

WILLIAM BRYMNER (1855 - 1925)

THE ARTIST IN RETROSPECT

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ABSTRACT

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This is a selected catalogue of the works of William Brymner, presented in a formal catalogue structure.

Included are: a chronology of the artist's life; an essay which is biographical and is descriptive of the artist's work; an abbreviation list; and eighty full catalogue entries of works which would be hung in a retrospective exhibition; most with associated photographs or slides. There are figures, with correct entries and photographs which in a published catalogue would be used to illustrate the text.

Since his death, William Brymner has been largely forgotten except as a teacher of painting at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. The purpose of this retrospective study is to reintroduce him as an artist.

To David

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Chronology

1855

William Brymner born to Douglas Brymner and Jean Thomson.
December 14th, Greenock, Scotland

1857

Family moves to Melbourne, Eastern Townships, Canada;
George Brymner born December 3rd

1858

Ottawa chosen as capital of Canada

1860's

The Brymner family moves to Montreal where Douglas becomes
an editor of The Montreal Herald

1861-1865

American Civil War

1861

Birth of James Greenshields Brymner, September 19th

1867

The signing of the British North America Act

1870

Douglas Brymner becomes President of the House of Commons
Press Gallery, Ottawa; Manitoba enters Confederation

1871

British Columbia enters Confederation

1872

Douglas Brymner appointed to begin a Canadian Archives;
founding of Ontario Society of Artists; one James Brymner
recorded in the Notman wage books as working during the
winter.

1873

Prince Edward Island enters Confederation; Sir John A.
Macdonald defeated; Alexander Mackenzie becomes Prime
Minister to 1878; North West Mounted Police formed

1876

William to Quebec City to sketch during the month of
September

1878

February, William to Europe, Paris Exposition; tours the
environs of Paris; visits Robert Harris in his studio in

1878 (cont'd)

July; commences study with Pinot and at Academie Julian

1879

William studying in Paris at Academie Julian with A. W. Bouguereau and Tony Robert-Fleury; travels through Belgium in June and July

1880

During summer Brymner returns to Ottawa; becomes Master of the Ottawa Art School during the winter of 1880 and spring of 1881

1881

May, to Brolles at Fontainebleau; ill, rheumatic fever; returns to Ottawa in October and spends winter convalescing in Ottawa; RCA exhibition at Halifax

1882

William to Lanark, Ochil and Jones Falls, Ontario to illustrate book for Joshua Fraser

1883

Fraser's book Shanty, Forest and River Life published with illustrations by Brymner; Brymner to France during the

1883 (cont'd)

summer; painting at Pontaubert, Burgundy with Fred Brown; visits Runswick Bay, Yorkshire with friends; elected ARCA; returns to Julian's, meets F.W. Jackson of Manchester

1884

In March, William's mother dies; May to November Brymner painting at Runswick Bay, Yorkshire with Frederick Jackson of Manchester and J. Kerr Lawson of Hamilton; December in Manchester

1885

January, Brymner returns to France; paints at Fontainebleau; work exhibited in the spring Salon, Paris

1886

Elected RCA, nominated by J. W. H. Watts and seconded by Homer Watson; A Wreath of Flowers deposited as diploma picture; OSA; summer and autumn painting at Gleichen, the Blackfoot Reservation and the Selkirk Range; October, appointed Master, Art Association of Montreal school (until 1921); works included in the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, London, England

1888

Canada enters a depression; Brymner quoted in the Montreal press on the state of the art market

1889

W. Brymner, L. R. O'Brien, F. M. Bell-Smith, R. Harris and Percy Woodcock in joint exhibition at AAM, during February, Montreal Carnival week; Brymner and J. M. Barnsley take pupils of the Montreal school to the home of J. C. Abbott at St. Anne's to paint; first meeting of the Montreal Water Colour Society; present; Robert Harris, J. C. Abbott, Otto Jacobi, William Brymner, John Popham, E. B. Greenshields, and others

1890

Pen and Pencil Club of Montreal formed, Brymner a member

1891

Sir John A. Macdonald elected Prime Minister; Brymner to Killarney, Ireland, paints with Barnsley; to the Low Countries with secretary of the AAM, John MacGillycuddy; visits Antwerp, Zuider Zee, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Haarlem

1892

Population of Montreal is about 200,000; membership of AAM is 500; Brymner to the West to paint for William Van Horne; November 7th Scott & Son present exhibition of work by Manet, Degas, Monet, Sisley, Renoir, Picasso and Cassat; Brymner wins second prize for figure painting at AAM

1893

Brymner's works included in The Columbian Exhibition, Chicago; Van Horne offers the Pen and Pencil Club "a car" for the Queen's birthday; Brymner exhibits at The Palette Club in Toronto

1894

Brymner wins popular vote award at the AAM Spring Exhibition for Reverie

1895

Brymner lectures to the AAM on "teaching"; Mr. Scott, Brymner's first employer in the Department of Public Works in Ottawa, dies

1896

Sir Wilfred Laurier elected Prime Minister; Maurice Cullen

1896 (cont'd)

returns to Montreal from Paris; Brymner spends summer at Beaupré staying at home of Mrs. Raymond

1897

Brymner lectures to the AAM on "Impressionism"; June in Paris; July in Belgium; in the late summer with Edmund Morris, Edmond Dyonnet, Maurice Cullen at Beaupré, Quebec

1898

Brymner exhibits ten works at the 18th annual AAM Spring Exhibition, one sold to R. B. Angus; twenty-four water colours at the AAM Christmas Exhibition, one sold to H. M. Molson, one to James Ross; James Ross becomes President of AAM.

1899

Brymner exhibits twelve water colours at AAM Christmas Exhibition, none sold; shows six works at AAM Spring Exhibition, one sold; April, RCA votes that women shall continue to be eligible for membership and may attend business meetings but not be on the Council; July, Brymner sketching on lower St. Lawrence for murals for summer home

1899 (cont'd)

of Charles Porteous; Bonhomme published with twelve illustrations by William Brymner

1900

Brymner resident at 67 St. James Street W., Montreal; signs and dates Porteous murals

1901

Awarded gold medal for an oil painting by the Awards Committee of the Pan American Exhibition at Buffalo; advised that gold medal would cost him \$175.00 for 24 carats fine; gives lecture at the AAM "Some Epochs in the History of Art Compared and Illustrated"

1902

Douglas Brymner dies in New Westminster while visiting his son George; William in Venice, Florence, Marseilles, Milan, Genoa and Martigues; in Venice on the 14th of July he sees the fall of "the great statue" and the Campanile of 1329

1903

Brymner paints a large landscape mural for the Porteous home at Island of Orleans; Brymner, George Reid,

1903 (cont'd)

Gustave Hahn, Edmond Dyonnet and others fail to secure a commission for mural decoration for Houses of Parliament, Ottawa

1904

Brymner awarded silver medal at the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition held at St. Louis, Missouri; begins a three-year correspondence with Clarence Gagnon who is in Paris

1905

Cullen and Brymner build a studio at St. Eustache; about twenty-five of Brymner's students exhibit at AAM Spring Exhibition

1906

Brymner writes to ask Gagnon to make a copy of Le Pauvre Pecheur by Puvis de Chavannes, for Charles Porteous; the fee, \$100.00; May, annual picnic at Mr. Abbott's; Brymner writes to Gagnon about the "damned rot" in local newspaper art criticism

1907

The article "Progress in Art" published in The University

1907 (cont'd)

Magazine; June and July, paints a mural decoration for the summer home of Edward Clouston at St. Anne's; elected vice-president of RCA; Montreal Star notes that Mr. Brymner rarely attends the "great gatherings" at the AAM

1908

During the summer Brymner to Martigues to paint; writes (unpublished) article about his visit there

1909

Brymner elected President of RCA, introduces Eric Brown to Edmond Morris; Edmond Walker becomes Chairman of the Advisory Arts Council; Brymner elected to the Canadian Art Club (Toronto); Brymner makes two trips to Louisbourg to paint, the first on the yacht of James Ross

1910

Brymner works included in the Canadian Art Club Exhibition; Arts Club of Montreal registered; Brymner works included in the Canadian Art Exhibition at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, England; Edward Maxwell and W. S. Maxwell design new building for AAM on Sherbrooke Street, Montreal

1911

Brymner attends RCA in Toronto with their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of Connaught

1912

Brymner in Pictou, Nova Scotia; Messrs Scott & Sons forced by police to place a nude statue with her back to the window, the interior of the store is crowded; "Village Life in Three Countries," by Brymner, is published in The University Magazine

1913

Travels to Vernon, B.C., New Westminster, Winnipeg, Toronto and St. Eustache; inaugural loan exhibition, The Arts Club, Montreal

1914

RCA, OSA, CAC prepare travelling exhibition for auction to provide money for The Patriotic Fund. Itinerary to be Toronto, Winnipeg, Halifax, St. John, Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, Hamilton, London and Toronto; J. E. H. MacDonald to make poster; Brymner paints at Louisbourg, then at St. Eustache

1915

CAC disbands; Sir William Van Horne dies

1916

Brymner named Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George (CMG); when informed, tells his cousin, Knox Thomson, that he has never met either of those two gentlemen; friends and associates give him a dinner; one-man exhibition at the Arts Club in celebration; Society of Graphic Arts in Toronto sends letter of congratulations; K. R. Macpherson dies; Brymner moves to Macpherson studio with George Hill and Edmond Dyonnet; Brymner elected vice-president Arts Club; lecture at AAM on "Modern - Isms in Art and Greek and Early Christian Art - A Comparison"

1917

Brymner wins the Jessie Dow prize for painting in water colour, for the work Givernay France; Brymner suffers a paralytic stroke; three months in the Royal Victoria Hospital; two weeks with Horatio Walker at the Island of Orleans and some weeks with Charles Porteous; marries Mary Capline Massey Larkin; retires as President RCA

1921

Retires as Master AAM, given well-attended tea party by students; a purse and books; Arts Club holds Brymner exhibition March and April

1922

R. B. Angus dies

1923

Mr. and Mrs. Brymner in Paris, Capri, Florence and possibly Madrid

1924

James Wilson Morrice dies, leaves his paint box to Brymner

1925

June 18, William Brymner dies and is buried at Wallasey, Cheshire, England across the river from Liverpool; exhibition and sale of his works at the Watson Art Galleries

1926

Memorial Exhibition of the work of William Brymner at the Art Association of Montreal

Introduction

William Brymner was born on December 14th, 1855 in Greenock, Scotland. In 1857 his parents moved to Melbourne in the Eastern Townships of Quebec where his father, Douglas, bought a farm. "Willie" was sent to St. Francis College in the neighbouring town of Richmond. When in the late 1860's the family moved to Montreal and Douglas became an editor of The Montreal Herald, William attended private school. At night he studied at the School of Arts and Manufactures and before he turned sixteen he was "articled" to the architect, R.C. Windeyer¹ in Montreal. Not surprisingly there is very little information about Willie's childhood.² We know his father was sent to the Parliamentary Press Gallery in Ottawa³ presumably by The Montreal Herald, and subsequently became President of the Gallery. In 1872, Douglas was asked by the Canadian government to establish a Dominion archival repository,⁴ and while there is no record of when the family moved to Ottawa, there is a note in the Notman wage books for 1872 that a James Brymner, possibly a younger brother of William, was employed by Notman's in Montreal that winter.

When William did move to Ottawa in the 1870's he entered a stimulating environment. His father was a man of

letters and well connected within political, religious and intellectual communities in Canada. Father and son were close friends, Douglas giving advice to William and each taking pride in the accomplishments of the other.

In the years between 1878 and 1886 when William was away from home he and his father corresponded regularly. There are hundreds of pages of typescript of letters, filled with the minutiae of daily life, which reveal that while William was gregarious and Douglas was not, they shared their Scottish wit; their political preferences were the same, both supported John A. MacDonald; and they agreed about the state of "art" in Canada, rejecting in particular the work of portraitists who painted from photographs. They had in common their intellectual strengths, ambition and integrity, and their great affection for each other.

From the time William was a little boy starting school until he was a man in his twenties, growth and change were the most constant elements in Canadian society. Since William became an artist when he grew up, it is relevant to observe that men in Canada who painted, who collected paintings, and who sold them, were affected by the general conditions of society. They made new associations

to promote and protect their interests. They built galleries and held exhibitions in which young painters could display their works. The Art Association of Montreal was founded in 1860, The Ontario Society of Artists in 1872 and The Royal Canadian Academy in 1880. Canadian artists were encouraged to submit paintings and sculpture to international exhibitions which were reviewed in the foreign press. The press in Canada increased their coverage of the art scene because they could see paintings hanging on gallery walls. Rarely did an exhibition go unreported.

Patronage developed. Men in government, business and the private sector came forward to support the arts. Lord Dufferin instigated schemes which required participation by Canadian artists. The Marquis of Lorne, Dufferin's successor as Governor General, worked with members of the art establishment to bring into being the Royal Canadian Academy. Bankers, businessmen and entrepreneurs, many of whom were associated with the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, provided money for artists to travel, and gave large cash donations to the Art Association of Montreal. George Stephen, William Van Horne, James Ross, Charles Porteous, Edward Clouston and R.B. Angus, all of

whom were to become patrons of William Brymner, attended exhibitions and a vernissage was fully reported in the social columns.

Patronage for Brymner as an artist was yet to come in the 1870's and while there is no doubt that he and his father had great confidence in long-term prospects for Canada, Douglas was concerned about immediate conditions in the country. In 1875 he wrote to his brother Graham in Greenock:

In common with every other part of the world we are suffering here from hard times....There has been too much overtrading and the low price of timber puts a check to a very important branch of business here. One good effect has been to make people retrench.⁵

Happier news was that William had received his first formal commission when, in 1875, he was asked by the St. Patrick's Society to prepare an illustrated address for the Lord Mayor of Dublin, on the occasion of the O'Connell Centennial:

It was very well done, all from his own designs, and he has been highly praised for it. The writing was very nicely illuminated and the borders, top, bottom, and sides were filled with emblematic designs of Canada and Ireland; figures, fruits, flowers, Indian scenes, etc. Several want copies which I advised him not to do unless he got a fair price....He is very

clever at designing and...busy saving all he can get to go to the Royal Academy....It is a good lesson to him as he was careless about money. It is a great blessing he is so steady and associates only with very steady fellows so that we never have the slightest uneasiness about him.⁶

No copy of the commission has been found but there is a scrapbook of student works (fig. no. I), and a set of eleven pen and ink drawings from these years. The latter, dated 1876, are views of old Quebec (fig. no. II).

According to a notation in Brymner's hand, it would seem that they were drawn for The Department of Public Works in September of 1876. Brymner worked for a short time in the office of Thomas Scott,⁷ Chief Architect in that Department, and it is probable that the sketches reflected Lord Dufferin's interest in preserving the beauty of the old town.⁸ Dufferin had written in 1875 to Sir William Howard Russell in England enclosing an article from The Quebec Morning Chronicle:

A portion of the inhabitants of Quebec, for the sake of the additional value it will impart to their private property, are anxious to have the old walls of the city pulled down. I have steadfastly set my face against this as Quebec is the one city upon the continent that possesses either a history or a quaint picturesque character in its architectural features.

He then asked Russell to write a few words in his

paper which "would be of very great effect"⁹ in providing support for Dufferin's project. Considerable research has been done on the planning and construction of Dufferin Terrace, but there is no evidence of the use of Brymner's sketches.

France 1878-1880

William had saved enough money by the beginning of 1878 to enable him to travel for study to the British Isles and France. He had, in addition, the prospect of obtaining some kind of work in connection with the Canadian section of the Paris Exposition. In February he travelled by the Bytown and Prescott Railway to Prescott, "waited for the train from the west," made a connection to Portland, Maine and "shipped" on the S.S. Ontario for the British Isles. His first visit was to Greenock in Scotland to meet his family; by the beginning of March he was in London. He bought a "Times," read the advertisements and found the address of the Fine Arts Society where "Mr. Ruskin's collection of Turner's drawings was on exhibit." There were 120 water colours and pencil sketches, the original works for Turner's twenty-five illustrations for the 1830 edition of Samuel Rogers poems, titled Italy, and thirty-one

engravings, all perfect. "As perfect prints as it is within the range of possibility." The gem "a view of Rouen." Brymner spent three hours looking at the collection, then "carefully examined Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament in half an hour."¹⁰ He wrote to his friend J. W. H. Watts in Ottawa:

St. Paul's has a grim appearance, the whole of the lower part is black except here and there a white streak. On the upper storey is all white except here and there a black streak. The roof and dome have a moderately even mixture of the two.¹¹

His visit to London was brief and he went immediately across the channel to France. When he arrived in Paris, he spoke to Thomas Keefer, an Ottawa engineer who was the Canadian Commissioner of the Paris Exposition and who agreed to give him six to eight weeks of work at \$70.00 a month, seven in the morning to six in the evening with Sundays free. Brymner designed exhibition cases,¹² drew floor plans,¹³ did hand printing for his own delegation and others, and was the contact with Nadar¹⁴ concerning photographs. At the end of March he registered for drawing classes two nights a week with a M. Pinot.¹⁵ Pinot charged three dollars a month for two hours a day, four days a week. The student worked from casts. On class nights, with no

time for dinner, Brymner ate rolls or bread:

The bread...all made in the shape of a darning needle, sharpened at both ends and from two to ten feet long.¹⁶

William wrote frequently to his parents. His letters which later on give reports of the life of an art student were at first full of detail about his accommodations, prices of food, and his new friends, some of them visitors from Scotland, Ottawa and Montreal. As preparations for the Exposition advanced, he spent his spare time looking at

...the different ways of work and kind of tools used by the Russians, Chinamen, Dutchmen and Spaniards....The Japanese wear the usual costume. The Chinamen dress in blue, the different shades seem to show the ranks; the workmen wearing a dark, while the gentlemen a brighter and gayer blue.¹⁷

He studied the collections of water colours and wrote:

They are superb. I like them better than anything I have seen yet. The paintings in the British collection look as if done by Christians, which those in the other collections do not. The Italian statuary is the most lifeless looking stuff I ever saw.¹⁸

On Sundays he toured the Louvre with Canadian friends who were working at the Exposition, and wrote to his father that he "liked best" Marriage at Cana, by Paul Veronese and Head of an Old Man, by Albrecht Durer. One Sunday he went to visit Versailles and on another to see Chartres:

...it takes two and half hours to go and costs six francs third class. Passing along we saw wheat so far on that it looked as if it had nearly grown to its full height and would soon begin to ripen. Potatoes two weeks above ground, strawberries in flower and grass looking splendid. In one field there were twenty two oxen and eight horses harrowing and ploughing on Sunday....The men were all at work on the railway track as usual, but.... the farther we get from Paris the less the people were working and the more they were got up in holiday attire. The villages look something like lower Canadian villages without their regular abundance of churches.¹⁹

In September he wrote from Beauvais where he had gone to see the old church below the Cathedral. He spent summer Sundays travelling and he sketched. His book was full, and we know from a letter to his mother that he left this record of architectural studies of the environs of Paris on a train.

Art students in France returned to school in October so William, following the pattern of the student world, left the French countryside in September, and rented a room in Paris at 36 Rue des Ecoles, "a corner room, splendidly lighted. From an iron balcony outside, the world will seem very small indeed." He still had a temporary job, and enough money to pay a "suitable" teacher. He talked to a man named Suisse:

A little old man who does not appear to think life is all it is cracked up to be and told me his school would close in one week until the first of October

when it would resume only in the evenings.²⁰

Brymner had not heard of Academie Julian and wrote to his father that he was told about this atelier by a young American whose name he did not know, whom he met when they were sitting on the top seats of a Paris streetcar.²¹ The American said Julian's had a good "life school," prices were reasonable and there were many young men in the classes. Brymner started there in October and began his studies by drawing from casts. Classes were from one in the afternoon until just after four which made it possible for him to continue to study with M. Pinot to whom he went in the mornings.

As a student at Julian's, William became an élève of²² of Jules Lefèvre²² and Gustave Boulanger,²³ "two of the best artists in France as far as drawing and colouring goes." By November he had not seen them, since they visited the school in the morning and he attended only in the afternoon. Julian opened a new atelier in 1879 and Mr. Tony Robert-Fleury²⁴ came to teach. Brymner wrote about Robert-Fleury:

I like his way of correcting exceedingly. He did not leave very much of my figure yesterday intact. He does not put a line on the paper, at least very seldom, but the way he picks things to pieces is astonishing. He's young, I would say about 35, wears a black beard and moustache, black hair...well made

and very pleasant. I like his paintings very much better than those of Mr. Jules Lefebvre who is the master at Julian's other atelier. Master is perhaps not an appropriate word: they are rather celebrated artists who deign to give their advice twice a week....²⁵

In February Robert-Fleury looked at Brymner's drawings, pointed out mistakes but noted that he had made improvement. That month William wrote his mother:

I have...given up all idea of being an architect and am exerting myself altogether in the direction of painting. The fastest seems slow but I've a clear year ahead of me which I will have to do something as I know now exactly what I am going to do. The great M. Bouguereau visited us last week and is not at all considerate as regards the feelings of the artists he corrects.²⁶

Brymner's reports home described the art student's life. He did not send his news as a result of vanity, but because there was no better way of letting his family know about his progress. On February 18th he wrote:

Last Saturday, Mr. Fleury gave me great praise for my figure. The drawing was very close from the model and below it, therefore there was a great deal of foreshortening to do and the action was a rather difficult one to express....the perspective was excellent (and) the movement was très bon....Every week the best drawings are judged and a prize awarded to the best. On Saturday the two most polished drawings were stood out for Mr. Fleury's inspection....He would choose neither, then pointed out mine away in the background and said if he chose any he would choose that one.²⁷

Each week the students wrestled with the demands of composition. The subjects given were biblical and heroic, and every month Julian gave a prize for the best painting of a figure, "full length about half size from life..." In April Brymner had his own pupil, a Miss Clotheal. He enrolled with Carolus-Duran²⁸ whom he considered to be a "splendid colourist." In the afternoons he worked at the Louvre. In addition he joined a sketching club which met between four in the afternoon and seven in the evening. The purpose of meeting at this time was to make use of the hours when daylight was fading and the members only worked in "black and white." He went to Carolus-Duran from seven to ten in the evening.

Brymner worked hard that winter and received encouraging critiques. He did not achieve one of his student goals: to register at Ecoles des Beaux Arts with the "great Gérôme."²⁹ Consequently in May of 1879, he gathered his courage and visited Gérôme at his studio. When Brymner asked if he would accept him, Gérôme refused, saying that currently he was forbidden to enrol foreigners since there were more foreigners than natives studying in the school.

He (Gérôme) spoke very kindly and explained how it was. I then told him I had brought two or three of my drawings to show him. He looked at them criticized them and told me that there was a bon sentiment. He told me that the last one was près d'être bien and was the best....it showed I was making steady progress.... He told me to come and show him my drawings de temps en temps and that after the summer holidays, that is in October, he would try and find me a place.³⁰

This did not happen and the young artist was severely disappointed.

Julian's was closed until October and Brymner left Paris and travelled along the Meuse river valley through Belgium with a friend, Cresson. It wasn't a particularly pleasant adventure. It rained much of the time. The young men had very little money and great difficulty in finding accommodation. They didn't want to stay in, or to work in, towns no matter how small, but at the village of Mezières on the border between Belgium and France they found a fortified wall which they studied from a number of viewpoints as an object to sketch. The guard at the toll house told them they must apply to the Colonel for permission. He "received them well" and said they might sketch, but he would not give official permission and warned that they could be arrested as Prussian spies. While no paintings have been identified from Brymner's work of

this summer in Belgium, he wrote from Melreux in Luxembourg on August 16th:

My left arm where the pallet (sic) comes against it is dirty with paint and a nail every now and then has managed to tear a 3 cornered hole in every corner of my coat.

His clothes were in tatters and he was dirty and tired when he returned to Paris in the early fall.

In September he enrolled at Julian's again and abandoned the "use of the stump," (a charcoal pencil) which he called an instrument of "no decision and no shade." He felt that everything done with the pencil point was more difficult but better practice. This was consistent with Bouguereau's³¹ preferences. Bouguereau said in his "grunniest manner" that the stump had un influence sinistre on drawing. Brymner wrote:

Very often you see muscles, legs and arms all astray but so nicely shaded with the stump that people who don't know, imagine they are looking at a wonderful piece of work.³²

Students always prepared themselves for Bouguereau's "day" because "old B" was dreaded:

Old B. was here this morning and only stayed half an hour to correct twenty. As he had only to say everything that was bad, he stayed long enough.³³

By now Brymner considered that he was able to paint

"a thing exactly correct in colour and form". but added:

I have to take such pains to get it right, that anyone looking at it feels the labour it has taken and takes no pleasure in it. My present work is to gain facility with the brush. My drawing is a long way ahead of this.³⁴

It had become his habit to spend almost every evening at the library of L'union centrale des beaux arts appliques a l'industrie. Here, one was permitted to make tracings of drawings, which was not possible in any other library in Paris. On September 30th, 1879, he received from his father the prospectus of an Ottawa organization, the Art Association of Canada. This made him consider that most artists had to teach in order to make a living and he told his mother:

I may remark that I hope from the bottom of my heart never to become the master at any art school. My aims at the present moment are very much higher. I would like to go back and make duffers consider that it was a great condescension on my part to give them some advice now and then....however I am very glad that they are doing something for the encouragement of art.³⁵

He continued to seek new sources of instruction and although he had not been able to register with Gérôme, he did enter anatomy classes at Ecole des Beaux Arts and attended two afternoons a week. He copied paintings in the

Louvre making "careful drawings...small ones principally Dutch masters,"³⁶ which were to be transferred to canvas or panels in his own studio. By spring he hoped to "have a good cargo ready to send out for sale." The idea was not new. When Robert Harris visited the Art Association of Montreal to see a loan exhibition of old masters he wrote to his mother:

The old masters which the papers said were to be seen in the rooms, having been lent, were of course all copies.³⁷

It would be interesting to know if any small paintings by "the old masters" which linger in Canadian collections, are, in fact, the work of William Brymner, produced as he faced very severe financial problems in 1879.

Brymner's financial position was so precarious, when classes came to a close in the spring of 1880, that he wrote to his father and his brother George for money, saying he could live on \$25.00 a month. William had been in France for two years, the Brymners were not a wealthy family and the money was not available.³⁸ He returned to Ottawa in the summer and at last it was necessary for him to teach. He was Master of the Ottawa Art School during the winter of 1880 and returned to Paris in May of 1881.

Brymner had planned his arrival date in France so that he could go into the countryside to sketch during the summer. This was not to be. He had a severe cold and on the advice of a doctor in Paris went to Fontainebleau to rest but not to work. Within a month his illness was diagnosed as rheumatic fever and his feet and hands were so swollen that for much of the summer he had to be fed and cared for. He returned to Paris. His landlord loaned him books left by the previous locataire: copies of works by Charles Kingsley, William Thackeray and John Ruskin. His friends (among them Blair Bruce of Hamilton) made frequent visits, but by October, too ill to remain in France for the winter, Brymner boarded ship for Canada. There were thirteen days of stormy passage:

The captain was a stupid man who was always having either a temperance meeting, a religious service, or giving you all tracts, or speaking against card playing or dancing, or discoursing on sailor's homes.³⁹

Lanark County and Pontaubert
1882-1883

The Brymner family must have been happy to have William at home while he convalesced during the winter of 1881. His father had a lot to tell about his own work in

Paris, London and Quebec City where he was instigating archival research. Doubtless, despite William's diligent devotion to detail in his letters of the previous two years, there were still stories for him to share with his family. There would have been much to discuss about the developing Canadian art world and about the part William hoped to play in it.

It was a good winter, and by March of 1882, William was well enough to take a commission. He was to illustrate a book by Joshua Fraser,⁴⁰ which would be titled, Shanty, Forest and River Life. (cat. no. 78) Fraser's book, a collection of stories from the bush and the lumber camps of the Ottawa River watershed, was set in Lanark County. (fig. no. III)

Brymner travelled by rail to Perth, by Hicks Hotel Stage to Lanark and by sleigh to Ochil, "a town of one house and a bridge." It was a long trip. He stayed in a shanty on the Clyde River, where a mill under construction produced sixty thousand board feet of lumber during the following year. William sketched inside the shanties, and when the weather was good he hiked through rough stands of untidy forest and rocky outcrops mixed with marshy bogs.

Fraser was usually nowhere to be seen. He had a taste for strong drink and frequently left the young artist to his own devices; this may explain the vague relation of the illustrations to the text.

Brymner's first days were "plagued with rain" and so he painted a view of the inside of a blacksmith's shop, "including the smith with whom I have become very good friends." After completing drawings for Fraser's book, he travelled down the Rideau River to Jones Falls where he stayed from May to July. Here he painted Country Store. (fig. no. IV) This painting is a student work. The composition is simple, based on complements of horizontals and verticals. The figures are not well modelled and are flat. Painted over a landscape,⁴¹ it is of interest as an early oil on canvas by the artist, and as an historical record of life on the Rideau River.

Brymner was teaching in Ottawa from the time he left Jones Falls until he returned to France in the summer of 1883. This fact is supported by the report of H. J. Morgan who commented in the Dominion Annual Register of 1883:

The most satisfactory work is being done (in Paris) by Mr. William Brymner of Ottawa for a

couple of seasons Head Master at the Art School in that city. In a recent competition amongst Paris students he came out fourth in a list of 260 exhibitors.⁴²

Fred Brown⁴³ and Brymner spent the summer in Burgundy at Pontaubert, near Avallon, ten miles from the great Romanesque church of Vezelay. They painted steadily during July and August and in September William wrote that on wet days, "of which after all there are a few," he liked the sabot makers' shops best. They were "so clean with all their chips and shavings."⁴⁴ He told his friend Watts in a letter:

The inhabitants of this place are dressed simply but very paintably. The little girls wear light blue apron, darker blue dress showing below grey stockings, dark socks over these and then sabots. They have generally white skull caps.⁴⁵

The painting, With Dolly at the Sabot Maker (cat. no. 2) is a product of this visit. The composition is simple, the figures are static and Brymner's palette is restricted. However the painting has life.⁴⁶ At the back of the picture there is a door open to the street. The house wall, which can be seen across the street from the sabot maker's shop, is bright with sunlight and the sabot maker stands against it in silhouette. Inside the shop, which is dark in comparison with the sunlight of the street, a little girl

sits on the sabot maker's work bench and holds out her dolly for him to see. Soft light from the window beside her highlights her dress and cap. Our attention is drawn first to the child, since Brymner has placed her towards the picture plane and captured her eagerness by portraying her in a moment of arrested action.

This oil was a prototype. Brymner continued to use conventional interiors, and for many works a palette of few colours. Over the years it was within this conventional framework that he made his greatest stylistic changes. As he observed how European artists expressed interior depth on two-dimensional surfaces, he moved his subjects towards the picture plane creating the sense of interior depth through inter-relating colour values and shape. Traditional depth perception gave way to a more flattened perspective.

By October of 1883, Brymner had six paintings to send to Canada via Liverpool and hoped they would be "dry enough to go." He told his father the works would come in a case forty-eight by fifty-six inches and his father should be careful when he opened it. A roll of canvas ran the entire length of the box and was fastened by screws "let in from the ends, which could be unscrewed from the outside."

I want them to be at the R.C.A. Exhibition. Call them what you like. Mark prices like this, Old Woman Spinning (framed) \$60.00....There is no sense marking them too high; high prices will come later.⁴⁷

The six works which Brymner had ready in the autumn of 1883 had been sent first to London for exhibit and were all rejected. His friend Brown had one accepted but it was not "on the line."⁴⁸

Runswick Bay and Baie St. Paul
1884-1885

Brymner met Fred W. Jackson⁴⁹ at Julian's in 1884 and told his father that Jackson, who was from Manchester, was a "very good landscape painter." He and Jackson were eager to get to the country to work, and Brymner hoped that by the following summer his things would be "lighter in colour and more interesting in everyway."⁵⁰

Douglas paid great attention to all of William's comments, since he was acting as his son's agent in Ottawa and was free with fine Victorian advice and strong opinions. He told William he was fed up with Robert Harris and his 'potboilers' and William replied:

I'm not going to spoil myself the way Harris is doing. It won't pay to say the least, but in the long run the smallest thing I do will be my best and I intend to make so much progress in doing

anything I do - it's the only way. I have no doubt of succeeding shortly.⁵¹

William was committed to working from nature. He and his Canadian friends, Dixon Patterson, Johny Pinhey and J. Kerr Lawson, all of whom were studying in Paris, had made up their minds someday to send photographic painters "to the wall" in Canada.⁵²

Evidence of Douglas' interest in his son's career was that he sent William "three notes" from the Kingston Art School indicating the position of Master was open. His father received the reply:

I do not think there is the slightest use in talking of taking the Kingston Art School. I have work on hand to keep me for two months.... To go out would cost something like \$70.00 when I got out I could not work (on account of the Winter) as I can here.... To go to Canada and take an art School again would simply be throwing up all chance of ever doing anything.⁵³

William was sure his work would sell well enough to keep him, but it was as a result of his father's continued efforts that The Sabot Maker was sold to the Government for the National Gallery in Ottawa for \$90.00.

In August, of 1884, Brymner sent three pictures to the City of Manchester Art Galleries' second Autumn Exhibition. The competition was keen and one, Wallflowers, (cat. no. 5)

was hung but did not sell. Three thousand works were entered, 1100 were accepted, and there was a catalogue with William's name in it, "for the mite of a picture they have accepted and hung where it can't be seen."⁵⁴

Wallflowers is a small oil which had been painted in Runswick Bay in Yorkshire in July of 1884. That spring in Paris, Brymner, Jackson and their friend from Hamilton, J. Kerr Lawson,⁵⁵ discussed pleasant places where they could find "good subjects" to paint. Good subjects were equated with narrative subjects⁵⁶ which would attract the eye of Victorian art patrons. The friends considered France and Belgium, but chose Yorkshire, partly at the insistence of Jackson whose patron was a wealthy owner of a Manchester dye works. Brymner's major painting completed that summer at Runswick was A Wreath of Flowers. (cat. no. 9) The subject is a group of children sitting on a hillside in a small orchard making daisy chains. The work was an exercise in self-discipline for Brymner, and during the summer of 1884 his letters are full of small triumphs and tragedies. About his models he wrote:

...the difficulties of painting children the size of mine are awful. Keeping the pose for two minutes and then doing something altogether different for ten nearly drives me wild....The

youngster I had this morning never kept one part of her body still...and finally ran awayI was putting her in my big picture sitting on the grass knitting a very dirty garter. The day was just right so I was very disappointed.⁵⁷

It was the largest canvas he had worked on. His letters indicate he painted it outside to capture the grey tonalities of the Yorkshire seacoast. He had difficulty placing figures in a landscape, and the composition was a striking departure from that of the rigidly framed interiors which he had painted during the previous two years. He worked with a palette of few colours using several intensities of pink as highlights. The Wreath, one of Brymner's finest expressions as a painter of subtle tones, became his Diploma picture for membership in the Royal Canadian Academy. The difficulties he had with the work have been well compensated for over the years. It is one of the most popular paintings in the collection of The National Gallery of Canada. It can be appreciated for many reasons, not the least of which is its sentimental quality. Brymner evoked this aspect of the painting when, in later years, he wrote about Runswick Bay:

Here in the warm light of the sun's afternoon glow (as) these children dance and play...the background comes up of mothers and grandmothers and great grandmothers and still others having

done the same thing for centuries before these children were born.⁵⁸

From September until November of 1884 he considered submitting A Wreath of Flowers to the Royal Academy in London. William wrote to his father on November 14 of 1884, from Runswick Bay, that he had sent a small picture, "more of a sketch," titled Stray Ducks to the Institute Exhibition in London. The Institute Exhibition was, according to Brymner, "the next best to the Royal Academy." He put a price on the work £5.00.

In December William gave a "box" to Allen's agents in Manchester for a ship that would sail from Liverpool for Canada on Christmas Day. In the box was: A Wreath of Flowers, (cat. no. 9) Wallflowers; (cat. no. 5) Speak Dolly; (cat. no. 6) Hinderwell Near Yorkshire from Newton; (cat. no. 7) Playmates (which he called Comradés); a sketch with red roofs and a sea, to be called Runswick, Yorkshire; (cat. no. 8) a panel with a white house and an apple tree; three panels, one with two little girls plaiting rushes, another an interior with an old couple by the fire; and a portrait head for his father's friend, Louis Frechette.⁵⁹ He gave his father instructions about what to do with his large picture if it had "gone dead, - i.e. sunk in,"⁶⁰

recommending mastic not copal varnish, rubbing the picture with sliced raw potato, washing it off without soap and varnishing as thinly as possible. He said his friend Moss would do it.⁶¹ There is no doubt that Douglas took good care of his son's business in Canada. He ensured that William's paintings were well framed, properly exhibited and hopefully, sold.

In January William returned to France. He could not paint in Manchester as the winter interiors were too dark. Although he did not ask his father for money, his young friend Jackson agreed to help him out. In Paris "Julian's was the same as ever," but it was at Brolles near the Forest of Fontainebleau where Brymner decided to work on a painting to submit to the Salon. He lived at a "rum place" where the people were pleasant but the ordinary comforts of life were ignored. The weather was so mild that he could work outside wearing his "ulster" and his "sabots," and he painted a picture which was "purely landscape."

...a screen of trees, dead leaves under them a grey sky, village and some fields seen through them. The subject is so full of detail by way of tree branches that it is very tedious to work out but I think it will do when finished if I can work out the whole of it as I have done a part. The only thing is that there may not be enough of an effect about it. The whole thing

is extremely delicate in colour. I am working on two or three other things which may come to something.⁶²

The painting, Border of the Forest at Fontainebleau, (cat. no. 10) was difficult to finish. He worked in the rain, sitting under a blue umbrella and "got soaked three or four times," finally painting in the two figures gathering leaves, in his studio. He wrote: "I managed to bring it to an end but not as I had intended."⁶³

Brymner's love affair with the French countryside never ended. He wanted to settle there for five or six months and paint. He didn't have enough money and returned to Canada.⁶⁴ He spent the summer at Baie St. Paul below Quebec City and it was there, in 1885, that he painted some of his most successful works. They included Four Girls in a Meadow, (cat. no. 12) The Books They Loved They Read in Running Brooks, (cat. no. 13) Robert in a Boat, Sad Memories, (cat. no. 11) and The Weaver (cat. no. 14).

In Four Girls in a Meadow Brymner refers to the composition of A Wreath of Flowers and brightens his palette to capture the sunshine of a Canadian summer day. The grey tonalities he loved so much in Yorkshire are used in The Books They Loved They Read in Running Brooks. The title was

taken from Shakespeare's As You Like It:

Sweet are the uses of adversity
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.⁶⁵

Certainly this was a "good" narrative subject adapted to canvas to please the taste of any Victorian viewer. The painting is more than that. It is a work of soft beauty, its success created by the sensitive way in which the artist has once again painted delicate tonal relationships. There is a new compositional element which he would use again: the central position of one tree.

Sad Memories is a portrait of Madame Frechette in whose home Brymner and later many other Canadian artists stayed when they went to Baie St. Paul to paint. Madam was persuaded, with great difficulty, to "sit" in her "everyday clothes" and Brymner painted her in her chair by the window, work-roughened hands at rest, her sewing nearby. Brymner liked "old-fashioned interiors" and was particularly fond of Sad Memories. It was purchased by a friend of his whose wife, after a year of looking at the painting, said she could no longer sit in comfort in the same room with a woman who had a face like a horse. Brymner was delighted. He

took it back and eventually gave it to his brother Robert.

Crazy Patchwork, 1886, (cat. no. 15) a portrait of Brymner's sister Agnes⁶⁶ and Longings⁶⁷ 1887, (cat. no. 18) are closely related to Sad Memories in composition. In each of the three paintings Brymner has positioned the subject just at the side of the window and in Longings curtained the window and painted pots of geraniums on the sill, thus avoiding the problem of painting a figure against a direct source of light. He took up this challenge in La femme au metier which was painted around Baie St. Paul in the same summer. It was exhibited as Weaving in the Ontario Society of Artists Exhibition in 1886 and was illustrated in the catalogue. The model was posed at her loom in front of the window and Brymner has depicted her in a confined space. A loom was often placed on the top floor of a Quebec house where the ceiling angled down in conformation with the roof. Through the window, there is a landscape similar to that in Sad Memories. With the model in front of the light source, Brymner has faced some interesting problems in this work. He has captured sunlight on the corner of the bench, on the face and floor, and as it plays in and about the fabric of the weaver's dress, and her face and body are silhouetted

against the sunlight in the window. With his paint Brymner emphasizes the strong verticals and horizontals of the loom, the brightness of the sunshine on the woven fabric, and the sure hand holding the shuttle.

Sad Memories, Crazy Patchwork and A Wreath of Flowers were among the works exhibited at the Royal Canadian Academy in 1886. The latter two were chosen to be hung at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition at the South Kensington Museum in London in the same year. At the request of Lord Lansdowne, the Canadian Governor General, J. E. Hodgson, Professor of painting and Librarian to the Royal Academy, provided an evaluation of the Canadian collection. In his report, "Pictures Contributed by Canadian Artists to the Exhibition,"⁶⁸ he said he preferred Crazy Patchwork to A Wreath of Flowers.

Crazy Patchwork has all the characteristic excellence, or let me call them truths, for which modern French art is remarkable, giving a scene in which a number of objects of different colours are grouped together. That art is mainly preoccupied with rendering the exact value in point of lightness or darkness which those objects have respectively to each other. And this one truth has been rendered with an accuracy which may be reckoned as a new achievement in art.⁶⁹

He considered Crazy Patchwork was more skillfully drawn

than A Wreath of Flowers, and said that Brymner had a delicate appreciation of tone, "in itself a rare gift."

Hodgson hoped that Brymner would endeavour to:

...unite grace and beauty of form and feature with the charm of tone and aerial perspective, which he already excels in.⁷⁰

Western Canada, Teaching and Travel
1886-1891

In May of 1886, when he was almost 33, Brymner travelled on the newly completed Canadian Pacific Railway to the Blackfoot Indian reservation at Gleichen in the North West Territories. It was the year after the Riel rebellion and there was great interest in the nature of life in the part of North America which eventually became Alberta. Brymner was well aware of the work of the artists who had "been sent out" to paint in the West by the CPR.⁷¹ He was drawn to the West for subject matter, problems to solve, and the probability that if he did some good work it would be of interest to collectors in the East who were involved in some way with the opening up of the country. Perhaps his father got a pass on the railway for William. Certainly it was as a result of his father's connections that William was allowed to stay at the North Camp in the Anglican section

of the reservation with the minister, John Tims.⁷² Very few works are known from this visit. There are some pencil sketches in the Art Gallery of Hamilton, the most interesting showing the burial of Poundmaker.⁷³ (fig. no. V)

A small oil, Giving Rations to the Blackfeet Indians

(cat. no. 16) was exhibited at the Art Association of Montreal in 1887 and purchased by Sir George Stephen, President of the Canadian Pacific Railway. It is a painting with important documentary value and not a subject which seems to have been popular with many Canadian artists at that time. Perhaps this was because one needed special permission to stay on the reservation. The subject does appear in a wood engraving, ca. 1883, a copy of which is in the collection of the Glenbow Archives in Calgary.

(fig. no. VI)

In one of his letters to his father from Gleichen, Brymner wrote about the rationing:

I saw them give out the ration for four days, one and a half pounds of meat per head per day and half a pound of flour I think. The sight was comical. These Indians are real painted savages. Some have their foreheads and cheeks painted bright vermilion, their noses and chins left nature.⁷⁴

Despite Brymner's comments in his letter, his interpretation

of the Indians is sympathetic. They are mostly women; their faces show anxiety, sadness and resignation.

The work was reviewed in both the Montreal Herald and Star. The critic of the Herald wrote:

Mr. Brymner has succeeded in investing his Indians, ugly and dirty specimens of humanity though they are, with a certain picturesque interest, while the whole shows a fine grasp of the subject. The white man (the rationer) must, we think, have been taken unawares, so easy and unconstrained is his attitude and so intent is he upon the right measurement of flour to receive which, one of the Indians holds open his bag, while another with a solemnly stoical, yet closely observant face, leans lightly against the barrier, watching the process, and a pretty little squaw with a shamelessly artificial complexion stands near ready to produce her ration ticket.

The gradations of light, or relation in which the objects stand to the light behind them upon the entering group are remarkably well shown.⁷⁵

William spent September and October in the Selkirk Range where he painted Yale in the Morning, (cat. no. 17) a work reminiscent of A Wreath of Flowers. It is a study of Indian girls completing their morning toilet on the bank of the Fraser River. They are accompanied by a Sister from All Hallows In the West School.⁷⁶ Comparison with A Wreath is invited when one considers similarities in the way the subject is placed in the landscape, the diagonals in the composition, the nature of Brymner's brush strokes and the

colours, including little highlights of deep pink.

Exhibited at the Art Association in 1887, the painting was purchased by Sir George Stephen.⁷⁷

Mount Cheops From Rogers Pass, (fig. no. VII) a large undated work, should be considered as having been painted during the same visit. In September Brymner wrote to his father that he was trying to beat "this 'artkins' who has been sent out by the CPR."⁷⁸ He added that painting a work of four feet was no joke. It is tightly painted in the careful brush strokes Brymner used in the mid-eighties when he had just returned from Paris. The inclusion of subject matter, a train and two small figures dwarfed by the magnitude of the pass, adds some of the Victorian romanticism which was characteristic of his work at that time. His later paintings of the mountains (1892 and after) are done with a full brush, brighter palette and none of the intimacy of his earlier work.

Mount Cheops apparently hung in the Alexandria Hotel in Winnipeg for many years. Under its present title it does not appear in early exhibition records nor has a work of that scale, and therefore comparable price, appeared in the Record Books of the Art Association of Montreal. It may

have been completed in Montreal and presented to George Stephen directly for purchase.

While Brymner was working in the Selkirks, he accepted the position of Master of the School of the Art Association of Montreal. Robert Harris, who had just retired, had recommended him. Despite Brymner's earlier protestations to his father about teaching, he realized he needed a steady income and this seemed to be the way to achieve it. Today he is remembered primarily as a fine and much loved teacher, even though there is evidence that he was always eager to get away from the school.⁷⁹

Few paintings from these early teaching years have come to light, but to some extent the intensity of Brymner's involvement in the Montreal art world is indicated in a newspaper report of 1889. In an article titled, "The Melancholy State of the Picture Market," Brymner was reported as having said:

I might cover the whole ground by saying that the present position of Canadian art is due to a want of intelligent appreciation on the part of the public. The people who bought pictures twenty years ago would not buy the same class now; but still their art education has not advanced sufficiently to enable them to depend on their own judgment and they fall back upon the standards of the art centres. This is why Canadian art is neglected. People won't buy local work because

they are not competent to judge of its merits, but they will not hesitate to buy foreign pictures because judgment has been passed on these in the centres from which they come.⁸⁰

He noted that active Canadian artists found it hard to make a living here. "For myself," he added, "I cannot complain."

In the summer of 1889, Brymner made one of numerous trips to Europe and resumed his studies at Julian's. Fred Brown was there, and John MacGillicuddy, the Secretary of the Art Association (who was putting together a collection of English pictures to be shown at the Art Association of Montreal) came over to see the Paris Exposition. The Exposition "entrance" exceeded by nearly two million people the number for the Exposition of 1878.

The Eiffel Tower is a really wonderful thing and not, as was said, ugly....it looks when lighted up...like lace work....The collection (of pictures) is enormous...Canada is totally unrepresented. I think it is just as well not to show the master-pieces we can produce.⁸¹

In the summer of 1891, Brymner visited Ireland where he spent a lot of time sketching with J. M. Barnsley⁸² at Killarney. MacGillicuddy (fig. no. VIII) accompanied him on a trip through Holland and Brymner wrote to his father from the Zuider Zee and again from Amsterdam:

The Frans Hals in the museum are worth coming all the way to see. They are all large portrait

groups and painted in the most straightforward way I have ever seen. Fine colour. People living.⁸³

At the end of September, he was alone and lonely in Antwerp. He wanted to see Ruben's work and he wanted to sketch. He wrote that it was:

...only now I begin to realize what a queer little country Holland is. It seems to be all the time pretending to be so large. The railway stations are twice as big as necessary. There are four rusty tracks, to one polished by use...the people are the happiest and politest I have ever seen. They have a new building for the picture gallery called the Museum (and) Rubens knocks all the others higher than a kite. Even Van Dyke doesn't hold more than a very small taper to him. Even Rembrandt, I think, is inferior to Rubens....Rubens...never appears to have laboured, Rembrandt sometimes.⁸⁴

Brymner never ceased to be a student of the great masters. In later years he extended his studies to Italy, reported on his observations in letters and articles which appeared in The University Magazine, and lectured about his travels at the Art Association.

A Commission, Patronage, Lectures at the AAM
1892-1895

Early in 1892, the Gazette carried the following announcement:

The Canadian Pacific Railway has sent Mr. William Brymner R.C.A., the well-known artist of his city, to the Rockies for the purpose of painting several

large pictures of the beautiful mountain scenery through which that road runs. It is the intention of the Company to send these pictures to the Art Exhibition of the World's Fair where they will, besides being good testimony to the progress of art in Canada, give hundreds of thousands of visitors to the fair an idea of the wonderful scenery to be found in the Canadian Rockies. Mr. Brymner is a very successful and popular landscape painter. While the work he has now undertaken is of a more ambitious nature, there is every encouragement to expect that the results will increase his enviable reputation. Mr. Brymner will be absent about three months.⁸⁵

There has been much speculation and research about the nature of commissions to Canadian painters who went West to work in the Rockies. There is one letter in the archives of the C.P.R. which Brymner wrote to Van Horne in August of 1892 from the Chalet, Lake Louise, Laggan, Alberta (fig. no. IX) It is undoubtedly the most formal letter of Brymner's which has come to light, and it is important since it indicates the way in which Brymner managed the huge works which had been commissioned. He wrote:

I will be able, from materials I have, to paint, beginning at the west - Mt. Baker...a view at Sunset with the moon rising at the same time. One of Yale, two different effects from Bridge 291 above Yale; Ross Peak at the Glacier, which I have done on a large scale, 60 x 42; three or four different pictures at Field; one 60 x 42, at Lake Louise and one the same size at Lake Agnes. Besides I have material for other subjects with the aid of photographs. This afternoon Hammond and I found a view of Mt. Lefroy from a place about three miles east of this. The intention is to go to Castle

Mountain doing sketches near Stephen's Station. If there is anything that you would suggest that should be done I will be glad to know. I need not tell you what a very bad summer we had from the rain and mosquitos. Hammond has about as much work as I have. What had we better do, return now and work up our material?. This place is as fine as can be. I have never seen anything much more beautiful in my life or difficult to paint. I hope that what we have done will prove satisfactory although I must say I have been very blue about it very often. Yours very obediently.⁸⁶

Today, three major works from the Rockies are owned by the City of Toronto. There is a small water colour Near Field B.C. unsigned and owned privately in Vancouver. There is an unfinished field sketch of a railway trestle held in Montreal and a small, not successful, oil on panel of Lake Louise. The study for Mount Baker, (cat. no. 22) a major work purchased by Sir William Van Horne at the Art Association of Montreal in 1893, is owned by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. The list of titles of paintings from the Rockies which were exhibited at the Art Association of Montreal, the Royal Canadian Academy, and in Chicago is long and the present ownership of very few is known.⁸⁷

Brymner returned to the west in the summer of 1893 and visited Field, Glacier, Gleichen, Winnipeg and St. Paul. He spent part of his time with Edmond Dyonnet who called William his "very good, if irritable friend." They

attended the great "Fair" in Chicago and, according to Dyonnet, William did not see much of the work in the Palace of Fine Arts, since the first day he was there he was stopped by an attendant while making a sketched copy of a painting:

Brymner's forceful language, embellished and tinted (was) better imagined than described. An inspector came along to support the attendant and confirmed what he had said. Brymner turned furiously on his heel and marched out with the announcement that he would never go back to the place. He kept his word.⁸⁸

Dyonnet had other stories of what he called "the Brymnerian fury" but wrote that when Brymner felt like it, he could be the most amiable of men. His bouts of ill humour passed as quickly as they rose, if he was not contradicted.

The spring of 1894 was a busy time for members of the art community. In April the spring exhibition opened at the Art Association with the usual comments in the press, social notices, and critical evaluations and listings of works. When, in April, the Royal Canadian Academy exhibition was held in Ottawa, Brymner showed five paintings from his visits to the Rocky Mountains. Six hundred works had been submitted and two hundred hung.

In December of 1894, the first vice-regal drawing room

was held at the Art Association of Montreal and the Gazette reported the rooms were crowded with a brilliant throng:

Lady Aberdeen wore a very handsome decollete, trained black satin gown with a unique silver embroidery down the face taken from an old book of Irish patterns known as the Book of Kells, the work being done in Ireland by the ladies of the Irish Industry Association.⁸⁹

The Montreal Star asked their readers if they had been practicing their curtsies, and it was reported that by the end of the year, attendance at the Gallery had increased by one thousand over the previous year.

Press reviews, and the exhibition record books of the Art Association of Montreal, give a clear picture of Montreal patronage at the end of the century. Prominent owners of Canadian works were G. A. Drummond, J. C. Abbott, J. W. Tempest, Donald Smith, E. Greenshields, John Thomas Wilson, J. Law, William Van Horne and James Ross.⁹⁰ These patrons, their families and members of the Art Association supported a full lecture programme which had been established in the early years of the Society. In 1895 Brymner gave his first general-membership lecture and it was on the teaching of art. Some comments shed light on his own philosophy:

The foundation of all the graphic and plastic

arts is drawing....drawing is treated with more contempt and neglect than any other branch of artistic training...A very small proportion of those who begin the study of art even reach eminence as artists and if the number of artists produced in proportion to the number of pupils taught were the mark of success...of a teacher, the whole business would be such a lamentable failure that no one would have the courage to go on teaching drawing anymore.... 91

He added that Raphael and Albrecht Durer exchanged drawings in order that they might see each other's "hand." They did not want to know each other's ideas but rather their manner of work. Their ideas they could exchange in writing. He recommended John Ruskin's Elements of Drawing as a fine book for an art student because it taught no habits but the observation of nature. He complained at length about the habit of copying from chromolithographs. He quoted Thomas Couture who had taught Manet: "We must all begin at the beginning finding out what nature has to teach us, not only what someone else has found out about her." And in referring to the work of J. M. Turner he said: "You are surprised to see with what minute care the painter of The Slave Ship drew all the small details of elaborately traceried gothic windows, the rigging of the ship, the branches of a tree." He called Ingres: "that greatest of French draughtsmen, the man whose motto was, 'le dessin

"c'est l'aprobite de l'art." Brymner envisioned a great work of art as a "perfect thought in a perfect form."⁹²

In the next year, he lectured on Impressionism. Much of the lecture was a general history of art to give his listeners a background in which to place the development of this "new" movement. He said Impressionism was the modern manifestation of the eternal fight between the living and the felt, and the dead and the stereotyped:

Experiments and attempts to solve new problems are surely more interesting and likely to bear fruit than repetitions of things already known or well done by a predecessor....There are other kinds of beauty besides that of a pretty face or a form or the brightness of a sunset. The beauty of the arrangement of spots of colour and the light and shade or even of lines are not often thought of.⁹³

While followers of Impressionism had done some astonishingly bad things:

They were no worse things however than are done by the followers of any manner of genius but more strikingly bad and obtrusive to the extent that purple and light are harder to manage than brown and dark.⁹⁴

Brymner did not really take a stand for or against Impressionism as a movement. Most important to him was that the artist work directly from "nature," had an understanding of the life of his own times and the world immediately

surrounding him. One must avoid studio tricks and sentimentality. Brymner cited Bouguereau as the "pet aversion of the impressionists." He referred to A Crown of Flowers in the Art Gallery, saying Bouguereau had not taken the trouble to find out what little peasant girls looked like, had arranged his models in a studio with artificial flowers and painted a landscape from memory. That kind of art "made glad the heart of the Philistine" who then could not be expected to understand Manet, Monet, Degas, Renoir or Whistler.

Experiments in Water Colour and a Time for Decision
1896-1898

Brymner spent part of the summer of 1896 and 1897 at the home of Mrs. Raymond in Beaufre with Maurice Cullen and Edmond Dyonnet, where they sketched and shared the cost of models, paying farmers who came with their oxen to pose for them. Dyonnet wrote:

We went to Beaufre...in 1897 and it was during that stay that Brymner painted the moonlight picture that is now in the National Gallery in Ottawa.⁹²

Certainly the most interesting work which Brymner exhibited at the Art Association of Montreal in the spring of 1897 was The Grey Girl, (cat. no. 29) and it was

thoroughly reviewed. G. de Werthemer, the art critic of Les Nouvelles, wrote articles on three consecutive days, commenting on almost every work in the exhibition, listing them carefully by number as well as title and making remarks which were acid, direct, and knowledgeable. He reviewed two works of Brymner. The Carrier's Horse he did not consider to be a success in any way. The other, The Grey Girl, he wrote, was one of the best water colours in the room; however it was not completely to his taste:

La plus grande aquarelle du groupe, a coup sur un des meilleurs, celle qui indique de l'étude, du savoir, et de l'acquis, encore que parfois tout cela ne tende au tour de force. La teinte grise générale est habilement maintenue quelque fois même au détriment de la vérité, les tons encore, que bien dégradés sont riches.... Bref, de cette oeuvre, il s'enonce un artiste non arrivé certes mais en bonne voie. Nous ferons toutefois observer que les tons gouachés de visage sont trop crus.... et que la partie de la robe qui sur les genoux tombe, n'indique pas suffisamment le mouvement d'intervalle, de vide, de creux; que les touches de pinceau en sont trop raides, et que cette partie de vêtement manque totalement de souplesse et de légèreté. 96

On March 30th in 1897, the Montreal Gazette referred to the "harmony of colour" and the Montreal Star critic said on the same day that "the treatment is peculiar, being water colour done on canvas in low tones and has the decorative effect of tapestry....The Grey Girl was one of

the best pictures in the exhibition." The critics were more interested than the buyers. On the 5th of May, Brymner wrote from the Art Association of Montreal to Charles Porteous⁹⁷ asking him if he would purchase the work:

No one has offered the \$300.00 I have been asking for it so that it lapses to ~~you~~ if you still feel inclined to carry out your offer. It was to give me the same price as I got from Mr. Ross last year for Francie. That price was \$150.00 including a black frame. I have an exactly similar black frame I'll give you....I have hopes of being able to take a trip to the old Sod this year and I am consequently much interested in what you will do. I'll throw in anything else you like as part of the bargain.⁹⁸

Porteous bought the water colour, and his daughter said that as they were growing up they always called it "the ugly little girl."⁹⁹

In March of 1897 there was an exhibition at Chapman's Book Store in Montreal. Works by Maurice Cullen, Edmond Dyonnet, Robert Harris, William Brymner and Brymner's student, Fanny Plimpson, were included. Most of Brymner's entries were in watercolour, the medium he preferred in the 1890's. (fig. nos. X, XI, XII, XIII)

By the end of the 1890's Brymner's life had worked itself into a pattern. Classes continued each year in October and Brymner was free in April or May. In the

summers he travelled in Quebec, across Canada, to France, the Low Countries and Italy to paint. He was a member of the Pen and Pencil Club and The St. James's Club in Montreal, and an active participant in the committees of the Royal Canadian Academy. He attended Academy meetings regularly and the records of this organization, which are held in the Public Archives, show that he worked diligently to protect the Academy from weakness within and attacks from without.

His teaching was his "bread and butter" and in 1897 The Witness published an interesting report on the classes of the Art Association of Montreal. There were illustrations of the "antique" classroom, a corner of the library, of Brymner himself, students studying from an "old master" and the "life" classroom.¹⁰⁰

Each Spring Brymner exhibited his previous summer's work, and in 1898 at the Royal Canadian Academy he showed a variety of media and subject matter. Among the titles: Lodestar (a mystical view of a female head); The Sisters, (cat. no. 33) London Bridge; Old Canal, Bruges Belgium; In County Kerry Ireland; and An Irish Cottage by the Cap of Dunlow. At this time, a critic for The Witness wrote

perceptively about Canadian artists. Contained in his observations is the most acute analysis of Brymner and his work that has been written to the present.

In an artistic sense, one of the most difficult men to write about today is William Brymner. Mr. Brymner is so many-sided his aesthetic aspirations crop out in so many different directions that one feels it is as unfortunate for himself as it is fortunate for his pupils that fate made him a teacher. Unfortunately for himself in a sense because if one is content with the career of a teacher...there is nothing more to be said, but one likes to think that Mr. Brymner has been spurred on to his many experiments more in pursuit of some personal objective even, than for means of imparting knowledge to others...The two things must necessarily mingle and the force that might have been expended in the one direction is frittered away to some extent between the two...there are some studies of the nude of such intrinsic quality...that one almost grieves to see them abandoned at that stage; sketches they are, but they show knowledge of anatomical drawing, modelling, colour and expression that would make the reputation of any man content to pursue his work in this direction; but the same may be said of Mr. Brymner's landscape work in watercolours and oils and of his portraits. It seems, and the writer offers this thought with all due deference, that the teacher side of him derives such a measure of satisfaction as to spur him on to new experiments rather than to urge him to use for his own ends, knowledge already gained... he holds today the means to making a great reputation in the very hollow of his hand. The sincere admirers of Mr. Brymner, and they are legion, look to him now to pursue some single aim; otherwise it may be, and perish the thought, as far as his personal work is concerned, among many stools he may fall to the ground.¹⁰¹

Brymner did not pursue "some single aim." He was gregarious, fond of good companionship, a man of wit and humour.

The Murals at The Island of Orleans
1899-1900

He continued to experiment with his craft. In the summer of 1899 a new adventure began when Brymner accepted a commission to paint murals for the dining-room in the summer home of Charles Porteous. The Porteous house, located on the northern end of the Island of Orleans across the tip of the island from the home of Horatio Walker, was called Homewood. Planning had begun in 1892 and Porteous was soon in touch with a number of painters concerning the decoration. Rex Stovel,¹⁰² a friend of George Reid from Toronto, seems to have suggested the theme, although he never submitted drawings. Harriet Ford¹⁰³ probably painted the over-the-mantle piece, and Homer Watson and Maurice Cullen are reputed to have contributed murals of a later date which hang in other parts of the house. The dining-room is in a "French Renaissance revival style"; the murals are above the fireplace, the bow window and the wood panelling; the subject is the four seasons. The date on

the canvases is 1900.¹⁰⁴

Brymner spent the summer of 1899 at Raymond's Hotel at Beaupré and sketched in preparation for this work in oil. In October, he wrote to Porteous to tell him that he "must return to the school." He said he hoped, before he went, to "get" (sketch) some boats (fig. no. XIV) for the decoration. "The decorations will turn me grey before I get them right. I find I get one to please me and then all the others have to be changed to suit that one. I'll get them right though in the end."¹⁰⁵

He achieved his goal. He was now able to work within a well-ordered classical composition which relied on the pleasant inter-relationships of verticals and horizontals. The subjects were ones Brymner loved: harvesting in the fields of the Island; in the orchards; (fig. nos. XV, XVI) from the small boats which fished the St. Lawrence; (fig. nos. XVII, XVIII) and in the sugar bush in the early spring. (fig. nos. XIX, XX) His limited palette of greyed browns, soft blues and greens, and accents of pink was the one with which he had had so much success before. He used white and rusty brown for the animals, and rosy red to delineate the side of a farmhouse. There is in the murals

the classical quietude of Corot, a pastoral formality which is created by the composition. Brymner's palette derives some gentleness from Puvis de Chavannes' beautiful paintings in the Pantheon in Paris. ¹⁰⁶

The work is uniquely Brymner's despite these references. His palette is the one he used at Pontaubert, Runswick, and Baie St. Paul. He paints in large flat areas and the murals appear to be unvarnished, giving the effect of fresco. This was a popular expression at the turn of the century and the simulation of fresco was achieved in a number of ways. Perhaps the artist used an absorbent canvas. He may have diluted his paints with turpentine, waxed the canvases with varnish or melted beeswax. The present condition of the Porteous murals suggests that as techniques of painting and protection most of the methods Brymner might have used have left something to be desired.

While there are in the work interesting influences from French painters that Brymner must have admired, he is direct, not allegorical in his subject matter. The murals are straightforward representations of the daily chores of harvesting as they were being carried out on the Islands and in the River at the end of the century.

It is important to consider, when studying Brymner's work, that he himself said:

Any good picture is done while the Artist is under some influence (but) the Artist must get as near nature as possible, be inspired by her at first hand and be allowed to express his emotions in the way he feels will best make them felt by others, although he is not following anyone's example.¹⁰⁷

On January 25th of 1900, William wrote to his friend Edmund Morris to tell him that he was "working at his large oxen."¹⁰⁸ In February, "News and Notes" in the Montreal Herald reported:

Mr. Brymner is busy at a frieze to be put up in a country house not far from Quebec. The good taste of owner and artist combined has selected for its subject the lovely landscape and farm life of that romantic neighbourhood. Will that owner allow us to get a peep before finally placing the frieze in position?¹⁰⁹

Part of a decoration for a dining-room in a Country House, was shown at the Art Association Spring Exhibition that year; oil on canvas, each panel was three feet by five. The Witness critic said Brymner was "a man of many artistic moods and therefore... always experimental in manner and matter."

Brymner's sketches of the lower St. Lawrence Valley during 1898 and 1899 produced more than murals for the Porteous home. Hay Making (fig. nos. XXI, XXII) was sold to

R. B. Angus. Haying on the Island of Orleans, (cat. no. 38) a water colour, was given to Brymner's good friend Adolf Lomer and a large oil Haying Near Quebec Beaupré (cat. no. 39) (fig. no. XXIII) was part of this group. These works were exhibited at the Montreal Spring Exhibition in 1902 with: July, Lower St. Lawrence; A Sheep Pasture; September Old Canada; Clover; At the Spring; A Habitant; and A Corner of the Farm.

Brymner painted in his studio during the winter of 1901 a very large work, Kicking Horse Pass. (cat. no. 40) One may presume that it was part of the ongoing commission from Sir William Van Horne.

Paris Canada¹¹⁰ reported that in the summer of 1901 Brymner was once again in Europe and on August 15th returned to Paris from Venice. In the same summer The Grey Girl, Francie, and Clearing Weather were exhibited at the Pan-American exhibition in Buffalo and Brymner won a gold medal. The Art Association lecture series continued and Brymner gave a talk about his travels. It was a long lecture, and probably one of the most interesting things in it was his view of Venice:

The general colour of Venice is a grey rose colour running into all kinds of other greys, and old

faded greens and yellows. These colours lighted by the late afternoon sun reflected in the gently undulating canals, with the black gondolas to give a positive note to the general delicate tone, (and) make a wonderful harmony. Add to this the graceful shape of the buildings, thus coloured, and you have the most unique combination of beauty I have ever seen. It is perfectly bewildering at first if your intention is...to try to paint it.¹¹¹ (cat. no. 19)

He was in Venice again in 1902¹¹² with James Wilson Morrice¹¹³ and Maurice Cullen¹¹⁴ and settled at the end of the summer in Givernay, France, where Monet lived. Monet has "a house, gardens and Automobile. They have all got Automobiles...a horrible invention."¹¹⁵

In these years Brymner sought recognition for his work by exhibiting in Montreal at the Art Association, with the Royal Canadian Academy, at Toronto Industrial fairs (CNE), occasionally at the Ontario Society of Artists, and at international exhibitions. Planning for, painting for and judging exhibitions was a large part of the life of a Canadian artist, and critics applied themselves to the results with commentaries more blessed with energy than erudition.

Certainly, in 1903, criticism of Brymner's work was more severe than it had been in the past. He exhibited at the Art Association in Montreal in the spring and again in

the summer; at the Dominion of Canada Industrial Exhibition in Toronto; and in the early autumn at the Royal Canadian Academy. The Witness art critic complained: "In Mr. Brymner's work this year we find very little to enthuse about." He was compared, unfavourably, with Barnsley, particularly in his ability to "diffuse light." Brymner's old friend Charles Moss in reviewing the 24th RCA Exhibition held in Ottawa said that there was nothing which "compels enthusiastic admiration." To the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition in St. Louis, Missouri, 1904, Brymner sent four oils: Cloud Shadows, Calves Drinking, Evening and Early Moonrise in September. He sent a watercolour on linen, Cool Shade, (now called Au Pays de Québec) (cat. no. 44) shown in the spring exhibition in Montreal in March and reviewed in The Witness:

Mr. Brymner has also on canvas what is described as a water colour - let the description pass - which is a wonder from a technical point of view. The texture of the girl's coat is a marvel and it has many other most pleasing qualities, a Ruskin or a Rosetti tree, for example - let us call it pre-Raphaelite - good detail in the grass and it is bright and light as anything... isn't the plebeian old fence too much insisted upon, and wouldn't a little less red stocking be an improvement? 116.

Au Pays de Québec is an awkward painting. The

proportions of the figure are wrong. The figure lacks volume and is rigid. Perhaps the work is not successful because it was painted as a joint project between William Brymner and Horatio Walker. ¹¹⁷

Now forty-nine, Brymner had been teaching for eighteen years and some of his best students, among them Clarence Gagnon, were travelling abroad to study. Brymner and Gagnon exchanged a few letters in the early 1900's. They tell a about Gagnon's problems with his patron-dealer, James Morgan, and give news of mutual friends in Paris (Eddie Boyd and Marc-Aurele de Foy, Suzor-Cote among them). Brymner's letters report on his activities, on the Island of Orleans and make reference to Madam Marquis with whom Brymner stayed when he painted at the island.

In 1904, in a letter to Gagnon, Brymner reflected on his own philosophy as an artist:

I agree with you that it is well to carry a picture as far as you can while enthusiastic about your subject. You are always so apt to find fifty things that you think you should have done instead....I think you should have a very definite idea of what you want to do in a picture before you begin it and then stick to your first impression...hammering at it till you get it....it is impossible to paint a work of long (?) outside. If you do you must keep changing the effort...concept in a country of sternal sun....I think you have to make endless studies

outside but I believe the picture has to be painted inside. A remark of Delacroix's is that you should study your picture from every point of view and know it thoroughly then paint the picture with vigour.¹¹⁸

At Christmas Brymner and Maurice Cullen had a joint Exhibition in the Gallery of the Art Association of Montreal. Regular patrons were among the buyers, but sales were poor. Of thirty-three oils and watercolours by Brymner, one, Girl Sewing, (cat. no. 45) can be identified by title.

By March there was new maple sugar, "the ice had made a shove" and in the next day or two the River would be clear. Brymner was upset because Scott, his dealer, had, during the Spring Exhibition, taken the occasion to have an exhibition of "fifteenth-rate" Dutch watercolours and oils. Brymner liked "good pictures" but detested "this kind of damned, rotten, dealer's trash that are shown as being superior works."¹¹⁹

St. Eustache, 1905
and
A Commission

In the summer of 1905, Brymner and Cullen built a studio at St. Eustache¹²⁰ and many of their most beautiful paintings come from the quiet landscapes which surrounded

this haven on the River behind the island of Montreal. Brymner was now, in some of his work, more free with paint and his colours were strong. New viewpoints, and new interests in the play of light on water and in the painting of landscape became ends in themselves. The studio was a haven. He stayed there until winter when he went to Montreal three days a week to teach. He wrote to Gagnon:

I only wish there was no school to be attended to but it means bread and butter and they seem hard to get otherwise. 121

He must have been pleased when, in 1906, he received a private commission for a mural for a house at "St Anne's" (now part of Senneville on the Island of Montreal). The commission was from Sir Edward Clouston and was followed by others in ensuing years. They were to decorate two family homes. One of the houses had been bought by Sir Edward as a summer home, the other was built for his daughter, Mrs. John Todd, at the time of her marriage.¹²² Three murals were completed: two subjects from Canadian history; and a landscape in which a woman and little girl walk by a brook. (fig. no. XXIV) The historical paintings, large works, were titled, The Order of Good Cheer and Frontenac Receiving the Envoy of Phips. (fig. no. XXV)

The Frontenac was in the Royal Canadian Academy Exhibition at the Victoria Memorial Museum in Ottawa in November of 1912. It was the second of three murals to be painted. The first was Champlain's residence at Port George where he established the "bon ton."¹²³ Sir Edward died in 1912 and a newspaper reviewer commented: "the third (decorative painting) may never now be painted."¹²⁴ The history paintings are no longer in situ. The Order of Good Cheer has taken an interesting journey through the Canadian art world. The Frontenac has disappeared and remains as a reproduction in a book by Dr. Arthur Doughty, the late Dominion Archivist.¹²⁵ (cat. no. 80) The landscape, the most beautifully painted of the three, was framed in "golden oak" panels and hung as a unit over a fireplace in the library of the Todd home. After the home was sold, the mural was sent to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts where the three panels joined, and it is now in a private collection in western Canada.

Martiques
1908

The following spring, in April of 1907, Brynner had an article "Progress in Art" published in The University

Magazine. He wrote:

...art cannot progress beyond the point at which the thing to be expressed and the means of expression are equally balanced. Before that point it is imperfect; after it comes decadence. Confusing the fundamental principle of art with craftsmanship is the cause of the trouble.... (This confusion) comes in great measure from a misapprehension as to what art really is... (the desire of) the artist to convey to us an emotion which he has experienced.... Everything not helpful to his end he leaves out. 126

In 1908, Brymner returned to Europe. He stayed at Martigues in the south of France:

...a fishing village, or rather a town, for it has seven thousand inhabitants, on a salt water lake called Etang de Berre. It is situated at the entrance to a sort of strait leading from the lake to the Mediterranean, three miles away.... The inhabitants have had messieurs les peintres with them for so many generations that they, or their works, have long ceased to be objects of curiosity to them. You are, for this reason, left in peace but treated at the same time with great respect, which speaks well for the character of the painters who have frequented the place for the last fifty or more years. Besides this freedom from annoyance... you are so sure of getting sunlight day after day that you can count on going on with the same subject for nearly as many days as you like at the same hour and know that you will have practically the same effect to work from.... 127

He described the costumes of the artists and something about their attitudes and techniques:

... (One of the artists) was Mr. Roberti, who had got this year a third medal in the Salon. He is doing impressionist yoke-of-egg looking landscapes. He

changes his subject every hour, as an effect, he says, can last no longer. Mr. Amiel does not like the impressionists so explains that Mr. Roberti's medal was got for figure work and not landscape. Mr. Casimir Raymond is further along and is painting watercolour of a very watery kind. He is still, at ten o'clock, working on what he began at half past six in the morning to the indignation of the true painters who work only in oil and not longer at a time than the effect lasts.... (Why should he change) every hour forsooth? Why should he change till his work's done?....Mr. Ducres, who is said to be very rich and therefore merely an amateur...paints everything in light purples, even a black boat....Mr. Olivier has had a certain success lately with his picture in Paris. His successes were painted on mill board with blue lines appearing here and there around his buildings, so he continues to paint on mill board with blue lines appearing here and there. 128

His landlord took him to a bull fight. They sat in the sun and William found the sight beautiful and extraordinary:

The whole place was packed with people - the coping stone even accommodated people against the sky - the near people large then small right opposite, then diminishing to almost nothing at the top above them. Baedeker says the place holds 20,000 people and they were all there. 129

The first evidence of Brymner's work at Martigues, a watercolour shown at the 25th Spring Exhibition of the Art Association, was titled Le Cours Martigues. Two watercolours, At Martigues (cat. no. 51) and the Red Wall, were shown in 1910. Not listed in exhibition records are

Untitled (a cobbler in the street) (cat. no. 52) or Summer Landscape Martiques. (cat. no. 53) Summer Landscape, an example of Brymner's best work in the early 1900's, is fresh in colour, has flattened perspective and softly outlined forms. It is one of the few paintings by Brymner which shows the influence of James Wilson Morrice, Brymner's close friend and, on occasion in those years, one of the artists to be seen around Benscoon Quai at Etang de Berre.

P.R.C.A., Portraits and Louisbourg
1909

In May of 1909, the annual meeting of the Royal Canadian Academy was held in the Archives building in Ottawa and Brymner was elected President. Plans were made for an Academy exhibition to be held in Hamilton, fulfilling the early hopes of the Marquis of Lorne that Canadian works would be shown throughout the Dominion. In addition, the annual Academy exhibition opening was changed to November "...to give this annual national display of Canadian art a first chance at the season's product and a fair opportunity of patronage."¹³⁰

In December, Brymner introduced to Edmond Morris of the Canadian Art Club in Toronto, Eric Brown, who would

become the Director of the National Gallery of Canada and a strong supporter of the Group of Seven and painters associated with them in style and philosophy.

The bearer of this is W. Eric Brown. He is a brother of Arnesby Brown. He has been expounding the English Exhibition to the public here with great success. You spoke of what kind of Secy. M. Lamb would make for the Museum - Mr. Brown I believe would make a much better one - At any rate you might just let him know how things stand and whether there is any prospect of anything.¹³¹

At Christmas William Brymner, Maurice Cullen, John Hammond, Laura Muntz and Alfred Laliberté exhibited at the Art Association. Brymner sent Evening, October Weather and The Spinner. He exhibited nineteen water colours and made few sales. In the spring of the following year he entered Evening at the Art Association exhibition and it was sold to the National Gallery of Canada.

Of more interest were three portraits:

K.R. Macpherson,¹³² (cat. no. 55) Marquerite Buller, and The Letter for which Brymner asked \$1,000.00. The Gazette critic said Brymner had not been "as strongly represented" for a long time. Mr. Harteloup, "who was in charge of the recent exhibition of French art" (Exposition d'art Francais), wrote an appreciative letter to the Montreal Star about the Spring Exhibition particularly mentioning the works of

Brymner, saying that "Brymner is too true an artist to confine himself to any specialty."¹³³

Brymner did not miss opportunities to paint despite his busy schedule. In the summer of 1909, he had been to Louisbourg, Cape Breton, on James Ross's yacht. While he was there for a second visit, he wrote a sweet letter to his niece Jean, a new baby, and said:

...I won't see you this summer....I'm down here painting the rocks and sea about the old fortifications, but would like it better if it did not rain so much, or get foggy, and if I had someone with me. Someone I like, though, for I'd rather be alone than with the other kind. I came here first in Mr. James Ross's yacht - I was in it with him for three weeks in July and liked the place so much that I went back to Montreal to get more paint and canvas and have come back to stay until the 8th of October....¹³⁴

He sent The Atlantic Coast to the Canadian

Art Gallery of 1910 and Sea Foam was

shown at the Academy:-

...the little surprises of the
...a 'nymph' rolling in on
...so laughing, so gay, so playful
and yet... that in a moment it
suggested the idea of foam.¹³⁵

Not sold, it was caricatured in The Montreal Star
under the title Old Orchard.¹³⁶ (fig. no. XXVI)

In 1910 Brymner exhibited in Liverpool at the Walker

Art Gallery with other Canadian artists whose work had been sent to The Festival of the Empire, an exhibition which was to have been held in The Crystal Palace in London but was cancelled because of the death of Edward VII. Edmond Dyonnet moved the Canadian collection from London to Liverpool. Brymner entered The Portrait of Miss Dorothy and Miss Irene Vaughan, October in Canada, Under the Apple Tree, the watercolour now known as Au Pays de Québec, and Blackfoot Indian. (cat. no. 56) The collection was reviewed in the British press with opinions similar to those expressed at the time of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition twenty-four years before - the lack of a Canadian school of painting, the influence of European art, and the scarcity of works which seek inspiration from the many picturesque portions of the country. 137

A Man of Influence,
Author and Artist
1911-1913

Brymner was now a man of influence in his own profession, with Academicians and with the young. He was part of the society which provided patronage to the arts and support to the Museum. His prestige was as great in Ottawa art circles as it was in Montreal. His advice about the

workings of the art establishment was respected. His reputation as a teacher was constantly enhanced by the nature of the work his students exhibited, not only at spring shows of the Art Association of Montreal, but at the Royal Canadian Academy and in private exhibitions.

Re-elected President at the Academy meeting in Toronto, in 1911, he said in his report that art in Canada was reaching a "higher level." There was friendly rivalry between institutions. Galleries would soon open in Ottawa, Montreal, and Toronto. He looked to the future with enthusiasm.

In 1912, his nostalgic article, "Village Life in Three Countries," was published in the University Magazine and included stories from his life as a young artist in Burgundy in 1883, in Runswick Bay in 1884 and at Ste. Famille in 1901. Brymner loved the Island of Orleans and particularly the country side at Ste. Famille. He wrote:

Long after the shadow of the Laurentians falls over the north shore of the St. Lawrence, that part of the Island of Orleans occupied by St. Famille is still in bright sunlight, and the procession of little farmhouses and barns, running along the cliffs from either end of the parish glows like something molten. 138

When Brymner first went to the Island to paint, Horatio

Walker drove him in a buckboard from Ste. Petronille to Ste. Famille as they looked for a place for Brymner to stay. They inquired at every likely looking house and finally found Michel Marquis, "a thin old man with whiskers under his chin, the best all-round workman in the parish." (fig. no. XXVII)

If you want the best of anything go to Michel. He can...do the best bricklaying, masonry, carpentry, or painting. In winter he converts the kitchen into a workshop where he makes furniture, principally chests of drawers. Things are generally made of yellow butternut, enriched with black walnut ornaments: and although the drawers do not always run true and are, in trying to shut them, a frequent cause of profanity, a set of them has come to be a necessary part of every properly equipped St. Famille's bride's outfit.¹³⁹

Madame, not wanting a boarder, told Brymner they did not have enough food and he replied she could not be so fat without having sufficient food and what she could eat he could eat, so he returned the following afternoon.

Michel took Brymner to see his church and the pew in which Marquis worshipped his God twice on Sundays and once on weekdays for fifty years. Brymner met the Curé, Father Gagnon, who offered him a glass of wine and showed him his garden and orchard. He sat with Marquis on the verandah in the evenings, facing the sun. Madame, who was afraid of the

night air, would not come out but spoke to them through the slats of green blinds. Michel knew:

...a great deal about his neighbours, church fêtes and how to do many things well. Most of the simplest things outside his own parish he knows nothing about....He had once seen a negre in Quebec and asked me where negroes came from....He had never heard of Africa, the Northern or the Southern States, or of the Civil War between them. He takes one paper, Le Quotidien de Levis, because it only costs a dollar a year.140

When Brymner wrote this article his days of painting on the Island had almost ended. In 1912, he was painting soft, tonal impressions of the surrounds of St. Eustache. Four of these, Afternoon, Late Afternoon, Afterglow and Nightfall, filled with elms, brooks, houses, boats and barns, were well received by the critics and most of them quickly disappeared into private collections. The days of Brymner's experiments were almost finished and his best works now were those which emphasized delicate tonal relationships and the nature of light. His openness to new ideas, part of his character since his youth, did not abate. When John Lyman was severely criticized by the Montreal Herald in 1913, Brymner said:

It seems to me that they*(the critics) take a wrong point of view with regard to pictures at an annual exhibition. You'd think that everything had to be a masterpiece to get in. There wouldn't

be many there in that case and I think they would bore people to death in the bargain. It's not only what one likes oneself that matters... People should be allowed to judge for themselves. While I may not care for some pictures personally, I recognize that they represent a modern work which should interest the public to see. They're not anything extraordinary. Matisse and others have done many like them.... 141

Early in the summer of 1913 Brymner was in British Columbia and Winnipeg. Glad to return home and to be able to work, he painted at St. Eustache and near Lancaster, Ontario. October, Rivière Beaudet (cat. no. 63) was included in the 31st Spring Exhibition at the Art Association of Montreal. The critic of The Montreal Herald called the work "decorative." It is one of Brymner's most sensitive interpretations of atmosphere. With subdued colours, gentle tonalities, and using a freer technique than was his habit, he captured in paint the misty beauty of autumn in the valley of the St. Lawrence.

A Nude 1914-1915

In the course of the article in which October, Rivière Beaudet was reviewed, the critic of The Herald commented on the general absence of paintings of "the nude" in Canadian exhibitions, "...which is a sign that Canadian artists still lack powers of correct and adroit

draftsmanship and drawing." Brymner addressed himself to the challenge and painted a nude figure which was exhibited in 1915, and purchased by the National Gallery of Canada.

(cat. no. 68)

Louisbourg, The War, C.M.G.
1914-1916

The following spring in 1914, after school closed, Brymner went to paint at Louisbourg, for the last time. With the start of the war the site became a gun emplacement and the area was used for target practice. There are three major works from this, his last visit: Fog on the Coast; (cat. no. 67) Coast at Louisbourg C.B.; (cat. no. 66) and Incoming Tide, Louisbourg. Fog on the Coast was called by the art critic of The Gazette, "an arrangement in greys," and indeed it could have been given that title in the style which James McNeill Whistler had used for his impressions of water and sky. All three works are skillful impressions of the atmospheric effects created when the great elements, air and water, converge on the north Atlantic coast. These paintings are strong statements of Brymner's skill and confidence as an artist as he approached the end of his career. There is little doubt that they were finished in

his studio in Montreal, since there are many small sketches of these subjects privately owned in Canada and varying widely in quality.

Brymner returned from Louisbourg to the school and to an art world which was soon greatly diminished in activity and patronage. To raise funds to assist "the war effort," Canadian artists, with the support of the Royal Canadian Academy, the Ontario Society of Artists, and the Canadian Art Club collected works to be shown and sold across the country.¹⁴² ..As President of the Academy, Brymner was very much involved in the exhibition's organization. There were eighty pictures, two pieces of sculpture and a poster design by J. E. H. MacDonald. In retrospect it is a fascinating collection. In contrasts between the old "schools" in Canada and the new, it represents, in itself, the abrupt change in Canadian society which was on the horizon. The Patriotic Fund raised \$10,514.28 and it was partly due to Brymner's success with this undertaking that in 1915 he was awarded the Order of the Companion of St. Michael and St. George. The art community gave him a banquet in the "C.P.R. Windsor Street dining-room" in February of 1916. Fifty artists and friends were present and at Brymner's

table were Robert Harris, CMG, Phillipe Hebert, CMG, Kenneth Angus, D. Forbes Angus, William Hope, Dr. J. F. Shepherd, John Abbott, K. R. Macpherson and W. R. Baker. Phillipe Hebert paid tribute to Brymner as an artist and administrator, making particular reference to the Patriotic Fund. Robert Harris told nostalgic stories about Brymner and himself when they were young men living in Montreal.

About Brymner he said:

The chief thing about an artist is after all whether he takes his art seriously. Whether he chooses the easier task of merely turning out useless work or whether he takes the nobler plan of continually putting out the standard of work at which he aims...and making honest efforts to reach it. In this he has been true to his convictions and kept his goal ahead.¹⁴³

Brymner spoke at length and said the fact he had been awarded the CMG was a recognition of the importance of art to the country. He made a plea for the establishment of schools and museums in Canada where Canadian artisans could see exhibits of the kinds of articles they were trying to produce. "...having schools without museums is like having medical schools without hospitals."¹⁴⁴

A one-man exhibition was hung in February 1916 in the Arts Club of Montreal for Brymner, who was then vice-president of the Club. There were a few loans; one from

D. Forbes Angus, two from R. B. Angus, two from Charles Porteous, one from J. K. L. Ross and one from the Mount Royal Club. Ten works priced from two hundred to seven hundred and fifty dollars were probably oils, and thirty works priced from twenty-five to one hundred and fifty dollars were water colours or small oil sketches.

In March he exhibited at the Spring show of the Art Association of Montreal, in November at the Royal Canadian Academy, and that month gave a lecture on "modernisms in Art." Mid-day le cours Martiques, (cat. no. 53) included in the Spring show, was well reviewed in The Montreal Star:

It is skillful handling of sunlight and shadows, and the overhanging trees, the pink tinted wall, the vehement splashes of sunlight and the spaces of grateful shade, are done with a certainty and an authority that convinces.¹⁴⁰

About The Trinket, (cat. no. 69) also part of the Spring show of 1916, the art critic of The Montreal Herald wrote:

The Trinket is a study of a woman in modern attire, black dress with transparent sleeves and becoming little blue velvet toque. In pose and expression, the figure is (full) of healthy young life, and there is a meditative look which suggests happy associations with the gold trinket in her hands. The joints of the hands, by the way, seem a little too prominent for beauty.¹⁴⁶

The Trinket, now called The Girl in a Blue Hat, is a polished figure study. Brymner painted the rich black

fabric of the dress, the delicacy of the chiffon sleeves and the lights in the model's blue toque with skill. Everything, including the little pink flowers, highlight her face on which Brymner has captured a bemused expression. This may have been the last of many successful and interesting figure studies which he painted.

There was something original in each of these figure studies and without doubt each work represents the solution of new problems for the artist. Three of the finest examples of Brymner's work in this genre are Two Girls Reading, (cat. no. 33) Women Sewing (cat. no. 45) and Prelude. (cat. no. 49) Two Girls Reading, water colour on linen and one of Brymner's most sentimental paintings, derives great beauty from the contrapuntal play in paint of darks and lights. In Woman Sewing spatial depth is flattened and the grey dress and delicate window curtains have a strong tonal quality. In Prelude the figure is placed near the picture plane, and Brymner with palette of pinks and browns makes a clever contemporary composition by the abstraction of shapes in space.

Final Years
1917-1925

In 1917 Brymner had a paralytic stroke. After he was in the Royal Victoria Hospital for three months his dear friend Edmund Dyonnet took him by steamship to the Island of Orleans. Brymner stayed there with Horatio Walker for two weeks then "transferred himself" to the home of Charles Porteous. He wrote to Clarence Gagnon:

In August, after three months in hospital, I paid a visit to Walker who was very kind and then I went to Porteous against Walker's commands where I stayed for a couple of weeks. Then I came home and not knowing what to do with my carcass I decided to marry Mrs. Larkin and I don't regret it. I wish I had been able to do it long before. When the school opened I was able to take it up and have been improving slowly every since. It's damned slow though, I can tell you. 147

At a meeting of the Royal Canadian Academy in December Brymner resigned as President. Homer Watson, "the old man of Doon," was elected and later wrote:

The honour fell to me....I have taken thought that if I walk diligently in the footsteps of my predecessor, the business of the Academy will go on with little friction. 148

Brymner continued to exhibit until 1921 but sold very little. He retired that year and after attending a farewell party given for him by friends and students, he went with.

his wife to Europe. They visited Paris, Florence and Capri.¹⁴⁹ (cat. no. 71) (fig. no. XXVIII) In 1925 when they were staying with Mrs. Brymner's family in Wallasey, Cheshire, England, William died.

There were extensive eulogies in the Canadian press. There was an exhibition and sale of his work at the Watson Art Gallery¹⁵⁰ and in 1926 a memorial exhibition was held at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.¹⁵¹

Conclusion

In the fifty-four years since his death William Brymner has been remembered as a teacher and almost forgotten as an artist. This retrospective study shows him as a painter, an honest and careful craftsman who, in his painting as in his life, not only accepted challenges but sought them out with all their attendant problems to solve. The major body of his work is in the tradition of French painting and those who were influenced by it. His palette, his skill in painting soft tonalities, his choice of subject, and his characteristic compositional techniques indicate his understanding of the works of Corot, Whistler and Puvis de Chavannes. He was his own man, however, and his paintings and watercolours are clearly stamped with the

mark of his personal struggles, insights, and experience.

Brymner taught hundreds of people about painting. He lectured to the public, wrote informative articles and was quoted in the press; but painting was always his first love and he turned to the practice of his craft at every opportunity. A small quotation from a letter which Brymner wrote on September 20th, 1904 to Clarence Gagnon reflects not only Brymner's philosophy of painting but also the way in which he lived his life:

Paint the picture with vigour, making mistakes but keeping life in it. Of course if you can keep life in it and make no mistakes it is better but to leave the go and the life in it at any rate and the unity. Life and unity are the first essentials.

Footnotes

1. R. C. Windeyer (act. 1872-89). In Castell Hopkins, Canada, an Encyclopaedia of the Country, 4:361, Robert Gagen writes, in an article titled, "History of Art Societies in Ontario," that Windeyer was one of the artists who exhibited in the first Annual Ontario Society of Artists Exhibition in Toronto in 1873. The information that William Brymner was studying with Windeyer is from an annotation in Brymner's hand on an article by M. J. Mount. This article, "William Brymner and His Work," The Canadian Century (11 June, 1910), p.7 is in the library of the Art Gallery of Ontario. Windeyer was an architect and painter in Toronto and exhibited water colour landscapes. Windeyer was elected in the category of architect as an Associate of the Royal Canadian Academy in 1880. In his early teens, Brymner studied briefly with Windeyer.
2. Ibid., Mount, M.J., "William Brymner and His Work."
3. Family Information: Grace Brymner, William's niece, has acted as the archivist for her Uncle's papers and Family information will indicate this source.

4. Public Archives of Canada's papers of the Privy Council, 20 June 1872:

On a memorandum dated 18 June 1872, from the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture, recommending that Mr. Douglas Brymner, aged 42 years be added to the Staff of the Department of Agriculture as a Senior Second Class Clerk at the salary of \$1200.00 per annum....

5. Douglas Brymner, Ottawa, to Graham Brymner, Greenock, Scotland, (27 July 1875), p. 276: the Douglas Brymner letter book, Private collection.
6. Ibid.
7. Thomas Seaton Scott (1836-1895), Chief, Federal Department of Public Works 1870-1880; Hugh Jones, "History of the Royal Canadian Academy," 1934, 6:3; The Library of The National Gallery of Canada.
8. For a full study of the development of Dufferin Terrace see: Achille Murphy, Groupe de Recherche en Art du Quebec, Université Laval, "Les Projets d'Embellissements de la Ville de Quebec Proposes Par Lord Dufferin en 1875," The Journal of Canadian Art History 1, 2, (Fall 1974), 18-29.
9. Lord Dufferin, Ottawa, to Sir William Howard Russell of the London Times, London, England (30 November 1875), Dufferin and Ava Papers, MG 27, 11B; Public

Archives of Canada, Ottawa.

10. William Brymner, Hotel de Gibraltar, 10 Rue Ste. Hyacinthe, Ste. Honore, Paris, to his father, Douglas, in Ottawa (7 March 1878). All correspondence between William Brymner and his family is, unless otherwise stated, in the collection of The McCord Museum Montreal and the Library, Concordia University, Montreal.
11. William Brymner, Paris, to J. W. H. Watts, Ottawa (18 March 1878), Watts MSS:245; Library, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Watts was an Ottawa architect, painter and designer and first Curator of the National Gallery of Canada; ARCA 1880; RCA 1881.
12. The cases from the Canadian section of the Paris Exposition were sent to the South Kensington Museum where they may still be in use. Scott's report after the Exposition referred to:

...a young Canadian Mr. W. Brymner, formerly employed as a draughtsman in the office of the Chief Architect in Ottawa, arrived in Paris to pursue art studies....He was temporarily engaged (one of 50 men employed)....Every decoration, arch and curlicue was determined by a drawing....

Report of the Executive Committee of the Canadian
Section for the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1878
(30 April 1879), Canadian Government Exhibition
Papers, RG 32, 4:21-25.

13. Ibid., p.4; In the Canadian Government Exhibition papers there is one drawing of part of a floor-plan for the Exposition with a small logo in the corner similar to the one Brymner used on his Quebec sketches of 1876.
14. Nadar (1820-1910), French photographer born Gaspard Felix Tournachon; took the first aerial photographs from a balloon; portraits by Nadar are now in La Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris. Brymner was given a ten percent commission by Nadar on all the work Brymner secured for him for the Exposition; William Brymner, Paris, to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (9 November 1878).
15. Charles Francois, Pinot (1870-1897), drawing, genre and portraiture, French school, pupil of Paul Delaroche 1848; debut at Salon 1859. In his correspondence Brymner spells this name Pinat.

16. William Brymner, Paris, to his mother, Ottawa (27 March 1878).
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid. (7 May 1878).
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid. (26 September 1878).
21. William Brymner, Paris, to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (16 July 1878).
22. Jules-Joseph Lefebvre (1836-1911), painter of genre and portraits; did decorative painting in the Hotel de Ville in Paris; 1852 studied with Leon Cogniete at Ecole des Beaux Arts; 1855 debut at the Paris Salon; 1861 Prix de Rome; medals 1865, 1868, 1870.
23. Gustave-Clarence-Rodolphe Boulanger (1824-1888), painter of Greek and Roman archeological scenes; portraits; murals in Le foyer de la danse in the Opera House in Paris; 1849 Prix de Rome.
24. Tony Robert-Fleury (1837-1912), painter of history themes and genre; studied with Paul Delaroche and Leon Cogniete at Ecole des Beaux Arts; debut at the Paris Salon 1864; 1882 secretary of L'association des

artistes français.

25. William Brymner, Paris, to his mother, Ottawa (15 January 1879).
26. Ibid.
27. William Brymner, 51 Rue de Rennes, Paris, to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (18 February 1878).
28. Charles Emile Auguste Duran dit Emil Auguste Carolus-Duran, (1837-1917); Lille; debut at the Salon 1866; painter of genre, portraits and historical epics; founder with Meissonier and Puvis de Chavannes of the Societé Nationale des Beaux Arts.
29. Jean Leon Gerôme (1824-1904), French academic painter and sculptor, a pupil of Jacques Louis David and an exponent of classicism; head of the French Government Academy, Ecole des Beaux Arts, situated in Paris.
30. William Brymner, Paris, to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (3 May 1879).
31. Adolphe William Bouguereau (1825-1905), French academic painter of nudes, heroic subjects, teacher at the Academie Julian.
31. William Brymner, Paris to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (23 September 1879).

33. Ibid. (5 May 1878).
34. Ibid. (14 October 1879).
35. William Brymner, Paris to his mother, Ottawa (30 September 1879).
36. Ibid. (25 November 1879).
37. Robert Harris, Toronto, to his mother, Charlottetown (14 December 1879); Harris Archive, Confederation Art Centre, Charlottetown.
38. George Brymner was the third son of the family; a banker with the Bank of Montreal, he started his career in Cornwall, Ontario, and opened the first branch of the Bank of Montreal in the west in New Westminster, B.C. His life is well documented in the Archives of the Province of British Columbia.
39. William Brymner, Ottawa to Douglas Brymner, London (15 October 1881).
40. Joshua Fraser (1858-1883), clergyman and author; a native of Lanark, Upper Canada, wrote Three Months Among the Moose, 1881; Shanty, Forest and River Life in The Backwoods of Canada, 1883.
41. Before Country Store was sold at Christie's of Canada Limited in April of 1971, it was examined with ultra

violet light.

42. Henry J. Morgan, Dominion Annual Register for 1883
Montreal p.242.
43. Frederick Brown (1851-1941), born Chelmsford England;
landscape, genre, portrait painter; studied Royal
College of Art 1868-1877; Paris 1883 with Bouguereau
and Robert-Fleury; with Brymner in Burgundy summer,
1883; 1877-1892 taught at Westminster School of Art;
Professor, Slade School, London 1892-1918.
44. William Brymner, "Village Life in Three Countries;"
The University Magazine (April 1912): 315.
45. William Brymner, Chez Gutron Pontaubert, près
d'Avallon, to J. W. H. Watts, Ottawa (22 September
1883); Watts MS. p.23.
46. "life" is a most satisfactory word which Brymner used
to describe vitality in a painting. The vitality
would only be achieved by organizing one's thoughts
and plans and then working with enthusiasm to keep the
spirit in the work. His most successful works are
alive in the very sense in which he used the word
"life."

47. William Brymner, 8 Quai des Orfevres, Paris, to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (8 January 1884).
48. In Victorian exhibitions, paintings were hung one above the other to the top of the wall. The best position was "on the line," at the eye level of the viewer.
49. Frederic William Jackson (1859-1918), painter of landscapes and marines; studied at Oldham School of Art; Manchester Academy and Paris; travelled in Italy and Morocco; works hang in the small Museum at Runswick Bay and in the City of Manchester Art Galleries. Brymner wrote to his father that Jackson received about 200 a year from Samuel Barlow and then had to give Barlow "everything he does." Barlow was a patron of the Manchester School of landscape painters and one of the first collectors of impressionist paintings in England: Janet Braide, "A Wreath of Flowers", The Journal of Canadian Art History, 2, 1 (Summer 1975): 83-4.
50. William Brymner, Paris, to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (14 February 1884).

51. William Brymner, Runswick Bay, Yorkshire, to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (15 January 1884).
52. William Brymner, Paris, to his mother, Ottawa (15 January 1884).
53. William Brymner, Runswick Bay, Yorkshire, to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (15 September 1884).
54. Ibid.
55. James Kerr Lawson (1864-1939), painted oil portraits, genre and landscape; worked for the Canadian War Memorials during the war of 1914-1918; studied in England; in Rome and at Academie Julian with Lefebvre and Boulanger; ARCA, 1885.
56. "Good subjects" in the years of Victoria's reign in England were narrative subjects and the title was an intrinsic part of the work. Brymner's works in his early years were certainly anecdotal but not as narrative as those of William Frith, Arthur Hughes or Holman Hunt. It was his father's interest in seeing that William sold his works to Canadians that encouraged William to pursue narrative subjects with sentimental titles.
57. William Brymner, Runswick Bay, Yorkshire, to Douglas

Brymner, Ottawa (17 June 1884).

58. William Brymner "Village Life in Three Countries," p. 312.
59. Louis J. Frechette (1838-1908), amateur artist, lawyer, journalist and poet; represented Lévis, Quebec in the House of Commons, Ottawa (1874-1878).
60. "sunk-in", refers to the potential condition of paint on the canvas of A Wreath of Flowers after the work had travelled in a box across the Atlantic to Canada.
61. Charles Eugene Moss (1860-1902), painted interiors of Quebec houses, nude studies, oil and water colour landscapes, portraits and classical figure studies; studied in Paris at Atelier Bonnat and with Bouguereau and Gérôme; principal of the Ottawa Art School, 1883-1885; ARCA 1897; RCA 1898.
62. William Brymner, Brolles, Bois le Roi, France, to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (18 February 1885).
63. William Brymner, Paris, to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (13 March 1885).
64. Family Information.
65. William Shakespeare, As You Like It, act.2, sc.1, line,1.

66. William was a member of a large family. Alexander, the first son, died in infancy; William was the second son, George, Family Information, note no. 38; James (1861-1930) was with the CPR survey in 1885; joined the North West Mounted Police when that organization was founded; fought in the Riel Rebellion; prison warden New Westminster B.C.; Elizabeth (1871-1934) m. Frederick Colson; Graham (1859-1876); Agnes (1871-1890); Robert (1875-1948), banker with the Canadian Bank of Commerce (father of Grace and Jean): Family information.
67. This work is one of the few recorded in the early years after Brymner came to teach in Montreal in 1886. It is dark and it may have been posed and painted in the city in the winter.
68. R.A. Hodgson, Report of Mr. Hodgson, R.A. on the Exhibit of Canadian Pictures; Extract from the Parliamentary Report of the Fine Arts Department of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition at South Kensington, Toronto: Bingham and Webber, 1886, p.8.
69. Ibid.
70. Ibid.

71. William Brymner, Glacier Hotel near Rogers Pass P.O., to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (18 September 1886).
72. William Brymner, Gleichen, N.W.T., to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa, (12 May 1886). The Reservation was divided into North and South Camps. Father Lacombe was in charge of religious observances in the South Camp and John Tims, the Anglican minister, in charge of similar matters in the North Camp. The home of the Indian agent, Alexander Begg, stood between. It was extremely difficult for an outsider to receive permission to stay in the camp other than at the home of the Indian agent. Janet Braide, "The Sun Dance; The Indian Agent; The Ration House," Montreal, 1977.
73. Poundmaker (1826-1886), Cree Chief, adopted son of Crowfoot. It is of interest that this little sketch was not "painted up." It would not have been a subject for sale in the East. The pencil note on the sketch is the only reference Brymner makes to the indefatigable ally of Louis Riel.
74. William Brymner, Gleichen, N.W.T., to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (12 May 1886).
75. Unless another source is given, it should be

considered that all the newspaper reviews are taken from the scrapbooks of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts Library, where they are ordered chronologically. "The Art Exhibition, some notices of the pictures displayed," Montreal Herald (21 April 1887).

76. The school was proposed by Bishop A. W. Sillitoe, first Anglican Bishop of New Westminster, B.C. In 1884 Anglican sisters came to Yale, B.C. from Norfolk, England: All Hallows in the West, n.d., n.p., J. C. Bonar, Archivist, Canadian Pacific Limited, to the author, Montreal (11 June 1970). Originally for Indian girls, All Hallows became the first private school in the West and was closed in 1916 with the opening of Crofton House in Vancouver. Author interview with Rowland Webb, Vancouver, May 1971.
77. AAM, Exhibition Record Book 2:130.
78. William Brymner, Glacier Hotel to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa. It may have been that Mount Cheops from Rogers Pass Selkirk Range, (reproduced Sotheby & Co., of Canada Ltd., April 1970; Lot no. 6) painted that summer contributed to giving Brymner the chance to

go to the West for Sir William Van Horne to paint in 1892.

79. A number of references to this fact are found in Brymner's correspondence with Charles Porteous and Clarence Gagnon; Collection The McCord Museum, Montreal.
80. "The Picture Market in Montreal in Melancholy State," The Witness, Montreal (14 March 1888).
81. William Brymner, 17 Quai des Grands Augustins, Paris, to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (19 July 1889).
82. James Macdonald Barnsley. (1861-1929), a painter and etcher, was a good friend of Brymner. At the end of the 1880's he took students from the school on sketching trips to the estate of J. B. Abbott and the Angus home at Senneville. In 1892 he taught a water-colour class at the AAM Scrapbooks (3 and 4), Library, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; passim.
83. William Brymner, The Hague, to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (11 September 1891).
84. William Brymner, Centre of the Zuider Zee, Holland, to Douglas Brymner, Ottawa (10 September 1891).

85. "An Important Commission," Montreal Gazette (30 May 1892).
86. The Archives of Canadian Pacific Limited, Montreal.
87. Titles of works "not found" from Brymner's trips to the west in 1892 and 1893 include: Lake Louise (purchased by Notman & Co.); Lake Agnes; Hell Gate Rocky Mountain; The Great Illiciwaet Glacier (AAM, Spring, 1894, 26); Wood Interior Near Emerald Lake; The Black Canyon, Thompson River; Mount Baker At Sunset (purchased by Sir William Van Horne).
88. Edmond Dyonnet, "Memoirs of a Canadian Artist," translated by the author from the original French with the assistance of Frank L. Flight, Montreal, 1951: 56,7. This typescript is in the Library at Concordia University, Montreal and The Archives of Canadian Artists, The University of Ottawa.
89. "The First Drawing Room, the Art Gallery Crowded with a Brilliant Throng," Montreal Gazette (11 December 1894).
90. A study of the Exhibition Record Books, Academy and Association catalogues and press clippings in the Scrapbooks in The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

provides an interesting profile of patronage of the arts in Montreal at the turn of the century. In addition Arcadia, which was published bi-monthly in Montreal (1892-93) gives clear accounts of art activities in Canada, the United States and Europe. A substantial report on patronage appears in Arcadia 1, 21 (1 March 1893):450.

91. "Views of Art Teaching, a very interesting lecture by Mr. William Brymner," Montreal Gazette (26 March 1895). This typescript is in the library, The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.
92. Ibid.
93. William Brymner, "Impressionism," Lecture given at the Art Association of Montreal, Montreal 1897, private collection, Montreal.
94. Ibid.
95. Dyonnet, "Memoirs of an Artist," p. 65.
96. Le Salon de L' 'art association,' Aquarelles, G. de Werthemer (11 April 1897).
97. Charles E. L. Porteous, (1883-1912), was the manager of branches of the Bank of Montreal in Lindsay and Kingston, Ontario from 1879-1893. In 1893 he managed

the affairs of William McKenzie and James Ross. He became President of the Chambly Manufacturing Company in 1900. He was an amateur artist and friend of many Canadian painters. The Montreal Gazette art critic wrote on April 21st of 1886 "This artist's work is bold in conception but defective in execution, the colouring good but the drawing the weak point." J. W. H. Watts in referring to Porteous said, "He started as a bank clerk, dabbled in paint in spare time, became Bank Manager at Kingston, more money, painted a little more, then became a friend of J. Ross the millionaire. Father left him money, did less painting. Made more money, quit painting a good thing too, an amateur like myself." Watts MS:335.

98. William Brymner, Montreal, to Charles Porteous, Island of Orleans (5 May 1897). Correspondence between William Brymner and Charles Porteous is in the Porteous papers in the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa. MG 28,4.
99. Author's interview with the late Mrs. Paul Sise, Montreal (25 March 1970).

100. "Art Association Classes," The Witness (23 October 1897).

101. "Some Representative Sculptors and Painters," The Witness (2 April 1898).

102. In the Porteous papers in the Public Archives in Ottawa, there is considerable correspondence between Porteous and Rex Stovel. It is interesting to read Stovel's attempts to receive pre-payment for work not done and his attempts to get Porteous to send him canvas and funds both to Toronto and New York. Stovel became a close friend of George Reid and had a studio in the old Arcade off Yonge Street in Toronto.

103. "...if you feel inclined to give \$75.00 for the panel...all right. There is a great deal of work...in a canvas 5 feet 3 by 3 feet, which is the size of the space; but anyway I hope you will like it."

Harriet Ford, St. Francis, Island of Orleans, to Charles Porteous, Ste. Petronille, Island of Orleans (2 September 1899), Porteous Papers, MG 28,4 PAC:

Mrs. Paul Sise in an interview with the author (25 March 1970) said; "Miss Ford did the picture over the mantle." The signature on the over-the-mantle picture is not clear.

104. A large landscape mural was painted by Brymner for the sitting room which was added to the house ca. 1902-1903.

105. William Brymner, Beaupre, to Charles Porteous, Island of Orleans (3 October 1899).

106. Pierre Cecile Puvis de Chavannes (1824-1898), French mural painter using flat decorative style. It is possible Brymner first saw Puvis' work at Amiens in 1878. Later Brymner wrote to Clarence Gagnon who was in Paris that the work of Puvis was "very sweet." One must take this as meaning pleasing to the mind or feelings, or delicately pleasing to the eye. William Brymner, Montreal to Clarence Gagnon, Paris (27 October 1906). Correspondence between William Brymner and Clarence Gagnon; collection, the McCord Museum, Montreal.

107. William Brymner, "Views of Art Teaching."

108. Edmond Morris was the Honorary Secretary of the Canadian Art Club in Toronto. He studied at the Art Student's League in New York and with Gerome in Paris. Morris became a very good friend of Brymner and they painted together in Quebec.

109. "News and Notes," Montreal Herald (10 February 1900).
110. Paris Canada (15 August 1901), 20, no. 16:4.
111. William Brymner, "Notes of Travel," Montreal, 17 April 1901, private collection.
112. William Brymner, Venice, to his brother-in-law F. Colson, Victoria, B.C. (17 July 1902), private collection.
113. James Wilson Morrice (1865-1925), close friend of Brymner, was with Brymner in Venice and Florence in 1902. William Brymner, Givernay par Vernon, France to Edmond Morris, Toronto (28 August 1902). Correspondence between William Brymner and Edmund Morris is in the library, the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto.
114. Maurice Cullen (1866-1934), close friend of Brymner; painted with Brymner at Beaupré in 1897; visited Venice, Italy and Givernay, France together in 1902; shared a painting studio at St. Eustache which they built in 1905; Cullen taught landscape painting at the Art Association of Montreal; painted figures, landscape and murals; drew in charcoal, pencil and coloured chalk; ARCA 1899; RCA 1907; member of the

Arts Club, Montreal.

115. William Brymner, France, to Edmund Morris, Toronto (28 August 1902); Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto.
116. "Art Exhibition," The Witness, Montreal (21 March 1904).
117. See catalogue entry (no. 44) Au Pays de Québec.
118. William Brymner, Ste. Famille, Island of Orleans, to Clarence Gagnon, Paris (20 September 1904).
119. Ibid.
120. William Brymner, Beaupré, to Charles Porteous, Island of Orleans (15 August 1906).
121. William Brymner, St. Eustache, to Clarence Gagnon, Paris (24 October 1906). During the years Brymner was associated with Cullen at St. Eustache he changed his palette for some of his works. His colours became brighter but they rarely matched the intensities of Cullen's colour.
122. Information from Mrs. J. Fialkowski, née Todd, the granddaughter of Sir Edward Clouston.
123. The Order of Good Cheer at Port Royal.
124. In Toronto Star (29 November 1912) Scrapbooks (1880-1915), Royal Canadian Academy Papers: MG 2, 4, p.93, The Public Archives of Canada.

125. Arthur G. Doughty, A Daughter of New France, Ottawa, Mortimer Press, 1916 plate facing p.104.
126. William Brymner, "Progress in Art," University Magazine, 1907, pp.239-246.
127. William Brymner, "Letters from Martigues, 10 July - 28 August, 1908." (August 28, 1908):2,3; private collection.
128. Ibid. (25 July 1908), p.9.
129. Ibid. (1 August 1908), p.16.
- 130.1 "Academy Pictures at Hamilton," The Globe, Toronto (27 November 1909).
131. William Brymner, Montreal to Edmund Morris, Toronto (10 December 1909).
132. Kenneth Ross Macpherson, (1861-1918), Montreal; a leading member of the Montreal bar, lawyer for the Royal Canadian Academy and an amateur artist; pupil of Brymner; member of the Pen and Pencil Club.
133. "Among the Portraits," Montreal Star (5 April 1909).
134. William Brymner, Fort Louisbourg C.B., N.S., to Jean Elizabeth Brymner (18 September 1909). Jean was three months old and her Uncle Willie asked her to write him a line when she had "nothing else to occupy (her)

time." Private collection.

135. "President's Pictures are Creditable" (25 December 1910) SB MMFA (1903-1929), 5:131.
136. "Art Exhibit," Montreal Daily Star (16 December 1910).
137. Scrapbooks, Royal Canadian Academy papers MG 28,7, The Public Archives of Canada.
138. William Brymner, University Magazine (April 1912), p. 309.
139. Ibid., p. 310.
140. Ibid., p. 312.
141. Two interviews: the author with Anne D. Savage, Montreal (December, 1969). Brymner told Miss Savage that if John Lyman wanted to paint a girl with a green face that was perfectly all right. In her conversation she emphasized his open mindedness to the work of others. The author with Norah Collyer, Montreal (May 1970). Miss Collyer said that when he taught, William Brymner never touched the student's work but made suggestions. She added that, as a result, when there was student exhibition there was greater

individuality in the works than there would have been otherwise.

142. Hugh G. Jones, in collaboration with Edmund Dyonnet, "History of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts," typescript, T. A. Dickson, 1935, 5:12, 1914. The Canadian Patriotic Fund was started in 1900 and revised during the Great War. The purpose became to provide money for wives and other dependents of Canadians on active service in the Great War. Post-Confederation, Corporate Bodies, 5: Parliamentary Inventory The Public Archives of Canada: in the library, Concordia University.
143. "Artists, Dined Honoured Confrère," Montreal Gazette (7 February 1916).
144. While making this suggestion, Brymner may have been recalling his studies at the Union of Applied and Industrial Arts when he was a young man in Paris.
145. "Spring Pictures Poorer Than for Sometime Past," Montreal Star (24 March 1916). This review seems to describe Summer Landscape Martigues (cat.no.53).
146. "The Trinket Attractive," Montreal Herald (24 March 1916).

147. William Brymner, Montreal to Clarence Gagnon (31 December 1917).
148. Homer Watson, RCA Arts Report for 1918, Montreal.
149. William Brymner, Villa Chiaria, Capri to Kathleen Daly, Montreal (27 May 1923), private collection.
150. Exhibition and Sale at the Watson Galleries of all Paintings and Water Colors by the late William Brymner, CMG, RCA, 30 November to 14 December 1925.
151. The Art Association of Montreal Memorial Exhibition of Paintings by the late William Brymner, CMG, RCA, 30 January to 14 February 1926.

Abbreviations

AAM	Art Association of Montreal to (1948)
AAM Memorial	<u>Memorial Exhibition of Paintings by the late William Brymner, CMG, RCA, January 30th to February 14th 1926</u>
ACM	Arts Club, Montreal
AGH	Art Gallery of Hamilton
AGH 1974	<u>Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Paintings from the Art Gallery of Hamilton</u>
AGO	Art Gallery of Ontario
AGT	Art Gallery of Toronto (to 1966)
AGT 1937	<u>Works by Senior Painters in Canada, Contemporary European Water Colours, The Art Gallery of Toronto, Toronto 1937</u>
AGV	Art Gallery of Greater Victoria
ARCA	Associate, Royal Canadian Academy of Arts
BAG	Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton
Buffalo	<u>Pan-American Exposition, Buffalo, N.Y., 1901</u>
CAC	Canadian Art Club
CIE	<u>Colonial & Indian Exhibition, London, England, 1886</u>
CMG	Companion of the Order of St. Michael & St. George
CNE	Canadian National Exhibition, Toronto; Toronto Industrial Exhibition 1880-1902; Dominion Industrial Exhibition 1903; Canadian National Exhibition opens 1904.

- Chicago World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893
- Duval Duval, Paul, Canadian Water Colour Painting,
Toronto, Burns & MacEachern, 1954
- Godsell Godsell, Patricia. Enjoying Canadian
Painting, Don Mills General Publishing
Company, 1976
- Guelph University of Guelph
- Harper 1966 Harper, J. Russell, Painting in Canada a
History, Toronto, University of Toronto
Press, 1966
- Impressionism Art Gallery of Ontario Impressionism in
Canada 1895-1935, 1973
- IO Island of Orleans
- JAMM Junior Associates of the Montreal Museum of
Fine Arts, The Winter in the Canadian
Imagination, 1964
- KWAG Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery
- LU Laurentian University
- MAG The City of Manchester Art Galleries,
Manchester, England
- McG McGill University, Two Hundred Years of
Canadian Painting
- MCMM McCord Museum, McGill University, Montreal
- Mellen Mellen, Peter. Landmarks of Canadian Art,
Toronto, McLelland & Stewart 1978
- MMFA Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
- MMFA 1960 Steegman, John. Paintings in the Montreal
Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal, 1960

MNA Museum Nacional de Arte, Mexico City

MRC Mount Royal Club, Montreal

MQ Musée du Québec

MUG McMaster University, Hamilton

NDHM Notre Dame Hospital, Montreal, La Kermesse,
December 1895

NGA National Gallery, Washington, D.C., USA

NGC The National Gallery of Canada

NGC 1935 The National Gallery of Canada, Exhibition
of Canadian Painting by a Group of Selected
Artists 1935

NGC 1960 Hubbard, R. H. The National Gallery of
Canada Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture,
Volume III Canadian School, Ottawa 1960

NGC 1967 Hubbard, R. H. Three Hundred Years of
Canadian Art, National Gallery of Canada,
Ottawa 1967

OAC Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph

OKCT O'Keefe Centre, Toronto

OSA Ontario Society of Artists

PAC Public Archives of Canada

PAPL Port Arthur Public Library

PRCA President of the Royal Canadian Academy of
Arts

RAG Rothman's Art Gallery, Stratford (now
Gallery/Stratford)

RCA Royal Canadian Academy of Arts

Reid Reid, Dennis. A Concise History of Canadian Painting, Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1973

RH Rodman Hall, St. Catharines

SJCM St. James's Club, Montreal

SFE Stratford Festival Exhibition

SJA St. John Art Club

SPL Sarnia Public Library

St. Louis Louisiana Purchase Exhibition, St. Louis, Missouri, 1904

UWO University of Western Ontario

UWSNY United War Services, New York City

VAG Vancouver Art Gallery

WAG Winnipeg Art Gallery

WAGL Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, England, 1911

Watson Watson Art Galleries, Montreal, William Brymner 1925

Works

1. Self Portrait 1881
charcoal on paper
43.0 x 28.0

Inscription: 1.1. W BRYMNER March 81.

Provenance: The artist

Miss Grace Brymner, Toronto

2. With Dolly at the Sabot Maker 1883
oil on canvas
36.8 x 44.5

Inscription: 1.1. Wm Brymner

Provenance: The artist, 1884

Exhibitions: AAM, 1884, 33; RCA, 1884, 33; St John Art Club, 1914, 4; AGH, 1915; Sarnia Public Library 1921; Port Arthur Public Library, 1923; Stratford Public Library, 1926; Orillia Ontario Women's Canadian Club, 1930; Cornwall Art Association, 1934; Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, 1936; AGH, 1958; NGC, Painting in Canada 1840-1940, 1962

Bibliography: The Canadian Magazine, 51, 3 (July 1918), p.227; NGC (1960), p.33

The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (35)

3. The Old Spinner 1883
oil on canvas
71.8 x 53.7

Inscription: 1.1. Wm Brymner

Provenance: Watson Art Galleries, Montreal 1948

Exhibitions: RCA, 1884, 95 (as Preparing to Spin);
AAM, 1889, 13 (as The Spinning Wheel);
RCA, 1889, 6; AAM, 1907 (as The Spinner); CAC, 1908, 3; Watson, 1925,
14

Bibliography: M du Q, 1976, Hier au Québec, p.14

Note: The Old Spinner may have been painted in Burgundy or in Runswick Bay, Yorkshire, on the north-east coast of England. Brymner's correspondence with his father reveals that he was in both places in the summer of 1883.

Musée du Québec, Quebec (A-48.106-P)

4. Untitled (apple tree in spring) ca. 1884
oil on panel
13.3 x 15.9

Mrs. C. A. Snowdon, Ottawa

5. Wallflowers 1884
oil on canvas
20.3 x 15.2

Inscription: l.l. W. BRYMNER '84

Provenance: The artist

Exhibition: MAG, Second Autumn Exhibition
(1 September 1884), 357

Mr. and Mrs. John P. Dawson (née Jean E. Brymner),
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

6. Speak Dolly 1884
oil on canvas
14.0 x 20.3.

Inscription: l.l. WM B '84

Provenance: The artist.

Miss Grace Brymner, Toronto

7. View of Hinderwell Yorkshire, from Newton 1884
oil on canvas
25.7 x 46.0

Inscription: l.r. W Brymner 84

Provenance: Dominion Gallery, Montreal

Exhibition: RCA, 1885, 79

Note: This work called, for many years, Peaceful Summer Day was given the above title by Brymner in a letter to his father from Brolles, Bois le Roi, Seine et Marne, February 9, 1885.

Private Collection

8. Village by the Sea. 1884
oil on panel
25.4 x 37.5

Inscription: l.l. WM BRYMNER, 84

Provenance: Estate of F. C. Lynch, 1964

Note: This may be the work Brymner wrote to his father about in August of 1884:

...am now in the afternoons painting a little on in the sunlight....My large picture

of the children I used to speak about I have had to put aside for a time, as the weather has been lately all bright and sunny.

The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (14633)

9. A Wreath of Flowers 1884

oil on canvas
120.0 x 139.7

Inscription: l.l. Wm. Brymner 1884

Provenance: The Royal Canadian Academy of Arts,
Diploma Work, deposited 1886

Exhibitions: RCA, 1885, 103; AAM, 1885, 27; RCA,
1885, 213; CIE, 1886, 1988; RAG, 1967,
Ten Decades 1867-1967 Ten Painters, 8

Bibliography: The Globe, Toronto (April 16 1892);
Canadian Geographical Journal 7 (1938)
p.219; NGC (1960) 19, p.369; Harper
(1966) 195, p.219; Reid (1973) p.94;
The Journal of Canadian Art History 2,1
(Summer 1975) facing p.83; Godsell
(1976) p.96; Mellen (1978) p.7

The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (19)

10. Border of the Forest at Fontainebleau 1885

oil on canvas
54.0 x 80.6

Inscription: l.l. Wm Brymner 1885

Provenance: A. C. Hutchison; Hon. Mr. Justice and
Mrs. F. Kaufman; Dominion Gallery,
Montreal

Exhibitions: Paris, Salon de la Société des artistes français, May 1885, 408 (as A Brolles); RCA, 1885, 103; RCA, 1893, 20; Chicago, 1893, 20

Bibliography: The Journal of Canadian Art History, 4, 2, 1977/78, p.144

Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston

11. Sad Memories 1885
oil on canvas
45.8 x 38.3.

Inscription: 1.1. Wm Brymner 85

Provenance: The artist

Exhibitions: RCA, 1886, 160; RCA, 1891, 81; NDHM, La Kermesse, 1895, 13; ACM, 1916, 12; AAM, Memorial, 1926, 45

Bibliography: Canadian Century (11 June, 1910)

Mr. and Mrs. John P. Dawson, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

12. Four Girls in a Meadow 1885
oil on canvas
45.7 x 38.1

Inscription: 1.1. Wm Brymner 85

Provenance: Wedding present in 1888 in Quebec City from Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Garneau to L. A. Audette (later Mr. Justice) and Miss Mary Stuart

L. C. Audette, O.C., Q.C., Ottawa

13. The Books They Loved They Read in Running Brooks 1885
oil on canvas
76.2 x 61.0

Inscription: l.r. W. BRYMNER 1885

Exhibition: RCA, 1886, 173

Bernard Désroches, Montreal

14. La femme au metier ca. 1885
oil on canvas
61.0 x 62.9

Inscription: l.l. Wm Brymner

Provenance: Watson Art Galleries, 1929

Exhibitions: OSA, 1886, 62, illus; Watson, 1925, 35
(as Habitant Woman Weaving); AAM,
Memorial, 1926, 32 (as Habitant Woman
Weaving); AGT, 1945, Development of
Painting in Canada, .101 (as The Weaver)

Bibliography: La fabrication artisanale des tissus,
MduQ, (1974) cover and title page

Musée du Québec, Québec (34.10-P)

15. Crazy Patchwork 1886
oil on canvas
59.7 x 44.5

Inscription: l.l. W. Brymner 1886

Provenance: The artist, 1886

Exhibitions: RCA, 1886, 170; CIE, 1886, 1988; St.
John Art Club, 1914, 3; Port Arthur
Public Library, 1918; Welland Rotary

Club, 1921; Fort William Public Library, 1923; Willistead Library, Walkerville, 1925; Alma College, St. Thomas, 1929; Stratford Public Library, 1932; London Western Fair, 1935; Windsor Art Association, 1936; Fine Arts Committee, Manitoba, 1937; Memorial University, St. John's, 1961; The Society of Arts, Hamilton, Bermuda, 1961; Fort William Public Library, 1962; KWAG, Belle Epoque, 1976

Bibliography: NGC (1960), p.34

The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (309)

16. Giving Rations to the Blackfeet Indians, N.W.T. 1886
oil on canvas
67.1 x 81.9

Inscription: Wm Brymner 1886

Provenance: Sir George Stephen; Major General Frank Meighen; St. James's Club of Montreal; Walter Klinkhoff Gallery, Montreal

Exhibition: RCA, 1887, 102

Art Gallery of Hamilton, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. E. Harrison in memory of Tyrrel Edward Harrison, 1971

17. Yale in the Morning 1886
oil on canvas
66.0 x 81.3

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner 1886

Provenance: Sir George Stephen; the Reford family Montreal; Sotheby's London

Exhibitions: RCA, 1887, 79; AGT, 1935, Selected Artists, 31

Private Collection, Vancouver, B.C.

18. Longings 1887
oil on canvas
45.7 x 33.7

Inscription: l.l. W^m Brymner '87

Provenance: Gift to Miss Helen Reynolds from Royal Victoria College on the occasion of her retirement, August 1970

Exhibitions: AAM, Auction sale 23 December 1887, 60
(as At The Window; AAM, 1888, 52 (as At the Window)

Helen R. Reynolds, Halifax

19. Venetian Canal 1890
watercolour
26.7 x 18.4

Inscription: l.l. W. Brymner

Provenance: Mrs. Paul Sise, 1959

Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, N.B., Gift of Mrs. Paul Sise

20. The Carpenter's Shop 1891
oil on canvas
75.0 x 60.0

Inscription: l.r. Wm. Brymner 91

Exhibitions: RCA, 1892, 65; AAM, 1892, 18

Note: This work is reminiscent of Dolly at the Sabot Maker. It represents a return to earlier compositional and painterly techniques. It may have been started in Europe since during the summer of 1891 Brymner travelled in Ireland and the Low Countries.

Miss Mable C. Evans, Montreal

21. Untitled (European town) ca. 1890
oil on panel
23.8 x 34.3

Inscription: l.l. W. Brymner

University Club, Montreal

22. Mount Baker ca. 1892
oil on bevelled panel
15.2 x 22.8

Provenance: Bequest of William James Morrice, 1943

Bibliography: MMFA (1960), p.10

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal (943.822)

23. Champ-de-Mars, Winter 1892
oil on canvas
75.0 x 101.6

Inscription: l.l. Wm. Brymner 1892

Provenance: R. B. Angus; Mrs. R. MacD. Paterson,
1949

Exhibitions: AAM, 1892, 17; RCA, 1892, 20; AAM

Memorial 1926, 88, (as The Champs de Mars); AGT, January 1937, 17; MMFA, JAMM, The Winter, 1964 (as Winter); MMFA, 1965, J.W. Morrice, 147, repr. p.82; RAG, 1967, Ten Decades 1867-1967 Ten Painters, 10; McG; Two Hundred Years of Canadian Painting, 1969, 10, repr.p.1

Bibliography: Antique Dealer and Collectors Guide London, 23, 5; December 1968 plate p.87; Vie des Arts, 9, 76; automne 1974 plate p.84; MMFA (1960), p.10

Note: Champs-de-Mars, Winter was illustrated and reviewed in the Montreal Star on the 20th of April in 1892. The critic found the work "most characteristic ...the treatment of the sun breaking through the trees (is) ably portrayed. Mr. Brymner is most at home with landscape."

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Bequest of Mrs. R. MacD. Paterson, Montreal (49.1008)

24. Chateau Landon 1894
watercolour
14.0 x 22.9
- Inscription: l.l. Lafleur from Brymner 94
- Provenance: Paul T. Lafleur
- Exhibitions: AAM, 1895, 150; ACM, 1916, 44
Miss Adele Lomer, Ottawa
25. Sous le Cap, Quebec City 1895
watercolour on paper, laid down
34.1 x 25.4
- Inscription: l.r. Wm. Brymner 95
- Private Collection

26. Forest Interior 1895
oil on panel
28.0 x 35.6

Inscription: l.r. WB 95

Private Collection

27. Landscape 1895
watercolour on paper
25.4 x 35.7

Inscription: l.l. Wm. Brymner, 1895

Provenance: Bequest of P. D. Ross, LL.D., Ottawa,
1950

Bibliography: NAC 1960, appendix; study collection
p.425

The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (6173)

28. A Village Street, Baie St. Paul 1896
watercolour on paper
36.8 x 53.4

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner 1896

Provenance: Walter Klinkhoff Gallery, Montreal

Mr. and Mrs. Fenner Dalley, Ancaster, Ontario

29. The Grey Girl 1897
watercolour on linen
102.5 x 74.6

Inscription: l.r. W^M BRYMNER .97

Provenance: C. E. L. Porteous, Island of Orleans

Exhibitions: RCA, 1897, 4; AAM, 1897, 144; RCA, 1901, 147; Buffalo, 1901, 6; AGT, 1937, 18; OKCT, 1963; MU, 1971; AGO, Ontario Community Collects, 1975, 11 (as Girl in the Yellow Dress) repr. plate facing p.32

Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton, Anonymous Gift, 1955 (55-43-J)

30. Robertine n.d.
oil on canvas
34.3 x 24.8

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner

Provenance: Mrs. William Brymner; Placide Morency; Dominion Gallery, Montreal; Jerrold Morris Gallery, Toronto

Exhibitions: AAM, 1898, 12; Toronto, Morris Gallery, 1975, Canadian Classics, 12, repr., u.p.

Rosslyn and Fred Sharf, Toronto

31. The Ramparts, Quebec 1898
watercolour on paper
24.1 x 31.8

Inscription: l.l. W.B.

Provenance: W. Scott & Sons; C. E. L. Porteous

Exhibition: AAM, 1911, 11

Thomas A. Piddington, Victoria, B.C.

32. Old Market, Lower Town, Quebec 1898

watercolour on paper

24.1 x 31.8

Inscription: 1.1. W.B.

Provenance: W. Scott & Sons; C. E. L. Porteous

Thomas A. Piddington, Victoria, B.C.

33. Two Girls Reading 1898

watercolour on linen

102.9 x 74.3

Inscription: 1.1. WM BRYMNER 1898

Provenance: Watson Art Galleries, 1927

Exhibitions: RCA, 1898, 143 (as Sisters); AAM, 1898, 127 (as The Picture Book); RCA, 1900, 117. (as The Picture Book); AAM, 1903, summer exhibition, 21; CNE, 1903, 186 (as The Picture Book); Watson, 1925, 81; AAM Memorial, 1926, 39; Paris, Exhibition of Canadian Art, 1927, 16; NGC, Canadian Annual, 1927, 22; Regina Exhibition, 1930; London Western Fair, 1930; NGC, Selected Artists, 1935, 20; AGT, Senior Painters, 1937, 16; University of Alberta, 1948; Congress of the Learned Societies, University of Ottawa, 1957; WAG, Children and Flowers, 1958, 13, repr; VAG, Canadian Painting, 1958, 7; RAG, Ten Decades, 1867 - 1967 Ten Painters, 11, repr; AGO, OSA 100 Years, 1972 18, repr; RH, One Hundred Years, 1975; KWAG, Belle Epoque, 1976

Bibliography: The Canadian Magazine (1897-1899), 10, p.509; Duval, 1954 (as 1892), p.19; NGC (1960), p.34; Reid (1973), p.93

The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, (3517)

34. Ile aux Coudres ca. 1898
watercolour on paper
36.5 x 48.5

Inscription: l.r. W. Brymner

Provenance: Kennedy Galleries, New York, 1977

The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (188888)

35. The Black Schooner 1898
watercolour
34.0 x 24.1

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner 1898

Provenance: John G. Rose, Vernon, B.C.

Exhibitions: AAM, Christmas 1899, 25; RCA, 1900, 118

Dr. Daya Ram Yadav, Calgary, Alberta

36. A Summer Morning 1898
oil on canvas
61.2 x 91.6

Inscription: l.l. Wm Brymner 1898

Provenance: Gift of the Women's Committee to the
Art Gallery of Hamilton 1964

Exhibitions: NGC, 1967, 166, repr; Guelph, AGH, 1974

Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton, 1964

37. St Paul, Ile d'Orleans ca. 1898
oil on panel
13.3 x 17.8

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner

Nicholas Hoare, Montreal

38. Haying on the Island of Orleans 1900
watercolour over pencil on paper
38.7 x 55.9

Inscription: l.l. Wm Brymner 1900

Provenance: Gift to Adolf Lomer from William
Brymner

Exhibition: AAM, 1901, as 18 or 19

Dr. and Mrs. Douglas Law, Ottawa

39. Haying near Quebec Beaupre 1902
oil on canvas
68.6 x 101.6

Inscription: l.l. Wm Brymner 1902

Power Corporation of Canada Limited, Montreal

40. Kicking Horse Pass 1901
oil on canvas
137.2 x 266.8

Inscription: l.l. Wm Brymner 1901

Collection of the Corporation of the City of Toronto

41. Harvesting at St. Famille 1902

oil on canvas
59.7 x 101.6

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner

Exhibitions: AAM, Memorial, 1926, 103; AGT, 1935,
Selected Artists, 32, repr; AGT,
Senior Painters, 1937, 19; MMFA, 1960,
Eleven Artists, 46

The St. James's Club of Montreal

42. Still Life Xmas 1902

watercolour
24.1 x 28.6

Inscription: W. Brymner

Réjane and Emile Colas, Montreal

43. Untitled (sketch) ca. 1902

watercolour on brown paper
14.0 x 21.3

Inscription: WB

Réjane and Emile Colas, Montreal

44. Au Pays de Québec 1903

watercolour on canvas
102.1 x 74.3

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner 03

Provenance: Watson Art Galleries, 1928

Exhibitions: RCA, 1904, #210 (as Cool Shade);

St. Louis, 1904 (as Cool Shade); AAM, Twenty-nine from St. Louis, 1905, 3; AAM, 1906 (as Cool Glades); RCA, May 1906, 37 (as In Cool Glades); Halifax, 1906, Dominion Exhibition, 24 (as In Cool Shade); AGT, 1945, Development of Painting in Canada, 95 (as In French Canada, painted by William Brymner and Horatio Walker)

Bibliography: The Christian Science Monitor, "Home Forum" (16 September 1948); Montreal Herald, (May 1910); Gazette, Montreal (26 March 1921)

Note from the Archives of the Musée du Québec signed by Gerard Morissette:

Au cours d'une visite au Musée en compagnie de Clarence Gagnon, vers 1937, Walker m'a dit qu'il avait un procédé spécial pour préparer la toile pour recevoir la peinture à l'eau. Alors que Brymner se trouvait en vacances chez lui à Ste-Pétronille, vers 1903, Walker prépara une toile de cette façon pour un sujet que Brymner voulait traiter. Walker me déclara alors qu'après avoir ainsi préparé la toile qui est d'un tissu très fin, il peignit lui-même à l'aquarelle, tout l'arrière plan jusqu'à la clôture qui divise la composition au second plan et que Brymner peignit le reste, soit la petite fille assise et tout le premier plan. Malheureusement Walker ne signa pas la peinture conjointement avec Brymner, mais j'atteste la véracité de sa déclaration.

Musée du Québec, Québec (34.582-P)

45. Woman Sewing ca. 1904
oil on canvas
64.8 x 41.3

Inscription: 1.1. Wm Brymner

Exhibitions: AAM, Christmas, 1904, 31; Richmond Virginia, 1959, 10, repr. (as Girl Sewing); NGA Washington, 1950, 10, repr; AGH, Inaugural Exhibition, 1953, 5, repr; AGH, 1958; MNA Mexico City, 1960, 98, repr; CNE, A Tribute to Women, 1960; MMFA, 1962; NGC, Three Huhdred Years, 1967, 170, repr; UWQ, The Image of Man, 1978, 11, repr.

Bibliography: Buchanan, 1950, no. 5, p. 21; The Ottawa Citizen (as Girl Sewing) p. 49; Hubbard, Anthology of Canadian Art (1960) no. 79; MMFA (1960), p. 10

The Montréal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal (948.999)

46. Girl With a Dog, Lower St. Lawrence 1905
oil on canvas
46.4 x 60.3

Inscription: 1.1. Wm Brymner 05

Exhibitions: Watson, 1925, 23, repr; AAM Memorial, 1926, 23; MMFA Eleven Artists, 1960, 44, repr.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Humphrey, New York, N.Y.

47. The Farm 1906
oil on canvas
64.0 x 73.8

Inscription: 1.1. Wm Brymner 1906

Exhibition: RCA, 1907, 30

Private collection, Ottawa

48. October 1906
oil on canvas
58.4 x 76.2

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner 1906

Provenance: R.B. Angus

Exhibitions: AAM, Memorial, 1926, 86; NGC, Selected Artists, 1935, 18; AGT, Senior Painters, 1937, 13; MMFA, Eleven Painters, 1960, 45.

The Mount Royal Club, Montreal

49. Prelude 1906
oil on canvas
67.4 x 52.2

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner 06

Exhibitions: RCA, 1906, 35; AAM, 1906, 27; Watson, 1925, 5 (as Girl Playing a Mandolin); AAM, Memorial, 1926, 22 (as Girl Playing a Mandolin); LU, 1972; KWAG, Belle Epoque, 1976 (as Girl Playing a Mandolin)

Art Gallery of Hamilton, Presented in Memory of Lillian C. Page by Leroy E. Page, 1965

50. Untitled (woman with a book) 1907
oil on canvas
68.6 x 50.8

Inscription: u.r. Wm Brymner

Paul Viau, Montreal

51. Martiques 1908
watercolour on paper
24.8 x 34.9

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner 08

Exhibition: AAM, 1910, 42

Richard and Constance Budelis, Conn., USA

52. Untitled 1908
watercolour on paper
34.4 x 24.3

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner 08

Provenance: Gift of the artist to his cousin,
Constance Baillie Rose Ripley

S. Dillon Ripley, Washington, D.C., USA

53. Summer Landscape, Martiques ca. 1908
oil on canvas
47.0 x 68.0

Inscription: l.l. WM BRYMNER

Exhibitions: AAM, 1909, 65 (as The Cours Martiques);
CAC, 1914, 8 (as Le Cours Martiques);
AAM, 1916, 29 (as Mid-Day Le Cours
Martiques); Watson, 1925, 40; AAM,
Memorial, 1926, 35 (as Le Cours
Martiques)

Bibliography: The Handbook, the Art Gallery of
Hamilton n.d., p.42 (as Martiques);
Canadian Art, 16 (February 1959) p.42,
The Journal of Canadian Art History,
1, 1 (Spring 1974), plate facing p.28

The Art Gallery of Hamilton, gift of Mrs. H. H. Leather, 1957

54. Portrait of a Young Lady 1902
oil on panel
33.7 x 25.4

Provenance: Studio WB; Watson Art Galleries,
Montreal; Warda Drummond, Montreal,
1977

The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (18873)

55. Portrait of K. R. Macpherson K. C. 1909
oil on canvas
84.7 x 65.4

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner

Provenance: M. W. J. Morrice, 1919

Exhibitions: AAM, 1909, 42; CNE, 1909, 53; RCA,
1912, 42; CNE, 1918, 80, repr; AAM
Memorial 1926, 1; MMFA, Eleven Artists,
1960 48; SFE, Faces, 1964; MMFA, Noel,
1970; MMFA, 1977, Decorative Scene

Bibliography: MMFA, 1960, p.9

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of M. W. H. Morrice,
Montreal (919.20)

56. Blackfoot Chief ca. 1892-1906
oil on canvas
80.6 x 50.2

Inscription: l.l. Wm Brymner

Provenance: Watson Art Galleries, 1925

Exhibitions: AAM, 1906, 28 (as Head of an Indian);
Walker Art Gallery Liverpool, 1910, 18
(as Blackfoot Indian)

Note: Grace Brymner and the late T. R. MacDonald both told the writer that Brymner painted ten Indian heads of this type. William Watson's sale catalogues record Blackfoot Indian Ready for the Sun Dance. The asking price indicates it is a watercolour. There is a record of Brymner exhibiting a painting of an Indian wearing a fur hat. A small head of an Indian girl is privately owned in Montreal. Brymner visited the Blackfoot reservation at Gleichen a number of times and became a good friend of the Indian agent, Magnus Begg. The full brush which he uses in this portrait and the rich colour suggests Blackfoot Chief was painted during one of Brymner's later visits to the reservation.

The Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa

57. Untitled 1910
oil on canvas
21.0 x 28.0

Inscription: Wm Brymner 1910

Private Collection, Montreal

58. Untitled ca. 1910
oil on panel
11.1 x 18.1

Inscription: l.r. Wm. Brymner

Private Collection, Montreal

59. Untitled 1910-1911
oil on board
13.3 x 15.9

Inscription: l.l. Wm Brymner

Private Collection, Montreal

60. Untitled (autumn trees) ca. 1906
oil on board
18.4 x 12.1

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner

Provenance: The McGill family; Walter Klinkhoff
Gallery

Private Collection, Montreal

61. Autumn Landscape ca. 1912
oil on canvas
51.4 x 68.6

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner

Frank G. Raymant, Montreal

62. Summer St. Eustache ca. 1911
watercolour
34.3 x 48.3

Inscription: l.l. Wm Brymner

T. I. W. Industries Limited, Ottawa

63. October (Riviere Beaudet) 1914
oil on canvas
96.5 x 124.5
Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner
Provenance: Mrs. Brymner; Watson Art Galleries, 1944
Exhibitions: AAM, 1914, 46; RCA, 1914, 27; CNE,
1915, 127; AGO, 1973, Impressionism in
Canada, 116, repr.
Musée du Québec, Québec (A-41.220-P)
64. Cape Breton Shore 1909-1914
oil on panel
11.4 x 17.8
Inscription: l.l. Wm Brymner
Private Collection, Montreal
65. Black Cape Louisbourg 1909-1914
oil on panel
11.4 x 17.8
Inscription: l.l. Wm Brymner
Private Collection, Montréal
66. The Coast at Louisbourg 1914
oil on canvas
53.3 x 71.1
Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner 1914
Provenance: The artist, 1921

Exhibitions: AAM, 1915, 32; CAC, 1915, 46, repr;
RCA, 1915, 31; AAM, 1921, 26; WAG,
Canadian Art of Today, 1921, 107;
London Ontario Western Fair, 1923,
Victoria Island Arts and Crafts, 1925;
Camrose Public Library, 1928,
Drumheller Public Library, 1929;
Edmonton Art Museum, 1935

Bibliography: The Gazette, Montreal (26 March 1915);
The Studio Magazine, May 1915; The
Canadian Magazine, 49, May 1917
p.19; NGC (1960), p.35

The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (1789)

67. Fog on the Coast 1914
oil on canvas
52.1 x 69.9

Inscription: l.r. WM BRYMNER 1914

Exhibitions: AAM, 1915, 38; Sherbrooke Public
Library, 1916; WAG, 1918, Regina
College, 1919; AGH, 1921; Moose Jaw
Public Library, 1923; New Westminster
Exhibition, 1925; Edmonton Art Museum,
1935; Western Fair, 1928; Ontario
Agricultural College, Guelph, 1928;
Douglas Library, Queen's University,
Kingston, 1931; McMaster University,
Hamilton, 1932; Ingersoll Art Gallery
Association, 1935; The Museum, Granby,
Quebec, 1955; RH, Canadian Landscape,
Fifty Years 1967

Bibliography: NGC (1960), p.34

The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (1123)

68. Nude Figure 1915

oil on canvas

74.3 x 101.6

Inscription: 1.1. WM BRYMNER 1915

Provenance: The artist 1915

Exhibitions: RCA, 1915, 29, repr; CAC, 1915, 43, repr; WAG, 1921; NGC, Selected Artists, 1935, 18; AGT, Senior Painters, 1937, 14; CNE, 1949, 3; AGH, 1958.

Bibliography: NGC (1960), p.34

Note: "...a Nude Figure is excellent as to drawing and flesh tones and the dull blues and reds of the cushions on which the figure is reclining help to bring out the ivory tints." (Montreal Herald 19 November 1915)

The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (1171)

69. Girl in a Blue Hat 1916

oil on canvas

56.0 x 74.0

Inscription: 1.1. WM BRYMNER 1916

Exhibitions: AAM, 1916, 27 (as The Trinket); Watson 1925, 12; AAM, Memorial 1926, 26

● Bibliography: The Canadian Magazine 47 (6 October 1916), p.447 (as The Trinket) repr; Le Musée du Québec - Oeuvres choisies (1978) plate facing p.68 and detail

Musée du Québec, Québec (A-76.371-P)

70. Portrait Bust of William Brymner RCA by George Hill
RCA 1918
bronze
61.0 h

Inscription: 1.1. Geo W. Hill 1918

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, presented by friends and former pupils of Mr. Brymner (928.477)

71. Capri ca. 1923
oil on canvas
44.8 x 60.0

Inscription: 1.1. Wm Brymner Capri

Exhibitions: McMM, 1932; MMFA, Eleven Artists, 1960, 50.

Note: This may be the last oil which Brymner painted. While in composition it is reminiscent of Cézanne, the palette is the one Brymner used for his most delicate works at Baie St. Paul. The paint surface has the quality of fresco and in this respect is a later reflection of the murals at the Island of Orleans. The brush strokes are unusual for Brymner and probably resulted from the fact that he was not well. On the 27th of May, 1923, he wrote from the Villa Chiara at Capri to Kathleen Daly (who had been his student.) In the letter he said, "Capri is no good without a lot of sun. You would be disgusted with my sketches which amount to nothing at all."

The St. James's Club, Montreal

72. Reclining Figure n.d.
oil on canvas
46.3 x 86.8

Provenance: Mrs. William Brymner, 1934

Exhibition: UWSNY, Canadiana, 1942, 257, repr.

Bibliography: MMFA (1960), p.10; Harper (1966),
194, p.218; Morris, Jerrold, The Nude
in the Canadian Painting; Vie des Arts
(1976), 4, p.33; Harper (1977), 86,
p.248

Note: William Brymner in Paris to Douglas Brymner in
Ottawa:

A girl lying down with a white skin is not an
easy piece of work (23 January, 1884).

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Mrs. William
Brymner (934.648)

73. Untitled ca. 1914
oil on panel
11.7 x 17.8

Inscription: I.I. Wm Brymner

Private Collection

74. Untitled n.d.
watercolour on paper
13.3 x 21.6

Provenance: Robert W. Pilot to T.R. MacDonald 1937

The Estate of T.R. MacDonald

75. Untitled n.d.
oil on canvas
43.8 x 36.2

Provenance: Estate J. W. Hickson

University Club of Montreal

76. Girl in a Red Dress ca. 1916
oil on board
34.3 x 25.1
- Inscription: I.I. W. BRYMNER
- Provenance: Norah Collyer; Galerie Bernard
Desroches, Montreal
- Exhibitions: AAM, 1905, 26; RCA, 1911, 26
- Private Collection, Calgary
77. Scrapbook 1876-1878
ink drawings, copies, photographs of people
and of Brymner sketches
26.0 x 22.9
- Private Collection, Montreal
78. Shanty, Forest and River Life in the Backwoods of
Canada
by Joshua Fraser
Montreal, John Lovell & Son, 1883
- Dedicated to Sir John A. MacDonald
- With 10 illustrations by William Brymner, signed in
the plates: Wm. Brymner; George Bishop & Co.
lithographer.
- Private Collection, Montreal

79. Bonhomme: French Canadian Stories and Legends
by Henry Cecil Walsh
Toronto, William Briggs, 1899

With twelve illustrations by William Brymner, RCA
'signed in the plates: l.r. WB

Private Collection, Montreal

80. A Daughter of New France
by Arthur G. Doughty
Ottawa, Mortimer Press, 1916

Facing p.104, reproduction of mural by W. Brymner
signed l.r: Wm. Brymner

Private Collection, Montreal

Figures

- I Geraniums 1876
ink on paper
26.0 x 22.9
- Provenance: from a scrapbook of William Brymner
- Private Collection
- II Mountain Hill September 1876
ink on paper
11 5/8 x 17 1/8
- Inscription: l.r. WB
- The Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa
- III Recreation 1882
lithograph
- Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner
- Bibliography: Fraser, Joshua. Shanty, Forest and
River Life in the Backwoods of Canada.
repr. p.217
- Private Collection
- IV A Country Store 1882
oil on canvas
54.6 x 37.5
- Inscription: l.l. Wm Brymner July 82
- Provenance: Christies of Canada, Montreal no.72
(22 April, 1971)

Exhibitions: AAM, 1883, 83; RCA, 1884, St. John,
3; Watson, 1925, 21

Private Collection

V Burial of Poundmaker ca. 1886
graphite on paper
23.1 x 14.0

Provenance: Robert Pilot, 1955

The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton (55-111)

VI Blackfeet Indians Receiving Rations ca. 1883-1884
copy of a wood engraving for an unpublished book
11.4 x 17.1

The Archives, The Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta
(MA 1033-3)

VII Mount Cheops from Rogers Pass, Selkirk Range
ca. 1886
oil on canvas
152.6 x 213.6

Inscription: 1.1. W^M BRYNER

Provenance: Walter Klinkhoff Gallery, Montreal;
Mr. and Mrs. Jules Loeb, Lucerne,
Quebec

Bibliography: Canadian Art March 1945 2:95 repr;
Sotheby & Co. (Canada) Ltd.,
Selected Paintings, Drawings, Water-
colours, Prints and Sculpture of the
19th and 20th Centuries from the Col-
lection of Mr. and Mrs. Jules Loeb of
Lucerne Quebec (8 April 1970) 6, p.9

Note: This painting did not sell at Sotheby's auction and is now in the collection of The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa, Ontario; Canadian Art May/June 1965, 22, 3, inside the back cover, advertisement for Walter Klinkhoff Gallery (as 1901). There is a Klinkhoff Gallery label on the back of the work which says "ca. 1901." However in light of the cited correspondence (footnote no. 78), this date is in question.

VIII John MacGillycuddy ca. 1892
graphite and chalk on paper
21.6 x 14.0

Inscription: l.l. John MacGillycuddy, Killarney Co.
Kerry, Ireland

Provenance: Gift of Robert Pilot, 1955

Note: John MacGillycuddy was for many years the Secretary of the Art Association of Montreal and a close friend of Brynner. When he retired he returned to his home in Ireland.

The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton (55-111)

IX Sir William Painting Building the Stacks ca. 1892
pastel on board
25.4 x 33.0

Inscription: l.l. W.B.

Note: In this sketch, Sir William Van Horne is working in his Montreal studio, painting, in oils, a scene from his farm at Selkirk, Manitoba. It portrays the urgent building of a haystack against the approaching storm. Sir William maintained that establishment privately as an experimental farm to assist new Canadians who were emigrating from Europe and Asia to settle in Western Canada. The

large canvas Building the Stack is in the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

Mrs. William Van Horne

X Baie St. Paul 1895
graphite on paper
23.3 x 13.8

Inscription: c.r. 18th July 1895

Provenance: Robert Pilot, 1955

Note: This work is a study for Young Girl Shading Her Eyes, Fig XI

The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton (55-111)

XI Young Girl Shading Her Eyes 1897
watercolour on paper, laid on cardboard
28.6 x 22.6

Inscription: l.l. To my friend James Morrice;
W. Brynner, Montreal, 29th April 1897

stamped on reverse: STUDIO J. W.
MORRICE

Provenance: Gift of David R. Morrice, 1972

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal (972.19)

XII. Pincette 1895
graphite and water colour on paper
23.2 x 14.0

Inscription: l.l. Pincette 4 Aug 95

Provenance: Robert Pilot, 1955

The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton (55-111)

XIII Old Smoker Island of Orleans 1905
watercolour
size not known

Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner 05

Exhibitions: RCA, 1905, 217; AGT, 1935, Selected Artists, 33.

Bibliography: Montreal Star (8 April, 1905 as Un Vieux); The Seigneur, 7, 1. (June 1934), the cover; Kenneth Dawson, "William Brymner, R.C.A., C.M.G.," a series on Canadian Teachers of Art, Canadian Review of Music and Art, June/July 1944, 3, p.19

XIV Study of a Rowboat
graphite on paper
11.9 x 19.4

Inscription: l.l. Wm Brymner

Provenance: Robert Pilot, 1955

The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton (55-111)

XV The Apple Harvest (part of a mural) 1900
oil on canvas
91.4 x 152.4

Provenance: The artist; Charles E. L. Forteous

Fraternité Sacerdotale, Ste. Pétronille, Island of
Orleans, Quebec

XVI The Apple Harvest (part of a mural) 1900
oil on canvas
91.4 x 152.4

Provenance: The artist; Charles E. L. Porteous

Fraternité Sacerdotale, Ste. Pétronille, Island of
Orleans, Quebec

XVII Beach with Boats (part of a mural) 1900
oil on canvas
91.4 x 152.4

Provenance: The artist; Charles E. L. Porteous

Fraternité Sacerdotale, Ste. Pétronille, Island of
Orleans, Quebec

XVIII Beach With Boats (part of a mural) 1900
oil on canvas
91.4 x 152.4

Provenance: The artist; Charles E. L. Porteous

Fraternité Sacerdotale, Ste. Pétronille, Island of
Orleans, Quebec

XIX Sugar Shack (part of a mural) 1900
oil on canvas
91.4 x 152.4

Provenance: The artist; Charles E. L. Porteous

Fraternité Sacerdotale, Ste. Pétronille, Island of
Orleans, Quebec

XX Study of Trees ca. 1899
graphite and water colour on paper
22.7 x 13.9

Provenance: Robert Pilot, 1955

The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton (55-111)

XXI Haycart ca. 1900
graphite on paper
13.9 x 21.9

Provenance: Robert Pilot, 1955

The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton (55-111)

XXII Study of a Woman Raking ca. 1900
graphite on paper
13.9 x 22.7

Provenance: Robert Pilot, 1955

The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton (55-111)

XXIII Study of a Man Pitching Hay ca. 1900
graphite on paper
13.9 x 22.7

Provenance: Robert Pilot, 1955

The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton (55-111)

- XXIV Todd-Clouston Mural ca. 1907
oil on canvas
167.6 x 355.6
- Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner
- Provenance: Sir Edward Clouston; Mrs. John Todd
- Private collection, Vancouver
- XXV Frontenac Receiving the Envoy of Phips ca. 1911
oil on canvas
size not known
- Inscription: l.r. Wm Brymner
- Provenance: Sir Edward Clouston; Dr. Arthur Doughty
- Exhibition: RCA, 1912, 31
- Bibliography: Canadian Courier (28 December 1912);
Scrapbook, Toronto Public Library
155:148; Doughty, A Daughter of New
France, 1916, plate facing p.104
- XXVI At the Canadian Academy's Art Exhibit
cartoons
- "Art Exhibit," The Montreal Daily Star (16 December
1910)
- XXVII Michel Marquis 1901
graphite on paper
21.2 x 14.0

Inscription: l.l. 31 Aug. 1901 Michel Marquis
Ile d'Orleans

Provenance: Robert Pilot, 1955

The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton (55-111)

XXVIII William Brymner at Capri ca. 1923
photograph

Private Collection

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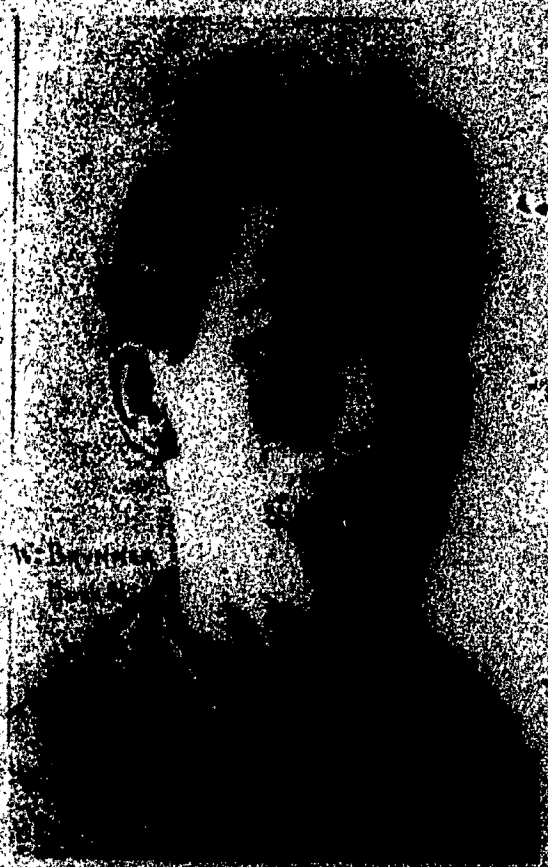
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W. B. ...

Oct. 1 1941

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Cat. 3. The Old Spinner

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Cat. 5 Wallflowers.

175



Cat. 6 Speak Dolly

176



Cat. 7 View of Hinderwell,
Yorkshire, from Newton.



Cat. 14 The Weaver



Cat. 15 Crazy Patchwork

179



Cat. 19 Venetian Canal

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Cat. 22 Mount Baker

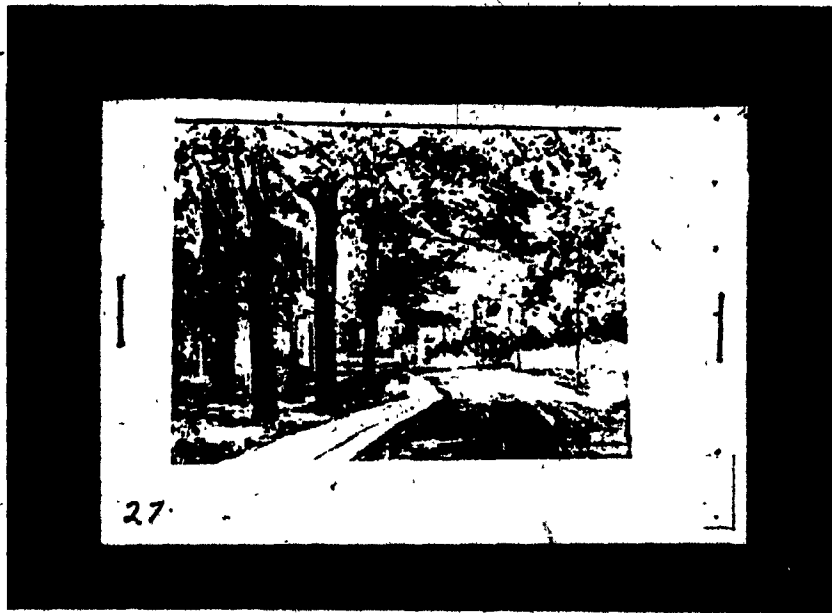


23 Champ-de-Mars, Winter



Cat. 27 Landscape

183



Cat. 28 A Village Street,
Baie St. Paul



Cat. 29 The Grey Girl

185 |



Cat. 30 Robertine

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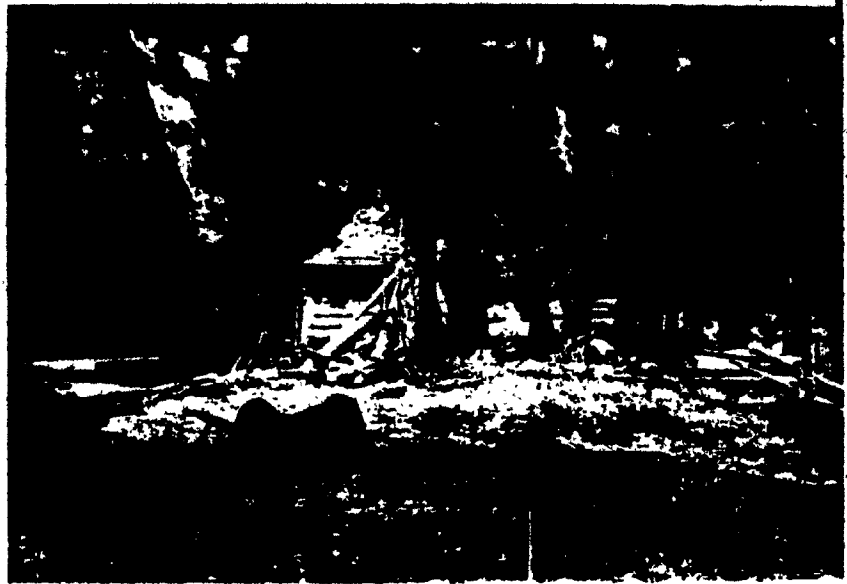


Cat. 33 Two Girls Reading



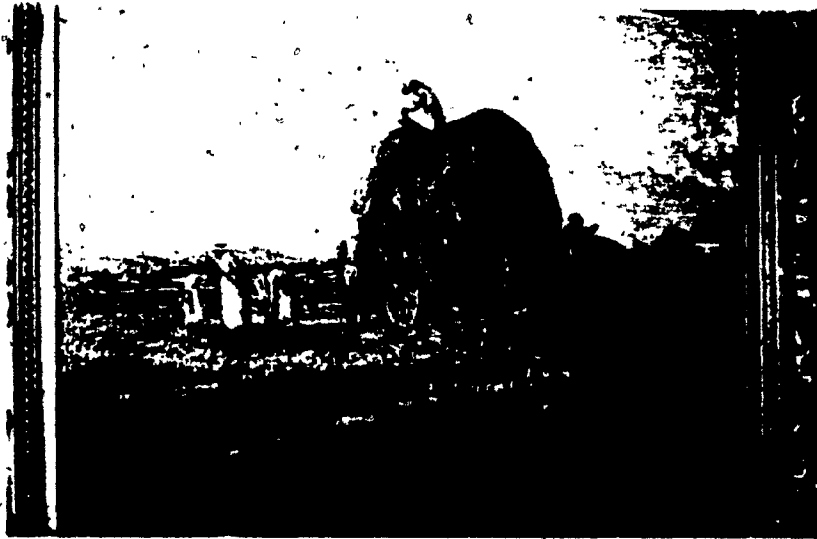
Cat. 35 The Black Schooner

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Cat. 36 A Summer Morning

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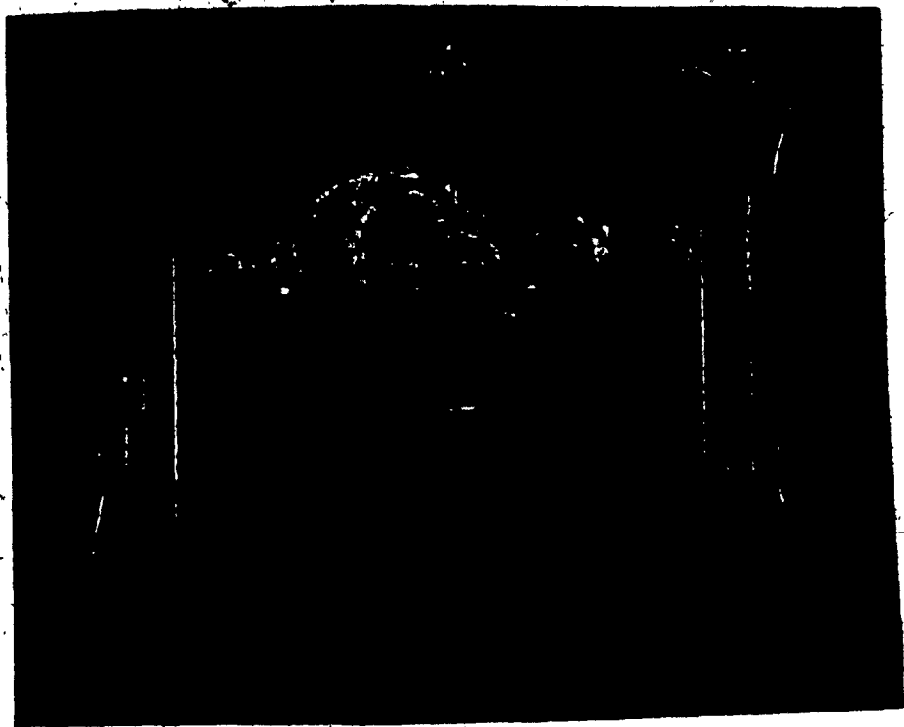


Cap. 39 Haying near Quebec,
Beaufre



Cat. 40 Kicking Horse Pass

1947



Cat. 41 Harvesting at St.
Famille



Cat. 44 Au Pays de Quebec



Cat. 45 Woman Sewing

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Cat. 46 Girl with a Dog,
Lower St. Lawrence



Cat. 49 .Prelude

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Cat. 53 Summer Landscape,
Nartigues



Cat. 55 Portrait of K.R.
Macpherson; K.C.



Cat. 56 Blackfoot Chief



Cat. 63 October, Riviere
Beudet

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Cat. 66 The Coast at
Louisbourg



Cat. 68 Nude Figure



Cat. 69 Girl in a Blue Hat.

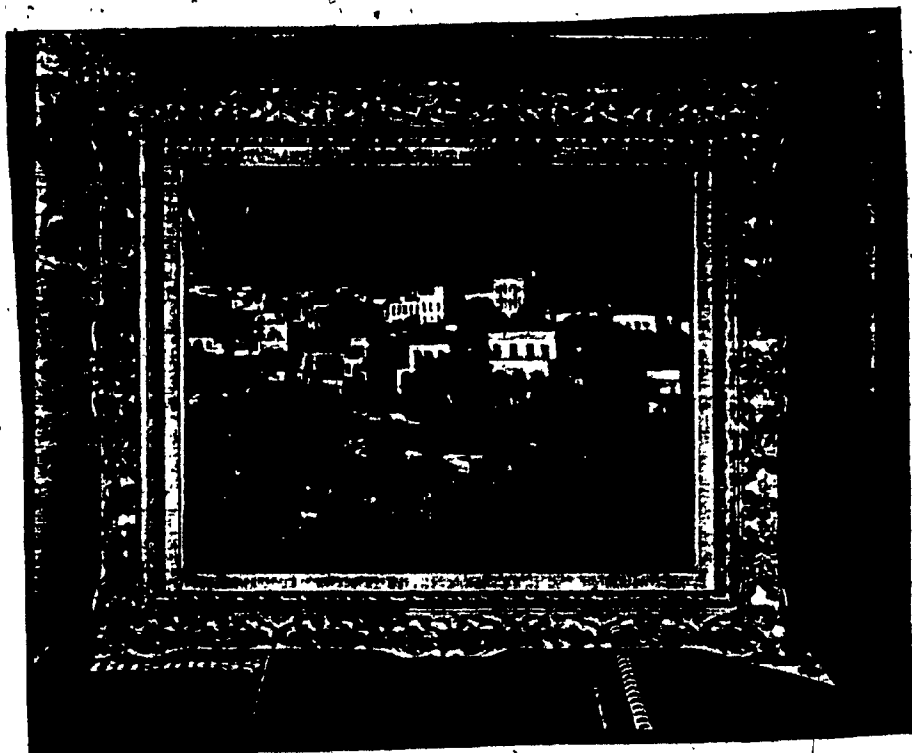


Cat. 70 Portrait Bust of
William Brymner RCA



Cat. 72 Reclining Figure

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Cat. 71 Capri

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Cat. '75 Untitled

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Cat. 76 Girl in Red Dress

SLIDES

(See copy in the Graduate Office
of the Faculty of Fine Arts,
Concordia University)

SLIDES

(See copy in the Graduate Office
of the Faculty of Fine Arts,
Concordia University)



Fig. I Geraniums

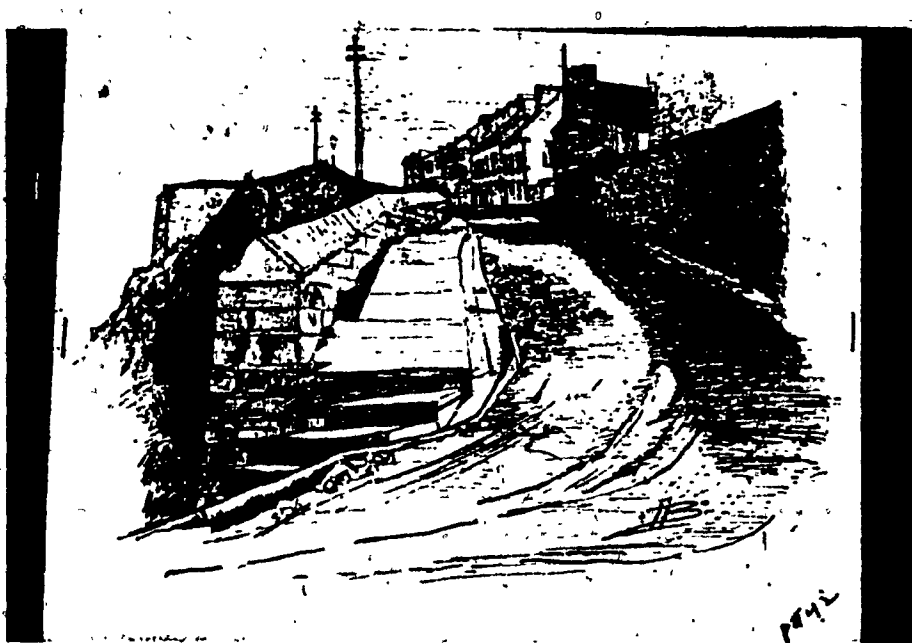


Fig. II Mountain Hill



Fig. III Recreation



Fig. IV A Country Store



Fig. V. Burial of Poundmaker

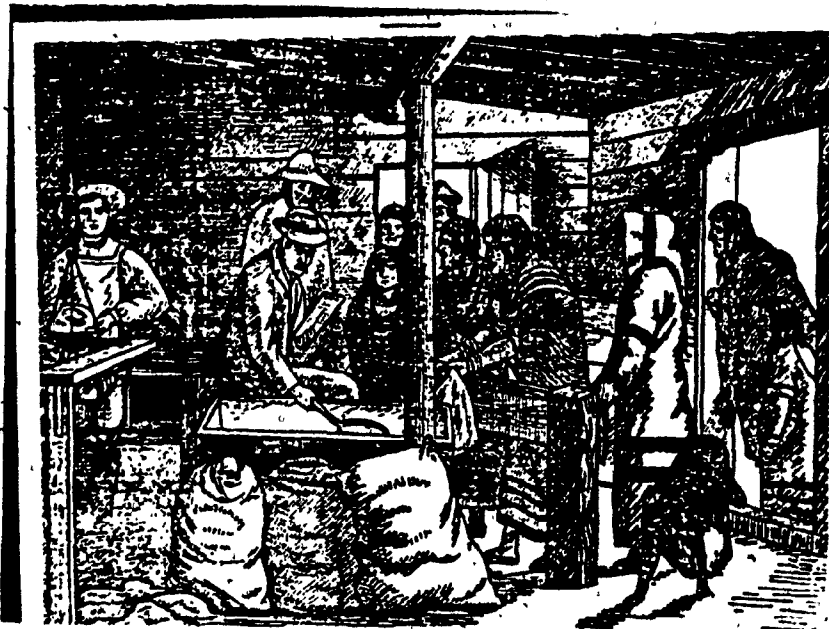


Fig. VI Blackfoot Indians
Receiving Rations

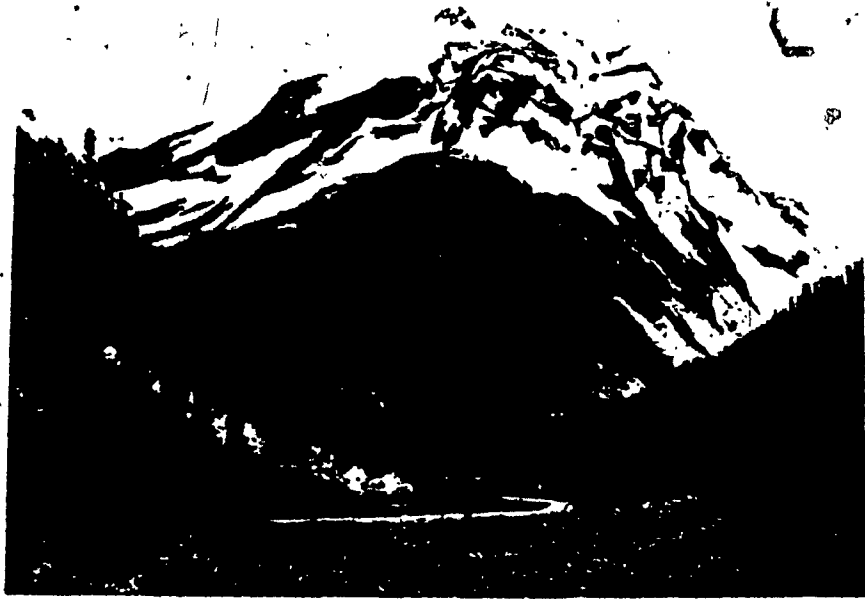


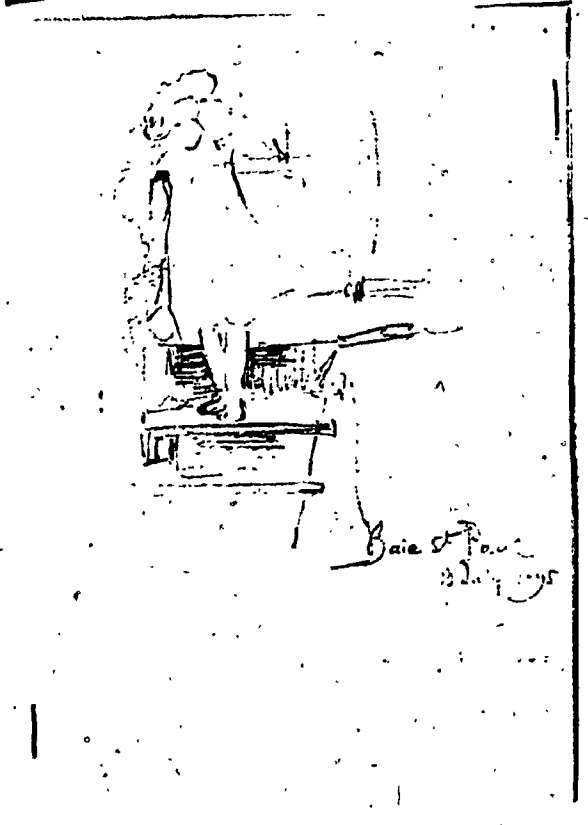
Fig. VII Mount Cheops From
Rogers Pass, Selkirk Range



Fig. VIII. John MacGilly-
cuddy



Fig. IX Sir William Painting Building the Stacks



Baie St. Paul
1847

Fig. X Baie St. Paul



Fig. XI Young Girl Shading
Her Eyes



Fig. XII. Pincette



Fig. XIII Old Smoker,
Island of Orleans

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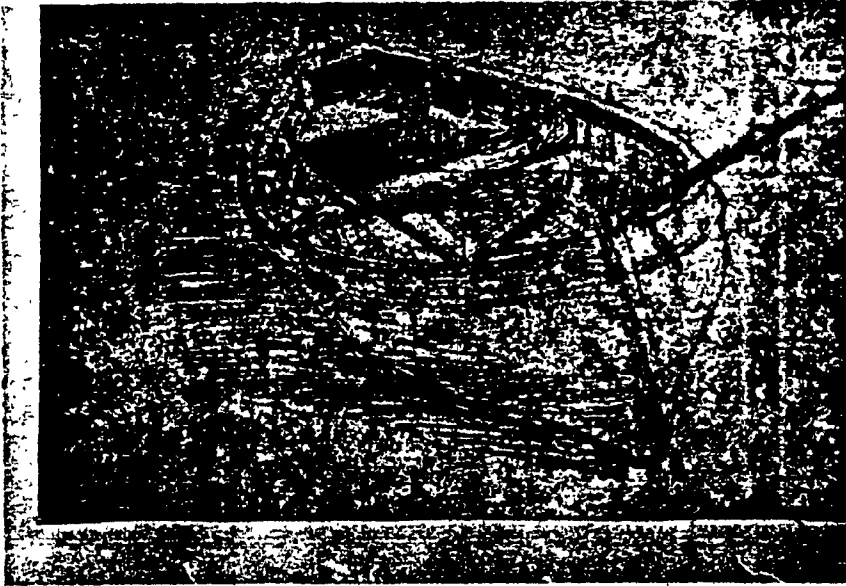


Fig. XIV Study of a Rowboat

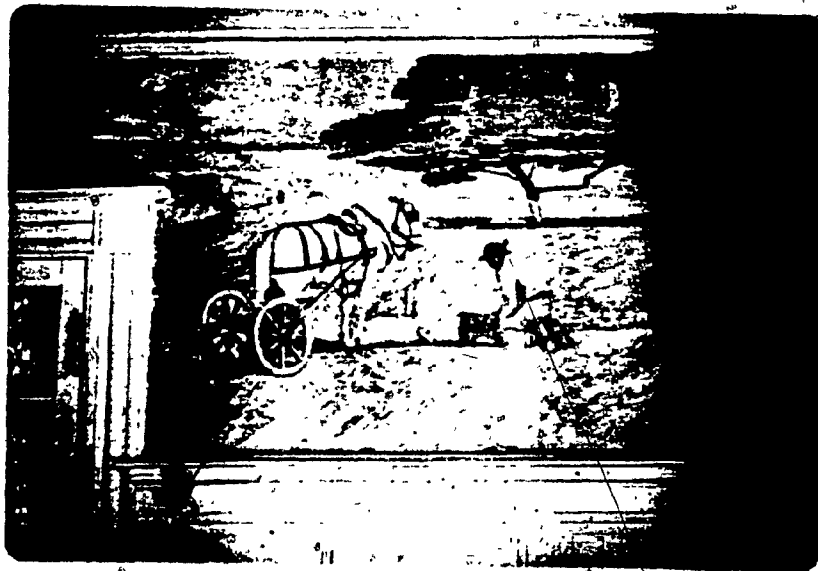


Fig. XV The Apple Harvest
(part of a mural)



Fig. XVI The Apple Harvest
(part of a mural)



Fig. XVII Beach with Boats
(part of a mural)

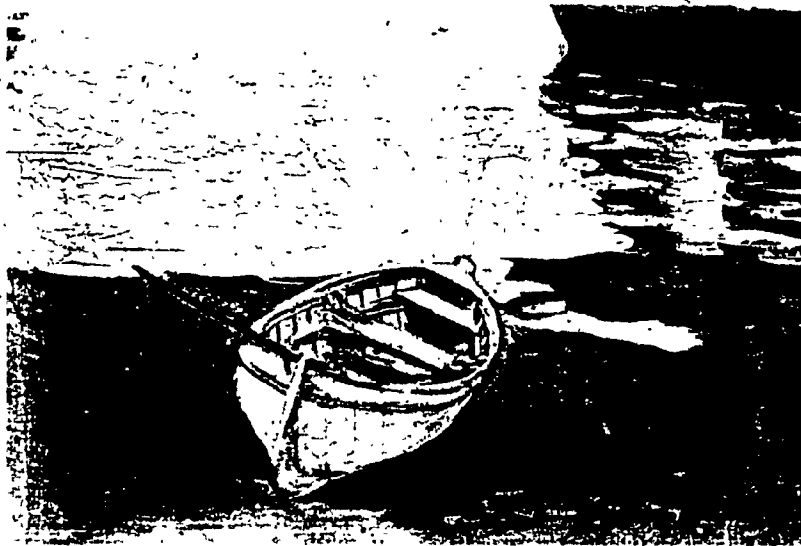


Fig. XVIII Beach with Boats
(part of a mural)



Fig. XIX Sugar Shack
(part of a mural)



Fig. XX Study of Trees

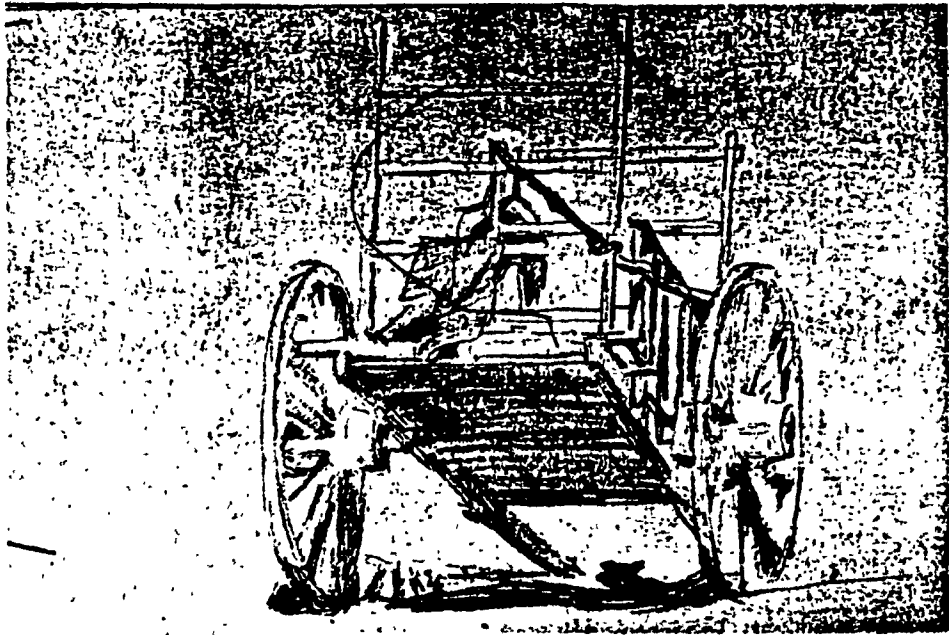


Fig. XXI Haycart



Fig. XXII Study of Women Raking



Fig. XXIII Study of Man
Pitching Hay



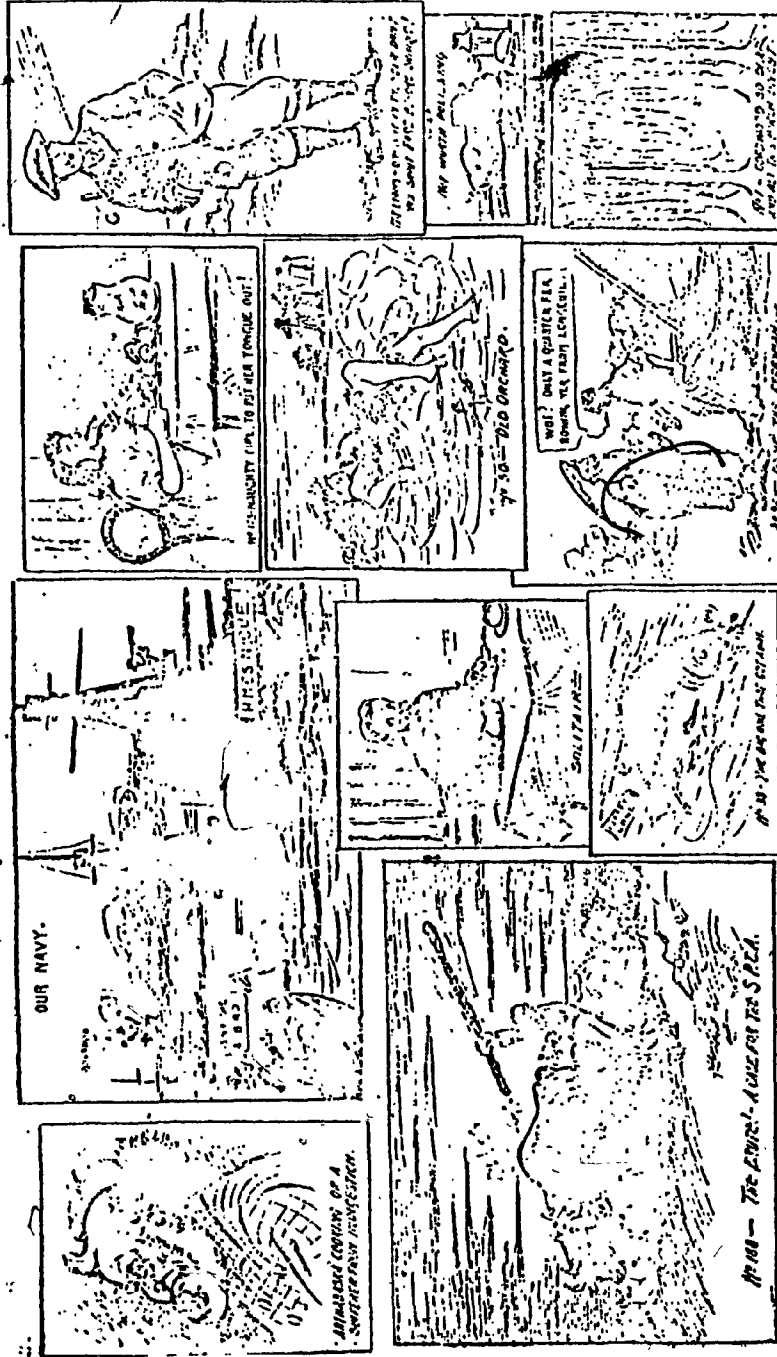
Fig. XXIV Todd-Clouston
Mural

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Fig. XXV Frontenac Receiving the Envoy of Phips

AT THE CANADIAN ACADEMY'S ART EXHIBIT



Some impressions by a Star Artist after seeing some of the pictures now on exhibition at the Montreal Art Gallery.

FIG. XXVI At the Canadian Academy's Art Exhibit



Fig. XXVII Michel Marquis



Fig. XXVIII William Brynner
at Capri c. 1923