

QAHN's 2023 HERITAGE ESSAY AND PHOTO CONTESTS

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# Quebec Heritage News

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## **Inimitable Fiddling**

Quebec's Own Graham Townsend

## **Hagiography**

Generations of a Quebec Family

## **The House on the Hill**

Cataraqui's Chaptered History

# Quebec Heritage News

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Cover: "No Prob-llama." Heritage Photo Contest, 2023. Photo: Jessie Lanterne.

## EDITOR'S DESK

*REMiniscent*

by Rod MacLeod

**A**twater. Guy. Peel. McGill. Place-des-Arts. Saint-Laurent. Berri-de-Montigny. These labels defined my childhood concept of downtown urban space. Long before I came to know the names of streets, or even to understand the collective essence of such streets as “downtown,” these seven station names were fixed in my brain.

I had soaked up my parents' excitement over Montreal's long-awaited subway – and not just the technical marvel of having a tunnel carved through the city centre, but also the transmogrification of places they had known all their lives into nodes forming part of a transit system. “Hmm,” they would say, pouring over the news reports. “They're going to put a station *there!*” Henceforth, certain parts of the city would be privileged. “Atwater,” for instance, would no longer be merely an avenue running from market to mountain: it was now the gateway to a new world. You went through a doorway at street level down to a concourse, then fed your card-stock bus transfer into a metal slot, pushed through the turnstile, pressed a soft white button on a nearby machine and pulled out a paper transfer (even if you didn't need one), and then went further down onto a platform, where a shiny blue train would whisk you away. To Guy. To Peel. To McGill – and beyond. This was the *metro*.

I recalled my childhood excitement this past summer when it was announced that at long last (at considerably longer last, in fact, than it had taken to build the original metro) the *Réseau Express Métropolitain* would open. Or at least one token part of it: the line from Gare Centrale (the downtown terminus) to Brossard. The route provides South Shore commuters with much-needed fast connection to the heart of Montreal. Although this line of the REM is of little practical use to me, nestled as I am in the city's west end, I knew I had to ride it just for the sake of riding it, much as I

had needed to ride the metro back in 1966. This need stemmed in part from a love of what is new and shiny, but also from something deeper (if you will excuse the pun in a discussion involving underground trains): just as a street corner transforms into a metro station entrance, so too does a city change forever when they build a new way to get around it.



To a certain extent, this feeling is pride. I was intensely proud of our new metro (again, allowing for a degree of parental influence), particularly how sleek and modern it felt. It was a train toward tomorrow, straight out of *Star Trek* – whose characters did not exactly ride underground trains, but the appearance of metro trains and platforms definitely echoed the look of the show. My appreciation for Montreal's cutting-edge modernity was underscored when I rode Toronto's underground counterpart, which was only a dozen years older but looked antiquated with its bulky square trains and drab platforms of

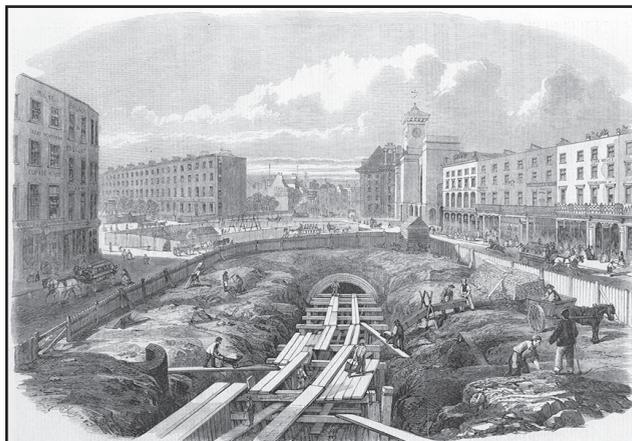
undifferentiated architectural blandness. New York City offered an even greater contrast: trains and platforms were dark, filthy, even somehow *greasy*. (I felt this tangibly, although of course I did not need to be told not to touch anything.) Mind you, the New York subway was also mysterious and exciting, with all its sinister corners and endless beckoning tunnels just waiting to have dark deeds done – as Hollywood movies kept insisting. Even creepier was the transit system in Boston, which obliged you to walk onto the black wet tunnel floor and climb up into the dingy carriage that rattled to a stop in front of you like a hearse. When I read H. P. Lovecraft stories of horrible creatures creeping up from the depths and attacking Boston subway passengers, I could believe them. These systems were impressive – but who wants public transit you're afraid to ride on?

I was also proud of Montreal's metro because we called it the “metro” rather than “subway,” as everyone else on the continent called their systems. We lived in a bilingual city (or so we thought in the 1960s) so it was cool to use a term that worked well in both languages. “Metro” was also simply more sophisticated, a deliberate echo of Paris' transit system – much as Hector Guimard's Art Nouveau entrance to Square Victoria station was literally a little piece of Paris relocated to the world's second largest French-speaking city. But here I should state emphatically that Montreal's metro should not be spelled with an accent when writing in English, the way numerous English-language publications that should know better do. “Metro” is a perfectly good English word, and is what we call many systems outside the French-speaking world: Madrid, Barcelona, Rome, Milan and Naples all have “metros” (without an accent), as the term is short for “metropolitana.” Indeed, the world's oldest metro started life in 1860 when workers began to carve a huge trench

through the north-west part of London to make way for the Metropolitan Railway – the first anywhere to run underground. A century later, when Washington D.C. constructed its own urban transit system it adopted the name “metro,” as if to distinguish itself from the North American norm. It’s just a dandier word than “subway.”

I continued to monitor our metro’s growth, beginning with the Yellow Line, the eerie extension dug under the river to help bring the world to the Expo site. You could change trains at Berri-de-Montigny and emerge five minutes later on another island: St Helen’s – or, to use the metro station name, Île Sainte-Hélène. For a kid, the high point of this very deep trajectory was seeing the series of jumping figures drawn on the tunnel walls that seemed to move as the train sped past (the technical term for this is a Subway Zoetrope) but you had to sit quietly and wait for it. Leaving the train, passengers were carefully herded along broad corridors up to the surface; heading back down at the end of the day, crowds were controlled by huge gates at the inner edge of the platform that swung shut just as the trains were coming to a stop, to prevent those not already on the platform from stampeding. Such enthusiasm dwindled as Expo diminished over subsequent years, and the gates were removed. Interest peaked again in 1976, when the Green line (which began at Atwater) was extended eastward to accommodate the Olympic facilities – although Montrealers never warmed to the

Olympics the way we had to Expo; the thrill of the new for its own sake had faded. Even so, a high school field trip via metro to Pie-IX in late April was much appreciated: we stepped out of the depths and stared in wonder at the stadium’s great cement buttresses rising above us like some vast spaceship. Over



the next few years the Green line was extended westward, bringing to an end Atwater’s title of western gateway to the metro, while the Orange line furrowed northward from Bonaventure to transform my daily commute with eye-catching stations with Disco-age décor at Vendôme and Villa-Maria.

I retained a certain fascination for urban transit as part of a larger interest in how cities worked. In my student travel days abroad, I often went Down (and, at the end of each journey, Out) in Paris and London – and it was definitely a Tale of Two Cities. The Paris metro was efficient and user-friendly: you paid (preferably with one ticket from a cheap *carnet* of 10), you checked the name of the final station on the line you wanted

to take, and headed for that platform – repeating the process if you had to change lines. I realized that this system had been adopted in Montreal – although we weren’t above making it challenging by naming the last station on one line “Henri-Bourassa” and the last one on another line “Honoré-

Beaugrand” (they looked very similar late at night when you’d had a few beers). The Paris metro trains were not particularly comfortable (some seats just flipped down like mini Murphy beds) but they got you where you wanted to go; there were stations everywhere, so you could always get within a few hundred metres of your destination. The London “underground,” by contrast, was cramped: its nickname, “the tube,” derives from its noodle-shaped tunnels that also meant low ceilings on platforms. It was also confusing: you had to find the line you wanted by its name (“Metropolitan,” “Northern,” “Bakerloo”), and then figure out whether you were headed “eastbound” or “northbound” as in Toronto. The stations were also far apart, and large stretches of town simply weren’t served. But riding the tube was certainly comfortable: you sank into deep springy cloth-covered seats with armrests – perfect if you wanted to curl up with a book for a half hour’s journey, as I often did. London’s underground also has a marvellous social history, particularly as a nightly haven during the Blitz. The Paris metro may have been stylish and efficient, but my heart belonged to its London counterpart.



Top: Percy William Justyne, “Constructing the Metropolitan Railway,” Illustrated London News, February 2, 1861.

Bottom left: Île-Sainte-Hélène metro station, 1967.

Bottom right: Atwater metro concourse, 1967. [stm.info/en/photosalbum](http://stm.info/en/photosalbum).

In addition to their underground systems, Paris and London both had commuter railways, which operated on a different level, symbolically as well as literally. Paris' R.E.R (Réseau Express Régional) was a novelty when I visited in the 1970s, and so obviously I had to check it out. A friend and I stumbled into the system, which seemed connected to the metro and yet apparently wasn't, and rode to the spanking new business hub at "La Défense," where we could not make our tickets work on the exit turnstiles; an official reprimanded us with equal parts outrage and utter bafflement (how could we have gotten on the train without a proper ticket?) before shoving us irritably outside. London had no such fancy system, but British Rail got you from the outer suburbs into the inner termini with remarkable efficiency. Curiously, the most efficient trains were the dingy Victorian relics that featured a series of unconnected compartments, each served by a single door on each side; when the train pulled into a station, the entire row of doors would be yanked open in cacophonous unison, a gaggle of bowler-hatted commuters would step in, the doors would be smartly pulled shut, and the train would be off again after a mere 15 seconds' pause. This system had its dangers (children were warned not to ride in these carriages as there was no place to run if a man with evil intent got on) and the trains were far from pretty, but they moved people well.

When I returned home from my travels and occasioned to take CP trains from Montreal West to Windsor Station, I despaired at their inefficiency. They were huge monsters built for transcontinental travel, but moved at a snail's pace: I remember standing for ages on the frozen platform while an engine groaned to a complete stop and then seemed to think long and hard before grudgingly allowing the heavy doors to swing slowly open so anxious passengers could cram themselves up the steps and inside. This system would improve immeasurably once commuter transit was taken over by the



Montreal Urban Community Transportation Commission and even more under its successors. Today, I can get downtown in 12 minutes by train, which is way faster than the bus.

My journey to the REM this summer began at the Montreal West station, where I was able to buy a through ticket to Brossard, the outer terminus of the freshly opened commuter line. In anticipation of this new experience, I recalled other light rail systems I had travelled in recent years – since much of the world has gone rapid-transit mad. London now has its Dockland Light Railway, from whose heights one can stare down over the ultra-modern Canary Wharf development with its massive skyscrapers ("One Canada Square" being the biggest, thanks to early Canadian investment in the area) and artfully posed piazzas. I found it spectacular, but had difficulty reconciling this mountain of steel and glass with the "Isle of Dogs," a gritty



slum near the port with warehouses and oily canals that a friend drove me through in the early 1980s to drop off a steamer trunk. ("I've been to the Isle of Dogs," I announced lugubriously when I got home.) London's Docklands is gentrification on a huge scale; the project displaced countless residents in favour of luxury condos and corporate head offices. This knowledge diminished the experience considerably, but riding the DLR proved an effective way to take in this drastic change. London is now also blessed with a surface railway network, known rather cheekily as the "overground." Much of it is vamped-up old train lines – a feature of many recent light rail projects, which are built on existing track or at any rate make use of the routes where railways ran. This means laudable recycling of unused industrial infrastructure. Liverpool's Merseyrail (an alternative to the city's famous ferry crossing) is one such recycler, and Birmingham and Manchester have similar networks. Madrid's *cercanías* network allows you to cross the city much faster than you would on the already very extensive metro system using repurposed tracks used until recently only for cargo. Even part of our own REM will follow the line of what was once Montreal's first urban railway as it goes under Mount Royal to Pierrefonds, Laval and Deux Montagnes. One does not have to reinvent the wheel as one rides the rails.

My own commuter line will not connect directly to the REM network. To get from its downtown terminus (now "Lucien L'Allier," a modern box located 200 metres west of where the CP trains used to stop) to the REM, one is obliged to walk around the periphery of the Bell Centre (the sports stadium built over what used to be tracks), through the shell of the 1880s Windsor Station, and from there down into Bonaventure metro station. It is a labyrinth of underground tunnels, doorways and escalators from Bonaventure to Central Station, which is now Montreal's main railway hub as well as the REM's downtown terminus – known officially as "Gare Centrale." There is a

doorway on one side of a tunnel, and then an escalator down to a concourse, and a little machine where you can validate your ticket. And then the adventure begins.

All the REM lines will eventually converge at Gare Centrale, but for the time being the diagram only lists the stops on the functioning line: Île-des-Soeurs, Panama, Du Quartier, and Brossard. One station is conspicuously absent: Griffintown. Despite being part of the original plan, and although architects' renditions show it as a stylish glass appendage to the elevated tracks near William Street, there is no trace of Griffintown station along the route, not even the vestige of a platform. The station became the subject of controversy when municipal authorities, despite much public protest, insisted on grafting the name "Bernard Landry" onto what should have been a straightforward nod to the area's Irish past. Apparently, local residents are also complaining about the potential noise, although people I've spoken to say you can barely notice it. These "locals" are the ones who have moved into the new high-rise condo blocks that have destroyed much of the area's built heritage – a process reminiscent of what happened in London's Docklands. Unfortunately, like heritage buildings that sit empty for too long, this projected station may simply fall off the REM's to-do list.

All that aside, the REM journey itself is a delight. It's smooth. It's fast. It snakes on silent wheels above streets, canal, piers, and highway, affording stunning views of the city skyline at every turn. Gliding towards the new Samuel de Champlain Bridge, you look down unimpeded at the vast stretches of ancient railway yards that formed our industrial heartland two centuries ago. After pausing at the hitherto car-dependent Nuns' Island, the train climbs in a dizzying arc over river and seaway, and from these heights huge freighters seem like tiny tugs. On the South Shore, suburbia sprawls in a way that you miss from a car, and then the line cozies up to the Quartier Dix-30 shopping complex (its dedicated station coyly called "du Quartier"), which I find bewildering to drive through but looks inviting from REM height. I was not the only one out for the simple pleasure of trying some-



Top and centre: REM train, interior and view of seaway.  
Photos: Rod MacLeod.

thing new: one large family got on at Gare Centrale and rode at the front of the train gazing out at the oncoming tracks, the kids' noses pressed firmly to the glass as if it were the window of a chocolate shop. That was me on the metro, back in the 1960s, I thought.

Or no – not so much the metro as that other, all-but-forgotten transport marvel of half a century ago: the Expo Express. This people-mover boarded fair goers at Cité du Havre – a spot at the western edge of Montreal's port once known as the Mackay Pier that had been tarted up to accommodate the iconic Habitat 67 residential complex and Place d'Accueil, the gateway to Expo. It wasn't particularly handy to any existing public transit, but you could park nearby in the shadow of the Autostade and flash your Expo passport to get through the turnstiles. The Expo Express trains were wide and clunky, unlike the metro, but they whisked you smoothly over land and water at some distance from the surface in a manner very much like today's REM. Indeed, like the REM, it was automated, the first transit system in North America to be driverless – although apparently the city appointed "drivers" to each train just so riders would feel safe. As a result, you were able to stand at the front window gazing out at the rapidly approaching scenery. It was this feature, along with the sense of being above the fray like all monorails of mid-twentieth century fantasy, that caught the imagination. Like the metro, this was something new. Alas, when the fair ended, the fantasy was over and drab practicality kicked in; with no vision to keep it alive, the Expo Express was torn down.

Riding the REM took me back in time. Not to a world of old things in danger of being destroyed by the forces of progress, but to a world in which we believed in what progress promised. I have spent much of my life looking back at the past and arguing for the need to understand it and preserve it – but I also miss being the kid who stood in awe of those shiny blue underground trains and the view out the front window of the Expo Express. I miss feeling excited about what the future would bring. The REM brought a curiously positive drop of optimism amid the rising seas and burning forests of our ominous present. Riding it was all about nostalgia – a nostalgia for the future.

## Letter

### Integration Challenge

I was a teenager from rural Alberta when I first visited Quebec in 1962, on a car trip with my family. I was smitten, and vowed to return. After my studies, including a year in France, I arrived in Montreal in 1973 (50 years ago this fall!), a naïve but excited Westerner at the height of the separatist movement. It was the start to a crazy lifetime that was not always pleasant, but I wouldn't exchange it for the world. I hope these personal reflections will be helpful for a new generation of non-Francophone Quebecers who may be apprehensive of new language legislation.

A dramatic law in 1977 decreed French the only official language in Quebec. It was too much for thousands of Quebecers who pulled up roots – some deep, some not – and headed west to Ontario and Alberta. I was clearly swimming against the tide.

My goal was to get a job in journalism for at least two years, and to integrate into French-Canadian culture. I didn't realize what a challenge the second goal would be.

I soon realized that French-Canadians – as they were called then – were quite different from my culture and personality. They considered me an *anglais* (English man), even though my parents were both from Quebec and my ancestors went back generations in Quebec. There were still a few relatives in the Eastern Townships.

Another hurdle was my Parisian accent, which Quebecers disdain. Next was my hippy personae; in Quebec, the long hair, beard and scruffy look was adopted mainly by radicals.

Despite these hurdles to integration, I wasn't going to give up easily. I figured their attitude to me would change as soon as I mastered the Québécois accent. Strolling around my new city, I imagined myself sharing a beer at the Toe Blake Tavern with my new French-Canadian friends, or singing Québécois pop songs with my guitar.

I worked hard to integrate, to always speak French, sometimes to the wrong people. I insisted that the old owners of a shop on Boulevard Saint-Laurent

speak French, until I later realized they were Polish Jews, more at home in English.

It irritated me that, while I was making the effort, many Anglo Quebecers made little effort to learn the language of the majority. This included my uncles. "I hear they're gonna change the name of Jeanne Mance Street into some French name," one complained, pronouncing it *jeen*. "But Uncle Gordon, isn't Jeanne Mance a French name?" I ventured. He replied with a snort: "Well, I grew up there and we always called it *jeen manse*."

To be fair, until the late 1990s, Anglos and immigrants were refused entry into French Catholic schools, where they would have learned fluent French. I admit I had an unfair advantage after marrying a wonderful woman from France the year after I moved to Montreal.

It took a long time to accept that Quebecers – in my opinion – were polite, but not enthusiastic about admitting outsiders into their close-knit family. Over the years I have met many Québécois, and made friends with some. It takes time and effort. I learned not to talk politics, and to show sympathy for their fear of losing their identity as the birthrate falls and thousands of immigrants flow in. My chum Robert once asked me if I thought the Québécois nation was under threat. I said yes, even though I'm not sure. But I could just see from the relief in his face that we had connected on an important issue for him.

Settling in Quebec provoked tensions with my family in the West. I found myself sticking up for Quebec, while trying to explain Alberta to Quebecers.

Compared with integration, finding a job was easy. I was taken on at The Canadian Press and spent a satisfying career there. My wife and I have three daughters and four grandchildren, all fluently bilingual. And I can boast: multi-cultural.

Allan Swift  
St. Lambert, Quebec

# MISSISQUOI HISTORICAL SOCIETY WINS NATIONAL MUSEUM VOLUNTEER AWARD

The Canadian Federation of Friends of Museums' prestigious Annual National Museum Volunteer Award was bestowed for 2023 on the Missisquoi Historical Society and Museum's Apple Pie Festival Committee.

For nearly four decades, the festival committee volunteers have promoted and preserved local history through the annual Apple Pie Festival in Stanbridge East, Quebec. The volunteer group consists of six core members: Pamela Realffe, Nicole Blinn, Robert Deschamps, Natalie Ingalls, Suzanne Dubé and Mona Beaulac. The committee grows to 80 additional volunteers annually to facilitate this living history event. Volunteers have contributed an extraordinary 10,000 hours to organizing and hosting the festival, and have welcomed over 30,000 museum visitors.

The Missisquoi Historical Society was founded in 1899 with the mission of conserving, promoting, and disseminating the history and heritage of Missisquoi County. Located in Quebec's Eastern Townships, the Society opened the Missisquoi County Museum in 1964 in order to expand its mission.

The Society's Apple Pie Festival Committee has proudly coordinated the long-standing tradition, which is an annual fundraising event bringing people of all ages and diverse communities to enjoy apple pie traditions and local history.

Apple orchards dot the region, and some 300 apple pies are baked and shared by volunteers at the festival,



Standing, L-R: Rosemary Wagner (CFFM Executive Director), Guenette Deschamps, Robert Deschamps, Nathalie Ingalls, Nicole Blinn, Mona Beaulac (Museum Director)

Sitting, L-R: Donna Butler, Pamela Realffe, Bruce Bolton (CFFM Board President)

which usually happens in peak apple-picking season (mid-to-late September). Throughout the years, the Apple Pie Festival has also hosted a variety of historical activities, including demonstrations of wood carving, blacksmithing and forging using traditional techniques and oxen rides.

The committee issued the following acknowledgement: "The Missisquoi Historical Society's Apple Pie Festival Committee is extremely honored to be granted this very prestigious award by the CFFM-CMA. Thank you to our nominators, Lac Brome Museum and the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network, for their support. Credit also goes to the 80 plus volunteers that make this festival a success.



Left: Photo: Dan Parsons.



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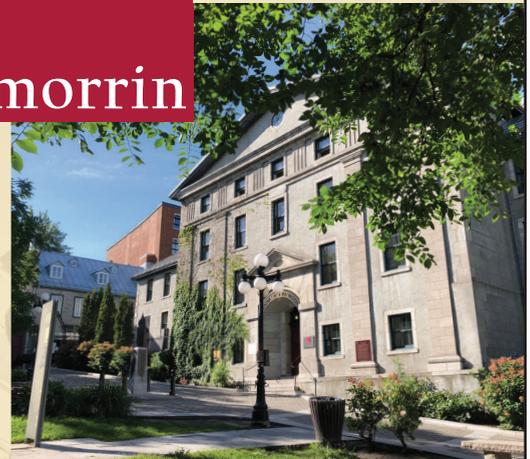


PHOTO: JULIE VOYER

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# MUSCULAR CHRISTIAN GENTLEMEN

## *Lacrosse as a Mass Spectator Sport*

by Sam Allison and Jon Bradley

As autumn begins to wane, various sports offer their discerning followers championship games to close out the spring and summer seasons. Contemporary Montrealers often watch baseball, football, or soccer during the start of winter. Interestingly, late nineteenth-century Montrealers and Torontonians flocked to lacrosse games in huge numbers.

Original versions of the game had been played by various First Nations teams. These games sometimes lasted several days, involved whole villages with many participants, and covered large areas of territory. The game, however, became a Montreal professional sports activity when two elements coalesced: (1) the rules were modernized and standardized, and (2) “cheap” public transportation made it much easier for the common citizen to attend the events.

In 1860, Dr. George Beers (1843-1900), a dentistry professor at McGill University, codified lacrosse, aligning twelve players per side on a limited, designated playing field. Beers’ limitations as to where, how, and the time required to play lacrosse enabled the game to become our first mass spectator sport.

The 1860s witnessed the commencement of the Grand Trunk Railway linking Montreal and Toronto via the Victoria Bridge to the United States. The first horse drawn streetcars for mass transport in urban Canada also started at this time. An efficient city-to-city railway, coupled with local streetcar transportation, enabled mass spectator sports to adopt a league format. For example, an 1876 *Gazette* report on the Montreal Shamrocks lacrosse team explains how lacrosse became an inter-provincial league game: “The arrangements made by the Grand Trunk Railway Company will permit many of their friends to accompany them. The double journey – there and back – can be made for one fare.” Cheap mass transport between Montreal and Toronto helped to create a paying audience for sports. The gradual reduction of working hours in the late nineteenth century meant that Saturday afternoons as well as Sundays were free time for the urban masses. *The Canadian Illustrated News* image from 1880 (October 16) of a lacrosse game in Montreal shows the vast growth of spectators by the

end of the nineteenth century.

Toronto and Montreal’s printed press was distributed widely by rail, and kept up-to-the-minute by another new and emerging invention: the electric telegraph. In an early 1880 comment, the *New York Times* noted that “the newspapers helped it [lacrosse] along so well” that “the game has spread all over the country [the United States] like a prairie fire. It has radiated from Toronto and Montreal to every great and most of the small cities”.

The *Gazette* and other Montreal newspapers boosted circulation by touting lacrosse games as more than mere local sporting events. American publications laughed at Canadian pretensions over lacrosse. In an October 11, 1869 article, the *New York Times* stated that George Beers was “a member of the Champion Club of the World, which, as all Canadians at any rate know, is the Montreal Lacrosse Club.” On the Canadian media landscape, Toronto regularly battled Montreal for what the Canadians labelled the “world champi-

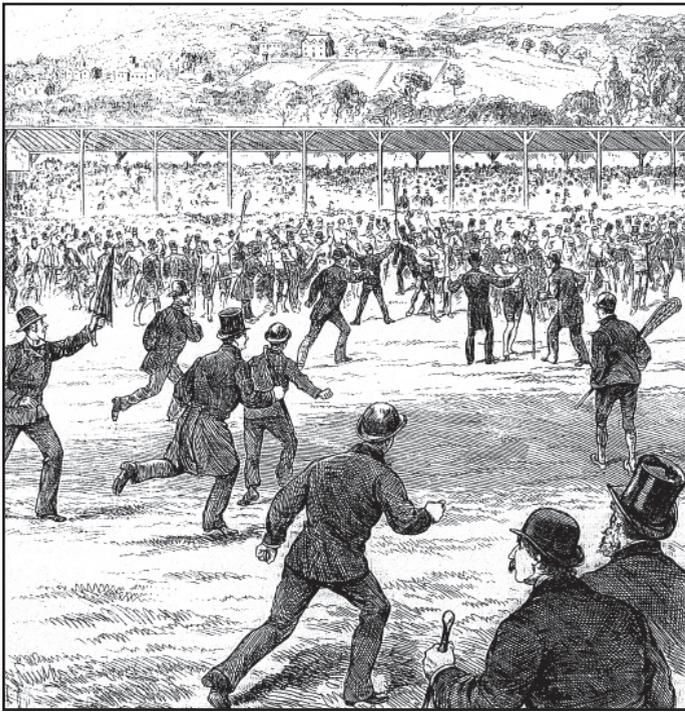
onship” of lacrosse.

Interestingly, lacrosse rapidly did indeed become a “world” game. The Summer Olympic games in 1904 (St. Louis) and 1908 (London) featured lacrosse as a sport, and in both years, the Canadian team came away with the gold medal. After having been relegated to demonstration status for the 1928, 1932, and 1948 Summer Games, lacrosse faded from the Olympic schedule. However, more recently, lacrosse has once again regained support amongst interested nations and may return to the 2028 Summer Olympics scheduled for Los Angeles.

Canadian lacrosse games often pitted Irish Catholic clubs, Irish Protestant clubs, and First Nations clubs against each other. The contemporary print media consistently deplored the resulting violence, while usually describing such antics in detail. In an account of a game between the Montreal Shamrocks and the local Mohawk club in 1886, the *New York Times* noted “they body checked them against trees and blackened their eyes and made their noses bleed, but the men from Green Isle got the best of the fighting.”

In some ways, the spectators cheered as much for the skill





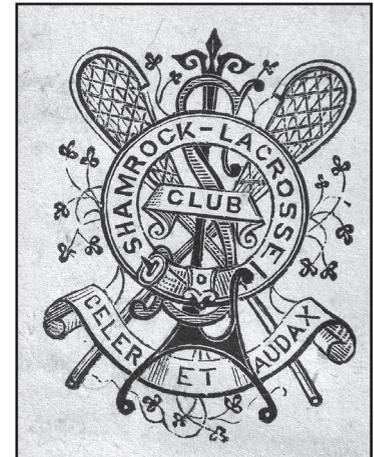
of the players as for the roughness. The *Montreal Herald* (November 24, 1886) commented that “the conduct of the crowd in Montreal is so barbarous that they [the Toronto team] will not again this year subject themselves to the insults and ruffianly treatment that they had to put up with Sunday... by their behaviour, the home team encouraged the mob.” However, these were Victorian times. While modern crowds sometimes invade a soccer field to attack the players, in those days the Toronto players attacked the Montreal crowd with their sticks and drove *them* from the stadium.

Extreme biases, gambling, and financial chicanery characterized Canadian lacrosse. By agreement, games were to rotate equally between cities, thus offering a sense of equal home advantage. However, in 1886, the Toronto lacrosse team refused to comply with the rival Montreal team’s “Committee of Management” decision that more games should be played in Montreal. In a show of defiance, the Toronto team did not show up for the final match. The referee – one Dr. Guerin of Montreal – then awarded the game, along with the championship, to Montreal. Furthermore, it surfaced that the Montreal club had previously shortchanged the Toronto club of their fair financial gate from previous games. Chicanery indeed!

Lacrosse and its accompanying violence and intense rivalry drew huge crowds. Nevertheless, lacrosse declined while both baseball and ice hockey grew without the same reliance on outright violence. The idea of “winning at all cost” was alien to the ideology spread by the bestselling book,

*Tom Brown’s School Days*. “Tom Brown” went to Rugby, a private school in England. Gentlemen played by the rules and accepted defeat with dignity. Rugby and soccer went on to become popular sports. The media described rugby as a “game for hooligans played by gentlemen” while soccer was seen as a game for “gentlemen played by hooligans”.

George Beers claimed that lacrosse produced “muscular Christian gentlemen.” However, given nineteenth-century media descriptions of lacrosse and its attending spectators, only the first of those three virtues was conspicuous.



**Sam Allison** is the author of *Driv’n by Fortune: The Scots’ March to Modernity in America, 1745-1812* (Dundurn Press, 2015), as well as several high school history and economics books. Now retired from the Faculty of Education at McGill, Sam is guest editor of the *London Journal of Canadian Studies*.

**Jon Bradley** is a retired McGill University Faculty of Education professor; co-author of the second edition of *Making Sense: A Student’s Guide to Research and Writing in Education* (Oxford University Press, 2017) and guest editor of the *London Journal of Canadian Studies*.



Top left: Canadian Illustrated News, October 16, 1880.

Bottom: Lacrosse, after James Duncan, 1942. McCord Museum View-26265.

Top centre: Notman Studio, Dr. W. George Beers, 1876. McCord Museum, II-42992.1.  
Top right: J. Walker, Emblem, National Lacrosse Association, 1867. McCord Museum.

## ODD OBJECTS

# AT YOUR SERVICE: THE ANNUNCIATOR BOARD

*Beaulne Museum, Coaticook*  
by Emma McCully

The Beaulne Museum at the illustrious Château Norton in the town of Coaticook is home to a host of charming exhibits and objects. What was once the residence of the Norton family, whose patriarch, Arthur Osmore Norton, was a manufacturer of railway jacks, is full of era-appropriate artefacts.

There is one room, and one object within it, that stands out especially. Just off the entrance hall of the sprawling mansion is a room featuring a permanent exhibit highlighting the Norton family's involvement in Coaticook and the Eastern Townships. When the house was inhabited by the Nortons, the room would have served as Arthur Osmore Norton's "office inside the home from where he also ran his business" (Beaulne Museum). Given the prominent members of society that lived in this house, it is clear that the wealthy former occupants were not the ones doing the housework; such tasks were reserved for servants.

One might assume that there would be bells of some sort to tell the servants that they were needed in a given room of the house by a given member of the household – the kind of bells one sees in period movies. However, in 1912, when the house was built, technology was advancing quickly. Château Norton featured an object that looks much like a telephone switchboard. There are no bells, but there are buttons. This object is what is called an annunciator board. Its main purpose was to alert the staff of the house which rooms required their service and when. For the Norton family, there were buttons on the walls of the dining room and living room, where the family might be spending a good amount of their time, and where they were most likely to call upon a servant.

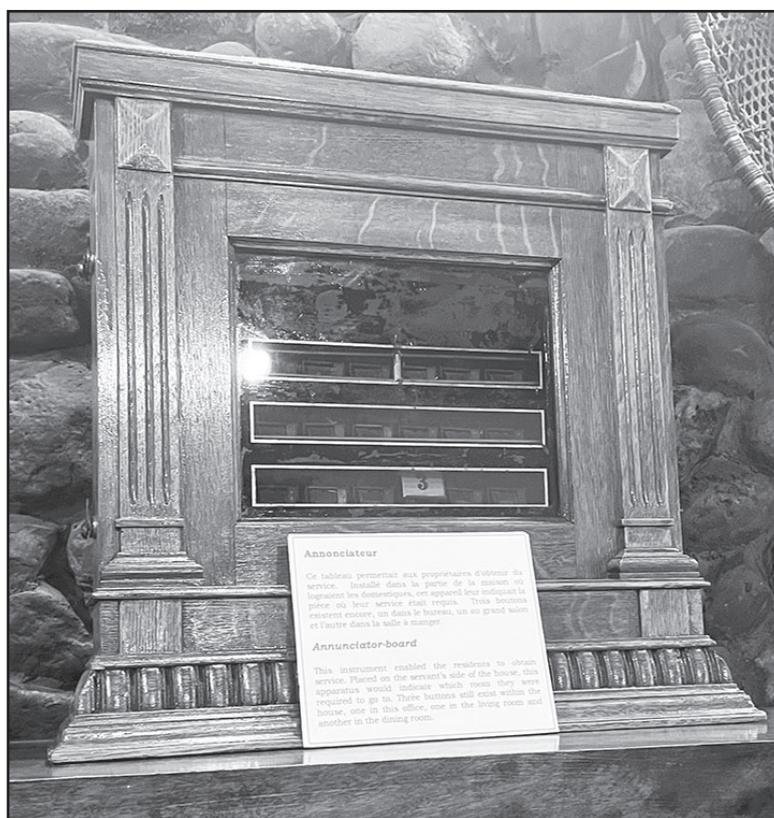
One could infer that for domestic servants and household members alike, this was a much more convenient way to conduct their interactions (Palmer and West, 3). Servants knew

exactly which room required their assistance, and members of the family were able to direct them straight to where they were needed more quickly than waiting for them to find them. The idea that the touch of a button in the wall could bring a servant to the exact room where they were needed can challenge visitors' perceptions of the time period as well as the technology available (Schroeder, 527). The artefact's description informs

visitors that "three buttons still exist within the house," and specifies in which rooms they can be found. Visitors can head right back out that office door in search of them, scanning the walls of the dining room, the living room and the office itself for those little indicators of the home's previous wealth and prestige.

The museum has many other fascinating objects in its collection, and holds temporary exhibits and events throughout the year. But make sure to check out the interesting annunciator board if you are making a trip to Coaticook.

*Bishop's University student  
Emma McCully interned  
for QAHN in 2023.*



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# 2023 HERITAGE ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

## FIRST PRIZE

### Ms. Hazel

by Matthew Farag  
Grade 6, Gardenview Elementary School  
St. Laurent, Quebec

Most people think heroes are big and strong and fly around fighting crime, but my essay is about Hazel Livingstone. She is 84 years old. Here is why I think she is a hero in our community.

Ms. Hazel was born in 1934 in Verdun but moved to Saint-Laurent in the 1970s. She has great stories about playing with Oscar Peterson and his brothers and sisters when she was little, but she also has stories about being called the N-word. That's why she has always volunteered to do the Black History window displays at Parkdale and Gardenview schools.

Ms. Hazel loves helping kids. She used to work at a halfway house for boys recovering from drugs, and she was a Sunday school teacher and helper at St. Mark's Anglican Church, which she did up until last year when she became too weak to take the bus. She was also a lunch monitor at Gardenview School for 29 years. Working with kids takes a lot of energy, but Ms. Hazel loves children. Over the years, she has probably helped thousands of children in our community, including our mayor, Alan de Sousa. She took care of him when he was a little boy playing in Hartenstein Park!

The last time I spoke with Ms. Hazel, she said she still loves Saint-Laurent but people aren't as friendly anymore. I wish more people were like her. Her courage and kindness inspire me to help others because that is what a real hero does.



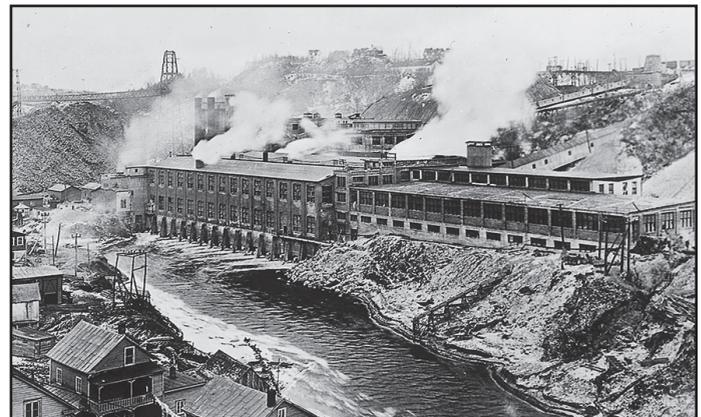
people from the other team.

I strongly believe that attending a Shawinigan Cataractes game can make our whole community come closer together, even if we will win or lose. Attending a Cataractes game can make all of us come together. At the Centre Gervais Auto people from other cities like Grandes-Piles and/or St-Flore come to see the Shawinigan Cataractes. The Cataractes can really help us come together as a family and community.

The Cataractes are not about us winning or losing they are more for us to really come together. Because if we lose, we do not care we say "next time our team will win" and it does! The Cataractes are good for our community

because they help us know that winning is not the importance.

Now we can see why the Shawinigan Cataractes team can make us come together, even with our enemies. Also, we can see why winning is never the importance to our life. I hope to one day see you at a Shawinigan Cataractes game.



## SECOND PRIZE

### The Cataractes

by Aurélie Houle  
Grade 5B, Shawinigan High School  
Shawinigan, Quebec

There he is Mavrik Bourque, the very best player on the Cataractes team, he

shoots, and he scores, again!! Everybody stands up and cheers, as we all chant Shawiii, Shawi, Shawi, Shawiii, Shawiiii, even

## THIRD PRIZE

### La Belgo

by Riley Perreault Turcotte  
Grade 5B, Shawinigan High School  
Shawinigan, Quebec

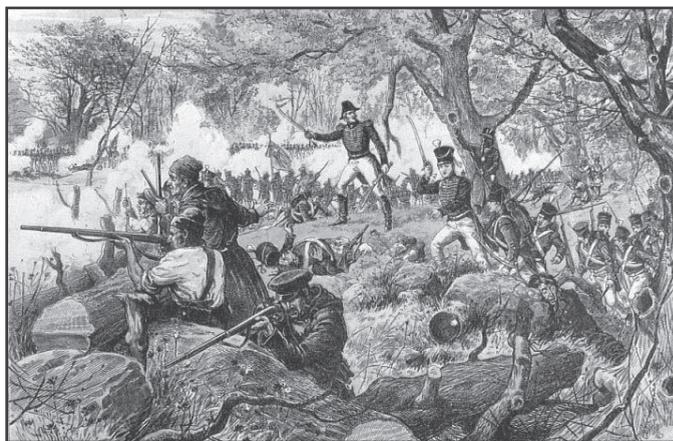
Ever wonder what those old, graffitied ruins are when you pass in Shawinigan? Well, they are what stayed of the demolition of La Belgo. La Belgo was built in 1900 and was demolished in the year 2000 and made for making newspapers. Back

then it furnished New York and Quebec.

I find that it was important to our community because it permitted people to have a job. At least 6,000 people worked there, and it brought new people to our community because they would settle down here. Can you imagine the amount of hard work for all that logging and paper making?

In my opinion it is also one of the big companies who helped our city become what it is today. Without it I think that there wouldn't be that much English speakers nor this school. It also made a lot of reviews on Quebec so people would come.

I believe that La Belgo is an important part of our history because it is one of the main reasons that there are English speakers not only in Montreal but also in Quebec and Shawinigan. Make sure that when you go to Shawinigan you go visit the ruins of La Belgo.



## HONOURABLE MENTION

John McNider  
by Alizée Fiset-Poirier  
Grade 6, Metis Beach School  
Métis-sur-Mer, Quebec



**J**ohn MacNider, born on June 10, 1790, is the one and only founder of M é t i s - sur-Mer. He lived in Kilmarnock, Scotland, in his early life, and afterwards decided to come to Quebec to work for his uncle Mathew. Later, John then bought a very large parcel of land in the lower Saint-Lawrence which is now the town of Métis-sur-Mer. He acquired this territory at an auction for

about 1,800 pounds sterling (which is equivalent to about 2,655 CAD).

Did you know John MacNider has a street named after him? In fact, he had a town named in his honour, in addition to many other tributes.

William MacNider had three sons and John MacNider was the third son. Many people in the region are descendants of the MacNider family. In addition to his own family, he helped hundreds of other Scottish people immigrate to Quebec. He was a businessman who invested greatly in making Metis the hub of the Gaspésie. He was involved in building a road that connected to Metis to all sorts of other communities along the Saint-Lawrence. This helped bring settlers and industry into the region. He died in 1829 at the age of 68 years old.

## HONOURABLE MENTION

### The Historical Battle of Chateauguy (1813)

by Ayden Fraser-Bagnato  
Grade 5, Harmony Elementary School  
Châteauguay, Quebec

**T**he Battle of Chateauguy started in 1813 on October 25 at Allan's Corners near present-day Ormstown, Quebec. It was the British, Canadians, Native Americans commanded by Charles de Salaberry against the Americans. It was 1,530 against 4,000! The Canadians won against the Americans. The reason for the battle was, like many other wars, that the Americans wanted the Canadians' land. What is impressive, was that the Canadians had some volunteers with their army. The troops included people from Kahnawake, Chateauguy and places nearby. The battle ended the next day on October 26..

I think it is good to learn about the Battle of Chateauguy, because it is good to learn what happened in the past. It is sad that it happened, it is sad for even war that happened. In Grade 4, we learned about World War 2, what we learned about World War 2 is like why it happened. It happened because the people wanted land, just like the Battle of Chateauguy the people wanted land. It all came down to people being greedy, if people were not greedy, the world would be a better place.

Hon. Marie-Claude  
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Left: William Notman & Son, Joh McNider.  
McCord Museum, VIEW-26111.

Right: Henri Julien, Battle of Chateauguy,  
Le Journal de Dimanche, June 24, 1884.

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## 2023 HERITAGE PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



### FIRST PRIZE

Ruohan Wallis  
Secondary 5, Alexander Galt Regional High School  
Sherbrooke, Quebec  
Title: "Multicoloured Gobblers"

**A** gnarled, knotted apple tree grows in the front yard of my grandparents' home. Covered with lichen and mushrooms, parts of its bark cracked and peeling, it seems quite out of place, especially in the meticulous surroundings my grandma so attentively created. One of my uncles had planted the tiny seed when he was a kid and my grandma had not expected it to grow. She keeps it as a mother who loves her son and a reminder to expect the unexpected. The turkey tail fungus is the main mushroom that thrives on the tree. With its captivating layers of colours and medicinal uses it struck me as a reflection of the reminder "expect the unexpected," an unexpected beauty that most people don't notice from mushrooms. Its medicinal properties can be perceived as a way of giving back to the tree as it doesn't produce any fruit. An unexpected entity that stands day to day, as important as any flora and fauna, all stemming from the decision of a little kid who desired to see something grow.

### SECOND PRIZE

Victoria Arana Castillo  
Secondary 5, Rosemere High School  
Rosemère, Quebec  
Title: "A Piece of Home"



**I**mmigrating is something I never thought I would do. When I did, I never thought about the many experiences and kinds of homesickness one can experience. Being away from home makes you appreciate what you once had, in a new light. You begin to hold your culture closer to your heart, and guard it as if it were a treasure. It's a beautiful irony, how distance makes one appreciate the once mundane more than ever imagined.

Talavera is an artisanal pottery originating from my home state, Puebla, Mexico. It is the product of Spanish and Mexican cultures inter-

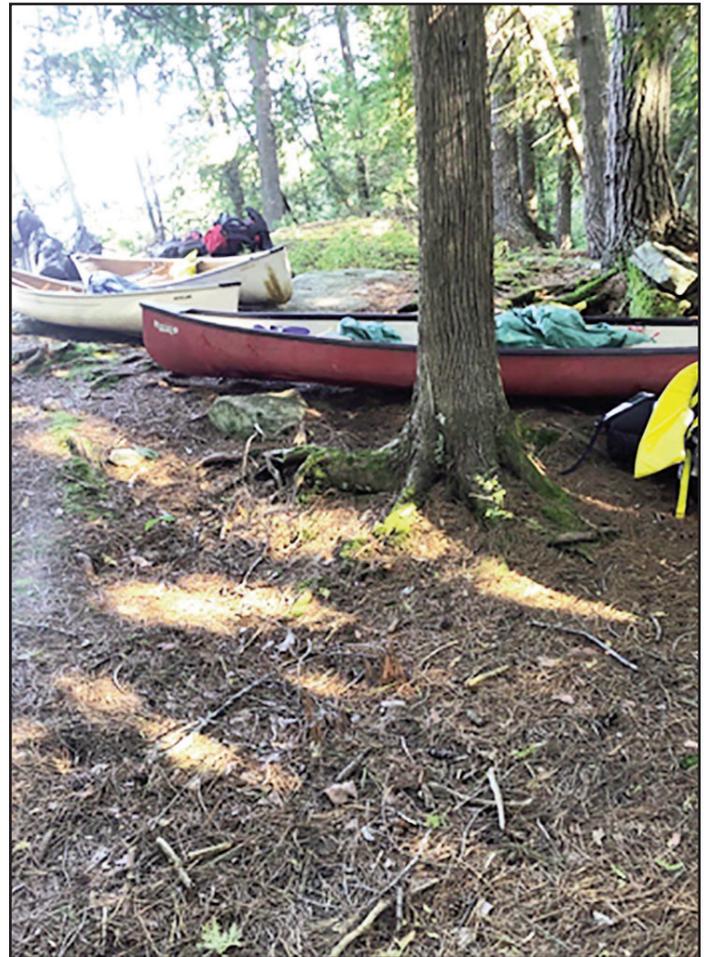
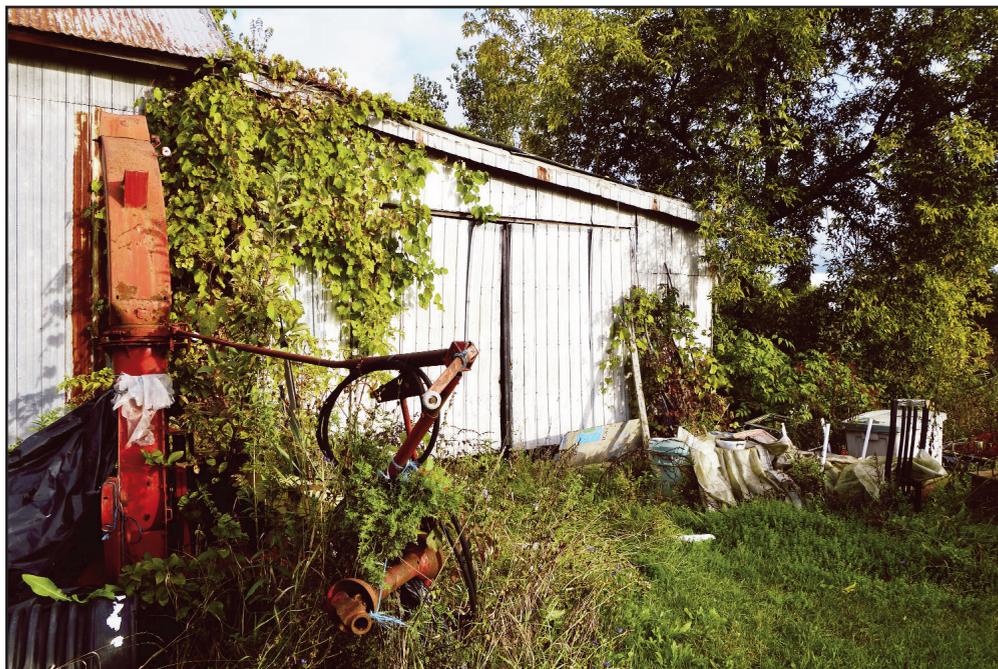
twining, a beautiful testament of cultural coexistence. The original tradition was brought from Talavera de la Reina in Spain to Mexico during the colonial period (sixteenth century). The craft took root in the state of Puebla, where high quality clay and pigments were abundant, and demand for tiles in the newly established monasteries was high. Throughout the many years of colonialism, this form of pottery, merged with the pre-existing style called “Majorica,” gave way to the now Talavera.

Every time I hold these pieces, every time I trace their delicate artistry, I count myself lucky to have a little piece of this flavourful, colourful, beautiful thing that is my culture. A little piece of home.

### THIRD PRIZE

Ella Mottillo  
 Secondary 5, Rosemere High School  
 Rosemère, Quebec  
 Title: “Barn of Knick-Knacks”

**L**ong ago this barn was livid with life. Cows, sheep, chickens, goats, dogs, rats, and all kinds of animals lived in this barn one time long ago. My Nonno lived in Montreal North as an excavator, though his favourite place to be was on the farm on Chemin St. Henri. He loved working in his garden and being with the farm animals. The farm life reminded him of his early life when he lived in Italy and his family had a farm. When he came to Quebec he and his brother bought this farmland to recreate the experience of farm life just as he had in Italy. It was one of his joys and pride in life. Even after my father bought the land, Nonno still worked in his garden. Now this barn is devoid of life, no more farm animals, no more Nonno. All that remains in the barn are the old tools and knick-knacks Nonno kept to work his land.



### HONOURABLE MENTION

Meadow Cortese  
 Secondary 5, Dr. Wilbert Keon School  
 Chapeau, Quebec  
 Title: “Trippin”

**I** have lived most of my life in the Pontiac. I am truly fortunate to attend a small school called Dr. Wilbert Keon. We have an Outdoor Ed class throughout our school year and we have an annual canoe trip to Algonquin Park. It was a life-changing experience, and I am glad I attended it. I have gone twice now and, since I am in grade 11, I will not have the chance to go again, but it could be great to plan one on my own with friends and family. You learn a lot from the experience, like how to start a fire, how to pitch a tent properly, how to portage a canoe and many more skills that could be used in your life at some point. The canoe trip has been going on for several years and it is always hosted by amazing teachers who make the best

of the situation. Wind, rain or shine, the show must go on. A trip to the falls is also part of it. Canoeing is a big part of the culture in our community because canoes have been a part of Canadian culture since the beginning of time. Many Indigenous people used canoes for transportation. Being outdoors allows one to learn about where we come from, and this is a big part of our community.

## HONOURABLE MENTION

William Dale  
 Grade 11, Pontiac High School  
 Shawville, Quebec  
 Title: "The Early Loss of the Dales"



**A**s a grandson, I am saddened that I never had the chance to meet my grandfather, William Hubert Dale. However, my father, Phil, has shared many stories with me about his life throughout his own, and other family members have generously reached out to share some insight on his life. And now I feel like I know him in some small way.

William Hubert Dale, known to his friends and family as "William Jr.," or "Bill" for short, was born on November 21, 1919, in Thorne, Shawville, probably at home. His father, William Edward Dale, passed away when William Jr. was just

two years old, and his mother, Katherine Acres, left for Ottawa with his sister, Ann, leaving him behind with his uncle, Robert Dale. William Jr. was also joined by his half-brother, Melvin Broome, who was younger than him and was taken in and raised by their Aunt Eliza on his father's side. This early loss of his father and separation from his mother and siblings shaped William Jr.'s childhood and influenced his outlook on life.

William Jr.'s childhood was challenging, but he showed resilience and determination from a young age. He attended Rooney School, located near Sparling's Lake in Thorne, until

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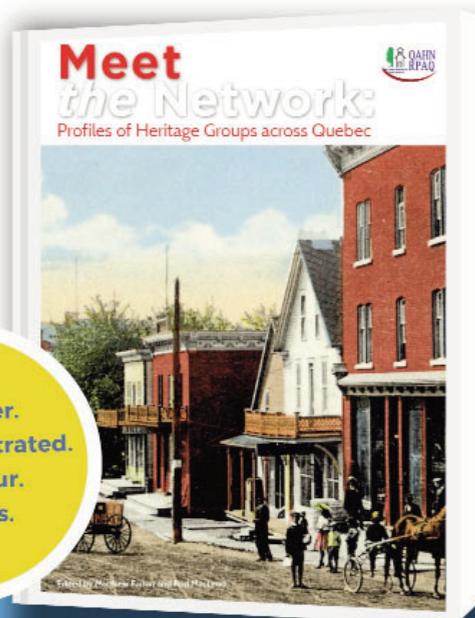
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Grade 7. However, at the age of 14, he quit school to start working at the logging camp. Despite facing hardships and not receiving the same treatment as the other children he was raised with, William Jr. remained focused on his work and responsibilities. He developed a strong work ethic that stayed with him throughout his life.

In his later years, William Jr. joined the army and served his country. He was known for his sense of humour and often joked about graduating from "Rooney's College," referring to his time at Rooney School. "I done graduated from Rooney's College," he'd say. He had a passion for boxing and enjoyed listening to fights on the radio on Saturday nights.

William Jr. was also known for his dancing skills. He and his wife, whom he met at a dance in Ladysmith, would often dance at parties and events. He would often ruffle people's feathers by being the jokester he was, saying things like "How could the Blessed Virgin Mary be a virgin if she gave birth to Jesus?" much to the amusement of those around him. He even attended midnight mass with his family, and when the altar boys would pour the wine, he would chuckle, adding his own unique perspective to the religious proceedings.

One of the significant milestones in William Jr.'s life was his marriage to his wife, whom he took care of with great love and care. He was known for his thoughtfulness and would often make her favorite snacks or do chores to help her. He was also a caring son-in-law to his in-laws, Theodore Plouffe and Celina Tourangeau, who were their neighbours. He would often help them with household tasks and drive them to the hospital when needed.

Despite the initial challenges of their different religious backgrounds, William Jr. and his wife had a strong and loving relationship that lasted throughout their lives. Terry Dale, my uncle, shared: "When Mom was pregnant with Ann, Dad would bring us with him in the back of the truck, and off we'd go into the bush, cutting whole limbs off the trees so we could pick cherries for her."

William Jr.'s legacy lives on through his children, Phil, Terry, Barry and Ann, and his grandchildren. He is remembered for his hard work, resilience, and kindness. Despite facing challenges and loss in his early years, he remained committed to his responsibilities and took care of his loved ones. He was known for his sense of humour, love of dancing, and dedication to his family. His legacy serves as an inspiration to his descendants to face challenges with resilience, maintain a strong work ethic, and cherish family values.

It's a shame I wasn't able to meet this man, who'd seemed to send these values along to my father. But sometimes things may happen for reasons we may not understand. I'm honoured to share his same values and mannerisms that I will one day pass to my own children and family. Sometimes, people leave behind a small trace of their presence even after they have passed away. Although we may not always recognize it ourselves, it is a precious family heirloom that we all hold onto. It takes someone who knew these individuals to point it out to us and reveal the special connection that we still have with them.

## HONOURABLE MENTION

Jessie Lanterne  
Secondary 3, Rosemere High School  
Rosemère, Quebec  
Title: "No Prob-llama"

**C**ovid-19, what a draining and sad experience! Though as a family it was a great opportunity to find great beautiful things through it. Spontaneous road trips and surprisingly amazing side of the road finds became part of our yearly routines. This photo is one moment I definitely won't forget. By the side of the road we saw this sign: "Alpaga Farm." We actually drove past it, thought about it and went back. The alpaca were beautiful and it was so fun to experience that all with friends and family through this hard and draining experience. Seeking new things and spontaneous adventures is definitely a family trait we all have.

*[Editor's note: The photo accompanying this essay is featured on the front cover of the magazine.]*



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ODD OBJECTS

# THE CHICKEN GUILLOTINE

*Lac-Brome Museum, Knowlton*

by Emma McCully

Lac-Brome Museum in Knowlton, which is run by the Brome County Historical Society, is devoted to telling the story of the region. Founded in 1897, the historical society has amassed a staggering collection of objects that are displayed in seven different buildings. One of the museum’s more unusual objects is its famous chicken guillotine, or decapitator. This artefact is exhibited in the Old Firehall and Tower building, along with other pieces of ironwork and farming tools.

The chicken guillotine is made of iron with a wooden handle and base. It is a fraction of the size of a real guillotine, and is operated manually by lifting the handle with the attached blade and bringing it down upon the neck of the hen, severing the head instantly.

What is unique about Lac-Brome Museum’s chicken guillotine is that it was not made with a handle attached to a spring, which became more prevalent in later models (*Popular Science*, 66). Instead of having to lift the handle, and therefore the blade, after every cut, future designs would incorporate a spring which allowed the handle to revert to its original position without any outside manipulation, further simplifying an already uncomplicated process (*Popular Science*, 66). Rather than using other methods of beheading chickens, such as a knife or axe, or even one’s own hands, farmers found the chicken guillotine a faster and easier way to proceed (*Popular Mechanics*, 715).

Invented in Dallas, Texas, by Frank S. Rece, the chicken guillotine was considered a “more accurate and humane” way to end the animal’s life than these other methods. The method was also far more “adaptable for use by women,” who according to Rece, were “not usually skilled in chicken-killing” (*Popular Science*, 66). It would seem, then, that the chicken guillotine had as a goal to aid in the process of developing larger scale poultry slaughter, and to make the process quicker and more compassionate for the hens and more accessible to a broader population, including women.

Lac-Brome Museum’s guillotine was donated by Arthur Faucher in 1985, but the rationale for the



artefact’s presence in the museum dates back to 1851, when “in terms of industry, the activities in Brome revolved almost entirely around the processing of local natural and agricultural products” (Booth, 66). With Brome County’s economy being so centred on local agriculture, including both crops and raising livestock, there was a need to ensure the efficiency of the associated processes in order to sustain the county and its inhabitants. Most of what was being produced was for subsistence farming, since transportation in and out of the area was not developed enough to support a consistent trade network (Booth, 66). In order to feed the population, many chickens had to be slaughtered at one go, and the speed and efficiency of the chicken guillotine was key to the sustainability and proficiency of the county’s poultry industry (*Popular Mechanics*, 715).

The chicken guillotine is certainly one of the more outlandish artefacts at Lac-Brome Museum. But like so many other objects at the museum, it contributes to a unique visiting experience.

*Bishop’s University student Emma McCully interned for QAHN in 2023.*

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# THE INIMITABLE GRAHAM TOWNSEND

## *A Canadian Fiddle Legend's Quebec Roots*

by Gordon Rainey  
with Glenn Patterson

My brother Johnny recently told me about an incident that took place back in 1985 when our parents were about to celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary. Our sister Clara was organizing a get-together in the Grenville community hall and had invited our second cousin, renowned Canadian fiddler Graham Townsend, to entertain the gathering with some fiddle music. Since Graham was family, Clara had assumed he would do it for free, but was shocked when he told her that he expected to be paid. She refused. The story did reduce Graham in my esteem somewhat, but I also realized that I had narrowly missed a rare opportunity to actually meet him.

I have a personal interest in the late Graham Townsend, because he was family. We were also about the same age. Our common great-grandparents were John Rainey (1847-1910) and Laura Hewson (1852-1926). Laura was from Buckingham, Quebec, where Graham grew up, while John was from Rawcliffe, Quebec, in the Township of Grenville, where I grew up. But we never met. I knew and loved the musician, but I never knew the man. I set out to piece together a fuller picture of Graham Townsend, drawing on album liner notes, media reports, and the testimonials of his peers.

Having learned the art of bow and fiddle at an early age, Townsend developed into a popular old-time fiddler and prolific composer. One of his “Banff-Rodeo” album titles from the mid-1960s described him as “inimitable.” The more I learn about Graham Townsend, the more I feel that the term is fitting. Within Canada’s old-time fiddle community, Townsend’s reputation is up there with only a few other prestigious players, such as Don Messer, Winston “Scotty”

Fitzgerald, and “Ti” Jean Carignan. His legacy reflects a high degree of commitment to his craft, with nearly virtuosic command of both the bow and left-hand technique. His compositions and repertoire were extensive, his music was memorable, the string of championships won and awards received is impressive,



and his induction into a half-dozen “fiddling halls-of-fame” is mind boggling. As an example of his creativity, for Canada’s Centennial in 1967, he released a 14-track Banff album entitled *Salute to Canadian Prime Ministers*, with compositions in a variety of musical forms (reels, jigs, waltzes, a march, two-step, polka, strathspeys, hornpipes, and clogs) for each of Canada’s prime ministers. He has been hailed as “King of the Fiddle,” anointed the “Messiah of Fiddling,” and credited with having spread the gospel of old-time fiddle music throughout the world.

He also had a clear sense of style. Rudy Meeks, who roasted Townsend at his induction into the Canadian Country Music and Dancing Hall of Fame in 1998, noted that he was always “a spiffy dresser” and was never caught with “the ass out of his pants” – a phrase that

makes Townsend sound like a bit of a “rhinestone cowboy.” Musician Carol Kennedy, who met Townsend when they were both 16 at the Canadian Open Old Time Fiddle Contest, reported that he wore a yellow sequined suit. Consistent with this image is the Don Cherry-type gaudy jacket he wears on the cover of *Championship Fiddle Favourites*. Was there perhaps a touch of vanity and arrogance in Townsend’s personality that would account for him asking to be paid to play at our parents’ anniversary?

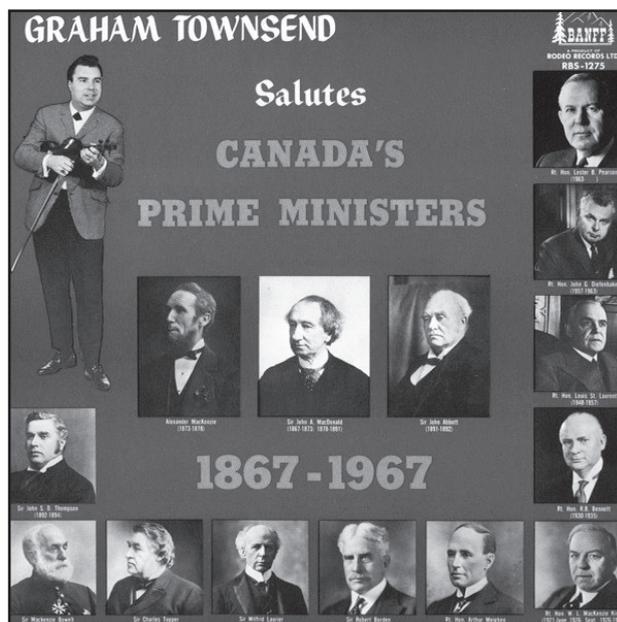
By most accounts, Townsend was non-confrontational, friendly, and helpful, graced with a sense of humor and a good measure of humility. His wife, Eleanor Reed, said he was a good husband and father, who always had a positive attitude during trying times. Townsend’s quiet, sincere, down-to-earth personality endeared him to competitors and audiences alike. And then, there is his music: that truckload of his albums, with many of his own compositions. More than twenty years after Townsend’s death, much of his music is accessible digitally via YouTube and blogs specializing in digitizing and sharing out-of-print Canadian country and fiddle LPs. (See Lonesome Lefty’s Scratchy Attic blog to hear many albums where Townsend is the principal artist or an accompanist.) His music remains timeless, perhaps inimitable.

So how did this family phenomenon come about? Doubtless it involved a combination of genetics, encouragement, determination, and the local musical heritage of the Ottawa Valley where he grew up. I’m an “insider,” but without the benefit of having directly known him. So this article explores Graham Townsend’s family background, tracing where he fits in my Rainey family tree, as well as providing some hints on his character, conditions of his upbringing,

and musical influences from family and neighbours which helped mold the fiddling superstar he became.

Graham Townsend's grandmother was Agnes Rainey (1893-1979), from Rawcliffe in the Lower Laurentians. After her father's death in 1910, at age 17, Agnes left Rawcliffe, along with her older sister Elizabeth (Lizzie), and their mother, Laura (Hewson) Rainey. They settled in Buckingham, where Laura had grown up. At 22, although unwed, Agnes had a daughter she named Enid Rainey (1915-1983). Enid, her only daughter, was raised in Buckingham more by her aunt Lizzie and uncle Edwin Dunning than by her own mother. In 1940, at the age of 25, Enid married Fred Townsend, age 40, of Perth, Ontario. Their son, Graham, was born in 1942, in Toronto, but was raised largely in Buckingham. A congenital eye condition meant that Graham was legally blind his whole life.

Both maternal and paternal sides of Graham's family provided crucial yet distinct family and community contexts for his musical development. Graham Townsend began playing on a toy fiddle at age eight in Buckingham, where his passion was directly nurtured by his mother's extended family, and in the wider region of the Lower Laurentians and Ottawa Valley. Sam Cormier's liner notes for the album *Le Violon / The Fiddle*, produced for the prestigious American folk label "Rounder Records" in 1975, point out many of these influences. His great uncle Edwin Dunning was also a fiddler and was known for his particularly fine violin tone; he and Lizzie always welcomed young Graham into their house. In addition to the Dunnings, Graham's cousin Gerald Hewson, of nearby Poltimore, Quebec, would take him to listen to local fiddlers Billy and Lorne Smith who specialized in Irish and Scottish repertoire. Graham saw another great uncle, Sam Rainey, of Grenville, less frequently than he saw Edwin Dunning, but Sam constituted an



important influence on his development nevertheless. Dan LaSalle, a neighbour in Buckingham, deepened Graham's knowledge of the French Canadian and Irish repertoire (Cormier). The Townsend family would leave Buckingham and Western Quebec for Toronto when Graham was nine, but they would return several times a year and spend many vacations there (Cormier).

A sense of the deep fiddle and dance culture of Western Quebec and the larger Ottawa Valley area is conveyed in the following anecdote from the liner notes (written by Graham Townsend and his wife, Eleanor, herself an exceptional, championship fiddler) of *The Great*

*Canadian Fiddle*, a 1976 album showcasing Canada's diverse regional fiddle styles:

*One Sunday in the late 1950s, young Graham was driving in the Pontiac County area of western Quebec, going from Wolf Lake to Quyon, with his father Fred and Ottawa Valley step-dancers George McKenny and Andy Dougherty. Their car broke down, so naturally they put a plywood board on the roadside, and everyone took turns step-dancing, Graham fiddling away while Fred played the harmonica. Soon traffic was backed up for miles. People left their cars to join the fun, along with two provincial police officers who happened to be fiddle freaks. Nobody liked the fellow who finally got the car working again.*

Graham's father, Fred, provided access to a somewhat different sphere of musical activity than that furnished by his mother's family and community in the Lower Laurentians. Fred was a British Home Child, born in Reading, England, in 1900, and adopted in either 1908 or 1912 into the legendary vaudeville family, the Marks, of Christie Lake, near Perth, Ontario. The Marks toured extensively across rural communities and smaller Canadian cities in covered wagons from the 1870s until the 1920s. In this milieu, Fred learned both har-

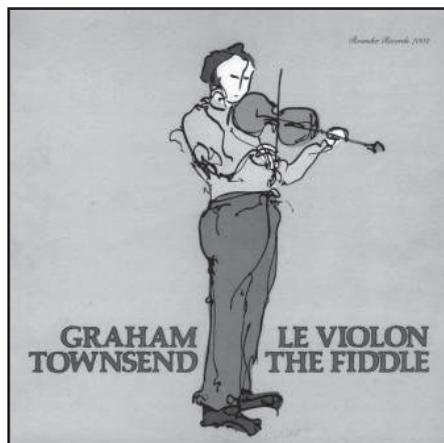
monica (mouth organ) and the art of square-dance calling as a teenager. Fred conveyed his keen sense of appropriate dance tempos to his son when Graham was learning fiddle (Cormier). We learn much more about Fred from the liner notes (written by Graham) on *Saturday Night Square Dance*, a 1973 album featuring Fred Townsend providing the square dance calls to the music of the "Backwoodsmen." Fred began calling dances as a teenager and led several Toronto-area square dance groups, including "The Hay Makers" from around Oshawa and the Hannigan Boys (Alf and Charlie). When Don Messer was touring through Ontario in the



Top: Graham Townsend Salutes Canada's Prime Ministers album cover. [scratchyattic.blogspot.com](http://scratchyattic.blogspot.com).

Bottom: *Saturday Night Square Dance* album cover. [discogs.com](http://discogs.com).

late 1940s, he asked Fred Townsend to be the caller for his legendary radio ensemble “The Islanders” (Townsend).



Fred was a seasoned professional entertainer, and his industry connections to Don Messer and “The Islanders” and the best fiddlers in southern Ontario were crucial in launching his son’s career. For example, Graham studied extensively with two of the most esteemed fiddlers in southern Ontario, Billy Crawford and Tom McQueston, both born in Antrim, Northern Ireland, and living in the Toronto area. Graham’s two-year tutelage with Crawford, who had exceptional technique and command of the bow, was especially rigorous. Graham would learn hundreds of the tunes in his repertoire from Crawford while also being instructed in mastering the full-length of the bow and the finest nuances of tone production. At age nine, Graham entered the under-30 category of the fiddle contest at the Canadian National Exhibition and took first prize, an achievement he would repeat the following two years (Cormier). As he entered his teenage years, he not only continued to cement his reputation as a contest fiddler with a string of first place trophies across Ontario, but he began performing on CBC television with Don Messer and releasing his own records for the “Rodeo” label based variously in Montreal, Halifax, and Toronto. The relationship with CBC and record label “Rodeo” and its subsidiaries “Banff” and “London” would form the foundations for Graham Townsend’s commercial career. In many ways, he became the heir to Don Messer’s nationwide legacy, active in numerous local and national

radio and television variety programs. In addition to releasing over forty albums beginning in 1958, he was soon a regular performer on nationally syndicated television shows including Tommy Hunter, Ronnie Prophet, and Family Brown.

Although Townsend would establish his reputation as a nationwide talent, he never lost his connection with the culture and people of the Ottawa Valley. He returned to the region between 1964 and 1967, moving to Ottawa and taking over from fiddler Ward Allen, leading the “Happy Wanderers” and their massively influential daily country show on radio station CFRA and a weekly television show on CJOH-TV. Through events celebrating Canada’s centennial, he developed a close association with champion dancer Donnie Gilchrist, of Campbell’s Bay in the Pontiac, and with Gilchrist’s protégé, Gilles Roy, of Cumberland, Ontario, across the river from Buckingham. Townsend composed tunes for both dancers, both appearing on his 1968 album *Graham Townsend and his Country Fiddle*; “Gilles Roy,” a bouncy two-step, has become a standard in the repertoire of Canadian Fiddlers.

By speaking with Ottawa Valley musicians Gail Gavan (Quyon, Quebec) and Carol Kennedy (Maxville, Ontario), we were able to glean more insights into Graham Townsend’s personality and his connection to the Ottawa Valley region, especially on the Quebec side.

Gail Gavan’s father, Lennox, owned and operated Gavan’s Hotel, which would become legendary in the musical culture of the Pontiac and Ottawa Valley. Her father noticed that many of the local labourers visiting the bar were musical, and so he left guitars, fiddles, and other instruments for them to play when they stopped in. Beginning in the 1960s, he added the Shamrock Lounge, a part of the hotel devoted to local music. Every St. Patrick’s Day for many years between the late 1960s and 1980s, Graham Townsend and his piano accompanist, Carol Kennedy, were the featured entertainment. From a young age, Gail Gavan fondly remembers these performances and how gracious Townsend was to all those who came out to hear his music. Although he struck her as a bit shy off-stage, he would say hello to everyone and talk to the people in the audience

before and between his sets. Although his playing was clearly more professional and polished than the typical local fiddler there, Townsend retained a humility and never acted like a showman around them.

Carol Kennedy was born into a musical family in Maxville, Ontario, and raised on the region’s rich highland Scottish music and local country music. She began learning piano at four years old and fiddle as a teenager. She got to know Townsend when they were both about 16 through the provincial fiddle circuit in Ontario. After a seven-year stint playing piano for North American



champion fiddler Johnny Mooring’s band, she got a call from Townsend in the late 1960s to become his regular piano accompanist for touring and studio work. The two toured internationally together, appearing in places as far-flung as Australia and the Shetland Islands. Because of Townsend’s blindness, Kennedy believes she helped him better understand what his audiences abroad wanted to hear from the huge diversity of fiddle styles in which he was adept: “He had some much different music in his head, he often didn’t know what to play.” Essentially, Kennedy convinced Townsend that international audiences were more interested in hearing music from his home in the Ottawa Valley rather than him playing their own music for them.

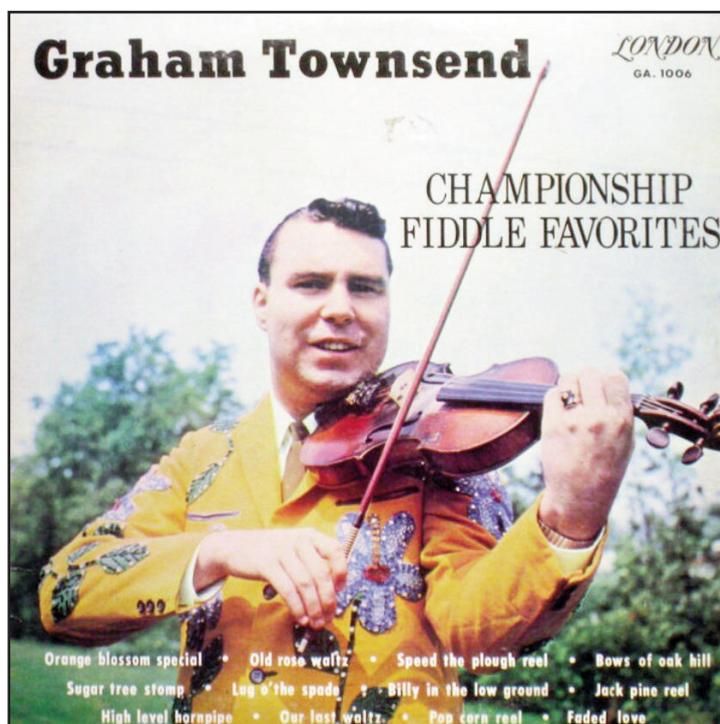
When performing closer to home, Kennedy and Townsend played many hotel-bars and small venues up and down Ottawa Valley. Kennedy describes the special relationship Townsend had with grassroots traditional players, many from the English-speaking communities

of the Pontiac on the Quebec side of the river:

*He had an incredible memory. And him and I, what do musicians do in the daytime? You wander around the country, right? Back in the day, bands played six nights a week in the same venue, it wasn't the weekend gig that they do now. So in the daytime, we used to go... I remember going to Wolf Lake, which is just back behind Quyon, for example, and going to old men's places and picking up tunes that maybe they wrote, or they didn't know the name of, or tunes that nobody knew. And we would pick up tunes like that. And we had great fun doing that... We knew every old fellow that lived on every old road in every old province pretty much.*

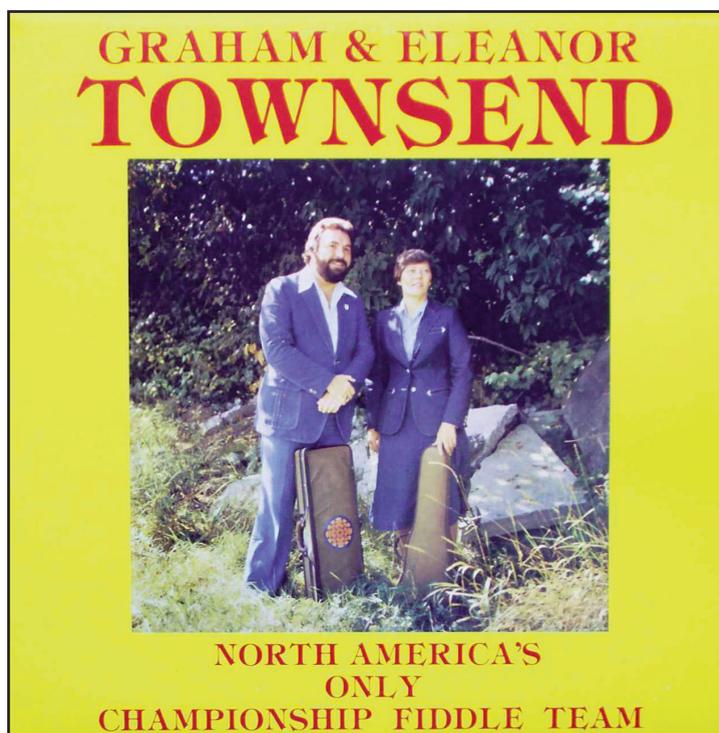
Regarding his personality, Kennedy agrees with Gail Gavan's assessment that Townsend was certainly not pompous, noting that he related to people largely through shared musical interests, and that he was quite categorical regarding who he wanted to be around:

*If we were playing somewhere and somebody invited us home after the gig, if you didn't have the right record collection, he wouldn't go. Music was his language and how he related to people and how he knew who his people were. Not just fiddle music though. He was broad minded when it came to music. He liked jazz, fiddle, old-time fiddle, American fiddle, Irish, French Canadian. We played it all. That was his communication.*



Kennedy describes Townsend as being like a brother to her:

*I gave him hell, loved him to death, everything from A to Z. He was funny, but not a loud person. He didn't do too much schooling, and was babied by his mother on account of his blindness. But he was smart regardless. He knew what was going on. He was interesting and had a vast knowledge of*



*musicians – who played with who, on what record, where they lived. I miss all that.*

In professional relationships and opportunities, he was very proud to represent the various layers of Canadian fiddle music:

*An interesting thing about him, as a Canadian, he was a very good Canadian. In the way that I was there when he got a phone call from [American country legend] Webb Pierce's management and they wanted Graham to go on tour with Webb for his Canadian tour dates. Now anybody else would have jumped at that... but he didn't go. He could be rude and tell people, 'I'm not going to stand there and go chuck-chuck on my fiddle just when you tell me too. I'm a Canadian old-time fiddler and I want to play fiddle tunes.' As opposed to being a backup fiddler for songs which he could also do very well. He chose to be the upfront guy.*

In 1973, Townsend had married Eleanor Reed of Dungannon, Ontario. "We could make such beautiful music together," he said when he proposed. That was not a line. Reed had firmly established herself as the champion woman fiddler of Canada, having repeatedly won that title at Shelburne in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1975, she was the first woman ever to break into the top three fiddlers in the all-male "open class," placing second. She was also internationally recognized as the featured fiddler on *Maple Sugar: Songs of Early Canada*, an album of Canadian folk music later used by embassies and outposts to spread awareness of Canadian folk culture throughout the world.

Eleanor and Graham toured together as "North

America's only championship fiddling team." *The Great Canadian Fiddle* was their first joint recording, proving how right Townsend had been when he proposed.

In 1980, Graham Townsend was inducted into the North American Fiddlers Hall of Fame; in 1986, Eleanor joined him. In 1990, Townsend was inducted into the Ottawa Valley Country Music Hall of Fame. He was nominated for a Juno Award for Instrumental Artist of the Year in 1991, received a 1993 Porcupine Award (jointly with Eleanor), and received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Canadian Grandmasters Fiddling Championships in 1998. In October of that same year, both Graham and Eleanor were inducted into the Canadian Fiddlers and Step Dancers Hall of Fame. Two months later, on December 3, Graham Townsend died, after a year-long battle with cancer, at his home in Barrie, Ontario. On the following December 31, Eleanor died when the Barrie house went up in flames.

Don Messer described "the one and only Graham Townsend" as "one of the most talented and distinctive performers [and] the undisputed Fiddle Champion of North America. His interpretations of the Old Tyme Melodies by far exceed those of any other player in this category." Fiddle contest regulars described Townsend as "the best damn fiddler in Canada." Or, one might simply call him "inimitable."

**Gordon Rainey**, of *Scotch / Irish and Norman French heritage*, was born and raised in Grenville, Quebec, and obtained a BSc in Electrical Engineering from the University of Waterloo in 1966. His career with the Bell / BNR / Nortel companies took him to Quebec City, Montreal and Ottawa, although he always maintained interest in his Lower Laurentian roots. After retiring in 2003, he did more genealogical and local history research, and in 2010 became treasurer of the Scotch Road Cemetery Association to help preserve the site where some of his ancestors are buried.

**Glenn Patterson**, a PhD candidate in Ethnomusicology at Memorial University, has worked since 2010 with the English-

speaking minority of Quebec's Gaspé region to archive and make use of the musical heritage that community members have shared through home recordings dating back to the 1950s. He has collaborated with researchers and community organizations to produce an ethnographic CD, several musical heritage blogs, and journal articles, and to establish a digital community sound archive. He also directed QAHN's project "A Different Tune: Musical Heritage in English-Speaking Quebec."

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Interview with Carol Kennedy, August 4, 2023.

Interview with Gail Gavan, November 22, 2022.

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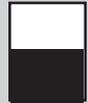
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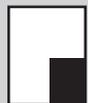
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# BANKING ON THE NEW WORLD

*The Hague Family*  
by Joseph Graham

Sheffield and Rotherham are both in South Yorkshire, England, far from the commercial centre of London, but in 1831 some partners got together and created a joint stock bank, called simply the Sheffield Banking Company. It proved to be one of the best-run banking operations in the United Kingdom and a training ground for excellent bankers. George Hague, from Rotherham, was trained there, and, once trained, he was lured away by millers James and Robert Sykes, from Sheffield. James Sykes was a general contractor as well, with serious business interests in Montreal. Once Hague had proven himself, he was offered the challenge of running Sykes's operations in Canada. It was 1853 and he was 28 years old, married to Sarah Cousins, daughter of J. Cousins, scissor manufacturer on Garden Street, and she had just given birth to their first child.

Their crossing was without incident and they arrived in Montreal preparing to take responsibility for contracts to build two railroads, the Montreal & Bytown and the Brockville & Ottawa. As contractors, their first obligation was to raise the money, four million dollars, a huge sum for the times. Sykes sought investors in England and sailed in the late summer of 1854 to join the Hagues, carrying \$250,000. He accepted no other way of bringing the money over.

James Sykes booked onto the *SS Arctic*, a luxurious paddle steamer, for a transatlantic voyage in September of 1854, traveling from Liverpool to New York. The *Arctic* was a ship of the Collins Line, an American company competing successfully with the British Cunard Line. It was the largest ship in its series, one of the surest, most comfortable ways of making the trip depending not only on the wind but also on coal and paddles.

Travelling through fog off the coast of Newfoundland, the *Arctic's* captain, James Luce, heard the crunch of a collision.

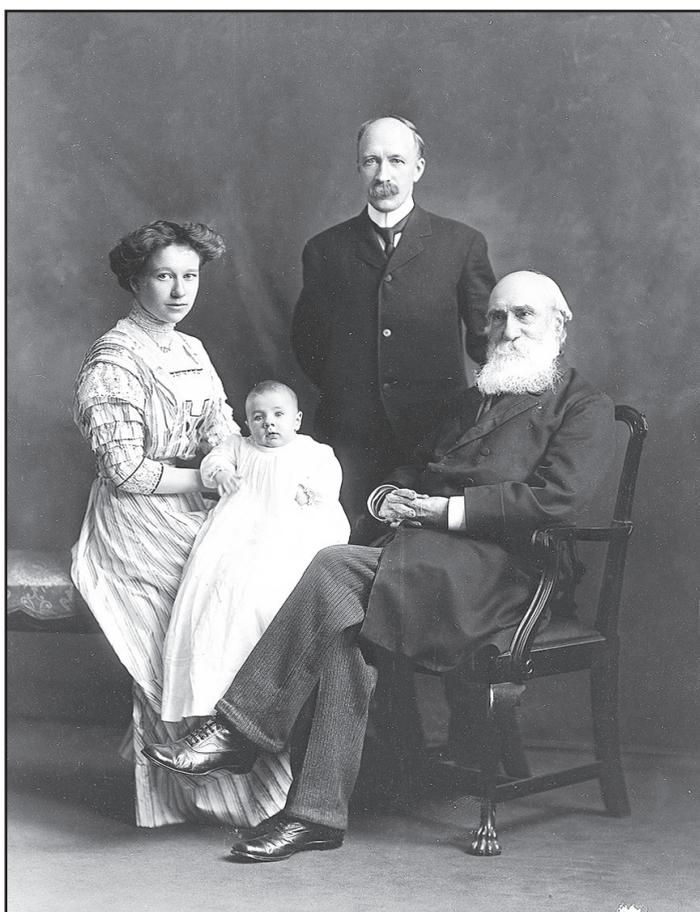
His first concern was for the small French ship, the *Vesta*, that they had rammed. Sure it would sink, he made efforts to rescue its crew, but soon he learned he was taking on water below decks. Confident in the *Arctic* and its engineering, he set course for shore, hoping to make it before the ship sank. In the fog he rammed and destroyed one of the *Vesta's* life boats and rescued only one of its passengers. Once out of sight of the *Vesta*, water flooded the engines and the ship stalled in the sea.

Pandemonium followed when he ordered the lifeboats launched. Typical for the times, the six boats could carry half of the 400 passengers and crew and there was no clear provision for priority. While Luce stayed with the ship, shouting orders to give priority to women and children, his crew spilled into the lifeboats upsetting one, losing its passengers in the sea. The engine staff commandeered another and the passengers, men, women and children, were abandoned. All six lifeboats finally launched, filled with crew and some passengers. Two found their way safely to shore, and a third was rescued by another ship. The other three disappeared. The search for survivors found some on makeshift rafts and

some, including the captain, who managed to escape the drag of the sinking ship, his dead son in his arms. No women or children survived.

It took two weeks for the news to reach New York. By then, George and Sarah Hague must have suspected something. How long they waited for news of Sykes is unknown, but he was gone, along with the investments. George, Sarah and their baby were stranded in a new country as reports of the loss spilled into the papers. Stories of cowardice and heroism were their only news. His job would now entail organizing the bankruptcy.

Once over the shock and having done what he could,



Notman & Son, "Mr. Hague's four generations," 1909. McCord Museum, II-174573.



Hague sought new employment. Two years after the sinking, he found a position with the newly created Bank of Toronto.

When the bank opened for business in July of 1856, it had three employees. Sponsored by millers, it was a conservative, well-funded bank that allowed Hague to show his abilities. By 1862, he was the cashier, the chief executive officer, and he guided the bank to astounding success over the next fourteen years.

Hague retired in 1876, his fortunes a contrast to the difficult beginning of his career. He was 51 and he intended to devote himself to his philanthropies and his studies of the Old Testament, but inside the banking community he had been noticed, having made the Bank of Toronto into a real contender in Canadian banking.

In Montreal, the Merchant's Bank was not experiencing similar success. A vastly larger institution, it was in great difficulty and needed to change course. The president was Sir Hugh Allan, founder of the Montreal Ocean Steamship Company, the Allan Line, connected to a business his father had begun. It



became the largest privately owned shipping company in the world, but under his presidency, the Merchant's Bank was foundering. Upon his resignation, the new president convinced George Hague to take the helm and, over the next five years, Hague turned the bank around. After those five years,

Allan managed to return as president. In a typical oversight of Canadian history, Allan rates 22 pages in the Dictionary of Canadian Biography while Hague merits only mentions in other people's stories.

Nevertheless, George Hague was highly respected in banking and political circles, and, in 1891, the year the Canadian Bankers Association was created, he was elected its president. A strong advocate of the need for banks to maintain cash reserves, he can be considered the man who made Canadian banking secure.

Hague retired from the Merchants' Bank in 1902 to finish



his work *Practical Studies of the Old Testament*. Noting in his retirement how much interest his family had in the Laurentians, he built a spectacular summer house in St. Agathe just before he died in 1915. He was ninety years old.

*This story is dedicated to the late Kenneth Hague, 1928-2018*

*Joseph Graham's book, Insatiable Hunger, reinterprets our historic understanding of the colonial period, here and in New England. It tells some of the stories that we were not taught in school.*

*Sources include the DBC Canadian Bankers Association; Turley-Ewart, John Anthony Gentlemen Bankers, Politicians and Bureaucrats; S. S. Arctic Disaster, Wikipedia; Edward Hague Autobiography, privately published; Joseph Graham, Rue Sir Mortimer B. Davis, Ste Agathe des Monts.*

# EMINENTLY PICTURESQUE

## *Domaine Cataraqui, Chemin Saint-Louis, Quebec City*

by Mark Meredith

**S**tunningly positioned high up on the cliffs overlooking the St. Lawrence River valley, the house lies three miles outside the old walls of Quebec City, in Sillery. Built in 1851 for Henry Burstall (1804-1866) and his wife, Elizabeth Blenkin (1811-1876), the house was designed by Quebec architect Edward Staveley. It replaced the original wooden cottage built here in 1836 for James Bell Forsyth, who named his estate “Cataraqui,” adapting the Iroquois name (*Katarokwen*) of his birthplace, Kingston. Known today as *Domaine Cataraqui* (2141 Chemin Saint-Louis), Burstall’s house is one of the very few of its like that remains almost completely intact. For a short period in the 1860s it filled in as the Governor-General’s residence. It remained a private home up until 1972 and today belongs to the government.

Timber merchant James Bell Forsyth sold his cottage at *Cataraqui* after his wife died in 1850. Having run into financial problems, he put it in the name of his brother-in-law and business partner Alexander Davidson Bell, who then sold it to the lumber baron Henry Burstall, whose brother Edward built “Kirk Ella” opposite in 1854.

The Burstall family had become well-known in Hull (England) from the mid-eighteenth century as merchant ship owners. In 1832, Henry came to Quebec to extend the family’s influence into exporting timber and shipbuilding; he was joined shortly afterwards by Edward. The yards of H & E Burstall were conveniently located at the foot of the cliffs on which the brothers built their homes. Although the boom days had ebbed considerably by 1895, the Burstall name

remained prominent in the Canadian timber trade up until World War I.

On February 28, 1860, the governor-general’s Quebec residence, Spencer Wood, burned down and a new interim home for Edmund Walker Head became an immediate priority. By March, Burstall had arranged the lease of *Cataraqui* for \$1,200 per annum, and he then promptly retired to England, taking up residence at *Wolfreton House* in the

him the balance. The sale was completed in February 1863 for \$12,100, and the government duly repaid Burstall the balance of \$7,900.

The new owner was another Englishman, Charles Eleazar Levey, who divided his time between here and his townhouse at the corner of d’Auteuil and St. Anne streets in Quebec’s old town. Prior to 1829, Levey was the owner of a large sugar plantation in *Demerara*, in South America, but when his brother, Lionel, died he was left a considerable lumber business at Quebec. Selling his plantation, Levey settled in Quebec, where he also founded the *Union Bank of Lower Canada* and served as its first president. In 1847, he married *Jemima Boxer*, daughter of Rear-Admiral *Edward Boxer*, who was described as “a legend in his own lifetime,” an anachronism who was “gruff, ‘unparliamentary’ in his language, terrifying to

juniors, but with a heart of gold.” The admiral and his wife resided with the *Leveys* at Quebec until 1853, and when they moved into *Cataraqui* the *Leveys* added two new wings on the sides of the main house.

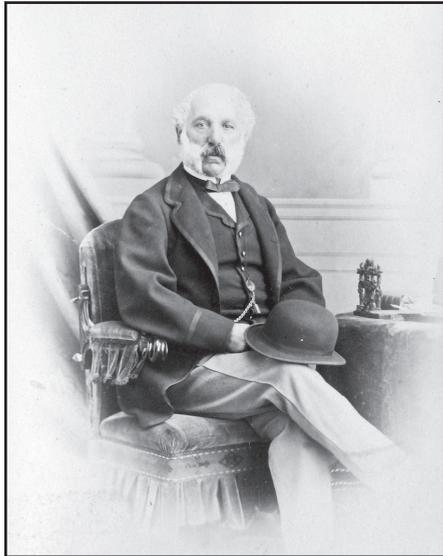
A visitor wrote in 1863:

*We had the pleasure on one occasion to view, on a piercing winter day, from the Drawing Room of Cataraqui, through the glass door which opens on the conservatory, the rare collections of exotics it contains – a perfect grove of verdure and blossoms – the whole lit up by the mellow light of the setting sun, whose rays scintillated in every fantastic form amongst this*



village of *Kirk Ella* that his father had originally purchased back in 1814. *Cataraqui* was not as large as *Spencer Wood*, but its gardens and situation were described as “eminently picturesque.”

*Cataraqui* then consisted of the main house and three outbuildings, but with the imminent arrival of the *Prince of Wales* just months away a few additions were rapidly made: a separate guard house and kitchen were put up, the stabling was enlarged, and the hot air furnaces were reconstructed at a total cost of \$8,781. Burstall, ever the businessman, had agreed in the terms of the lease that, once *Spencer Wood* had been rebuilt, *Cataraqui* was then to be sold at public auction, but if it sold for less than \$20,000 the government was to repay



*gorgeous tropical vegetation, whilst the snow-wreathed evergreens surrounding the conservatory waived their palms to the orb of day in our clear, bracing Canadian atmosphere – summer and winter combined in the one landscape.*

Levey filled Cataraqui’s conservatories with exotic specimens from South America and beyond, counting among the hundreds of varieties 70 Camellia Japonicas. Levey cleverly retained the services of the eminent Scottish gardener Peter Lowe, who had previously been employed to look after the conservatories at Spencer Wood.

The Leveys were survived by a son and daughter, both of whom were married in London to members of the Anglo-Irish gentry. Their daughter, Florence, lived at Kilcroney House, a Gothic-Revival mansion in County Wicklow, while their son, Charles, moved from “Kirk Ella” (built by Edward Burstall) to Cataraqui after

Jemima Levey died in 1893. Charles Jr. was devoted to breeding thoroughbred horses and cattle; aside from a pack of hounds and a model farm, he kept “an expensive stud” and had “some splendid animals with pedigrees from winners of the blue ribbon on English turf.”

It is assumed that the younger Charles E. Levey overspent by 1905 and had to sell Cataraqui. The estate was purchased at auction for \$7,500 by his friend Godfrey William Rhodes. According to family lore, Rhodes had not wanted to buy the place at all, but had merely placed a bid in order to get things going. A great-grandson through his mother of Thomas Dunn, Lieutenant-Governor of Lower Canada, Godfrey Rhodes had grown up at “Benmore,” the estate adjoining Cataraqui on its eastern side. He pursued a career in the United States, where, for 25 years, he was the highly respected Superintendent of Motive Power and Machinery for the Chicago,



Burlington & Quincy Railroad under Charles Elliott Perkins. On retiring in 1905, he returned to Quebec and, accidentally, bought Cataraqui.

In 1909, Godfrey Rhodes and his



wife, Lily Jamison, were presented with an opportunity too good to miss. James T. Davis was a contractor from Montreal and his firm had been commissioned to build the pillars for the new Quebec Bridge. By leasing their home to Davis for the duration of his contract, Godfrey and Lily were able to base themselves in England for the next six years, during which time they travelled extensively throughout Europe. In the meantime, while Davis was busy working on the project, architects Edward and William Maxwell were busy building the

Top left & right: Charles E. Levey, Jemima Boxer, both 1865. McCord Museum, I-18457.1, I-18458.

Centre: H. W. Hopkins, Atlas of Quebec, 1879. Bottom: Godfrey, Lily and Catherine Rhodes, Tadoussac, 1898. tidesoftadoussac.com.

J. T. Davis house back in Montreal. Davis returned there in 1915 when Godfrey and Lily re-established themselves at Cataraqui, where they would remain happily for the rest of their lives.

Lily Rhodes survived her husband by seven years and died at Cataraqui in 1939. She left the estate to their only daughter, Catherine, whom they had adopted when she was three. Catherine's biological father, Napoleon Augustus Jennings, an author and personal friend of Theodore Roosevelt, had abandoned her mother, Kathryn, in New York, leaving her with no money and three young children to bring up. In the meantime, Godfrey and Lily were grieving the loss of their only natural child, Gertrude, who died at the age of three in 1888. To relieve Kathryn of financial hardship and to offer her daughter a brighter future, her brother-in-law, Frank Jamison, arranged for Catherine to be adopted by his sister, Lily Rhodes. And so, at the age of three, Catherine was sent to live with the Rhodes who were then in Cincinnati.

Catherine accompanied her parents to England in 1909, and since she was eager to study painting they also went to Paris. There, they met Percyval Tudor-Hart, an art teacher from Montreal who had remained in Paris after graduating from the École des Beaux-Arts. Since Tudor-Hart was 15 years Catherine's senior and married with two children, Godfrey and Lily felt safe leaving their daughter in his care and returned to England. Catherine studied under Tudor-Hart for the next three years, but later



returned to England and then Cataraqui.

Catherine was still unmarried at the age of 44 and seemed destined for a life without love. But all that changed in 1933, when she received a surprise visit from her old – and now twice widowed – teacher, Percyval Tudor Hart, who was in Quebec on business. Romance blossomed, and when Tudor-Hart had to return to London he wrote: “Catherine, your words have moved my heart and I pray to all the gods that you will have the courage and the awareness of your own worth, to give yourself, without bondage, to him whom you love in all the splendor of your freedom.” He wrote her up to six love letters a week. But since Catherine was unable to abandon her elderly mother, it became clear that Percyval would have to abandon Europe for Canada. They were married in Quebec City in 1935, and took up residence at Cataraqui, which became their own when Lily Rhodes died in 1939.

Percyval and Catherine continued to cultivate Cataraqui's gardens, with the help of Scottish landscape gardener Mary Stewart, who had joined

Catherine's staff in 1929. Catherine survived Percyval by nearly two decades and died here in 1972. That year, her heirs attempted to sell Cataraqui to the government, but their asking price was deemed excessive. Three years later,



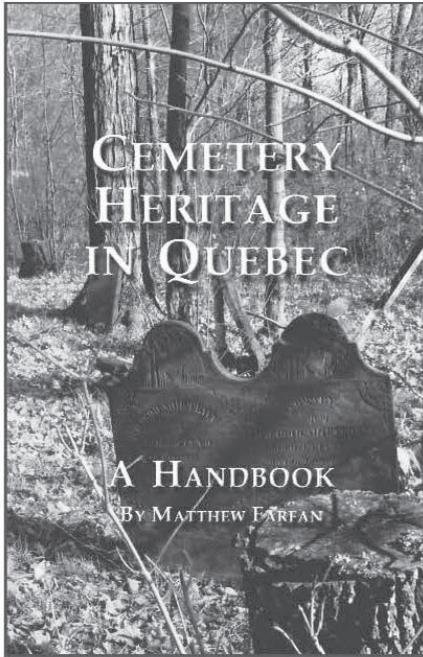
however, sufficient money was raised so that the property would not be lost to private developers. Since then, the gardens have been open to the public, the ground floor of the house comprises a small museum but is more popularly used as an events space, and the second floor is reserved as a guesthouse for important visitors.

*Mark Meredith has always been passionate about history, particularly the history behind houses and the stories and people that shape them. Having worked for twenty years in the building industry, he is now a recognized writer and lecturer in both the United States and Europe. In 2019, Mark founded HouseHistree (househistree.com), a website that explores “genealogy through houses.”*



Top: Domains Cataraqui, 2008. Photo: Gilbert Bochenek.  
Bottom: Greenhouse, Domains Cataraqui, 2018. Photo: Rod MacLeod.

Right: William Notman Studio, “Master E. Percyval Tudor-Hart, Montreal,” 1876. McCord Museum, II-41572.1.



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