This research has been organized chronologically into overlapping periods in order to reinforce the extent and ways which landscape takes shape, both visually and materially. From antimodern painted sites of escape to a contemporary ecopark, this study has considered landscape's traditional role in formulating identities and documenting shifting cultural values: from progress and prosperity to nature tourism, landscapes are humanly cultivated spatio-temporal environments that encapsulate people's activities, preoccupations, aspirations and values. This thesis has thus apprehended the landscapes of the Eastern Townships in terms of a physical and material terrain, and as a representation of successive historical moments. Landscapes are complex ecologies that are characterized by the relationships woven together over time; landscapes represent the social environments where everyday life unfolds.

[521] Urry, 6.

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