

G.G. Naismith's 1923 biography, that Timothy was forced to sleep under the counter of the Portglenone shop where he apprenticed in Ireland, and then proceed to repeat Naismith's unsupported claim that he often walked the nine miles home to his mother's house in Clogher while the shopkeeper drove by in his carriage?

The appearance of Santink's book coincides with the publication of the inventory to The T. Eaton Records following the donation of these papers to the Archives of Ontario. Santink is the first historian to draw and quote extensively from the Eaton's Archives which were still in the company's hands when she did her research. Accordingly, it must have been a disappointment for her to learn that there were more papers available at the Archives of Ontario than what she examined at Eaton's. Most series of administrative records now available were warehoused in dead storage at the time.

Not only does Santink miss some early material now at the Archives of Ontario (although, to be fair, her conclusions are still valid), but her citations are no longer accurate given that the papers are now organized into proper series. The former Eaton's Archives consisted mainly of items the company archivists regarded as interesting and worthy of keeping in their idiosyncratic subject files, and the result is some rather cryptic citations in Santink's notes. Where the Eaton's archivists could readily have laid their hands on an item such as "Timothy Eaton, Memorandum 1857-1866" or "Bank reference from the Commercial Bank of Canada, 1864-7," the archivists at the provincial archives responsible for the papers now organized into 228 series may have some digging to do. Of course Santink cannot be blamed for such shortcomings. Her research was carried out several years ago for the preparation of a doctoral thesis. It is hardly her fault if the administrative responsibility shifted just at the moment when her work was brought before the public. Indeed, more problems are created for the Archives of Ontario and its clientele than for the author.

*Timothy Eaton and the Rise of His Department Store* is worthy of attention and one can only hope that someone will tap the resources of the T. Eaton Records to carry the story through to the present.

**Carolyn Heald**  
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**Discerning Tastes: Montreal Collectors, 1880-1920.** JANET M. BROOKE. Montreal: The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1989. 254 p. ISBN 2-89192-123-2 \$40.00.

This handsome catalogue was published to accompany an exhibition by the same title which took place at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts from December 1989 to February 1990. Its main thrust was an examination of the collecting of nineteenth-century European painting in Montreal, between 1880 and 1920. R.H. Hubbard's study of collecting in Canada, published in 1962, has already covered the same material but in less detail (*European Paintings in Canadian Collections II: Modern Schools*). The present in-depth study has been long overdue and serves not only to give us an excellent picture of this era but also to remind us of the misconceptions that have been repeated. The most commonly held opinion of turn-of-the-century Montreal collections was the one pronounced by A.Y. Jackson in his autobiography:

Instead of purchasing Pissarros, Sisleys, Manets, Cezannes, and Renoirs, they [Montreal collectors] played safe and bought Dutch paintings at high prices.

While we in Canada were cautiously buying sound and sane art, so called, the Americans were acquiring the work of the modern French school . . . .  
(*A Painter's Country*, p. 18)

As Janet Brooke points out in her introduction to the catalogue, the view that Montreal collectors were buying only "safe" works of art has been reiterated up to today. The exhibition consisted of sixty-one paintings, by artists whose works have endured in the history of art, which had belonged to one of the many Montreal collectors, such as Sir William van Horne, Sir George A. Drummond, Sir Donald Smith (later Lord Strathcona), James Ross, Charles R. Hosmer, Edward B. Greenshields and others. It was a show full of surprises! There were, of course, a number of "safe" paintings, by the very popular painters of the time such as Jules Breton (Lord Strathcona, "an enterprising and open-handed Canadian," paid the highest price at auction for the work of a living artist when he purchased Breton's *Communicants* for \$45,500 in 1886), Camille Corot, and William Bouguereau (to name just a few), but there were also a small number of more daring purchases. Drummond's collection included a very interesting painting by Edgar Degas and a marvellous sketch by Whistler (who is classified as British in the catalogue, in order, I suppose, to include his painting in an exhibition of European art, and to not have to deal with the American content of the Montreal collections which likely would have required a volume of its own). Van Horne owned paintings by Daumier, Cezanne, Sisley, Renoir, and Monet, along with works by Toulouse-Lautrec (the latter not in the exhibition).

The exhibition brought together only a tiny fraction, sixty-one paintings, of what had been in these vast Montreal collections. An important part of the catalogue is an inventory, arranged by artist, of all the nineteenth-century European paintings that had been in Montreal collections. Studying this list makes one fervently wish that the Cultural Property Export and Import Review Act or some other provision to encourage keeping works of art in the country had been instituted at the turn of the century. Although some family members of the collectors made very generous donations to art institutions in Canada — principally to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, the core of whose permanent collection consists of such gifts, but also to the National Gallery and to the Beaverbrook Art Gallery — too many superb paintings from these collections are now in major foreign collections, both in the United States and Europe, and many are unlocated. The collections were auctioned off following the death of the collector or later by descendants. A few, such as *Still Life* by Courbet, now in the National Gallery, were recovered with the help of Cultural Property Grants.

The catalogue consists of an introduction discussing the time-frame, 1880-1920, of the exhibition. 1880 was the beginning of the CPR boom years which would make these men rich and enable them to engage in art collecting, much as their American counterparts, railway magnates Henry Frick and J. Pierpont Morgan, for example. By 1920, after the end of the First World War, the boom was at an end, the unlimited growth of private wealth capped through the introduction of income tax. Moreover, Canada also lacked provisions which encouraged the donation of works of art to institutions. Why did Canadian collectors not set up major foundations in the manner of American collectors? A discussion of this difference would have been interesting. The introduction includes a brief discussion of some of the more outstanding collectors such as Van Horne, Drummond, Ross, Angus, and others. Unfortunately, the reader's knowledge of the business aspect of these men's lives is taken for granted and is not

brought into the discussion. This is followed by a scholarly catalogue of each of the sixty-one entries in the exhibition, which includes an illustration, the provenance of the work, its exhibition history, a bibliography which includes archival references, and illustrations of other works by the same artist which were also in Montreal collections, followed by an essay which situates the work in the artist's career and recounts the circumstances of its acquisition by the Montreal collector. We discover, for example, that Drummond owned two studies for Daumier's *Third Class Carriage* (one finished version is owned by the National Gallery), one of which is owned by the National Museum of Wales; the other is unlocated. The notes (except in the catalogue essays) are in the generous margins on the same page as the text, making reference very handy. The catalogue is nicely designed and includes sixteen colour plates of the most interesting pieces.

The inventory of all nineteenth-century European paintings in Montreal collections, already mentioned, is probably the most fascinating part of the catalogue. This list of over 1,400 paintings is the indication of just how discerning the tastes really were in Montreal. Of over five hundred artists of French, British and Scottish, German, Spanish, Italian, Scandinavian, and even Russian nationalities, less than one hundred have passed into the annals of art history as outstanding artists. So Montreal collectors on the whole were not all that adventurous. For the historian this list would be even more interesting had it also been organized under the name of the collector, so that each individual taste and the growth of each collection would have been revealed.

The author made use of an extremely wide variety of sources, both archival and published, held in Canada and elsewhere, in order to recreate the contents of these collections and "the private and ephemeral process of collecting [which] goes unrecorded." It becomes clear that Montreal collections were famous at the turn of the century, and were included in publications on important North American collections. Moreover, the collectors were generous lenders to various exhibitions, obviously conscious of the need to share their wealth with the public. William van Horne had even lent two works by Toulouse-Lautrec and one by Cezanne to the most controversial exhibition of contemporary European art, the Armory Show, held in New York in 1913. Through the extremely thorough and extensive research which preceded this welcome publication, an important epoch in Canadian cultural history has been re-created. Its contents will have to be considered in any biographies of the collectors, and in rewriting Montreal history or the CPR boom.

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**The Monthly Epic: A History of Canadian Magazines, 1789-1989.** FRASER SUTHERLAND. Markham, Ont.: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1989. vii, 355 p. ISBN 0-88902-897-4.

Fraser Sutherland's *The Monthly Epic* is a lively account of English-language magazines published in British North America and Canada over the past two hundred years. It is divided into four parts, the first carrying the story into the 1920s and subsequent parts each covering roughly two decades of the twentieth century. The sections begin with a chapter that describes the characteristics and trends of the period