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Womanly Arts

Expressions of and
creations by women
in Victorian British
Columbia.

Left: Kathleen O'Reilly, age 21,
December of 1888. Photo taken at the
studio of Lambert Weston & Sons,
Folkestone, England. See "How Shall I
Frame Myself?" by Liberty Walton in this
issue.

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WOMANLY ARTS

Last year, Jennifer Iredale, Curator, Coastal Okanagan Region of the Heritage Branch, convinced me that she would assemble enough writings on womanly arts to fill an issue to coincide with Women's History month. She did what she promised. This issue is in many ways her dream come true.

Objects in museums and collections may tell us about skills, talents, artistry. They may have aesthetic, sentimental, or monetary value but without records about their makers and their lives and times—without a human context—they have little if any historical value for anyone but perhaps an art historian.

This issue of *BC Historical News* gathers writings about artifacts with a human context. The articles speak about specific women of Victoria's social elite in the late eighteenth century, their talents and the objects they created. Added are discussions about two institutions where women learned and practised these manual skills and developed their artistic talents.

The preparation of the texts for publication was a greater challenge than expected, and not only for the authors. I want to extend a special thanks to University of Victoria faculty members Karen Finlay and Barbara Winters for their generous and substantial help in the final stages of preparation.

Enjoy!

the editor

"Any country worthy of a future should be interested in its past."
W. Kaye Lamb, 1937

Beauty, Spirituality, and Practicability

by Jennifer Iredale

In 2000, the University of Victoria received a Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) grant by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, in a new initiative to encourage collaboration between universities and other sectors of the community. Under this grant, which was awarded to the History in Art Department at the University, projects were undertaken in partnership with community heritage organizations to research and document little-known but historically important collections. The articles in this issue of BC Historical News are a product of preliminary research mainly by University of Victoria students and myself in connection with two continuing CURA projects: an examination of the liturgical textiles in the collection of St. John the Divine Church in Yale and a study of "womanly arts" produced by the women of four historic sites in Victoria: Helmcken House, Emily Carr House, Point Ellice House and Craigflower Manor. University of Victoria faculty members Carol-Gibson Wood, Karen Finlay, Diane Tolomeo, and Cultural Resource Management Director Joy Davis oversaw most of the student research. All the papers published here are based on preliminary research, within a limited time. The program offered these students the rare opportunity to learn research practices based on primary materials.

Women and Art in Colonial British Columbia

As curator of provincial historic sites it has been my job to preserve and present significant themes about the building; often a story in which a woman plays a supporting rather than dominant role.

Although a house may have been preserved because it was the home of a great man, or the oldest man in the country or for some other reason, a home is first and foremost the province of a woman. Women care for the family and the household contents, they decorate and buy or make the objects in the house. Much more than for a man, the home is an expression and a creation of a woman's life.

Among the many manufactured objects in these historic houses are a



At work at the Anglican Archives in Vancouver. From left to right Bev Kennedy, Jennifer Iredale, Doreen Stevens, Rachel Edwards and Natasha Slik.

number of artifacts made by the women of the household. Although generally not of significance to the major story that led to the preservation of the house, these objects caught my attention in that their creation clearly played a major role in the life of the maker. These objects included the visual arts of painting and drawing and also many decorative art objects, baskets, ceramics, needlework, photographs, and even books.

This large collection of "womanly arts" became of great interest to me and when studied together I suspected they could reveal untold and lost stories that could significantly add to our understanding and respect of women's history and lives in colonial British Columbia.

Studies of decorative arts and womanly arts have in the past focused on collections of objects without known artistic provenance. Collectors did not document the name of the artist and women did not sign their work. Part of the work of this project has been to try to associate the artists' name with their work. "Naming the artist" led us to frame many other questions. How and where did the makers of these objects learn these arts? Why did they make these objects? How were they used? What

function did their creation play in the life of the artist? Why did the artist's name get separated from the artifact? Why didn't she sign her work? More broadly, we were curious about the cultural and social significance of the art as well as the societal or self-perception of these women as creators or artists. We wanted our research to uncover and provide a greater understanding of the social systems that existed to encourage or discourage women in the arts and to discover why so much of this story of womanly arts was untold or had been lost.

My work on this project has led me to believe that the creation of these artifacts can be traced to the ideologies of mid-Victorian social reform movements directed by secular and ecclesiastical agencies as well as a growing nineteenth-century cultural appreciation for the useful arts and the ideals of "art for life's sake." Simply stated, the decorative arts created by women in nineteenth-century Victoria can usefully be discussed as part of the Arts and Crafts movement with a strong dash of church and religion.

The proponents of the Arts and Crafts ideals believed that it was an uplifting experience of a higher order to create

or to use an utilitarian object that was beautiful. The belief was that good art not only revealed the spirit of its maker but also affected its user. As William Morris wrote: "Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful." Reformers such as Pugin, George Bernard Shaw, William Morris, and Mackmurdo as well as many other British writers and designers practised and published to promote the restoration of the useful arts—pottery, metalwork, bookbinding, the textiles arts, glass and ceramic painting, woodcarving and basketry—to their "rightful places" beside painting and sculpture. They were seeking to create a society where handicrafts not only equalled the fine arts but were superior to them. They believed art was the spirit in which something was done and not necessarily a specialized activity. Even the simplest product deserved to be made a thing of beauty. Thus beauty, practicability, and spirituality were the fundamental values underlying the reasons why Victorian women spent so much time creating or decorating practical objects.

Religion was central to Victorian life in England and very much in the Colony. Missionaries and their churches largely undertook the earliest education in British Columbia. Many of the women whose work is examined in the following papers received their early schooling at a religious school. The curriculum in these colonial schools always included lessons in visual and decorative arts and many of the nuns were skilled artists in their own right. Not only did they pass on their knowledge on how to create beautiful and useful objects to their colonial female students, they also passed on strong moral concepts of creating beautiful objects as a spiritual activity and the value of undertaking labour for charitable causes.

This concept of charity was fundamental to the Victorian ethos but frequently took the form of giving work rather than money. Needlework, painted ceramics, beaded items, and other womanly arts such as baking and floral decoration were made by Victorian middle class women to sell to one another to raise funds for charity. These women, without financial means of their

own, were better able to provide the skill and time required to make these items, rather than a cash contribution. In a very direct way it can be seen that the church and ecclesiastical social reform shaped the arts in colonial British Columbia.

This work served as an outlet for many women's talents and gave a focus for artistic development appropriate in a Victorian woman's life. Very few of the women whose work is chronicled in these papers became recognized artists. Schooling, religion, family, and societal values all supported women's work and life being in the private sphere of home and family. Nevertheless, the making of decorative and fine arts for home and charity can be seen as contributing to these women's self-expression and personal sense of independence and should be understood as part of the artistic tradition and artistic output of the Victorian period in British Columbia.

These ideas are explored and illustrated in the following papers, mainly authored by University of Victoria students. The material history research

they undertook at the historic sites was complemented by study of related material in various archives; notably the BC Archives, Victoria City Archives, the Anglican Archives at UBC, Vancouver City Archives, Yale Museum Archives, St. Ann's Archives, and the All Hallows Archives in Ditchingham, England.

Our thanks must be extended to all the archivists and museum staff who have assisted us in our research, as well as the many descendants and "elders" who agreed to interviews or gave us access to related collections. The research trail was "hot," the discoveries plenty and very exciting. Best of all were the growing delight and exclamations of happy surprise by women who had "no idea" that their grandmothers or their own arts were a significant topic of study and they were heartened by our interest.

We share with you a work in progress: the untold stories of a number of women artists in colonial British Columbia. ~

Studies on the basketery collection at the White Rock Museum written by Karen Petkau and Faith Whiting in the context of this project will appear in *The MIDDEN*, published by the Archaeological Society of British Columbia.

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Beyond Recollection

The Early Art Education of Emily Carr

by Tusa Shea

¹ Emily Carr, *Growing Pains* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1946), 6.

² *Ibid.*, 20.

³ Ann Bermingham, *Learning to Draw: Studies in the Cultural History of a Polite and Useful Art*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 184.

⁴ Christina Johnson-Dean, "B.C. Women Artists, 1885–1920" in *British Columbia Women Artists: 1885–1985* (Art Gallery of Greater Victoria: 1985), 8.

⁵ Carr, *Growing Pains*, 274.

⁶ Bermingham, *Learning to Draw*, 125, 151, and especially 184.

⁷ Carr, *Growing Pains*, 14.

⁸ Emily Woods Clipping File, BC Archives, D19 2845.

⁹ Angela College Statement of School Fees, August 186–February 1877, BC Archives, MS 2538.

¹⁰ Carr, *Growing Pains*, 14.

¹¹ Bermingham, *Learning to Draw*, 89.

¹² John Jessop, Annual Report of the Public Schools of 1875, BC Archives, D31, reel 1, 87. In 1875, John Jessop, the superintendent for BC schools, argued for the inclusion of drawing in public schools and quoted "a competent authority" as saying "whosoever can learn to write can learn to draw." His sentiments on drawing echo those of the British utilitarian drawing advocate Henry Cole, who established the first art training school for teachers in Britain. For more on Henry Cole see Fiona MacCarthy, *A History of British Design 1830–1970* (London: George, Allen and Unwin, 1979), 7–9.

IN her autobiographical writing, Emily Carr was careful to portray herself in the tradition of the romantic individual by highlighting historical facts about herself that conformed to the modernist image of the artist as a professional and a genius, and downplaying those that did not. Born during a snowstorm, "contrary from the start,"¹ she emphasized her difference from the rest of her family and insinuated that her "fondness for drawing" was not only viewed with disinterest by her sisters, but was something she had initiated on her own at a very young age.²

Yet, in Victoria during the 1880s, when Emily was in her teens, it was not out of the ordinary for upper-middle-class young ladies to receive training in drawing and painting as a standard part of their formal education. Such artistic training in "the accomplishments" was considered a necessary marker of class status and refinement of character.³ As Christina Johnson Dean has pointed out, Emily Carr's early art is equally as conservative as the work of other "gentlewomen" of the time,⁴ and would not look particularly uncomfortable alongside the watercolour still lifes or the landscape sketches of the "society ladies" Emily mockingly referred to as "a very select band of elderly persons, very prehistoric in their ideas on Art."⁵

Although Emily Carr received a good deal of such art education in her early life in Victoria, overall, scholars have not paid the same careful attention to it as they have to the formal methods of art training she experienced in San Francisco and Europe. The artistic training that was part of a young girl's education in accomplishments during the Victorian era was designed to inculcate femininity, and was invested with connotations of morality.⁶ Therefore, the products created out of women's efforts to employ the artistic skills they were taught within this system do not simply reflect the results of art training, but are the complex by-products of women's efforts to function within and around the social pressures and limitations that were placed on them.

Emily Carr's early art education belongs within this training in "the accomplishments." Furthermore, both of Emily Carr's early local art teachers produced significant bodies of work that have not been investigated. This article will take a closer look at the early artistic training that Emily Carr received in Victoria, and attempt to provide a clearer picture of her art teachers.

Emily Carr spent the first few years of her education at a private school run by Mrs. Frazer at Merrifield Cottage near her home in James Bay. There she received drawing lessons from Miss Emily Woods, who "came every Monday with a portfolio of copies under her arm."⁷ Emily Woods was born in Ireland, but her family had immigrated to Victoria, along with her uncle Reverend C.T. Woods, in 1860.⁸ She had attended Angela College, an Anglican private girls' school, with Emily Carr's older sisters where, like most upper-middle-class young ladies, they had all received lessons in pencil and watercolour drawing.⁹ Woods excelled in botanical and landscape drawing, and over three hundred of her own pencil and watercolour drawings are held in the BC Archives collections.

Emily Carr later recalled the pride she had felt at winning a prize from Woods for copying



BC Archives PDF-00651

Right: *Emily Carr. Roses in vase.*



Left: *Emily Carr, Adam and Eve rug.*

a picture of a boy with a rabbit.¹⁰ Emily Woods's method of instructing her students to copy other drawings probably reflects the way she herself had been trained. Although at the time copying was still the foundation of academic art training, it had also been promoted as an especially suitable pastime for ladies because it was not thought to require original thinking, talent, or a gift for genius.¹¹ Thus it remained safely in the realm of the amateur. A commonly repeated philosophy of the times stated that "anyone who can learn to write can learn to draw,"¹² suggesting that drawing skills could be acquired through careful practice, and that they had more to do with accuracy than with creativity.

By the time Emily Carr was ten years old she was attending Central Public School with her sisters Lizzie and Alice. Although Emily's two eldest sisters, Clara and Edith, had attended the prestigious Angela College,¹³ and most of Emily's and Alice's friends continued to do so, their father was no longer convinced that an expensive private ladies' school could provide a proper academic grounding. According to Emily, her father was of the opinion that even though such schools taught young ladies manners, or what she satirically described as "how to hold their heads up, their stomachs in and how to look down their noses at the right moment,"¹⁴ by the late 1880s they had fallen behind the academic standard set by the Canadian public education system.¹⁵

Because drawing was apparently not part of the curriculum at Central Public School,¹⁶ Emily, Alice, and Lizzie took private art lessons with Miss Ada Leslie Withrow, who had opened an art studio in Victoria in 1883. Miss Withrow gave lessons to young ladies in oil and water-colour painting, as well as crayon and pencil drawing.¹⁷ In her otherwise exhaustively researched biography of Emily Carr, Maria Tippett writes: "Along with Alice and Lizzie, Emily

joined the class of Miss *Eva* Withrow, who had trained as an artist in *San Francisco* [my emphasis]."¹⁸ Aside from using the wrong name, no mention is made of the fact that Ada Withrow was originally from British Columbia and had received her early lessons in drawing at St. Ann's Academy in New Westminster.¹⁹ This is the kind of oversight that demonstrates just how uninterested scholars have been in Emily Carr's local art training.

Ada Withrow had numerous works of art on exhibit in various Victoria storefronts from the time she opened her studio in 1883 until 1888 when she was married.²⁰ She appears to have been a highly regarded artist in Victoria at that time, and was commissioned by prominent families to do portraits in oil, four of which are held in the BC Archives collections.²¹ It is likely that Ada Withrow introduced Emily Carr to oil painting. In addition, Maria Tippett credits Withrow with encouraging and assisting Emily in submitting work to the California School of Design, which she attended in 1891.²²

Like Emily Woods, Ada Withrow taught Emily Carr to draw by copying.²³ Just as Miss Woods had given her a prize for her earlier copy work, Emily Carr's father gave her five dollars for two copies of portraits she had drawn using a grid method Miss Withrow had taught her.²⁴ The rewards and attention Emily received from her teachers and father encouraged her to continue to work at her drawing skills. It is notable that one of the rewards she received was money, which must have reinforced the idea that art could be a way to financial independence. Miss Woods and Miss Withrow, both gainfully employed upper-middle class ladies, provided Emily Carr with positive role models. She eventually followed their example and taught art lessons to children when she returned from studying in San Francisco.

¹³ Angela College Statement of School Fees 1867-1877, BC Archives, MS 2538.

¹⁴ Emily Carr, *The Book of Small* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1942), 168.

¹⁵ Jean Barman, "The Emergence of Educational Structures in Nineteenth Century British Columbia," in Jean Barman et al, eds. *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia* (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd, 1995), 189-212.

¹⁶ Maria Tippett, *Emily Carr: A Biography* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1979), 12. Even though Maria Tippett states that drawing was not part of the curriculum at Girl's Central School, linear drawing was listed on the report card as a possible subject in 1886, (Flora Frazer Report Card, 1886, BC Archives, MS 2800, File 1). It is possible that linear drawing was only offered if there was a teacher who was skilled in that area to teach it. Likewise, it may be that linear drawing was a subject taught only to boys at this time.

¹⁷ *The Daily British Colonist*, 2 October 1883, 3.

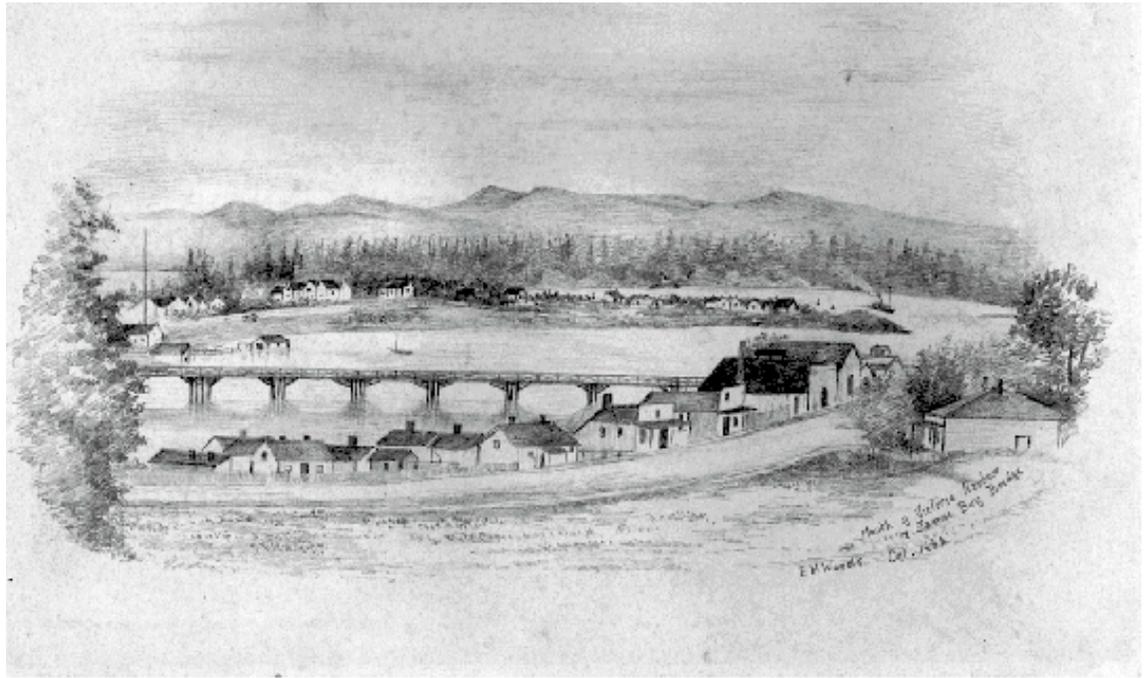
¹⁸ Tippett, *Emily Carr*, 11-12.

¹⁹ Ada Withrow Clipping File, PABC, (D19 162-0463).

²⁰ James K. Nesbitt, "Victoria Started to Grow in 1886," *The Daily Colonist*, 5 April 1966, 10. In 1883, Miss Withrow had work on exhibit at the store of M.W. Waitt & Co. The *Daily British Colonist* had this to say: "The crayon of Venus is a life-like production. A scene on the Susquehanna, for boldness and charming blend of color, is admirable, but a picture of Oregon scenery, with the hoary outlines of Mount Hood rising in silent majesty in the background, and the deep, quiet water, fringed with trees and shrubs, in the fore,

Notes continue >>>

Right: *Mouth of Victoria Harbour and James Bay Bridge* by Emily Henrietta Woods, October 1882



presents a view of exquisite loveliness." (*The Daily British Colonist*, 1883, 30 September 1883). In 1886, she had work on exhibit at Joseph Sommer's art shop, as well as at Mr. Jacob Sehl's furniture store. (Ada Withrow Clipping File, BC Archives, D19 162 – 0463.

²¹ The following portraits painted by Ada Withrow are housed in the BC Archives collections: "Ebenezer Brown," 1880s, PDP-02666; "The Late Honorable William Smithe," 1887, PDP-00363; "The Late Honorable Robert Dunsmuir," 1889, PDP-09064; "The Late Honorable Robert Dunsmuir," 1889, PDP-0965.

²² Tippet, *Emily Carr*, 18.

²³ Emily Carr, *Growing Pains*, 15.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

²⁵ Tippet, *Emily Carr*, 19. See also Carr, *Growing Pains*, 40.

²⁶ Carr, *Growing Pains*, 99.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 277

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 276.

Even though, while attending art classes in San Francisco, she had been exposed to a diverse range of drawing styles and techniques, Emily refused to attend life drawing classes on moral grounds and instead focused on landscape and still life.²⁵ She later referred to the kind of art she produced during this time as "humdrum and unemotional—objects honestly portrayed, nothing more."²⁶ Even after returning from five years of study in England she called her work "narrow, conservative, dull seeing, perhaps rather mechanical, but nevertheless honest."²⁷ Yet, these criticisms were launched from the perspective of hindsight during a time when Emily Carr identified strongly with the modernist ethos of Lawren Harris and the Group of Seven, and thus represent her attempts to reframe her own artistic career. Emily Carr could not reconcile the disparity between the two images of herself as a gentlewoman art teacher and an eccentric artist, and so created a dichotomy between her conservative early work and her later "true" work, which brought her notoriety and acceptance from other artists.

In her autobiographical writing Emily Carr describes how as a child she had so *wanted* to draw, that she retrieved charcoal out of the fireplace and drew on scraps of paper, as if a great paucity of drawing implements had conspired against her. She states that she was *allowed* to take art classes as a young girl, and contrasts her own penchant for drawing heads with her sis-

ters' inclination toward flowers. After being dismissed from her position as art teacher from the Vancouver Art Club, she claims she would rather *starve* than spend one more second teaching art to women she described as "vulgar, lazy old beasts."²⁸ Yet, what separates Emily Carr from the lady painters she so disdained, or from her sisters who were content to paint china and sketch flowers, is not so much that she was an artist, but that, by the time she turned her attention to the past, she saw herself as a particular kind of artist.

Later biographers and writers have tended to follow Emily Carr's lead, and have bypassed her early local art training. This lack of interest in the "unexceptional" has resulted in a historical picture that tends to favour a traditional stereotype of the artist as a heroic genius. Yet the art and artistic products women created during the late nineteenth-century functioned in more complex ways than simply by attempting to fit into the fine art system perpetuated by popular art schools like the Royal Academy in England. To analyze Emily Carr's work only in terms of the professional art system is limiting because she created so many other kinds of artistic products like hooked rugs, pottery, and humorous narrative cartoons. In order to discuss these fascinating and significant artistic products, which do not reflect the standards of professional art training, it makes sense to look at what other kinds of experiences may have shaped her work. ~

When the Flowers Talked

by Christine D. Currie

EDITH Louisa (Helmcken) Higgins, known as Dolly, was the youngest daughter of Dr. John Sebastian and Cecilia Helmcken. Her father was the colony's first surgeon and general practitioner, and an active politician who helped negotiate British Columbia's entrance into Confederation in 1871. When Edith was two years old, her mother died, leaving Dr. Helmcken as a sole parent. Due to his frequent travels on government duty Edith was raised primarily by the family's housekeepers. Edith attended school at St. Ann's Academy and excelled in the arts. Like many young women from Victoria's social elite, she went to Toronto for finishing school where she showed promise in art and music. In 1882 she went to London for further study, and, accompanied by an aunt, she travelled extensively in Britain and on the European continent before returning to Victoria the next year. In 1889 Edith married William R. Higgins, a professional British-trained singer, the son of prominent Victoria pioneers. At the age of 30, William Higgins took ill and died and in October 1896 Edith went to live with her father at her childhood home.¹

In 1919, a year before Dr. Helmcken died, Edith wrote *An Early Spring Morning Chat: When the Flowers Talked*, a charming, self-produced booklet for children. The book was dedicated to great-nephew John Douglas Craig McTavish "and all other children who played in the Dear Old Garden." There are two known copies of the book, both illustrated by Edith's cousin Martha Harris (née Douglas), a known Victoria writer and painter, and "typed by Miss Dora Kitts." Although efforts were made to produce identical copies, there are slight differences in the illustrations and the placement of text on the pages.

In the epilogue of the book Edith mentions that she wrote the book to "try and interest children in the love of flowers." Edith Helmcken's own interest in flowers and gardening came from her father, a keen gardener. The story unfolds in the "Dear Old Garden" and takes the form of a dialogue between two of the flowers, Mr. Johnnie Snowdrops and Glory-of-the-Snow. In the course of their gossip-like conversation, these two antagonists discuss the various inhabitants of the garden in terms of their specific characteristics and relate the story how a human being, the Man Flower, cultivates and cares for the flowers.

The book reflects Victorian custom and propriety by blending a children's moral story with the Victorian sensibility of the "symbolism of flowers." Some inspiration for her book likely came from the numerous books on gardening in the Helmcken library, including two copies of *The Manual of the School Garden*, published in 1856, a basic garden manual. Children's books about flowers were also in the family's book collection. A small book called *The Flower of Innocence*² bears an inscription that reads "to Edith Louisa Helmcken, a birthday gift from her affectionate uncle James, 24th June 1870."³ Flowers are pressed between stories rife with scripture and floral descriptions. An inscription in *Flower Stories and Their Lessons: A Book for the Young* (London, 1864) names the owner as Edith's older sister Amy. These and similar books kindled Edith's interest in flowers and their symbolic meaning.

Notes on next page >>>



All illustrations in this article are from Edith Helmcken's book and are reproduced here with kind permission of Helmcken descendants who own two of the surviving copies.

Right: Dr. Helmcken, "Man Flower" in Edith Helmcken's book, tending the "Dear Old Garden" at the age of ninety-four.

¹ BC Archives, NWp.707.4 182A

² The first pages are damaged and the name of the author and publication information is missing.

³ It is not known who this "Uncle James" was. The word "not" has been written in front of "affectionate uncle," perhaps by Edith herself.

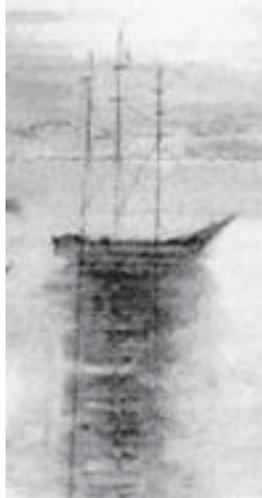
⁵ Kimberley Reynolds *Children's Literature in the 1890s and 1990s* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1994), ix.

⁶ Johanna Lehner and Ernst Lehner. *Folklore and Symbolism of Flowers, Plants and Trees* (New York: Tudor Publishing, 1990) 109.

⁷ Lesley Gordon. *Green Magic: Flower Plants & Herbs in Lore & Legend* (New York: The Viking Press, 1977).

⁸ BC Archives, MS 0505, v. 12.

Below: "'Man Flower,' the Gardener, being my father... who arrived in Victoria B. C. in 1850... in the sailing vessel 'Norman Morrison'"



In *An Early Spring Morning Chat: When the Flowers Talked*, the language, floral theme, and style are consistent with countless other Victorian moral tales for children concerned with shaping the young reader's ideas.⁴

The book employs the symbolic language of flowers that was very important in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁵ In *Green Magic: Flower Plants & Herbs in Lore and Legend*, Lesley Gordon examines the many Victorian books on the language of flowers.⁶ Often these books were arranged as a foreign language dictionary with the first half of the book listing flowers followed by meanings and the second half the reverse. Also common were flower bibles in which segments of the text were accompanied with a representative species of flowers.

The flowers in *An Early Spring Morning Chat: When the Flowers Talked*, have specific symbolic meaning. Following the convention, the oak represents hospitality, rosemary is remembrance, and violets are modesty and faithfulness. Gloria, "Glory-of-the-Snow," comments, "The reason I am out so early is that dear old Mrs. Oaktree, who lives just over there, being so generous and kind, gave me some of her warm brown leaves to cover me." In another passage, Miss Violet is described as "modest and sweet." Elsewhere, Miss Rosemary offers rosemary sprigs to the main characters so that they will remember their conversation and why they want to remain in this cultivated garden.

However, the symbolism in Edith's book does not always concur with contemporary source material. For example, she designates dandelions as weeds and dangerous characters. This may correspond with a seasoned gardener's opinion, but it does not conform to the conventional language of flowers, where the dandelion is honoured as a rustic oracle. For Edith the dandelion represented "uneducted" and "uncultivated" flowers which must be sent away, in other words, they had not learned the lessons of moral propriety. She clearly took liberties within the established tradition to suit her needs.

Dr. Helmcken's clear expectations of upstanding behaviour from his youngest daughter could be reflected in the conduct of the flowers in Edith's book. In a letter to Edith dated 9 June 1870, her father wrote as though she were an adult—she was then only seven years old. He discusses politics, and compares the virtues of Vancouver Island with that of the whole Dominion



of Canada. He repeatedly instructs Edith to be a good girl.

God has been good to little Edith, and whilst she continues to be an obedient little girl and behaves herself everybody will like her. But remember, you have to depend upon yourself...and continue to be a good little girl and give up crying and learn to sit quietly at the table. Now my little daughter I must finish—be a very good little girl—so that when I return at the end of next month I may be proud of my little daughter.⁷

Edith's book was finished while her father was gravely ill. He was perhaps the most important person in her life. Dr. Helmcken had been an accomplished gardener, passing many hours outdoors and in his greenhouse. Edith wrote in the epilogue that "Man Flower", the caring gardener in her story, and the only human to make an appearance, is her father, "who has always taken a keen interest in the cultivation of flowers, even today at the age of ninety-four." She may also be making an analogy between his nurturing of his garden and the care he showed to his family, patients, and the welfare of British Columbia.

Edith's book for children reflects the values encoded in the Victorian language of flowers and her father's moral standards, told through a tale based on their mutual love of the family garden. ~

To have a look at and page through a copy of Edith's charming book visit the schoolnet Web site pages <www.sbt.c.ca/culture/schoolnet/helmcken/helmbook/page1.html>.

Edith Helmcken's Hand-Painted Ceramics

by Marla Stevenson

CERAMIC artifacts at Helmcken House in Victoria hint at colonial women's lively interest in china painting. A small collection of hand-painted plaques by Edith Helmcken helps us to explore the history of local women who decorated and worked in clay. What follows is a brief case study of the ceramics painted by Helmcken, which I will argue reflect the Arts and Crafts aesthetic that pervaded Victoria.

During Helmcken's formative years and early maturity, the Arts and Crafts aesthetic was widely influential in Britain and North America, including Victoria. There are abundant examples of the Arts and Crafts style evident in Victoria homes and gardens today. In 1992, Edward Gibson summarizes the situation at the beginning of the twentieth century on the BC coast:

Many highly skilled industrial craftspeople were attracted to the new Pacific railhead at a time of worldwide recession at the turn of the century. Stone masons, carvers, glaziers, landscape gardeners and cabinet-makers flooded to the coast from Great Britain. More importantly, they came from backgrounds steeped in the Arts and Crafts Movement. The coast's formative years were stamped with the tastes of William Morris's *News From Nowhere* and its images of handcrafted decoration and a gardened landscape, an earthly paradise needing human care.

Gibson goes on to write specifically about Victoria's eager adoption of the Arts and Crafts Movement, "By 1900, arts and crafts societies, centred mainly in Victoria, were promoting ceramics and painting, and horticultural societies were promoting landscape garden competitions in the new towns and cities."¹

The influence of the Arts and Crafts movement extends to Helmcken's china painting. The small collection of her work at Helmcken House, includes three plaques, a plate, and a small porcelain tea-set. The plaques are decorated with daisies, black-eyed Susans, and a portrait of a child.² The three plaques are described as porcelain in the Helmcken House collection catalogue, but they are actually earthenware.³

The plaque decorated with daisies is the only dated piece in the group. It was painted in 1881, when Helmcken was nineteen. In 1881 and 1882, she was in England, and it can be concluded that



Heritage Branch HH1988.1.236

this plate was painted there. This is supported by a letter written by Helmcken from England to her sister Amy McTavish back home.⁴ Also, no evidence has been found of a china painting kiln in Victoria before 1892. In that year, a newspaper article titled "The Provincial Fair: The Art Gallery" praises Ethel McMicking's china painting, and implies her kiln was the only one in Victoria, or the area. It stated:

About as pretty a collection as is to be found in the whole gallery is that of painted china and terra cotta,⁷ by Miss Ethel M. McMicking. ...The young lady completes the work herself, the necessary firing being done by the use of the Wilkie studio kiln, said to be the only one on the Coast.⁸

A final reason for concluding that the piece was painted in London is that an English style of china painting, which closely resembles Helmcken's, and was usually done on earthenware, was popular when she was there. This style of china painting was a product of the aesthetic promoted by John Ruskin and William Morris; it was a reaction

Above: *Earthenware plaque decorated by the 19-year-old Edith Helmcken with daisies in 1881. 10 inches across.*

¹ E. Gibson, "Pacific Craft Traditions and Development" in *A Treasury of Canadian Craft*. S. Carter, ed. (Vancouver: Canadian Craft Museum, 1992).

² HH 1988.1.236, HH 1988.1.218, and HH 1988.1.514 respectively; the plaques each have two holes in the backs to accommodate hanging devices, which distinguishes them from plates.

³ When tapped with a finger, they emit a dull "clunk", instead of a high "ping" as porcelain

Notes continue >>>

Right: *Black-eyed Susan plaque by Edith Helmcken. About 20 inches across.*

should using the same test. The tonal difference occurs because porcelain clay vitrifies (begins to melt and become glass), during the firing, while earthenware clay, fired to a lower temperature, remains un-vitrified.

⁴ British Columbia Archives. Call No. MS 505, Box No. 14, File No. 4, Dolly Helmcken correspondence, July 24, 1882.

⁵ Terra cotta is earthenware.

⁶ *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 29 September 1892. A china painting kiln was donated by the McMicking family to St. Ann's Academy in the late 1890s, this is probably the same kiln. (Linda McMicking interview, 26 April 2002).

⁷ W. Kaplan. *The Art that is life: The Arts and Crafts Movement in America, 1975-1920* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1987), 54.

⁸ P. Stansky, *Redesigning the World: William Morris, the 1880s, and the Arts and Crafts*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1985), 31.

⁹ D. Pye, *The Nature and Art of Workmanship* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 66.

¹⁰ A. Callen, *Angel in the Studio: Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement 1870-1914* (London: Astragal Books, 1979), 54.

Right: *Child's portrait. Plaque by Edith Helmcken.*



Heritage Branch HHI988.1.218

against the repetitive look displayed by factory-produced items. W. Kaplan writes:

...factory work had so disturbed the natural rhythms of life, that it turned once creative craftsmen into mere cogs in the wheel of machinery, so that they, like their products, lost uniqueness. For Ruskin the industrial revolution made designers become anonymous labourers.⁷

Ruskin thought that handmade arts and crafts should show their imperfections; he called them "virtues of irregularity."⁸ The irregularities gave the piece a spiritual quality which Ruskin believed nature had, but machine-made objects lacked. In *The Nature and Art of Workmanship*, D. Pye noted that Ruskin, "before Japanese aesthetics were known in the West, [recognized] that free and rough workmanship has aesthetic qualities which are unique."⁹ Ruskin also thought the structures of Nature could be mined for creative inspiration. Some principles practiced in the natural style were respect for originality, valuing of unique, non-repetitive characteristics, and recognizing beauty in variety, as opposed to sameness.

During the 1870s, a craze for china painting, participated in by middle-class women, developed in England. A book about women and the Arts and Crafts movement, *Angel in the Studio: Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement 1870-1914*, by A.

Heritage Branch HHI988.1.514



Callen describes the phenomenon:

Thus the 1870s saw a veritable explosion of interest in art pottery decoration and painting on china. At the amateur level, this interest developed to craze proportions as ladies all over England took up the craft; for a while it outstripped embroidery as a pastime.

According to Callen, one of the most popular places in London to learn china painting was at Howell and James' Art Pottery Classes.¹⁰ The February 1880 issue of the city's *Magazine of Art* advertised the classes: "Mssrs. Howell and James Pottery

Classes...have opened a studio at their Art Galleries where classes for ladies are held daily, Saturdays excluded, in China Painting."

Howell and James held regular exhibits of china painting and popular china painting competitions. An 1878 Howell and James exhibit included some earthenware plaques painted in a lively, natural way which closely resembles Helmcken's china painting style.¹¹ An 1879 *Magazine of Art* review of a Howell and James china painting exhibit describes some china-painted plants as "treated naturally" compared to "conventional, elegant arrangements"

of china-painted flowers and foliage: “We hardly know whether to award the palm to plants treated naturally, or to the many graceful and elegant conventional arrangements of flowers and foliage to be found in the collection.”

The author describes some plaques painted in the natural way as “boldly and vigorously painted on a dark ground” and as having “freshness and originality”¹² Helmcken’s china-painted plaques were painted during the same interval, in close proximity to the Howell and James studio. It seems plausible that Helmcken took part in the china painting craze while she was in London, and her plaques were produced as a result of this experience. Perhaps she even took lessons with Howell and James, or a similar studio. It seems reasonable to posit that the informal naive look of her pieces is due to Ruskin’s promotion of a “natural” look for arts and crafts.

Helmcken’s 1881 plaque painted with daisies shows much evidence of the handcrafted aesthetic promoted by Ruskin, Morris, and the Howell and James Gallery. The slightly bowl-shaped plaque, about ten inches across, is painted with an informal arrangement of daisies. The heads of the daisies take up a significant portion of the available space on the plate. These include six fully-opened flowers, with loosely-painted white petals and yellow centres. A seventh flower, just to the right of the others, curves downward, and is partially opened. The leaves and centres of the daisies have a layered, watercolour-like appearance. The built-up colours indicate the piece was china-painted several times, and fired after each painting. A thick dark brown layer of china-paint has been brushed up to the edges of the flower petals, stems, and leaves. In some areas the rough edge of the background colour has not quite reached a petal’s edge. In other places the background has been casually brushed over a green-hued leaf’s edge or into the white of a petal. The brighter colours of the leaves and flowers are dramatic against the plaque’s nearly black background. Each leaf and petal is freely and individually painted and there is a pleasing, relaxed, sketch-like quality to the entire image.

The plaque Helmcken decorated with black-eyed Susans is substantially larger than the daisy plate and measures about twenty inches across. It is another interesting example of Helmcken’s vibrant, personal style. On the plaque’s surface, Helmcken has spontaneously sketched four black-eyed Susan blossoms. Three of the flowers are large and open, while the fourth’s partly-open flower on the right, faces upward. The artist has then painted green, brown, and yellow colour within the shapes of the petals and leaves formed by the dark line drawing. Some of the china-paint is very thick, particularly in the dark brown parts of the image, as in the centre of a flower. Small areas of cross-hatching add depth to several leaves and petals. Speckles of paint are spattered (it seems unintentionally), here and there on top of the art work. The background behind the black-eyed Susan blossoms consists of a blended transition from black into blue, although some brushwork can be seen.

The lively spontaneity of Helmcken’s china painting is enchanting. It seems so different from the elegant and more formal style of china painting with which we are more typically familiar, such as the delicately tinted flower painting on what North Americans refer to as “the good china”. In Helmcken’s work, the paint is thickly laid on in very visible brushstrokes, and her compositions are rough and informal. The variety, asymmetry, and naivety exhibited in Edith Helmcken’s work is probably the result of her conscious attempt to emulate the “virtues of irregularity” espoused by Ruskin and Morris. ∞



Above: *Earthenware plaque painted by J. Edith Cowper dated 1878. From M. Haslam, English Pottery: 1865-1915.*



Above: *Earthenware plaque J. Wedgwood and Sons, 1880. From M. Haslam, English Pottery: 1865-1915.*

¹¹ “Naturally decorated” plaques are illustrated in M. Haslam’s *English Art Pottery: 1865-1915* (Suffolk: Baron Publishing, 1975), 131. Examples of the informal style from Haslam’s book are shown above.

¹² “The Fourth Annual Exhibition of Paintings on China”, *The Magazine of Art*, V. II, 1879. 269-270.

The Needle Art of Kathleen O'Reilly

by Tina Lowery

¹ Kathleen O'Reilly was born to Peter and Caroline (Trutch) O'Reilly in 1867. Peter O'Reilly came to Victoria from Ireland in 1859 and in 1863 married Caroline A. Trutch, the sister of Joseph Trutch who became BC's first Lieutenant-Governor. Peter worked as Stipendiary Magistrate, Gold Commissioner, and Indian Reserve Commissioner all important roles and key to the early development of the Province of British Columbia. They were a middle-class family who lived in the beautiful, but not opulent or extravagant, home at Point Ellice along the Gorge, and who were among Victoria's social elite.

² The needle arts are generally divided into two main categories. Plain sewing, such as mending, was learned by girls and women of every social class. These simple stitches formed the basis of the necessary skills and techniques required in the second category, fancy needlework. Fancy needlework was popular among the women of the upper and middle classes who produced work that was to become a part of the decorative arts. Traditionally within the definition of fancy needlework fall many types of work, and specifically within the time of this research project, from 1860-1920, includes both canvas and ornamental needlework.

³ Mrs. Lethbridge in 1875 and Miss Robinson in 1876, from notes on Kathleen in the diary of Peter O'Reilly, O'Reilly Family Papers. BC Archives.

⁴ As described in the 1860 Female Collegiate School prospectus, the object of the school was "to provide careful religious training, in combination with a solid English Education, and the usual accomplishments." The school offered lessons in

music and singing, drawing and painting, and needlework. From the monthly magazine of the Anglican Synod of BC and the Yukon. Anglican Synod archives at UBC.

⁵ PE975.1.5055

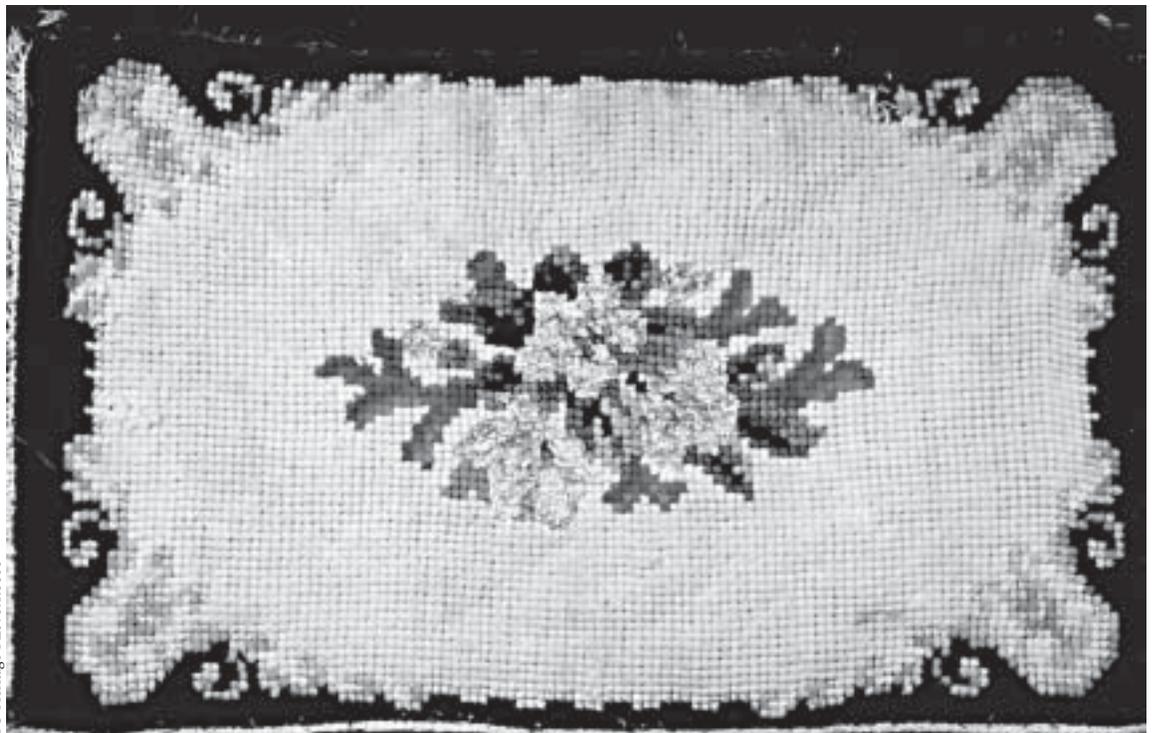
⁶ Letter from Caroline to Kathleen, 7 April 1884.

⁷ PE975.1.3553 a-1,

⁸ Barbara Morris, *Victorian Embroidery* (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1962), 113-147.

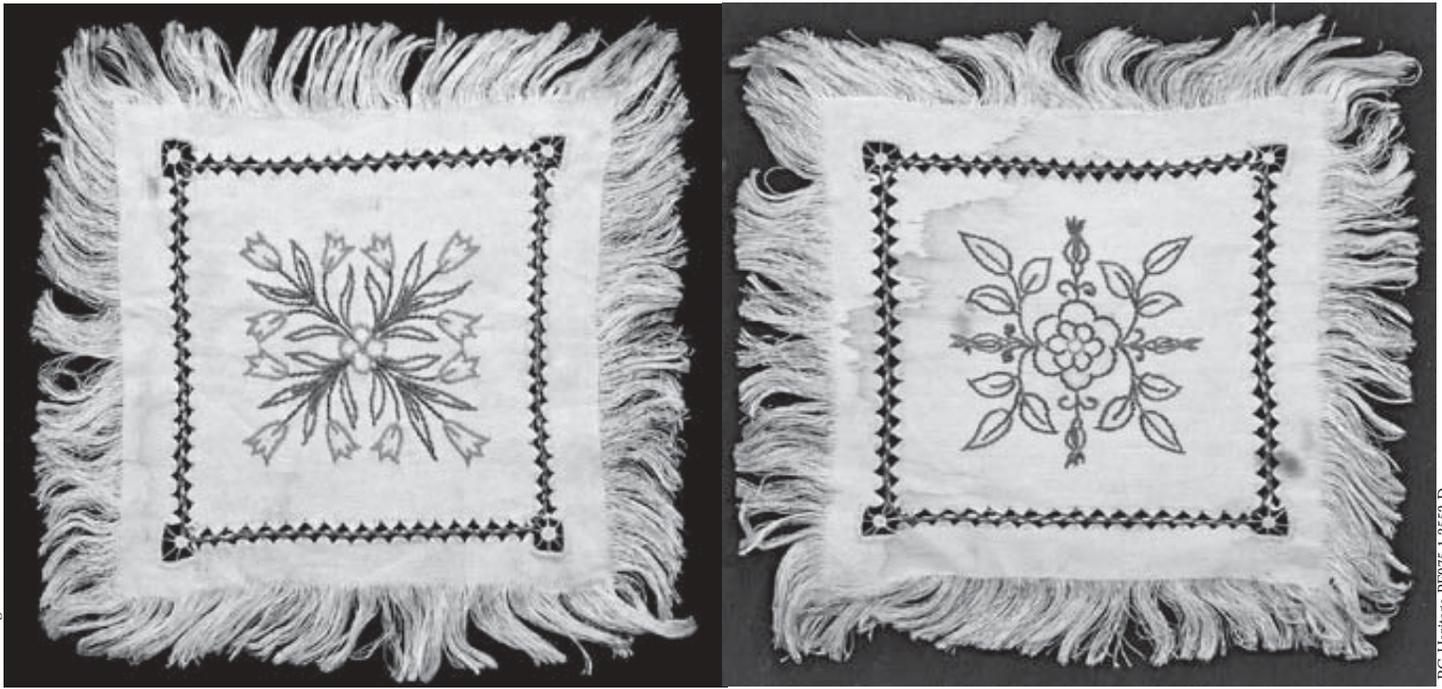
MIDDLE-AND UPPER-CLASS women in Victoria, well trained in the womanly arts, or "the accomplishments," produced works for private consumption to be given as gifts, for charity events, or for decorating their own homes. Generally, collections of needle art available to historians and researchers are by nameless, unknown women, but the collections at Carr House, Craigflower Manor, Helmcken House, and Point Ellice House include an impressive amount of needlework that can be attributable to woman artists such as Dolly Helmcken, Goodie McKenzie, and Kathleen O'Reilly.¹

A watercolourist, musician, and needlewoman, Kathleen exemplified the Victorian ideal of the "accomplished" lady. The technical skills she learned and practised in painting, for example, resulted in her ability and confidence in creating and designing her own pieces of needle art.² While educated as a young child at home by private tutors, Miss Lethbridge and Miss Robinson,³ Kathleen might have learned simple sewing techniques from her mother and her tutors. In her teens, Kathleen attended Victoria's Angela College from 1879 to 1882, where needlework was included in the curriculum.⁴ A Berlin wool work pillow cover found in the O'Reilly collection may be an example of Kathleen's student work.⁵ Berlin wool work, one of the most popular types of canvas work in the nineteenth century, was a simple form of needlework that required little skill. Typically worked on square mesh canvas in tent or cross stitch, designs were copied stitch by stitch from printed patterns. The navy blue and cream-coloured pillow cover is simple in design and done in a half-cross stitch, also known as a



BC Heritage PE975.1.5055

Right: Navy blue and cream-coloured pillow cover. Around 1880.



half stitch. The floral motif is common for the period and the central motif of larger pink flowers appears to have been worked in silk or chenille. The simplicity of the piece suggests that this is the work of a young or inexperienced needlewoman.

In 1882 Kathleen travelled to England with her mother and brother. Remaining in England through 1885, Kathleen filled her days with social calls, attending exhibits, visiting museums, and school. Through a series of letters Kathleen wrote to and received from her mother in 1884 and 1885, it is possible to attribute the making of a set of dessert doilies to Kathleen. "I should like a set of d'oylees [sic] for dessert, white worked in little figures or flowers in washing silk. It w[ould] be pretty work for you on some fine material—the simpler the better! I want them to put under rose coloured finger bowls at dessert," wrote her mother.⁶ The result was a dozen square-shaped doilies decorated with hand embroidered rose and rosebuds, each in a different shade.⁷ Each is surrounded by a drawn thread fringe border and finished with coordinating colours. The doilies are attractive, simply but carefully worked in a design consistent with the contemporary English Arts and Crafts movement.⁸

Several examples of Berlin wool slippers found in the O'Reilly collection may have been made by Kathleen.⁹ A pair of slipper forms is worked on double mesh canvas.¹⁰ The floral motif is typical of what would have been available in ladies'

magazines and pattern books. A second pair of slippers also exhibits a common motif: a pair of seated dogs. Household pets were popular at this time, in part due to the "Royal Dogs" kept and much loved by Queen Victoria.¹¹ The O'Reillys kept dogs of many breeds, shown in a number of surviving family photographs. It may, therefore, be suggested that the slippers were intended to represent the family's pet terriers and were perhaps a gift for a brother or even Kathleen's father.

Women often took sewing along to social events such as parties and picnics. Long winter nights and rainy days were often spent catching up on a little sewing. This work was an opportunity for women to work together for charity or for ladies' bazaars. A review of Kathleen O'Reilly's letters and journals attests to her participation in these activities.¹² Kathleen's journal mentions dressing dolls, possibly for Sunday school,¹³ and even making the clothes herself. Kathleen and her mother, Caroline O'Reilly, were active members of their ladies' church committee. Church records from the Anglican *Parish Magazine*, document fundraising bazaars in British Columbia.¹⁴ Funds raised were substantial, often amounting to hundreds of dollars. These funds helped support mission schools, the building of churches, and other good causes.¹⁵

It is difficult to determine just how the individual makers of art needlework would have interpreted these womanly activities. Kathleen

Left: Two of a set of 12 dessert doilies. Around 1885.

⁹ Six pairs of slipper forms are included in the Point Ellice Collection.

¹⁰ PE 975.1.2908a-b

¹¹ Morris, *Victorian Embroidery*, 22.

¹² Kathleen writes in her journal 26 January 1887, "very stormy wet morning I did some sewing". Entries from January and February, 1887, describe sewing at home while a friend reads to her, or while working alongside her mother.

¹³ "I dressed a doll for school treat" Friday 14 January 1887, AE OR3 OR32

¹⁴ *Parish Magazine*, Anglican Diocese Archives, Victoria.

¹⁵ The records show that in September of 1884 the magazine reports an estimated cost of the building of St. James Church, in Victoria, to be \$2,500. By January of 1885, \$900 was raised by the ladies committee in support of the costs of the building of the church.

Right: Slipper forms with a floral decoration and with sitting dogs (detail).

- ¹⁶ 8 November, year not known. BC Archives.
- ¹⁷ Ann Romines, "Putting Things in Order: The Domestic Aesthetic of Laura Ingalls Wilder's Little House Books," in *The Material Culture of Gender: The Gender of Material Culture*, eds. Katharine Martinez and Kenneth L. Ames (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1997) 189.
- ¹⁸ Thomas J. Schlereth, *Material Culture: A Research Guide* (University of Kansas Press, 1985) 25.



BC Heritage PE975.1.2908 b



BC Heritage PE975.1.2908 a

O'Reilly's true feelings of bazaar work are suggested in a letter to her from D. Chesterfield in which he wrote, "Oh no, you are not wicked. I too hate bazaar sales of work!"¹⁶

Kathleen was schooled in other arts such as watercolour painting and drawing. However, while she painted at school and took lessons in

drawing it is unclear if she continued this work. She did consistently create needlework from childhood to adulthood. Possibly needlework was a continued artistic pursuit because it provided Kathleen with a means of artistic freedom and social activity within the acceptable separate sphere of a Victorian woman.

Needle art is an important and revealing expression of the lives, thoughts and achievements of local Victorian women. As one researcher, Ann Romines, has noted, sewing, knitting, and art needlework are the soundless language of domestic culture.¹⁷ While the examples described in this paper may not have been "great art" created by the "artist genius," they have significant historical value. Domestic works such as these are important as both art and artifact, and have been too often overlooked because of their utilitarian purpose and the anonymity of the makers. As Thomas Schlereth stated: "the study of the unique adds little to the sum understanding of human behaviour. The study of the kinds of things used [and made] by people during a given historical period reveals a great deal about them."¹⁸ The preliminary research conducted for this project has brought to light notable collections of womanly arts by specific artists that are available for more in depth research into the lives and accomplishments of women in the social context of late nineteenth century Victoria. ~

Naming the Artist

Womanly Arts from 19th Century

British Columbia

3 – 25 October 2002

Emily Carr House

207 Government Street, Victoria, BC

An exhibit presenting decorative and fine arts created by women in colonial British Columbia.

Shown are the results of a year's work on a research project on the womanly arts from some of British Columbia's provincial historic sites. The Womanly Arts Research Project has another year to run with the final exhibit, curated by Karen Finlay, to be held at the Maltwood Gallery at the University of Victoria, in the fall of 2003.

For information on hours and admission, lectures, seminars, and programs related to the exhibit, please call 250.383.5843

The St. Ann's Academy Art Studio

by Ayla Lepine

“Sic itur ad astra”

FROM its establishment in 1858 until its doors closed to students in 1973, the motto of St. Ann's Academy in Victoria was the Latin “*sic itur ad astra*.” The phrase, meaning “such is the way to the stars,” embodies the depth of investment on the part of the institution in the education of girls and young women in a diverse variety of subjects and disciplines. Not least the Academy was actively involved in art education and was the centre of artistic activity in Victoria in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Although publications such as Edith Down's *A Century of Service* give us a window into the history of St. Ann's, they do not reveal the central role played by art education in its programs.¹ It is only from incidental references in local memoirs and biographies that it is possible to piece together the wide scope of the school's activities and influence in this sphere. Moreover, since most of the documentation and surviving material relating to the St. Ann's art studio is from the years between 1897 and 1935, the years when Sister Mary Osithe was in charge of the art program, it is easy to assume that she was the first art teacher at St. Ann's and that no art education was given at the academy prior to her arrival.² In this paper, I will attempt to trace the Academy's early art activity and place Sister Osithe's contribution in a wider context.

In June of 1858, four Sisters of St. Ann having



BC Archives A-7746

travelled for weeks from the Motherhouse in Lachine, Quebec, aboard the *Seabird*, landed at Fort Victoria.³ They opened a convent and started a school in a log cabin. Their intention was to provide education and spiritual direction for the colony's children. The sisters were not the first Christian order to arrive at the fledgling colony.⁴ The mandate of the few clergy at Fort Victoria was not only to ensure the comfort and worship needs of the colonists, but also to act as missionaries to the First Nations people in the vicinity. The Sisters of St. Ann were no exception, and included Aboriginal children in their programs.

Many in the Victoria settlement were keen to enrol their children at the convent school. Dr. John Sebastian Helmcken, a notable politician in the Legislature and Victoria's only surgeon at the time, enrolled Amy, his eldest daughter, in the convent school immediately as it opened.⁵ A few months later, he was called upon to treat the Mother Superior, and had to “trump up the courage, having never before spoken to nuns, nor treated one.”⁶ This marked the beginning of a strong friendship between the Helmckens and the Sisters of St. Ann; Edith “Dolly” was also soon attending the Academy. Others who attended St. Ann's over the following few decades were Rita McTavish, Amy Helmcken's daughter in the 1890s, Martha Douglas, Edith's Helmcken's cousin, for a day or two in the 1860s,⁷ and the McKenzie girls from Craighflower Mansion.

Above: *The first convent and schoolhouse.*

¹ Edith Down, SSA, *A Century of Service: The Sisters of Saint Ann*. (Victoria: 1996, reprint 1999).

² Christina Johnson-Dean comments that the art department was only established in 1917 is probably a typographical error. Roberta Pazdro asserts that there was no art program at the convent until until S. Sophie Labelle's arrival in 1871. Christina Johnson-Dean, “B.C. Women Artists, 1885–1920” in *British Columbia Women Artists: 1885–1985* (Art Gallery of Greater Victoria: 1985), p 12. Roberta Pazdro, “From Pastels to Chisel: the Changing Role of B.C. Women Artists,” in *Not Just Pin Money*:

Notes continue >>>

Left: *A needlework piece probably done by Edith Helmcken as a student of approximately 13 years.*



Heritage Trust HH1988.1.221

Right: *Farm scene. Pencil on paper, Rita McTavish, 1893.*

Selected Essays on the History of Women's Work in British Columbia, ed. Barbara K. Latham and Roberta J. Pazdro (Victoria: Camosun College, 1984).

³ Eunice M.L. Harrison. *The Judge's Wife: Memoirs of a British Columbia Pioneer*. Ed. Jean Barman (Vancouver: Ronsdale, 2002)

⁴ A letter from then Dean Edward Cridge to Sir James Douglas, the governor of the colony and Chief Factor of the HBC post indicates that a Catholic school was running as early as 1856, and the Victoria District Church, later to become Christ Church Cathedral, was established in the same year. Anglican Diocese of British Columbia Archives, box 317.

⁵ An indexed list print-out of all the girls who ever attended the school shows "Emma Helmcken, 22 Feb. [18]59"

⁶ BC Archives, M1

⁷ Horrified at seeing a student disciplined, 6-year-old Martha didn't make it past her first day.

⁸ ASSA S35-1-6b

⁹ Margaret Cantwell, SSA, "Art Studio, St. Anne's Academy, Victoria B.C." in *Annals of the Community*. July-December 1994.

¹⁰ ASSA S35-6-9a & b.

¹¹ Marg Andrews. "The History and Early Development of Art Education at St. Ann's Academy" UBC MA Ed. Dept, 1978. p 3.

¹² ASSA S35-5-18

¹³ Mary Ann Eva, SAA, *A History of the Sisters of St. Ann, 1850-1900*. (New York: Vintage, 1960) 25.

¹⁴ Cantwell, "Art Studio," 104

¹⁵ ASSA S35-1-6e

¹⁶ Turkey work—work of even, deep pile formed by knotting wools on a canvas base, in imitation of Turkey carpets. Berlin work was a form of needlepoint which was tremendously popular during Victorian times. The work was stitched from charts and often in very bright colours. Most of the cards came from Germany, hence the name.

¹⁷ A copy of the Katie Jennings piece is at ASSA.

¹⁸ HH1988.1.79, HH1988.1.80.

¹⁹ Volumes 1870-1880 are held in the ASSA

²⁰ S. Rose of Lima (Rosalinda Roy) fell ill and died within a year of arriving in Victoria.

²¹ BC Archives, PDP05518-22; S. Osithe's camera and photographic materials are catalogued in the ASSA. Almost all of her work, like the other objects from the St. Ann's collections, remains unseen and essentially unknown.

²² ASSA S35-1-6g

²³ Pazdro, "From Pastels to Chisel," 112.

²⁴ The ASSA collection includes a ledger kept by Sister Osithe (S35-5-2) keeping track of lessons and kiln use given to community members.



Sisters of St. Anne's Archives

Judging from the 1858 syllabus visual arts were a priority. Even in the art studio's meagre beginnings it was clear that the students were being encouraged to work with a variety of mediums and a number of different styles. The core courses were reading, history, English, writing, and French, but also "plain and ornamental needle and net work in all their different shapes."⁸ Students were given the opportunity to take lessons in drawing, at an additional cost of £1.50 per month. None of the founding Sisters could teach art, and a lay teacher was hired.⁹ Two pieces, done by the McQuade sisters, survive from this period and both are done with exceptional skill.¹⁰ One of the mats, done by Anna McQuade in 1865, uses more than six different kinds of needlework to achieve the desired overall effect. Both McQuade sisters eventually took their vows at the convent.

In the 1860s several other convent schools were established on Vancouver Island, and farther North and inland. New Westminster, Alaska, Nanaimo, and Kuper Island were among the sites, but in her MA thesis Marg Andrews explains that the emphasis on fine arts was specific to Victoria, and that the arts department at the Academy was highly successful well before the turn of the century.¹¹ Little specifically is known about the development of the art studio in these early decades, but the success of the school and its programs can be measured by the necessity of an immense expansion including a separate Novitiate wing for prospective sisters, and ample space for separate classrooms and living quarters.

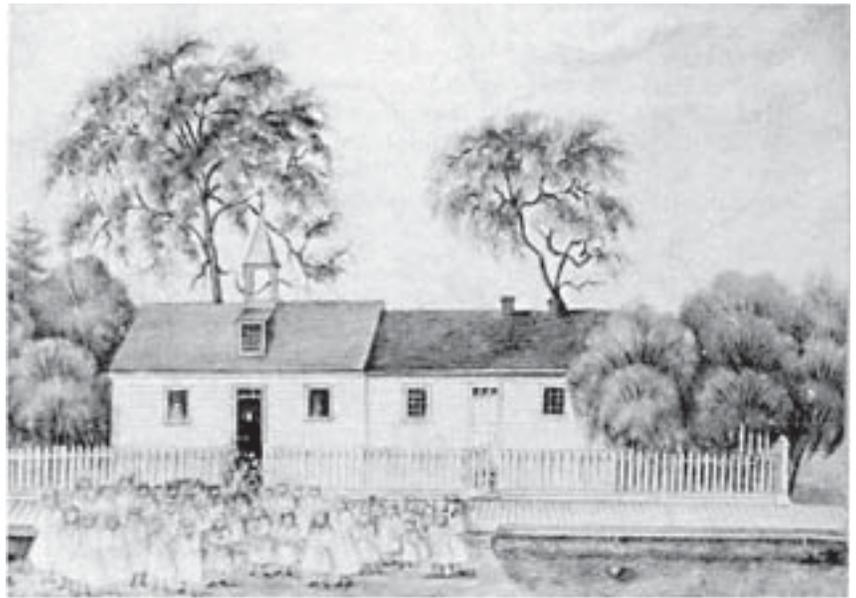
With the construction underway, the sisters decided to send for a nun who would be able to take on the responsibility of teaching music and visual arts. The motherhouse requested that Sister Marie Sophie (Antoinette Labelle), lend her musical and artistic talents to the growing Victoria convent.¹² Protesting that she'd never taken an art lesson in her life,¹³ she appears to have been apprehensive at first. However, her work and the program's development during her stay suggest she had nothing to worry about.¹⁴ Under Sister Labelle, the art program diversified and grew. The 1894 prospectus, released the year before she left, boasts an oil painting component, charcoal, ink, and pencil drawing, and "lessons in all kinds of plain and ornamental needlework,

knitting, embroidery, crochet, tapistry [sic], etc, etc, are given free of charge.”¹⁵ A watercolour of the first St. Ann’s convent school gives us an idea of her style in that medium.

Sister Labelle would have been in charge of the art department when Edith Helmcken went through the Academy in the 1870s, and also when her niece Rita McTavish followed twenty years later. A needlework piece probably done by Edith Helmcken recalls this period in St. Ann’s history (HH1988.1.221). It is a fairly large framed Turkeywork or Berlinwork tapestry of a boy with a flute or pipe surrounded by chickens.¹⁶ It is listed as being from the 1880s or later, but I suspect it is from no later than 1875. Dolly would have been approximately 13, which seems young for such an involved, detailed piece of work. However, another identical piece was found recently in an American curio shop, signed “Katie T. Jennings, Aged 13, St. Ann’s Convent. September 1 1874-July 10 1875” thus suggesting the possibility that it was a set piece, meant to be a class project or assignment for that particular year, and that Edith Helmcken and Katie Jennings were classmates.¹⁷

Nearly a generation later, with Sister Labelle still in the art department, Rita McTavish completed a series of pencil and charcoal sketches. Two triptychs hang in the halls of Helmcken House,¹⁸ and two more drawings, done in 1893, are on display in the St. Ann’s Interpretive Centre parlour. All of Rita McTavish’s drawings deal with local themes, with the possible exception of the farm scene, which may have been copied from a lithograph or etching in one of the many volumes of the *British Art Journal* kept by the art department.¹⁹ By the time the Lachine motherhouse asked Sister Sophie Labelle to return, she was responsible for a thriving and popular art studio.

In 1897, Sister Mary Rose of Lima served briefly as the art teacher²⁰ She was was succeed by Sister Mary Osithe (Elizabeth Labossiere). Sister Osithe had trained extensively in Lachine under the tutelage of William Raphael, Edmund Dyonnet and others, and came with the ability to both instruct and practice in drawing from life, ceramics painting, needlework, as well as oil and watercolour painting. During her three decades at the academy, she offered classes to the community, fostering a passion for art in students and other Victorians alike. The collections at BC Archives, the St. Ann’s Interpretive Centre, and the Sisters of St. Ann Archives show Sister Osithe to have been a versatile artist, and an avid photographer.²¹ The



Sisters of St. Anne's Archives



Sisters of St. Anne's Archives

1910s and 1920s were the height of the art department at St. Ann’s. Prospectuses from this time outline that there was also a student “St. Luke’s Art Society,” much like an amateur art history group, based on criticism and practice in the visual arts.²² Throughout her time at the art studio at St. Ann’s, Sister Osithe held yearly exhibitions of student work, and several times had to hire extra teachers to satisfy the demand for lessons in various art forms.²³

While Sister Osithe’s was exceptionally diverse and sustained, it must not obscure the contributions of her predecessors nor the Academy’s commitment to the art education of women from its outset. The art instruction St. Ann’s offered to its students and to the wider community²⁴ helped shape the climate for art production in Victoria for decades. ~

Above: *St. Ann’s convent school. Watercolour on paper, by S. Sophie Labelle, c. 1872. Image from Edith Down, SAA, Century of Service. The right part of the building may well be the original convent shown on page 15.* Below: *St. Ann’s in 1910. Handcoloured postcard.*

Pretty in Pink

by Wendy Nichols

Centre: *The bodice of the pink gown of Goody McKenzie. The bodice seems unchanged but the skirt (not shown) was restyled.*

Goodie McKenzie's Ballgown

Appearing to one's best advantage was integral to the etiquette that played such a pervasive role in the lives of the upper class of Victorian times. Dressing well was not only a matter of wearing fashionable clothes, but included donning the appropriate costume for the occasion, and selecting the colours and cut of dress that flattered one's figure and complexion the best.¹ For this reason, women put much time and careful thought into their appearances, and it is thus that dress falls under the "womanly arts." The following analysis of a ball gown is one of three to be carried out on gowns held in the collections of the Victoria area historical sites. The goal of this project is to shed light on the reality of the art of dress of upper class women in late-nineteenth-century Victoria.

Goodie's pink ball gown² is held in the collection at Craigflower Farm.³ Goodie McKenzie (1852-1928), whose given name was Wilhelmina, was the youngest daughter of Kenneth McKenzie, the Bailiff of Craigflower Farm. The dress is referred to as Goodie's as there is conclusive evidence, in the nature of a photograph, that it was worn by her.

The gown that remains today, however, is not entirely in the same form as the gown in the portrait. The bodice is quite recognizable as the same, but the skirt has been restyled from the 1880s bustle effect seen in the photograph, to the 1900s A-line of the extant garment.

It is exciting that both the gown and the photograph have survived, as each uncovers something about the other. The dress reveals the brilliant pink silk brocade from which it was made and the skill with which it was manufactured, while the portrait illustrates how the costume

looked on the body and the choice of fashionable accessories with which it was worn. We know also from the portrait that Goodie was in her mid thirties when she wore this gown in its original form. Moreover, the fact that both the portrait and the altered dress have survived reveals that the McKenzies participated in the historical custom of prolonging the use of a garment through extensive alterations. Goodie would have been in her early fifties by the time the alterations to her ball gown were made. It is impressive that she may have kept her youthful

figure for so long that she could have fitted into the 22½" waist of the bodice at this age, or perhaps the altered gown was worn by a younger relation.

The cut of Goodie's pink gown, in its original form, can safely be dated to the 1880s. This is supported by the fact that Hall and Lowe, the photographic studio where Goodie's portrait was taken, set

up shop in Victoria in 1884 or 1885.⁴ In addition, issues of *The Young Ladies Journal* from 1883 to 1885, which are held in the collection at Craigflower Farm and are identified in Goodie's hand as her own, describe many characteristics of fashionable formal attire that also apply to Goodie's dress.⁵

In this analysis, Goodie's dress has been referred to as a ball gown. Whether it is in fact a ball gown or an evening dress, a reception gown or a dinner gown, is difficult for the twenty-first century eye to discern. All could be low necked, trained and have minimal sleeves. Ball gowns however, were worn with the lowest décolletage and were less likely to have trains, for "where much dancing is to be indulged in, trains are very much in the way."⁶

In addition to the physical features of Goodie's



¹ Maud C. Cooke. *Social Etiquette or Manners and Customs of Polite Society*. (London, ON: McDermid & Logan, 1896).

² CF1968.508.

³ Craigflower Farm, established in 1853, was one of the four Vancouver Island farms of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company which were founded to meet the Hudson Bay Company's obligations to support colonization. The site tells the stories of the Bailiff Kenneth McKenzie and his family, as well as of the labourers who worked the farm.

⁴ Though the partnership of Hall and Lowe was dissolved in 1892, Lowe continued to operate under this name until the turn of the century. David Mattison. *Camera Workers: The British Columbia, Alaska & Yukon Photographic Directory, 1858-1950*.

⁵ CS1927.126.1 a-ac

⁶ Cooke, 416.

⁷ Kenneth McKenzie's Daybook No. 5: 12 Sep 1863-9 Apr 1964, BC Archives, MF 1394 13/1. It is interesting to note that dancing lessons nearly doubled the price of the schooling.

⁸ Nan DeBertand Lugin. *Pioneer Women of Vancouver Island*. (Victoria: The Women's Canadian Club of Victoria, 1928), 80.

pink gown that point in the direction of a ball gown, there are several clues to Goodie's life that support this conclusion. It is recorded, for example, that Goodie and her sister Dorothea were taking dancing lessons at Ladies Collegiate in 1864.⁷ They may well have been attending balls by this age for, due to the shortage of women in the Colony, the desire for female dance partners was particularly keen. Though their mother had been reluctant to let them go, the two eldest McKenzie girls, Jessie and Agnes, had been only ten and eleven when they attended their first ball, owing to the persuasive abilities of the officers of the Royal Navy.⁸

As Bailiff of Craigflower Farm, Agent and Superintendent of the Agricultural Company on Vancouver Island, Magistrate, and Justice of the Peace, Kenneth McKenzie and his family moved amongst the upper classes. The popularity of balls in the social scene of early Victoria has been recounted many times.⁹ The significance that attending balls played in the lives of the McKenzies is evidenced in a collection of invitations, which they saved.¹⁰ The collection of roughly 35 invitations spans the years 1866-1895. About half the invitations are to events hosted by the Royal Navy, while others include occasions at Government House, the Alhambra Room, the Philharmonic, and private "at homes."

In *Pioneer Women of Vancouver Island*, Goodie is said to have been "as lovely as a Greek goddess and the belle of many a ball."¹¹ This is not difficult to imagine when we view her beautifully beaded pink gown and photograph. Goodie appears in the portrait to have had dark hair and was likely able to carry off such a strong colour to her advantage. As well, Goodie's gown shows off her small waist and well rounded bust that were the ideals of beauty in this period. Even the plumpness of her arms was considered an attractive attribute.¹² Her full back, an effect created by a bustle worn under the skirt is a further enhancement to her beauty in the eyes of her contemporaries. Also, Goodie took care to wear her stylishly cut gown with the most fashionable accessories, including long gloves and a fan.

Looking at Goodie McKenzie in her gown, and bearing in mind the circumstances of her family and background discussed above, it appears that she definitely was proficient in the womanly art of dress. ~



Above: Wilhelmina A. Blair (Goody) McKenzie in her pink ball gown.

⁹ For example, Valerie Green, *Above Stairs: Social Life in Upper Class Victoria 1843-1918*. (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1995), 126.

¹⁰ Invitations 1866-1895, McKenzie Family Papers, BC Archives, MF1481 8/11.

¹¹ Lugrin, 81

¹² Sarah Levitt. *Fashion in Photographs: 1880-1900*. (London: BT Batsford, 1991), 73.

Unravelling the Past

by Rachel Edwards

Right: *Embroidery room. All Hallows, Ditchingham, England.*

A History of the Church Linens of St. John the Divine and the Embroiderers of All Hallows School

¹ Student in *All Hallows in the West*, Christmas 1901.

² For more about All Hallows school: Jean Barman, "Lost Opportunity: All Hallows School for Indian and White Girls 1884-1920." in *BC Historical News*, 22: 2, Spring 1989 and Vera Bennett, "All Hallows School." in *Okanagan Historical Society Report*, v. 24. 1960. <<http://www.tbc.gov.bc.ca/culture/schoolnet/yale/tour/hallows.htm>>.

³ *The Churchman's Gazette*, New Westminster, August 1891 vol. XI, no. 4, 842 and *Ibid.*, September 1891 vol. XI, no. 5, 859.

⁴ *Ibid.*, August 1891 vol. XI, no. 4, p.842.

⁵ *All Hallows in the West*, Christmas 1901.

Many of the details of work done, lessons learnt, worship offered seem very small and insignificant, and some, like the finest stitches in embroidery, are all but invisible, yet one little stitch being out of place or out of proportion somewhat mars the effect of the whole.¹

In the late nineteenth century, church linens were in high demand for decorating churches in British Columbia. The history of these textiles, their provenance, and their creation is largely undocumented. This is the case with the collection of liturgical textiles at the church of St. John the Divine in Yale. The now de-sanctified church, originally in the New Westminster Diocese, is over 140 years old. For many years its small, damp vestry housed over a hundred hand-made embroidered pieces, some of which are exceptional. Archival records show that societies and guilds in England supplied many of the churches in British Columbia with money, furniture, and vestments. The St. John's collection might be of less interest to British Columbia historians were it made entirely in England, but Yale appears to have far fewer embroidered vestments, frontals, and other works made in England than other area churches. How could Yale, a rough, developing town filled with CPR workers and gold diggers, and home to few European needlewomen, have created the elegant pieces in the collection? The answer may be All



Hallows School.

Yale was home to a girls' boarding school called All Hallows, under the direction of several Anglican nuns from All Hallows, Ditchingham, England, a convent that had an internationally respected school for ladies' ecclesiastical embroidery, founded in 1854. Three nuns were sent to Yale in 1884 to establish a mission school for the Native children of the area. Enrolment lists show that also a few white students attended in the early years. In November 1890, a new "Indian School House" was completed effectively separating the Native and white students both in schooling and boarding. White enrolment increased thereafter.²

While both the Native and the white students were taught needlework at All Hallows school, the purpose differed. The white pupils were educated to be "refined Christian gentlewomen"³ while the First Nations students were taught "a good English elementary education, in addition to training in housework generally."⁴

Aside from being part of the curriculum, needlework was also a social activity for the white girls at the boarding school. In 1894, a group of girls, presumably non-Native, formed a society called the Guild of the Holy Child. After 1895, the guild's existence is not mentioned again until 1901 when an article appeared in the school newspaper entitled "The Story of a Piece of Embroidery." The text narrates the story of a frontal that had been started in 1896 but was left unfinished for several years. The article describes how the piece, meant for the altar at the Agassiz

Below: *Sisters of All Hallows school in Yale.*



BC Archives G-02042

church, was taken up again and carried to England by a student as she travelled for her summer break. In her Norfolk home and the nearby Ditchingham convent, she continued the work begun in Yale:

How very kindly the Sisters helped, entering with loving interest into that tangible little bit of foreign mission work...Then again on the Atlantic, on the return journey, fellow-passengers with skilled fingers contributed their mite [sic] to the great design...patient fingers worked on at chain stitch, satin stitch, French embroidery stitch, and long lines of plain neat hemming, until in course of time grapes and vine-leaves, corn and scrolls, took shape and form, and the whole work was nearly done...Two of the girls from the Indian school, who are not members of this Guild, offered their services in pulling out threads for hem stitching. Every needle-woman knows how hard it is to draw threads in long unbroken lines in fine linen. How much patience and skill it requires, such a firm and delicate touch, such keen clear sight.⁵

The frontal, now missing, is evidence of a collaborative work not only among the white students but also among the Sisters in England, passengers on a transatlantic steamer, and most remarkably perhaps, between the European and Native girls. Although according to the article, the First Nations girls were given the rather menial

task of pulling threads, their work was nonetheless acknowledged as essential and skilled.

When looking at the St. John the Divine collection, several factors further counter the idea of England as the primary source for the Yale textiles. While the quality of some of the work is exceptional, other pieces are quite obviously a beginner's work, indicating the school's involvement. One piece in particular, the *Agnus Dei*, or Lamb of God banner,⁶ suggests that the school was a major producer of textiles for St. John the Divine. The central lamb is quite well done and

probably the work of a teacher. The surrounding pieces, while attached to look like one complete piece, are in fact appliqués done by several different hands and then attached. The banner seems



Robin Hooper

Above: *Church of Saint John the Divine in Yale.*



BC Archives A-03609

⁶ Yale 1996.1.28. See image on page 22.

Left: *Sisters and pupils at All Hallows school, 1901.*



Above: *Interior of St. John's Anglican Church in Yale. ca. 1893. The church dressed for a special occasion with its best liturgical textiles and bows of flowers.*

to be the result of several students working under a teacher, who then pieced the elements together to create a completed work for the local church. That this was indeed made for St. John's is affirmed by the colour and imagery of the piece. The turquoise fabric used in the banner is also found in a stole with the same lamb image and a turquoise backing, suggesting that this was made to match another item. A photograph of St. John's, Yale from 1893 shows the altar draped in what looks like this frontal and two grapevine-embroidered hangings that are also part of the collection.⁷

Another banner in the collection is expertly made and trimmed with a European silk-satin ribbon⁸ The banner is elegantly executed; however, one leaf in the intricate pattern is a slightly different colour from the others. If this piece were made in England, the embroiderer would have had access to more thread of the original colour, had she run out. However, in Yale, the chances of finding matching thread would have been slim.

The backing of the piece is red serge: the same fabric was used to make the uniforms for the Native students, and is found on at least four other pieces in the collection.

All Hallows closed in 1920 and few if any students are still alive. However, several descendants remember their mothers or grandmothers speaking of the school and of needlework. Joan (Crawford) Vogstad, the granddaughter of former student Ambie McRae, said:

I remember my grandmother talking about going to school at All Hallows. Grandmother said that it was a school where they went to learn how to be young ladies. Part of their training was to sit in the afternoon and do needlework—which went to the church.

Another descendant of an All Hallows student remembers differently. Clare Chrane is the granddaughter of Clara Clare, a prominent member of the Yale community and St. John the Divine Church. She commented,

...the Church linens originally came from All Hallows, Ditchingham, England, made by the Nuns there. ...At various times, I would go with her to inspect the linen. ...If the need arose, she would take these items home to repair. She always did the work herself and it was very fine.⁹

Clare Chrane's account would suggest that the collection came from England with only repairs being done in Canada. However, race provides a possible explanation for these two differing accounts; Ambie McRae was a white student and Clara Clare was a Native student. Perhaps the accounts of their granddaughters differ because the groups were so separated: the Native students may not have known that the white girls were making textiles for the church under the tutelage of the nuns.

Although no definite conclusion can be drawn, students at All Hallows seem to have been the creators of at least part of the collection. While many pieces are impressive from an aesthetic point of view, they are primarily invaluable as a part of British Columbia's past. The All Hallows students engaged in one of the most common and most anonymous art forms, yet through their ecclesiastic embroidery, they managed to leave a part of their history and culture in the collection of St. John the Divine. ~

⁷ BC Archives D-07830

⁸ Yale 1996.1.22 See image on page 26.

⁹ Information from Mrs. Chrane comes from an oral interview in December 2001 and a letter written in March 2002.

Yale's Ecclesiastical Textiles

by Natasha Slik

THE Church of Saint John the Divine in Yale was consecrated in 1863.¹ As other Anglican churches, Yale's church required furnishings, including banners, altar frontals and frontlets, as well as burses and corporals. Many of these are now part of the Yale ecclesiastical textile collection. What is the provenance of these textiles?

In general the ecclesiastical embroidery in Yale shows consistency with the symbolism found in England during the Gothic Revival, but there are some absences, such as figural work and heraldry, themes that were common in English Victorian ecclesiastical embroidery.²

Rachel Edwards suggests in this issue, that the Yale collection supports the hypothesis that many of the pieces were made by the girls and teachers at All Hallows School in Yale. Some of the Yale ecclesiastical textiles show that they probably were made locally—partly by beginning embroiderers. Students at All Hallows School would be such beginners. Following is a brief review of some of the pieces in the collection.

LAMB OF GOD ALTAR FRONTAL
Yale 1996.1.28.

This frontal, also mentioned in Rachel Edward's paper, is of particular significance because it was probably worked on by a number of different needleworkers of varying skill levels. The lamb in

the centre was obviously done by someone with a great deal of needlework experience and expertise, as the condition remains excellent, and the stitching is complex. The background is laid and couched work, with loosely attached threads and inconsistent, widely spaced couching stitches, and likely done by an amateur. The Lamb and the blue background are surrounded with four flowers and four fleurs-de-lis, which have been appliquéed around the outside of the central piece. Again, there are different levels of workmanship in the embroidery. While some of the flowers are delicately and beautifully embroidered, others are decidedly childlike. The fleurs-de-lis are decorated with cross-hatched laid work, a characteristic stitch of the nuns of All Hallows embroidery.⁴ It seems likely that this piece was made by several students of All Hallows School who were at different stages in their needlework education, along with either an advanced student, or a teacher. In this way, each child had an opportunity to practise her skills and to contribute to the work.

RED IHS BANNER
Yale 1996.1.3.

This red banner, decorated with white flowers, bears a small, lower case IHS appliquéed in red felt in the centre of a white cross. In the early Church, the letters IHS were the short form of IHOUS, "Jesus" in Greek.⁵ The IHS monogram slowly re-

¹ *HistoricYale*. (Vancouver: Vancouver Section British Columbia Historical Association, 1954).
² Mary Schoeser. *The Watts Book of Embroidery: English Church Embroidery 1833-1953* (London: Watts & Co. 1998)

Below:
Yale 1996.1.28.
Lamb of God Altar Frontal.



BC Heritage Yale 1996.1.28.

Centre:
Yale 1996.1.3
Red IHS Banner.

placed the XP symbol in the Greek Church and quickly became adopted by the Latin Church. After becoming common use in the Latin Church, the letters often also took on the meaning of *Ihous Hominum Salvator*, or “Jesus, Saviour of men.”⁶ With the shift of the English church into the vernacular, it is not surprising that a purely English meaning for these letters was also developed. “In His Service” can also be given as the meaning of the IHS monogram.

BURSE AND
CORPORAL SET
Yale 996.1.95 a&b, not shown.

This set illustrates the fineness of work that seems characteristic of burses and corporals in the Anglican Victorian tradition. Gold wire is used for the crown of thorns, and the red silk embroidered HIS has been padded and is outlined in gold. As with the other burses and corporals, this suggests that they were probably made abroad, and sent

to British Columbia as used pieces rather than when they were new. In addition, interwoven IHS symbols appear on a baptismal font and on an altar chair (Yale 1996.1.0070 and Yale 1996.1.0063, not shown).

WHITE WALL HANGING
Yale 1996.1.41 a & b-not shown.

The cross on this hanging is done in green ribbon, decorated with seven appliquéd flowers and may possibly have been done as a student sampler. Each flower is different both in design and execution, making it likely that different people made them. These could easily have been sample pieces, done by students learning embroidery, and then applied to the banner. These flowers “samplers” bear close resemblance to the four flowers applied to the “Lamb of God” banner discussed earlier. None of the flowers on the white wall hanging are identical, and some of them do not even have the same number of petals. Often they are asymmetrical and amateurishly embroidered, adding

credibility to the theory that they were student-made.

RED ALTAR FRONTAL
Yale 1996.1.22

This red altar frontal with its applied golden brown panels and cross in the centre, decorated with small six-petalled flowers, was clearly designed and completed by a very accomplished embroiderer. All

of the embroidery is done directly on the fabric. Although it shows perfection in the embroidery, one single leaf has been embroidered in a different shade of green. This suggests that, upon running out of thread, the artist either could not afford to buy more of the same shade, or none was available. This suggests that the piece was not made in an area where embroidery floss was readily available, such as in British Columbia. Unfortunately, it is impossible to tell for certain that this piece



BC Heritage Yale 1996.1.3

was made in Yale, as these circumstances could certainly also describe other areas. Flowers were undoubtedly considered an appropriate motif for ecclesiastical embroidery, both in England and in Canada. In addition to displaying medieval roots, they were easy to design or copy from published material.

ALTAR FRONTAL WITH FRINGE
Yale 1996.1.51.

Most Victorian trims were being made by machine, while the medieval trims were of course, handmade. This altar frontal does, however, have a handmade tri-coloured inkle-woven fringe. This is of particular interest, because at the start of the weaving the work is poor, as though it was the first attempt at this craft made by the artist. As the weaving progresses, it improves greatly, finishing with a tight and even tension, and is very well done. Either the weaver improved over the length of the fringe, or a more accomplished weaver took over the weaving partway through. ~

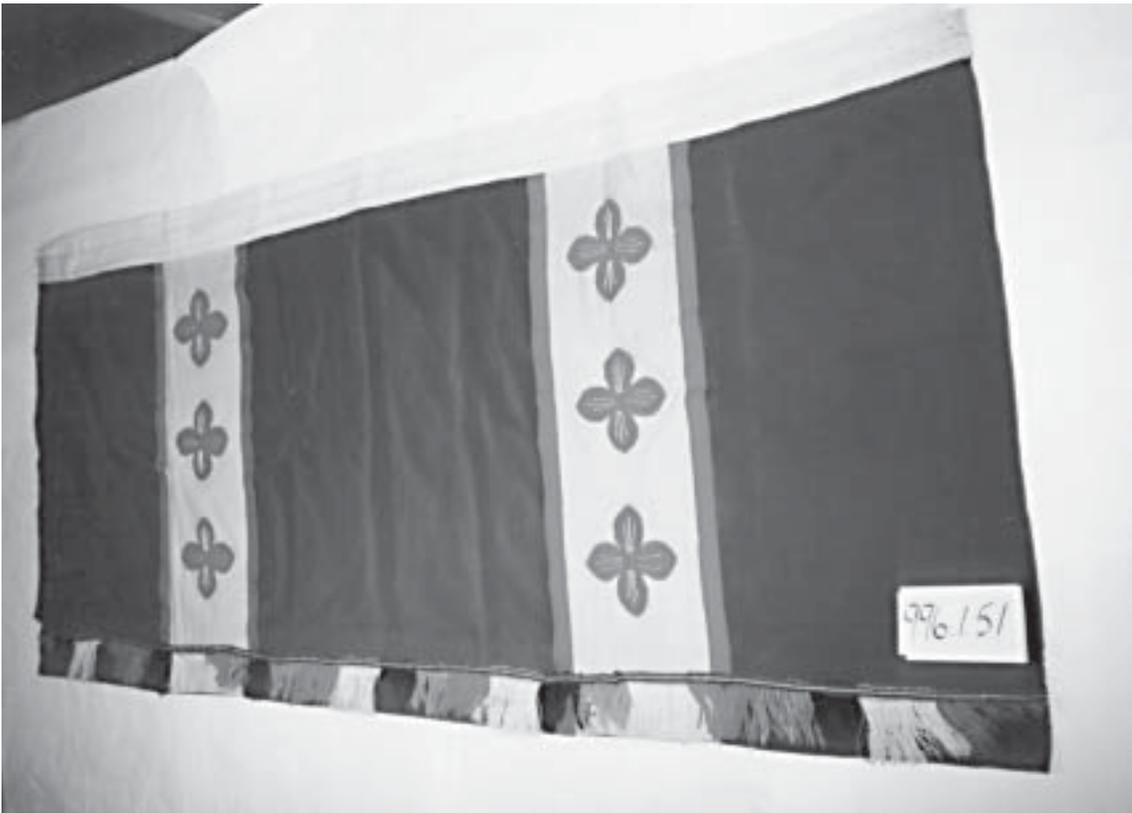
³ Anthea Callen, *Angel in the Studio, Women in the Arts and Crafts Movements, 1870–1914* (London: Astragal, 1997) 103.

⁴ Schoeser. *The Watts Book of Embroidery*, 101.

⁵ Mrs. Henry Jenner, *Christian Symbolism* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1910) 36.

⁶ F. Edward Hulme, *Symbolism in Christian Art: The History, Principles and Practice* (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1909) 52.

BC Heritage Yale 1996.1.51



Left:
Yale 1996.1.51
*Altar frontal with fringe.
The start of the weaving of
the fringe is poor, as though
it was the first attempt at
this craft made by the
artist. As the weaving
progresses, it improves
greatly, finishing with a
tight and even tension, and
is very well done.*

BC Heritage 1996.1.97, 98, 99.



Left:
Yale 1996.1.97, 98, 99.
*The embroidery on the
bookmark on the right—
an orange cross on a piece
of purple scrap piece—is
the work of a beginning
student.*

BC Heritage Yale 1996.1.22



Left:
Yale 1996.1.22.
*Red altar frontal with its
applied golden brown
panels and cross in the
centre, decorated with small
six-petaled flowers.*

How Shall I Frame Myself?

by Liberty Walton

An investigation into the Act of Self-Representation in Front of the Camera

Charlotte Kathleen O'Reilly (1867-1945) of Victoria, British Columbia, was the most beloved daughter of Peter and Caroline O'Reilly. She held her home and family closer to her heart than any of her many social affairs. Embracing her British roots, she accepted the traditions imposed upon her by her family, yet exemplified the lifestyle patterns and choices of a first-generation Canadian. Kathleen was not only photographed in several international professional studios, but also by her brother, the amateur photographer in the family. He used a Kodak camera that is still in the collection at Point Ellice House Historic site. Although Kathleen visited England several times and travelled internationally, she never abandoned Point Ellice and her home. To examine Kathleen O'Reilly's self-representation in front of the camera, it is the sizable collection of archival photographs in the O'Reilly collection at Point Ellice House and the BC Archives that are deconstructed in this paper to reveal her personal choices, influences, and values.

Home to the pioneer Victoria family of British heritage, Point Ellice House contains a wealth of two-dimensional documentary sources. Much of this material relates specifically to the life of Kathleen O'Reilly: prints and paintings, photographs, both unmounted and in frames; some diaries, letters, notebooks; accounts and bills; invitations, calling cards, programs for dances, regattas, and concerts; books of various kinds. This collection covers Kathleen's lifespan from 1867 to 1945. Point Ellice existed as a place for social gathering and as the home of Peter and Caroline O'Reilly with their four children. Peter O'Reilly immigrated to Canada from Ireland, and arrived in Victoria, where he was given his first appointment from Governor James Douglas. In the early 1860s, Caroline Trutch moved from England to Victoria, where she met Peter and married him in 1863. Eighteen hundred and sixty-seven was a momentous year for the O'Reilly family, including the birth of their second child, Kathleen O'Reilly, and the move into Point Ellice House.

There are over fifty photographs of Kathleen O'Reilly. They are in the collections of the BC Archives and Point Ellice House Historic site. Nearly 30 of those were taken in a studio, while the others were taken by an amateur photographer and can be considered snapshots. In this paper, the studio photographs and five of the amateur photographs will be analyzed in chronological order and used to discuss how Kathleen chose to use photography as a form of personal expression.

The photograph became the universal language of information about 150 years ago with the initial development of photography. Since then, photographic images and changing technology have been seriously examined under the academic eye. The art-historical analysis of discussing subject matter, stylistic trends, provenance of the image, and role of the photographer can be applied to the entire collection of Kathleen O'Reilly's studio images. This analysis will illustrate photography's important role within the humanities and the study of womanly arts. The study of domestic imagery, as well as the Victorian use of romanticism within social history, is appropriate to this investigation.

Studio photographs are especially informative pieces of documentary evidence. On the mounted photographs, the name of the photographer, often with the address, helps to establish the date of the image. With the invention of the camera in 1839 came the development of the profession of the studio photographer, with its complexity of tripods, black cloths, glass plate negatives, special backdrops, darkrooms and a cocktail of chemicals. In the studio photograph, however, is presented an image created by both the studio photographer and the subject. In the Kathleen O'Reilly images, one can trace her growing self-expression from childhood to adulthood, in her choice of dress, posture, and props. Each of the background props, personal ornaments, facial expression, and body posture places Kathleen in a romanticized environment, showing the influence of a British, Victorian culture.

Around the year 1870, Kathleen is presented for the first time in front of the camera. Even at a very young age, Kathleen is shown in her Sunday

¹Terry Reksten, *More English than the English* (Victoria BC: Orca Book Publishing, 1986), 71

best at an unknown, yet professional studio, likely in the Victoria area. Typical even today, this baby portrait, HP 50070, is an example of parental concerns and values for the appearance of their daughter. This image sets the stage for the role photography was to play in Kathleen's life, and exemplifies the value her parents placed on the act of photographing their daughter. With a lace shawl tied at the neck, over a dress adorned with rosebuds, her face is framed with perfectly sweet curls, the epitome of innocence. Her innocence was to become an underlining thread in all of her studio portraits.

Children were a rarity in Victoria during the year 1867, as this was only a decade since the fur traders' outpost expanded to become a town supplying miners heading to the Cariboo gold rush. In 1865, the population dropped from 8,000 to 3,500.¹ This decline in population and business meant the colony of Vancouver Island could no longer survive on its own and was annexed with the mainland, in an Act passed by Queen Victoria in the year 1866. This Act, which had significant impact on the development of Victoria, was passed only a year before Kathleen was born.

In 1871, four years after Kathleen's birth, the English colony of British Columbia entered the four-year-old Dominion of Canada and Victoria was officially designated status as the capital of British Columbia. As Kathleen grew, so did the city. While the political unification of this British territory in continental North America led to stable prospects in the city, Kathleen left her toddler years and entered her childhood. Victoria, more than any other place in the Canadian west, embodied the English and Victorian ideals of class structure and proper behaviour.² Kathleen in all of her innocence and youth mirrored these ideals and reflected the city's growth.

At age ten, in 1877, Kathleen is presented again

in her best, a dress with similarly jagged detailing at the collar and cuffs. The style of her dress is Victorian, emphasized with a double band at the bottom of the skirt. Taken at the studio of Stephen Allen Spencer, this photograph, HP 23057, is evidence that the O'Reilly family saw several advantages to commissioning professional portraits of Kathleen. The act of preserving an image of their daughter, and by utilizing a professional studio, was a sign of wealth. Not all people in Victoria

could afford the costs of photographing their children, especially on such a regular basis. By exploiting their wealth in such a fashion, Caroline O'Reilly would have seen photography an opportunity to secure their position within the upper classes. Portraits were sent back to family and friends in the homeland, constantly announcing the O'Reillys' financial success and the growth of their family.

With the dedication "For dear Uncle Joe" written on the back of the photograph, this likely was a gift to Joseph Trutch, Caroline's brother. Caroline would

have distributed copies of this image to family members in Victoria and the British Isles. Only a year after the death of Kathleen's sister, Mary Augusta, the O'Reilly family in Victoria would still be receiving condolences from family abroad. This image would have been sent to comfort distant relatives, as a sign of hope and survival during the harsh years of Kathleen's early life in Canada's wild west. Until the time of this photograph, a daughter of the Crease family personally tutored Kathleen. In 1878, at age eleven, she attended Angela College, an Anglican college on Burdett Street in Victoria. Combined with the death of her sister and start of formal studies, Kathleen would have received considerable attention at this time in her life as the only remaining daughter of the family. Even her wardrobe would have received extra attention.³



BC Archives HP-23057

Left: HP-23057. Kathleen O'Reilly, 1877. Studio portrait shows Kathleen as a young girl, age ten, sitting on a chair, hands folded and resting on chair arm. Studio of S.A. Spencer, Victoria.

² Rosemary Neering, *Wild West Women: Travels, Adventures, and Rebels* (Vancouver: Whitecap Books, 2000), 97

³ Virginia Careless, *Responding to Fashion - The Clothing of the O'Reilly Family*, (Victoria: Royal British Columbia Museum, 1993) 7

Several O'Reilly family photographs were taken in the Fort Street studio of S.A. Spencer, one of the prominent Victoria area photographers that made a start in 1858 with the Cariboo gold rush boom and increased business operations. Ending his studio work in 1885, Spencer had advertised as a "daguerrian artist," a reflection upon British photographic traditions. Apart from this image, two of Kathleen's siblings, Mary Augusta and Arthur Jack, were photographed at the Spencer studio. All of the children were propped against a two-tiered stripped stool, used to steady them for the length of exposure. HP 50003 is a constructed image, using settings, props and practical costume for a formal pose and presentation. Below Kathleen's skirt, and to either side of her feet, is the thick base for an instrument used to support her position. This instrument would have been clamped to the back of her neck or at the back of her waist. Props, such as this stool, were used in the studio portraits of children, not by choice, but in order to keep the children from moving.

The development of studio photography also affected the changing role of women, as photography was now more accessible for the amateur. Women, who in Victorian times were not expected to have a profession or succeed at endeavours outside of the home, found in this new medium a way in which they could employ their creative talents.⁴ One of Victoria's nineteenth-century studio photographers was Hannah Maynard.

Hannah began to photograph residents of the Victoria area shortly after her arrival from eastern Canada. She was popularly known for photographing children, in a series of "little gems." These served as images for New Year's greetings between the years 1885 to 1899. Hannah is known for her non-traditional approach to photography, cutting out images of children and placing them onto new backgrounds. She also experimented with multiple exposures in composite images, reproducing herself in triplicate on one image. Hannah's vision was never truly embraced by the O'Reilly family, as only one known studio image by her exists in the O'Reilly photo collections: a cut-out of Arthur imposed onto an image of the Gorge waterfront.

Hannah's work has won her acclaimed status in the history of women's photography. But during the Victorian era, several contemporaries would have frowned upon her non-traditional approach and may have viewed her as an eccen-

tric. Other Victoria area photographers, such as S.A. Spencer, relied upon traditional approaches of presenting the subject to the camera, providing the client with a photograph rooted in British practices of photography.

The O'Reilly decision to remain a client of the S.A. Spencer studio is an example of the influence on Kathleen's perspective and her continued choice to embrace the traditions of her British past.

At age 15, in 1882, Caroline took Kathleen to London to enroll her in an appropriate finishing school. En route they visited San Francisco where these images of Kathleen and Caroline were photographed in the Taber studio. Kathleen returns to this studio in the future, showing her satisfaction with the results of the images.

At the Taber Studio, Kathleen is photographed in two different dresses against two different backdrops, both at one sitting. Both dresses are simplistic in line, with a high collar, while detailed at the collar and cuffs. Consisting of a heavier, practical fabric, the dresses could have been worn to formal affairs. In both images, Kathleen's thick, dark hair is smartly tied back with a bow, while a pendant hangs from her neck.

Also at this studio visit, Caroline is photographed against both backdrops, although she faces the opposite direction of her daughter. The line of her dress echoes the line of her daughter's dress, as do the severity of facial expressions. Caroline's dress is Victorian and slightly bustled in the back. The same simply beaded earrings and necklace, as well as the neat hairstyle underneath a tightly fitting hat, appear in both images.

Both images of mother and daughter are conservative, containing similar stylistic elements of hairstyle and dress. These similarities show Caroline's desire to present both herself and Kathleen in an orderly fashion. Even the choice of darker fabrics is an indication of Caroline's intervention, as she often chose darker fabrics for her dress. Such maternal choices made on her daughter's behalf would have been the greatest source of influence on Kathleen's life at this time.

These images are very orderly in nature, which is reflected not only by the maternal choice of clothing and tidy hairstyle but also by the photographer's choice of backdrop and props. When Caroline selected this studio, she would have investigated the quality of final images, the photographer's style, and perhaps the studio props. In one image, HP 50072, the photographer has selected

⁴ Cathy Converse, *Mainstays – Women Who Shaped BC* (Victoria: Horsdal & Shubert, 1998) 64



Left: HP-50072.
Kathleen O'Reilly, 1882,
at age fifteen, Taber Studio,
San Francisco.

In London of 1883, the photograph studio of W. & D. Downey billed themselves as “Photographers by Special Appointment to Her Majesty the Queen.” This studio may have been personally selected by Kathleen, or as instructed by her family. “You must have your photo taken before long, not an expensive one until we see how we like it.”⁵ This choice of photographer ensured the subject would be presented in accordance with the upper-class social norms.

At the studio of W. & D. Downey, photographs taken of Kathleen present her in a bust portrait, as well as two three-quarter-length portraits. There is a remarkable difference between the image of a young girl taken one year earlier in San Francisco and the image of a young lady captured in these photographs taken at W.

a backdrop painting of an arch, while the backdrop in photograph HP-23055 is of an ornate pillar and low riser. Both backdrops are reminiscent of architectural types, used to create an institutional and orderly setting. In HP-23055 Kathleen leans against the pillar, an unwavering symbol of good order on a stable foundation, all of the same ideals Caroline invested in her daughter.

Two of Kathleen’s personal items are brought into these photographs, a basket and a pendant. While holding the backrest of a wooden chair, she is clutching a simple, woven basket. Of particular interest is the pendant, which appears in both photographs, possibly a personal item with sentimental attachment.

& D. Downey. These portraits are the first indication of Kathleen’s attention to current trends, following the fashions best suited for a young lady, leaving behind her childhood image. In short, they show Kathleen’s transition from a girl into adulthood.

From age fifteen until eighteen, Kathleen attended Lady Murray’s Finishing School in London. Here, she would have been educated on the most fashionable clothing and hairstyles for the time. In keeping with these fashions, this school instructed Kathleen to wear a corset, which shaped a feminine waist, complementing the cut of her dress. The action of wearing fashionable clothing to a studio sitting was similar to the social events Kathleen attended. Choice of clothing is influ-

⁵ Peter O’Reilly to Kathleen O’Reilly, Victoria, 11 November 1896. O’Reilly letters, BC Archives, p.2

Right: HP-50095
Romantic imagery and responding to fashion.
Kathleen O'Reilly, age 16,
1883. W. & D. Downey,
Photographers by Special
Appointment to Her
Majesty the Queen,
London, England.

enced by the occasion at which it is worn and by the type of people with whom the wearer associates.⁶

Influenced by her mother, as well as by her peers, school, and society, the clothing in these images indicates that Kathleen's choice of a fashion is very closely linked to her personal considerations of social status, and her response to socially dictated standards.⁷

As seen in the bust portrait, HP 50077, she continues to neatly turn back her hair, always secured into place, adopting a hairstyle that is in keeping with current trends, as illustrated in *Lady's Pictorial* dated 21 February 1891.⁸ HP 50095 is also the first image of Kathleen in a hat, which is elaborately feathered. Although similar to the hat worn by Caroline in the Taber Studio photograph, it is likely this choice was a personal statement at-

tending contemporary fashion rather than an influence of maternal concerns. The parasol is indicative of another personal choice made by Kathleen, an elaborate and fashionable substitute for the simple woven basket selected a year earlier.

These images not only provide documentary evidence of Kathleen's life and her growing self-expression; as portraits they also display an artificial romanticism—a philosophy that encouraged certain viewpoints as a way of seeing. The backdrop selected by the photographer is a painted garden scene, while Kathleen, wearing a tea gown, stands holding an outdoor parasol. This photographer has presented Kathleen in the romantic, complementing not only her personal concerns, but also her outward appearance. Studio settings



BC Archives HP-50095

were most likely decided by the photographer, who would have crafted the pastoral scenes and staged interiors, such as these. These elements are somewhat reminiscent of the surroundings at Point Ellice and the dress she would have worn at home. In the studio photographs of Kathleen, she is portrayed in conventional images within a romantic environment. Kathleen has become subject to the construction of the image by the photographer. The romantic props and backdrops, combined with posture, facial expressions, and personal dress, concrete her role as a conventional young woman in Victorian society. Kathleen has embraced this romanticism in her own dress and adornment.

Romanticism is an alternative to realism. Romance is said to focus in dreams rather than real-

⁶ Careless, *Responding to Fashion*, 4

⁷ *Ibid.*, 26

⁸ Magazine from the Point Ellice House collection.

ity, its creators interested in the internal rather than the external lives of their subjects.⁹ Reminiscent of a garden scene, this romantic image reflects Kathleen's love of Point Ellice. Romance has human vision as its obsession: at its center is a person or persons viewing and viewed, an observer or spectator whose abilities to see fully, partially, or not at all indicate his or her moral as well as physical activities.¹⁰ More importantly than story to photograph, was the photograph to storytelling itself.

At age seventeen, in 1884, Kathleen visited the studio of Lambert, Weston and Son in Folkestone, England, for the first time. Five photographs are produced at this sitting, including three bust portraits and two standing three-quarter length portraits. As was the custom, Kathleen would have sent these images to friends and family members. Requesting multiple images from one sitting would have provided Kathleen with a selection from which to choose the best representation of herself. On a Saturday afternoon, 17 May 1884, she wrote in a letter to her brother Frank, indicating her pleasure with the photographs from this sitting. "My dear Frank, ... I am going to send out the photos that were taken down at Folkestone, of me. You will all think they are very flattering."¹¹

It is quite possible Kathleen selected this studio. Kathleen adds in her letter to Frank, "Weston's establishment has been very enlarged he has a very large window now, opposite the Bank, so a great many people stop to look. Lisa & I used to have fun watching them."¹²

In this series, Kathleen's hairstyle and dress are nearly identical to the fashions adopted the previous year. As seen in the photograph H-01513, again the high collared dress indicates Kathleen's constant attention to Victorian stylistic patterns. Changes in this style of dress are the front button enclosure, skirt gathered at the front, and slightly peaked gatherings at the shoulder. Collar and cuff are alike in fabric and detail, slightly ruffled. In photograph HP 50086, Kathleen holds a hat of woven material, similar to the men's top hat, and adorned with a large band of satin fabric and a bow.

When one looks at the relationship of the photographer and subject, it is evident that Kathleen was aware of the role of the photographer in capturing her image. Photography shows the physical truth, but it is the photographer, the subject, and the camera that stage truth. The subject wants

to see an image that is true to their personal associations. To ensure these associations were addressed accurately, the subject would have selected the studio, photographer, dress, as well as posture. These choices all reveal her personal concerns. "People are gendered both by their clothing and by their posture."¹³ In this image, and many other studio photographs of Kathleen, she holds her arms and legs close to her body, presenting a smooth, confined, and reserved image. The majority of Kathleen's photographs present her in bust in portraiture, an image of her head and shoulders. There are also many images of her standing, a few of her seated. In none is she openly smiling. "In Victorian America, sitting was not merely taking a load off your feet. It was a way to reveal character, gender, social class and power."¹⁴ Both sitting and standing positions were staged, as the presentation of self was held up for public scrutiny and evaluation.¹⁵

Photography played with unusual relationships between the subject and the photographer, which toyed with the idea of truthfulness. This relationship would have been partially responsible for the posture and pose of subject. For example, at this sitting, there are four instances where Kathleen looks away from the camera, and one instance where she looks straight ahead at the lens. Was the direction of Kathleen's gaze a request of the photographer, based on his artistic merit? Not only is her posture determined by a personal sense of self-esteem, but by the culture she belongs to, and thus, the photographer that controls it. "As in all portraits, the challenge is to represent sitters in ways that meet their expectations and conform to cultural norms."¹⁶ If Kathleen's posture can be equated to her sense of self-esteem, it must also be mentioned in light of her education at Lady Murray's. Kathleen was known for erect posture,¹⁷ which was achieved at school, spending half an hour a day lying on a backboard.¹⁸

At home, in snapshot photographs likely taken by her brother, Kathleen is posed leaning on the front door of Point Ellice House. In this image, H-04812, she wears full-length feminine riding attire, leather gloves, and a cloche hat. Her gaze is cast downward at the riding whip held in her hands. The image presents a young woman, modestly attired, elegant, and serene.

In another photograph, H-04871, taken in the front driveway at Point Ellice House, she is similarly dressed in stylish riding gear, standing beside her horse, Blackie. Her wide smile and proud

⁹ Jennifer Green-Lewis, *Framing the Victorians: Photography and the Culture of Realism*, (Cornell, Ithaca and London, 1996), 32

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p.34

¹¹ C.K. O'Reilly to F.J. O'Reilly, Campden Hill, 17 May 1884, BC Archives A/E/Or3/Or321.

¹² C.K. O'Reilly to F.J. O'Reilly, Campden Hill, 17 May 1884, BC Archives A/E/Or3/Or321.

¹³ Kenneth L. Ames, "Posture and Power," *Death in the Dining Room and Other Tales of Victorian Culture*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992) 187

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 189

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 189

¹⁶ Ames, p.185

¹⁷ Mrs. E. Sisson. Personal communication and interviewed by Virginia Careless, 22 November 1988.

¹⁸ C.K. O'Reilly to parents. 21 May 1884. O'Reilly papers BC Archives.

stance indicate a love for riding, as well as for her horse. Kathleen is caught in this spontaneous snapshot with a full smile, teeth exposed. This is a rare image, as Kathleen is shy about exposing her teeth, and has previously referred to herself as a “walrus.”¹⁹

Both images depict Kathleen as a stylish girl of active outdoor pursuits, very much determined by her spontaneous smile, and carefully selected riding gear. Other snapshot images of Kathleen show her boating, bicycle riding, and holding a tennis racquet posed by the Point Ellice tennis lawn.

By the time Kathleen returned from England to Victoria in 1884 she is fully aware of the photographer’s ability to tell her story and document her personal interests. These gentle intimate portraits of Kathleen in the entranceway of her home look inward at an increasingly privatized and protected domestic haven, expressing her personal passions.

At the time of this photograph, George Eastman is promoting the Kodak camera, as an instrument easily used by the amateur photographer, and not just by the professional. During Eastman’s early campaign of daylight-loading cameras he emphasized the ease of using the camera. “Anybody can use it. Everybody will use it,” ran the publicity.²⁰ But by 1899, George Eastman had released the revolutionary hand-held Kodak Brownie with the slogan “You press the button, we do the rest” where the amateur was now able to send off the film for processing and no special skills were required.²¹ In the Point Ellice House collection are two Kodak cameras, a No. 4 cartridge camera manufactured in 1897 and one of the first of the folding pocket autographic cameras launched in 1914. However, the back cover of the autographic camera appears to have been added to an original folding pocket camera model 3A, which could date the camera as early as 1909. The introduction of the Kodak camera in August 1888 brought photography to the masses.²² It was introduced in the same way that other consumer products were introduced in a market economy, through mass marketing techniques. For women, Eastman’s advertisements looked inward toward the domestic theme, encouraging the use of the camera as a tool to create a personal record. Eastman’s advertisements appeared in the same ladies’ journals Kathleen purchased. This message was also directed largely at the middle class,²³ who could afford the pleasures of this new technology. In deconstructing the elements of these amateur photographs, Kathleen’s understanding of how the camera operates is brought forth, whether it was used in the studio or by the amateur in the family.

In 1888, the O’Reilly family vacationed in England and Europe, and Kathleen chose to have her photograph taken in a number of studios. In photographs, HP 50082 and C-03885, taken by Lambert Weston & Son, Folkestone, England, she chooses to adorn herself with an elaborately fur-trimmed suit and high hat. This attire is indicative

of a woman attending to the concerns of high fashion and maintaining her role in high society. Neither of these items are particularly practical in nature, nor could they be seen as reminiscent of former maternal influence for simplicity and order. Here she is a poised young woman of solid, upper middle class parentage, flaunting her love of high fashion. In other instances, Kathleen’s personal sense of “style seems to come through and her presence makes a bolder statement.”²⁴

Kathleen and her parents travelled through Spain as part of this trip in 1888. Kathleen’s appreciation of this foreign place is indicated in her letter home to brother Frank, so too is her appreciation for the arrival of her clothing. “My dear Frank, . . . it has been a lovely trip through orange groves, by mountains & plains & at times the train passes so close to the shores of the Mediterranean



BC Archives HP-50088



that you can see the pebbles on the beach under the water... You will imagine I was glad to see my box last Sunday morning & be able to get a change of things."²⁵

At the time, Kathleen stops at the photographer L. Sanchez, Calle Zaragoza 12, Madrid. The photograph of Kathleen in the Spanish studio, HP 50080, is a remarkable indication of her personal interest in fashion, and an obvious act of self-representation. The Spanish mantilla she has chosen is an elaborate piece as it frames the beauty she is so obviously aware of. Graced with a beauty that was timeless rather than simply fashionable, Kathleen took advantage of her presentation in front of the camera. In her gloved hands she holds an exquisitely detailed fan, and on her shoulder sits an exotic Spanish flower. As she rests upon a prop provided by the photographer, she is photographed against a backdrop of exotic foliage. This Spanish photographer has nearly turned the photograph into a painting. In fact, Kathleen is so delighted by this image of herself that a painting is commissioned at this same studio, HP 50081, based on this photograph. Note that this is the only time she chooses to portray herself in the costume of an exotic culture, although she travelled in other countries, as far away as Rome. Her choice to wear this outfit, while travelling with

her mother, may be an indication of Kathleen's independence from her mother's influence.

Focusing on dreams rather than reality, these photographs of Kathleen in elaborate costume capture her personal desires and fantasies. In photographs of herself, she owns the right to self-representation, and uses it to present her personal story. When the images are professionally taken, there is a contract between photographer and subject quite different from amateur photography. Personal photographs are specifically made to portray the individual or group as they would wish to be seen and as they have chosen to show themselves to others.²⁶ Kathleen is quite obviously announcing a personal interest with the exotic and beautiful.

Throughout her life, Kathleen visits the studio of Lambert, Weston and Son many times. In 1888, four photographs, including two bust portraits, HP 50084 & HP 87413, and two standing three-quarter length portraits, C-03896 & HP 50085, are produced from this sitting. These portraits show an evolution in Kathleen's hairstyle, again, according to fashion. Worn with confidence, this formal gown has a low, V-shaped neckline and shorter sleeves. Almost considered daring, the neckline's lowest point is enhanced with a large floral corsage, while the choker-style necklace draws attention to her graceful neck. Another indication of self-confidence is the jewelled pin on her breast, which bears the letter "K" for her name. These personal decisions to announce herself to the viewer were clearly chosen by Kathleen in preparation for this sitting. Kathleen was not known to flaunt her beauty and womanly figure, or known as the outgoing type, but was described as pretty but modest,²⁷ and she referred to herself as being shy.²⁸

These photographs can be compared to another photograph taken at this time on Kathleen's return to the Taber studio in San Francisco. Here, the daring line of her dress is presented to the camera, as the elegant arch of the fabric drops to expose her back. Again, Kathleen has adorned herself with a floral corsage, as she holds a bouquet of flowers in her hands. Such floral additions to her attire may have been merely a reflection of Victorian fashion with flowers, but they also echo her personal attachment to the gardens of Point Ellice.

In this image, HP 50119, she is seated at the center of family and close friends on the tennis lawn at Point Ellice House. The photographer,

Left: HP 50080
Kathleen O'Reilly, age 21,
1888, in Spanish attire.
Studio of L. Sanchez,
Spain.

Opposite page:
HP-50086
Kathleen O'Reilly, age 17,
1884. Lambert Weston &
Son Studio, Folkestone,
England.

¹⁹ C.K. O'Reilly to parents.
7 November 1884.

O'Reilly papers BC
Archives

²⁰ Patricia Holland, "How
Sweet is it to Scan:
Personal Photographs and
Popular Photography," in
*Photography, A Critical
Introduction*, ed. Liz Wells
(New York: Routledge,
1997) 129

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.105

²² James E. Paster,
"Advertising Immortality
by Kodak," *History of
Photography* (London:
Journal Publisher: Taylor
& Francis Ltd, London),
vol. 16, no. 2 (Summer
1992): p.135

²³ Holland, p.129

²⁴ Careless, p.29

²⁵ C.K. O'Reilly to E.J.
O'Reilly, Barcelona,
Spain, 20 April 1888, BC
Archives A/E/Or3/
Or321

²⁶ Holland, p.107

²⁷ Agnes Murray to C.A.
O'Reilly, 27 April 1885.
O'Reilly papers, BC
Archives.

²⁸ C.K. O'Reilly to C.A.
O'Reilly, 26 June 1885.
O'Reilly papers, BC
Archives.



Above: HP-87413
Kathleen O'Reilly, age
21, 1888. Lambert
Weston & Son studio,
Folkestone, England.

brought to Point Ellice to take this photograph, may have selected this arrangement. In any case, the posture and gaze of each individual is quite uniquely their own.

The only one looking directly at the camera, Kathleen sits upright and proper as she would for a studio photograph. Pose, posture, and bright clothing all combine to make Kathleen the focal point and centre of this photograph. This gaze and posture indicate that she is comfortable in front of the camera, while others shy away with downward and cast-off glances. On the

bench, her father sits in a position of authority, looking off to the horizon, with his arm propped on the backrest and right hand steady on his cane. Mother Caroline is seated in a reserved and orderly position, eyes directed towards her hands, which are placed neatly on her lap. The Colonel is positioned on the edge of the bench, indicating the casual nature of this event. Both of Kathleen's brothers are seated to her right, somewhat slumped over while their hats nearly fall over their eyes.

Stanhope, her suitor at the time, is comfortably leaning back into Kathleen's personal space. Having casually cast his hat and racket to the side, while seated very close to the dog, his posture indicates a very nonchalant attitude.

Naval officer Lieutenant-Commander Henry Stanhope, thirty-six year old heir to the Earl of Chesterfield, was very fond of Kathleen. He courted her for several years, before proposing marriage in 1892. Initially, twenty-five-year-old Kathleen was very vague, and eventually denied his request. Kathleen wrote in a letter to her father, "I did not want to be married, I love being here with you all & though you may think that I am discontented, I am not—and I don't believe any one has ever had a happier house & life than I have."

Stanhope writes to Peter with hopes of win-

ning his approval, expressing concern for Kathleen's well being. "Dear Mr. Peter O'Reilly, ...how could she be expected to look with anything but shudder at a prospect so uncertain, and give up her home and her horse, and all her other things, and leave her parents, who are so devoted to her, & she to them, in complete uncertainty as to when or how would see them again."²⁹ These actions have no effect on Kathleen's decision, as she decides to remain with her family at beloved Point Ellice.

At the Lafayette studio, photographs A-07106 and PE 975.1.9247 document Kathleen's presentation to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Cadogan, at Dublin Castle. Having been encouraged by the family to have these photos taken, as noted in a letter before this event, Kathleen is told "Don't forget the photo."³⁰ The family knew this photograph would appear in the contemporary journal, *Ladies Pictorial*. A prestigious event, Kathleen is presented in the most elaborate dress she has ever worn, as an expanse of fabric and flowers cascades down the stairs behind her. The enormous bouquet and headpiece were suited for royalty, not exactly the colonial type seen in British Columbia. Kathleen's presentation mirrors that of a princess, certainly the highlight in any woman's quest for fashion perfected. Yet, Kathleen downplays it all and does not revel in this glory.

She writes "My dear Father, ...I had no intention of going to the Drawing Room. It was on the spur of the moment and I wonder what you will think of my going! It was strange Carry [Dunsmuir] wrote me some time ago she had her dress and w[oul]d like to present me in London! I said No I did not care for it & it was not worth the expense but I could not have gone to the Ball at the Castle without being presented. Old Scotter charged 10 pounds for my train, of course it will make a dress..." Instead, she yearns for home and gardens "...Carry w[oul]d like to take me & Josephine to the Drawing Room here in May & all go to the Buckingham Palace Garden Party. I think I had better be at the Point Ellice House Garden Party, what do you say."³¹ (10 March 1897, Baileys Hotel, London)

In another letter to her family, Kathleen expresses concern about the amount she has spent on accessories for the event "...I did not mean to have a bouquet for the Drawing Room as it is not necessary if one has a fan, and I had the Annie Pooley one. I don't know what you will say to all this extravagance write as soon as you can & fully

²⁹ Stanhope to Peter O'Reilly, Banff Hotel, 22 August 1892, Add Mss 412, Box 1 File 18, Point Ellice House collection.

³⁰ Peter O'Reilly to C.K O'Reilly, Victoria, 8 December 1896, O'Reilly letters 1896-1897. p.4



Left:A-07106
*Kathleen O'Reilly, age
30, 27 February 1897, in
her presentation gown.
Presentation to Lord
Lieutenant of Ireland.
Photographed by Lafayette,
Photographer to The
Queen, London England
and Dublin, Ireland.*

BC Archives A-07106

about commissions and exporting.”

Partaking in a grand social whirl, these letters may document the “life of a well-to-do, upper-class young lady of the late 1890s.”³² However, these letters also indicate her concern for the extravagance and expense.

One only has to examine the photograph of Kathleen in the garden, H-05582, to see that she was happy at home. She smiles while carrying an armful of flowers. The amateur family photographer has taken this image of their beloved Kathleen, surrounded by the gardens she and her father had developed together.

Several amateur photographs exist of Kathleen in the gardens and on the lawns of Point Ellice, but many more studio images exist. The O’Reilly family understood the value of a photograph, and often requested the image of their precious Kathleen be taken. “I have not yet seen the photos of my girl where are they?”³³ Photograph I-51782, which shows Kathleen adjusting the shade of the back window at Point Ellice, is the typical amateur photograph, as it is candid, informal and spontaneous. Taken by a family member with the Cartridge Kodak No.4, this image of Kathleen may have been taken for several other reasons.

By the turn of the century, Kodak no longer promoted the camera’s instantaneous capabilities that were novelty in the 1888 promotions. Instead, the idea of the snapshot’s value as an aid to memory was promoted. The idea that photography could be used to capture and save moments is evident in Eastman’s advertising campaign, con-

taining such slogans as “...a means of keeping green the Christmas memories.”

1903: “A vacation without a Kodak is a vacation wasted.” 1904: “Where there’s a child, there should the Kodak be. As a means of keeping green the Christmas memories, or as a gift, it’s a holiday delight.” 1905: “Bring your Vacation Home in a Kodak.” 1907: “In every home there’s a story for the Kodak to record - not merely a travel story and the story of summer holidays, but the story of Christmas, of the winter evening gathering and of the house party.”

1909: “There are Kodak stories everywhere.”³⁴

Eastman’s advertisements would have been present in the ladies’ journals that Kathleen was fond of. The nature of the Kodak camera, as it relates to lasting human concerns, would have appealed to this family. As early as 1897, amateur photographs at Point Ellice captured memories of Kathleen. Amateur photographs act as carriers of meaning and interpretations. They record and reflect on daily activities, delicately holding within the innocent-seeming image much that is intimate.³⁵

In her thirties, Kathleen lost both her mother and father. Caroline’s death in 1899 requires Kathleen to take on the responsibility of caring for her father at Point Ellice, which resulted in fewer trips overseas. In 1905, Peter dies, leaving Kathleen to tend the home for her brother and his wife. She is content within the confines of her home, maintaining the gardens of Point Ellice. Her personal photographs and the photographs taken by family members would have comforted Kathleen as her family disappeared. Now her photographs have become part of the complex network of memories and meanings that made sense of Kathleen’s daily life.

This formal photograph taken inside Point Ellice House, HP 50078, is that of a woman of upper social class residing in a regal, yet dim environment. The dark clothing, sombre expression and surrounding do not resemble the romantic studio photographs from the past. She belonged to a minority, unmarried, a woman of independence having rejected a proposal for marriage. While she does not fit the typical model of the married, middle-class woman, she is content to reside at Point Ellice. In her twenties, she was



Right:
HP 50119. Kathleen
O’Reilly seated at the
centre of family and close
friends on the tennis lawn
at Point Ellice House.

Opposite page: C-03924



Left: H-05582 Kathleen O'Reilly, circa 1905, in the garden at Point Ellice. Unknown amateur photographer.

fulfilled emotionally by the love of her parents and brothers. Now as a spinster, Kathleen lives out her life at Point Ellice, vacant of the social activity and elaborate affairs.

It has been argued that Kathleen used photography as a measure of success, confirming her position within society. The elements of every portrait were carefully composed to illustrate the full extent and diversity of Kathleen's lifestyle. Such a portrait was a personal statement of financial and social status, and successful lifestyle choice. Those who saw these images would have looked upon them as all that was tasteful and refined. To colonials who brought with them conservative views on government, home, and society based upon British traditions and Victorian taste, photographs of elegant settings and genteel pastimes concerned the creation of civilized society, and an ordered landscape in an isolated corner of the Empire.

Kathleen would have chosen how she wanted to be portrayed in front of the camera. Her choice of dress, the studio she attended, and the consistency of this practice proved her self-worth. Kathleen would have made a conscious decision to attend the studio of a photographer. Often, she selected one photographer, and visited his studio on several occasions, such as Lambert, Weston and

Son, whom she frequented in trips to the Folkestone area. The decision to have her likeness captured by an English photographer, as opposed to studios in Victoria, is an indication of her sense of self-identity within British practices.

Photography can be placed within broader theoretical debates and understandings, either pertaining to meaning and communication, or to visual culture and representation. Kathleen's interests and self-expression can be extracted from the deconstruction of elements of each photograph. Photographed in so many instances, the collection of images provided Kathleen and her friends and family with a memory of her life constructed according to her values. These images can best be understood as Kathleen's romanticized story of her life. Photography, then and now, is a creative, cultural practice and must be traced back to its significance in personal and social terms. ~

³¹ C.K. O'Reilly to Peter O'Reilly, Point Ellice, Victoria, BC Archives, location unknown.

³² James K. Nesbitt, *Kathleen O'Reilly Mingled with Dublin Society*, Point Ellice House Web site, <<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/peh/tour/news.htm>>.

³³ Peter O'Reilly to C.K. O'Reilly, Victoria, May 25, 1897, O'Reilly letters 1896-1897. p. 21

³⁴ Paster, p. 135

³⁵ Holland, p. 106

Book Reviews

Books for review and book reviews should be sent to:

Anne Yandle, Book Review Editor BC Historical News, 3450 West 20th Avenue, Vancouver BC V6S 1E4

Deborah Rink

Spirited Women: A History of Catholic Sisters in British Columbia,

reviewed by Jacqueline Gresko.

Dwight L. Smith, ed.

A Tour of Duty in the Pacific Northwest: E.A. Porcher and H.M.S. Sparrowhawk, 1865–1868,

reviewed by Barry M. Gough.

Frank Moritsugu

Teaching in Canadian Exile,

reviewed by Naomi Miller.

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Beginnings: Stories of Canada's Past,
reviewed by Pat Ajello.

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The Promise: Love, Loyalty and the Lure of Gold. The Story of "Cariboo" Cameron,

reviewed by Branwen C. Patenaude.

Mike Puhallo

Piled Higher and Deeper on the Cariboo Trail,

reviewed by Sheryl Salloum.

Richard J. Lane

Literature & Loss: Betrand William Sinclair's British Columbia,

reviewed by Betty Keller.

Spirited Women: A History of Catholic Sisters in British Columbia

Deborah Rink.

Vancouver: Sisters' Association Archdiocese of Vancouver, 2000.

275 pp. Illus. \$27.95 paperback.

REVIEWED BY JACQUELINE GRESKO.

For most people outside the Roman Catholic Church nuns all seem, or, until the 1960s, all seemed the same: women in long black outfits teaching or nursing in male-dominated institutions. Few historians write about female religious congregations, or note that the active groups should be called "sisters" and the contemplative, convent-enclosed groups should be called "Nuns." British Columbians who want to inquire about the sisters who established themselves here in the past have difficulty doing so. Since the 1960s these women have changed in appearance and in works. Most recently they have been declining in numbers or departing the province.

British Columbia historians will welcome the news that the Sisters Association of the Archdiocese of Vancouver contracted with geographer Deborah Rink to compile the history of the sisterhoods that arrived in this province prior to 1958. Rink's *Spirited Women* goes a long way towards answering the questions British Columbia historians ask about Catholic sisters.

Rink surveys these religious women in three time periods: settlement to 1914, education and health 1914 to 1945, and changing habits and transforming ministries 1946 to 2000. She outlines how each of two dozen congregations were organized, and when and how they came to British Columbia. She summarizes their first impressions of its peoples, and indicates both what services each group of sisters provided and how they adjusted to various communities and changing times. For the first two groups she gives us maps and for all groups she includes photographs of traditional costumes or "habits."

The chapter of *Spirited Women* on the

Sisters of Saint Ann, the first Catholic sisters to arrive in British Columbia, serves as an example of Deborah Rink's work and the sisters' histories. Esther Blondin and her associates in the diocese of Montreal took the initiative to found a teaching sisterhood in 1850, although their bishop got the official credit. They sent a small group of sisters west in 1858 to teach children of the fur traders and Native peoples. The Sisters of Saint Ann established services for these peoples and for the gold rush and settler communities. They not only founded schools on Vancouver Island and the mainland but also began orphanages, hospitals and social service work. The sisters staffed Indian residential schools directed by male clerics but also ran their own Native missions and taught in government day schools. By 1900 the Sisters of Saint Ann established a nursing school in Victoria and had pioneered the teaching of commercial courses. Their school students followed the British Columbia curriculum and sat provincial government entrance exams both for high school and university.

In a male-dominated church the Sisters of Saint Ann had to finance their own efforts. They raised funds by charging fees for elite academy pupils, for music lessons, and for memberships in a hospital society. They used these funds to care for needy students and patients in towns and to make up shortfalls in government funding for Indian schools. Donations from the public helped the sisters' efforts and so did the proceeds from women's auxiliary events. In turn the Sisters of Saint Ann assisted several other sisterhoods in getting started in British Columbia, including groups who provided Catholic services to Asian immigrants.

Deborah Rink and her sponsors ought to do another volume on Catholic sisters in British Columbia and help historians answer further questions, especially regarding the context and controversies surrounding their work. For example, how did Catholic women's activities compare with those of Methodist or Anglican women, or with those of Catholic men? Why did schools begun by Catholic sisters before 1900



continue well into the twentieth century in contrast to most schools begun by other religious organizations? Why did the sisterhoods attract members from Native, White, and Asian communities on the west coast and the largest male congregation, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, has to rely on recruits from France, Ireland, and central Canada? By the 1920s the Oblates split into separate French and English-speaking branches of a large international order. The French-speaking sisterhoods that came to British Columbia remained closely linked to their original mother houses, even when they became multilingual or spoke of this province as "home."

The most interesting variation on this theme, and one not fully explored by Rink, is the story of the sisters of the Child Jesus. They came from France in 1896 to teach at Williams Lake Indian Residential School. The sisters sought Native and Irish entrants to help with their work. They staffed other residential schools: e.g. one for the Squamish Nation, a parish school and boarding academy in North Vancouver, and parish schools in Maillardville. When the French-Canadian parishioners of the latter community took the school children out on strike to get government funding for Catholic schools in 1951-1952, they were not supported by the English Catholics of the Vancouver Archdiocese. This controversial event did aid Catholic schools in getting government services, and it did contribute to the achievement in 1977 of partial provincial funding for independent schools. The strike also meant the Sisters of the Child Jesus departed Maillardville schools. They put their efforts into expansion to the east, to the prairies and even to Quebec. Meanwhile, the Good Shepherd Sisters of Quebec City came west to teach in French parish schools in Maillardville and Vancouver from 1953 to 1968. By the latter date the Sisters of the Child Jesus sold their Quebec institutions and returned home to their Canadian motherhouse in North Vancouver. More recently, in 1996, the Squamish Nation hosted a celebration of these sisters' centennial in Canada in three official languages: Squamish, English and French, and made all invited guests promise to remember and tell their story forever.

Reviewer Jacqueline Gresko, Douglas College, is First Vice President of the British Columbia Historical Federation.

A Tour of Duty in the Pacific Northwest: E.A. Porcher and H.M.S. Sparrowhawk, 1865-1868

Dwight L. Smith, ed.

Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2000. 172 pp. Illus., map. US\$34.95. hardcover.

REVIEWED BY BARRY M. GOUGH

In a time not so long ago warships provided such security as existed on the shores of British Columbia and adjacent territories of Russian America, Oregon and Washington State. In the age of Pax Britannica this shoreline was another zone of influence in which the world's pre-eminent naval power, Britain, exercised its influence by various sloops-of-war, gunboats, gun vessels, corvettes, and light and armoured cruisers. As that century proceeded, so too did the size of these vessels increase, and as time advanced the Pax became more assuredly established. Law was extended from the quarterdeck in support of authorities ashore. Certain tribes were pacified, by force if necessary but mainly through peaceful accommodation. This subject was one that became a personal passion for this historian, and my book *Gunboat Frontier: British Maritime Authority and Northwest Coast Indians* (UBCPress, 1984) was the result. I cite this book because it provides the overarching framework for the themes grandly developed by Professor Dwight Smith. By taking the experience of one gun vessel as recorded through the journal of its commander we are given a brilliant slice of the Pax Britannica at work.

And what a wonderful slice it was. Steam power and gunnery, displayed in great influence, in the *Sparrowhawk*, seemed to get to all the important places of crisis, real and imagined, on the coast. The gun vessel had reached Esquimalt by way of a passage under sail and steam via Rio, the Falklands and the Strait of Magellan. From England to Esquimalt was 19,988 sea miles, and of these 17,866 were undertaken under canvas alone. Coal was expensive, hard to obtain, and steam navigation could be unreliable as experience had shown. *Sparrowhawk* reached Esquimalt from Hawaii, and after a brief time began to show the flag to the Native communities and to forts and missionary establishments. In May 1866 she went north on a month-long cruise to Metlakatla, the Church Missionary Society mission to the Tsimshian, returning via the Queen Charlotte Islands and Fort Rupert and Alert Bay. Once the gun vessel was back

at the naval base of Esquimalt news was relayed through Admiralty and diplomatic channels that the Fenians were advocating attacking Canada from bases in the United States. The intention was to end Britain's rule in Ireland. *Sparrowhawk* was sent to New Westminster to provide aid to the civil power and to deter aggression, and made two voyages to San Francisco for repairs and mail. From June to August *Sparrowhawk* completed a grand northern cruise, to Sitka, then Russian America, being the last time a British warship transited inner waters of Alaska when under Russian authority. Years later, in 1879, another British man-of-war *Osprey* would be there at American request to provide assistance against a local Native rising. The vessel called at Port Simpson and at the San Juan Islands (where the British had a garrison to prevent the Americans from taking all). The commander of the *Sparrowhawk*, E.A. Porcher, joined the governor of British Columbia, Seymour, in a trouble-shooting expedition to the interior, the Cariboo, an event known as the Grouse Creek War. They travelled to parts of BC's yesteryear: Clinton, 150 Mile House, and Kanaka Bar. They travelled in Mr. Barnard's stage. They steamed upriver in the *Lillooet*. They met gold commissioners and government agents, examined the public buildings at Barkerville, and by steamer, horseback, and on foot completed the rest of their voyage, a grand summer tour of about 1000 miles, with travelling costs in the order of \$100 for steamer and stage fares.

Further official duties of the Pax were undertaken during the last winter of the *Sparrowhawk* in these waters: readiness against a possible Fenian attack; a tour to towns on Puget Sound, a visit to New Westminster, and the transfer of the governor's seat of residence from the mainland to Victoria:

As Victoria was to be proclaimed the Capital on the Queen's Birthday, the Governor as well as the Officials had been making preparations for leaving New Westminster for some time past, and at Noon the Governor, Mrs Seymour, Lowndes & the servants embarked without any ceremony or anybody coming down to see them off. Steamed away...and on passing New Westminster not a Flag was hoisted as was usual on ordinary occasions, and hardly a soul was to be seen. Arrived at Cadboro Bay in little less than 6 hours where the Governor & party disembarked and we then proceeded on to Esquimalt where we anchored at 8.15 [p.m. 18 May 1868].

From Cadboro Bay, the editor explains in one of his many fine footnotes, the Governor and his party were met and driven to Government House, where they were met by the militia under Captain Pearse, presenting arms, and a band played "God Save the Queen." The *Sparrowhawk* was meanwhile enroute to Esquimalt, unable to enter Victoria Harbour because she drew too much water for low tide—thus avoiding a most embarrassing gubernatorial arrival at the Capital of the United Colony of British Columbia.

Two more coastal voyages were undertaken by the gun vessel: one, to the Queen Charlottes and southern Alaska; the other to investigate murder cases involving Indians and the rescue of officers and men of the USS *Suwanee* off the northern tip of Vancouver Island. This cruise into the northern waters of BC included extending justice in Native-related matters, inspecting a military installation, conducting business with a trading post, and visiting a coal mining operation.

It has been all too customary to imagine that the men and officers of the Royal Navy of this era spent their days resting on their oars. Historians have even gone so far as to suggest that at the end of the nineteenth century the RN was really a yacht club. Guns were not to be fired because it might get powder on sails and uniforms; steam was not to be got up because soot might dirty the deck, and much else besides. War with a capital "W" was hardly thought of—that is true in these palmy days of empire. The long period of peace had its other obligations. Some were pacifistic, still others belligerent. Most were diplomatic or merely "showing the flag." Humanitarian work was the order of business of the day, and peace for the purpose of commerce and regulated order the purpose of naval presence.

Professor Smith found Porcher's narrative in the Beineke Library at Yale University, and with it wonderful watercolour drawings reproduced in the book. The commentary as supplied by Smith is superb, and reflects dedicated and thorough research. The edition is a model of its kind, not the cheap and nasty stuff so often produced by publishers who should know better. Smith has exploited most successfully the primary materials that can sustain his story. Inasmuch as Porcher wrote for Victoria newspapers about his several voyages the texts of these have been neatly used to supplement the original manuscript.

A full bibliography and most useful index complete this delightful and important volume. The forty coloured illustrations (from the Yale Collection of Western Americana) add hugely to printed illustrations of British Columbia of the 19th century, and collectors will want the book for these alone. But the real meat of this book is the text, wonderfully and richly annotated, that tells the story of one warship, one captain, many officers, and still many more men who served their Monarch and their Empire in pursuit of peace, order, and good government. In all, it was a noble mission but one soon forgotten by those who have failed to read the pages of history of that time.

Reviewer Barry M. Gough teaches at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario

Teaching in Canadian Exile

Frank Moritsugu

395 pp. Illus. \$29.95 paperback.

Order from: Ghost-Town Teachers Historical Society, 36 Deerford Road, Toronto, ON M2J 3J4, or from the Japanese Canadian National Museum, 6688 South Oaks Crescent, Burnaby, BC V5E 4M7

REVIEWED BY NAOMI MILLER.

This is a collection of memories of those who taught in make-shift schools in the camps for Japanese Canadians evacuated from the coast after Pearl Harbour. About 250 Nisei (Canadian-born Japanese) became teachers in eight elementary schools operated from 1942 to 1946 by the BC Security Commission.

These teachers were barely out of high school themselves, initially with no formal training, put into improvised classrooms with a minimum of supplies—yet they were determined. They succeeded. Their pupils went on to regular schools after the war and ranked at the top of their new classes.

Each of the short stories woven into the fabric of twenty-four chapters is listed by its subtitle in the table of contents. The articles cover circumstances before the war, changes after Pearl Harbour, the relocation of families, recruiting of these teachers, life in detention camps, then post-war adjustments. The Ghost Town Teachers Historical Society can justifiably boast of their successes. Five of their members and a few of their pupils were awarded the Order of Canada. Many achieved international renown for science, artistic endeavours, and even politics.

The tone of the book is generally happy. The uprooting of families is recorded in a matter-of-fact way. There is considerable emphasis on the humorous and pleasant interludes. The contributors have refrained from expressing bitterness or recriminations.

This is a fascinating book about a unique period in British Columbia. It is a good read and we recommend it especially as a possible source of reference for students in the history of education courses.

Reviewer Naomi Miller is a former editor of the BC Historical News.

Beginnings: Stories of Canada's Past

Ann Walsh, ed.

Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 2001. 227 pp. \$12.95 paperback.

REVIEWED BY PAT AJELLO.

Beginnings is a book of fourteen stories, each by a different author, including one by Ann Walsh, editor of the collection. The stories are arranged chronologically, and cover the period from the early 1800s to 1937. This is a book intended for young adults.

Ann Walsh has written an excellent introduction, putting the stories into context, including brief outlines of each and, in some cases, giving the flavour of a story and something of its emotional content. Historical notes are also provided, which give further details of the origins of the stories, the social conditions of the times, and their locations across Canada.

The stories in this collection describe "beginnings", all of them based on true events in Canadian history. Some are fictional accounts of real people involved in the events; in others, characters have been invented to tell the story. Often the reader is left longing to know what happened next. I do not consider this a fault because it gives the opportunity, especially for a young reader, to wonder, to imagine, to invent.

"First Encounter" by Margaret Thompson is a tale for two voices, and tells of an encounter between a young European, David, and a young native, Teluah, whose voices tell the tale from their two points of view. They speculate, wonder, doubt, question, and finally realize that nothing can ever be the same for them again. This format provides an opportunity for young readers to appreciate different points of view, and perhaps to consider more thoughtfully the opinions and feelings of others.

One of the most poignant stories, "The

Bear Tree” by Victoria Miles, is told in the first person by Marguerite Sedilot who, at 11, was the youngest known bride-to-be in Canadian history. When the story opens Marguerite is lying in bed between her two sisters. She lies quite still. “I will not be the one to begin this day,” she says to herself, reluctant to start what is to be her wedding day and will take her away from her family. And later, “...I mark this moment when I am still Marguerite Sedilot. I will leave here Marguerite Aubuchon. And I will be, as I was when I awoke this morning, twelve years and eight days old.” The bear tree of the title has particular significance for Marguerite, and at the end of the story, four years later and back with her family awaiting the birth of her first child, she sits beneath it. “At last I rest my back against the bear tree and take strength for all the work there will be in my life, and all the children and all the years to come.” This story will surely provide much for a young reader to ponder.

The stories in *Beginnings* are totally unlike each other, yet each is a unique account of a circumstance told in clear, uncluttered prose with just the right amount of description to allow for the unfolding of a tale. Each story tells of a beginning and has a defined ending, yet in every case the future stretches ahead with possibility and sometimes promise for those readers blessed with imagination.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book, and feel that it will prove an enduring addition to the genre of young adult literature.

The Promise: Love, Loyalty and the Lure of Gold. The Story of “Cariboo” Cameron

Bill Gallaher.

Victoria: TouchWood Editions, 2001. 180 pp. Illus. \$17.95 paperback.

REVIEWED BY BRANWEN C. PATENAUDE

This book is written in the first person, based on the journals of Robert Stevenson, an entrepreneur and miner of the Rock Creek, and later the Cariboo region of British Columbia. Stevenson’s journal, written nearly fifty years after his experiences of the early 1860s, was included in a book written by Dr. W.W. Walkem, entitled “Stories of Early British Columbia.” It is well known that Stevenson had an enormous ego, and a story written so many years after the event is often greatly embroidered, but does make a good yarn.

Cameron, a miner from eastern Canada, and his lovely young wife Sophie, travelled to the Cariboo region of British Columbia in 1862 to dig for gold. While on Williams Creek, Sophie delivered a still-born baby, and died of typhoid. The account goes on to describe a desperate journey, made in the dead of winter to transport Sophie’s remains from Williams Creek to her home in eastern Canada.

At first glance the attractive cover of *The Promise* harbours the hope that this book might include some new material, the culmination of new research found on the “Cariboo” Cameron story. My hopes for new material were soon dashed, for such is not the case. It is the same old story, and because the original text of Stevenson’s journal has been rewritten and in some cases changed, the publishers should have included the words “a novel” in the title. I was fortunate enough to have a long chat with the author on this point, and he agreed, but takes no responsibility for this oversight.

However, what makes the book most entertaining are many of the old chestnuts, the old stories and legends associated with the Cariboo gold rush that have been rewritten and included here and there throughout the book. Among these are the murder of Morgan Blessing, the murder of the Jewish merchants on the trail to Quesnel Forks, the story of Johanna McGuire, from the book *The Mystic Spring* by David Higgins, and even a portion from Cheadle’s *The North-West Passage by Land*.

The stories are well written and create a background of information concerning the gold rush, and life as it was at that time in history.

One part of the journey has never made sense to me, and that is that the travellers took the coffin all the way up Pavilion Mountain when they could have taken it south by Spences Bridge to Lytton. Although the wagon road between Clinton and Spence’s Bridge was built a year later than the rest of the Yale route, it had been completed by the winter of 1863.

Except for the fact that the title of *The Promise* is misleading in that it does not mention that the book is a novel, it is well written, entertaining and informative; a good read.

Reviewer Branwen Patenaude’s latest book is *Golden Nuggets: Roadhouse Portraits along the Cariboo’s Gold Rush Trails*. 1998.

Piled Higher and Deeper on the Cariboo Trail

Mike Puhallo.

Cartoons by Wendy Liddle.

Surrey: Hancock House, 2001.

64 pp. Illus. \$8.95 paperback.

REVIEWED BY SHERYL SALLOUM.

This slim volume of cowboy poetry explores the past and present state of the Canadian cowpoke. Following the tradition of telling yarns around the campfire, the author writes about Canadians who have worked as cowhands and those, such as motorcycling “Harley Huggers,” who are cowboys “deep at heart.” Puhallo explains that “A steed of steel, like the one with hooves, / lets you feel the wind on your face.”

The verses are silly, sentimental, amusing, and heart-felt. The lighthearted tone of the book is highlighted by Wendy Liddle’s whimsical pen and ink sketches.

Reviewer Sheryl Salloom used to teach school in *One Hundred Mile House*.

Literature & Loss: Bertrand William Sinclair’s British Columbia

Richard J. Lane.

London: The London Network for Modern Fiction Studies, 2000. 102 pp. \$15 paperback. Available from the London Network for Modern Fiction Studies, Dept. of English, South Bank University, 103 Borough Rd., London SE1 0AA, England.

REVIEWED BY BETTY KELLER.

Three-quarters of a century have passed since Bertrand Sinclair’s British Columbia novels were eagerly snatched from the shelves of bookstores across North America, Britain, and Australia. *North of Fifty-Three*, his first BC-based romance, sold 340,000 copies, and was still selling in 1940, 26 years after it was first issued. It became a Hollywood silent film, as did his next one, *Big Timber*, a story about BC’s logging industry. Two more logging stories followed: *The Hidden Places* (1921) and *The Inverted Pyramid* (1924). However, although it only sold 80,000 copies, critics generally agree that his best novel was *Poor Man’s Rock* (1920), a tale of BC’s salmon fishermen’s battle for a better deal from the salmon canning industry.

Sinclair is almost unknown today, his style being too old-fashioned, and his sentiments—as Richard Lane points out in *Literature & Loss: Bertrand William Sinclair’s*

British Columbia—too sexist for modern readers. Lane began his study of Sinclair's work a dozen years ago when he was a Commonwealth Scholar at the University of British Columbia. His book is a collection of five essays, four of them previously published in academic journals and one in *BC Historical News* (Vol. 32:3, 1999). The first, "Archive Simulations: Reading the Bertrand Sinclair Collection," was first published in the spring of 1993 and is the least rewarding of the collection. In it he proposes a series of "fictions which resist 'finding' the author 'behind the text'," in the Sinclair materials held in UBC's Special Collections. Although he does identify recurring themes within Sinclair's work—individualism versus collectivism, concern over property loss, the residual cost of war, and the imposition of alien systems on natural working structures—in the end it is unclear why the author concludes he has called "the institutional archival structures into further question."

In "British Columbia's War of Two Worlds: The Birth of the Modern Age in Bertrand Sinclair's Fiction" Lane explores Sinclair's six British Columbia novels to discover the author's attitudes to the social and economic impact of the First World War on the people of Vancouver and the province as a whole. He finds a crucial difference between Sinclair's take on the pre-war city and that of Martin Allerdale Grainger in *Woodsmen of the West*. Grainger, he says, focused "on the city as a service-centre for the logging

community;" in *North of Fifty-Three* Sinclair saw it as a machine and the people "mere parts of that machine," dehumanized by a corrupt city while beyond it lay the "honest countryside." In the later novels—written during and after the war—Lane finds that Vancouver's social scene "while derided by Sinclair's narrators for its... parasites feeding off the work and warfare of others, marks a transition nonetheless in terms of national identity."

Lane returns to this theme when examining Sinclair's failed literary novel *The Inverted Pyramid* in "Dreams of a Frontier Classic." Describing it as being "concerned with the binary opposition of 'land versus speculation'," he sees it as a "morality tale" that "narrates the importance of land, family, tradition, and freedom, contrasting such values with the immorality of the city, of financial speculation and the creation of non-productive wealth." The most important aspect of this vision, however, is nostalgia: "the desire for a copy without an original." With its clear analysis of Sinclair's overriding conflict—a nostalgia that "depended upon the destruction of the original which could then be recreated more accurately in his historical fictions"—this essay is undoubtedly the most incisive in the collection and does add substantially to an analysis of Sinclair's work.

"Writing the Coast," which Lane first published in 1999, suffers from factual errors concerning Sinclair's life. However, it does

contain an interesting analysis of the author's predilection for purely masculine activities and his difficulty in "fitting women into his scheme of things." The final essay, "Border Crossings: Forgotten Native Voices in Bertrand William Sinclair's Canadian and American Fiction," concentrates on what Sinclair did not write. Except for a brief episode in *North of Fifty-Three*, Sinclair failed to write about Native peoples. His choice of characters in his BC novels was limited to people in the logging and fishing industries, but Lane points out that his later novels contain "disparaging remarks and asides concerning the indigenous people of British Columbia." Examples of these remarks and asides—other than that contained in his first BC novel—would have given readers a better idea of the "continual effacement of indigenous peoples" for which Lane condemns him. It is difficult, however, to accept Lane's contention that this effacement of the native peoples from his work was the reason that Sinclair's novels are virtually unknown today. "It could be argued," he writes, "that Sinclair has disappeared from the Canadian canon precisely because he is telling the wrong story." It is, in fact, rare for novels from that period to have survived the massive social changes which have occurred since then and still have relevance. The fact that Sinclair's novels are read at all is due to the veracity of the subject matter he did write about—the logging and fishing industries of BC.

Reviewer Betty Keller is a Sechelt writer.

More Books

Books listed here may be reviewed at a later date. For further information on any title, please consult Book Review Editor Anne Yandle.

Bella Coola... "A Romantic History..." Cliff Kopas. Heritage House, 2002. \$21.95 paperback.

British Columbia Crosswords: A Look at BC Through Crosswords from Early Explorers to Modern Day. Glenn Rusth. Harbour Publishing, 2002. \$7.95 paperback.

The Canadian Rockies: Early Travels and Explorations. Esther Fraser. Fifth House, 2002. \$16.95 paperback.

Discovery by Design; the Department of Mechanical Engineering of the University of British Columbia: Origins and History, 1907-2001. Eric Damer. Ronsdale Press, \$29.95 paperback.

The Fire Still Burns: A Life of Trail Talk and Contrary Opinions. Chilco Choate. Surrey, Heritage House, 2001. \$16.95 paper.

First Nations, First Dogs. Canadian Aboriginal Ethnology. Bryan D. Cummins. Detselig Enterprises, 2002. \$39.95 paperback

Flying Under Fire; Canadian Fliers Recall the Second World War. Wm J. Wheeler, ed. Fifth House, 2001. \$21.95 paperback.

Fort Steele: Gold Rush to Boom Town. Naomi Miller. Heritage House, 2002. \$18.95 paperback.

Head Smashed-in Buffalo Jump. Gordon Reid. Fifth House, 2002. \$12.95 paperback.

Honoured in Places: Remembered Mounties Across Canada. William J. Hulgaard and John W. White. Heritage House, 2002. \$18.95 paperback.

If These Walls Could Talk: Victoria's Houses from the Past. Valerie Green. Touchwood Editions, 2001. \$24.95 paperback.

The Inlet: Memoir of a Modern Pioneer. Helen Piddington. Harbour Publishing, 2001. \$32.95 hard cover.

The Old Bow Fort. Douglas A. Hughes. Detselig Enterprises, 2002 \$16.95 paperback..

On to the Sunset: The Lifetime Adventures of a Spirited Pioneer. Ethel Burnett Tibbits. Fifth House, 2002. \$15.95 paperback.

The People's Boat: HMCS Oriole: Ship of a Thousand Dreams. Shirley Hewett. Heritage House, 2002. \$26.95 paperback.

R.M. Patterson: A Life of Great Adventure. David Finch. Rocky Mountain Books, 2000.

Sayings of Women. Nancy Millar & Margaret McCready. Detselig Enterprises, 2002. \$14.95 paperback.

News and Notes

OCTOBER IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH
In 1991 I initiated a letter-writing campaign to have one month of the year declared Canadian Women's History Month. October was suggested because of its association with the Persons Case. Canadian women officially became "persons" on 18 October 1929 following a legal battle. In 1992 the federal government designated October as Canadian Women's History Month. More information on <Victoria.tc.ca/community/whist>.

—Lyn Gough

LILIAN CORRIVEAU †

Naomi Miller writes: "Thank goodness you took the sheep story ["Looking for Grass," 35:1] out of the line-up. Lil was delighted to see her research published. Lilian Corriveau passed away on 25 May 2002. This staunch community worker requested no farewell service but suggested donations be made to either of two pet projects, namely the Seniors Foundation of BC or the restored Marysville school."

BC ARCHIVES ACTION GROUP

Effective 14 August 2002, the British Columbia Archives will be moving Wednesdays from full service to partial service hours (i.e., the reference room will be opened from 09:30-21:00 hrs but there will be no staff providing services).

The BC Archives has finally been squeezed enough by the government staff and funding cuts that it is proposing to close one weekday a week—every Wednesday.

For a year now the Archives has closed on the third Wednesday of every month for staff in service. Now it will close every Wednesday to meet its Freedom of Information and archival mandates.

The Archives will be available for what is euphemistically called "Partial Service Hours" on Wednesdays. "Partial Service" here means no retrievals, no reference staff, no copying on the microfilm readers—in other words the reading room is open but there is "no service."

Can you imagine another government department closing one week-day a week? The Department of Education? The Motor Vehicle Branch? Government Agents? The Ar-

chives is one of the central agencies of government and it should be funded to run five days a week, with full service, full days, with unattended service on evenings and weekends.

The closure is a major inconvenience to students, treaty researchers, genealogists, authors, historians, and especially to those who have to travel to Victoria for a few days of research. If you feel strongly please let the minister responsible know. He is: Hon. Sandy Santory, Minister of Management Services, Phone 250.356.7332, Fax 250.356.2960. Trail Constituency Office Phone 250.364.5514. E-mail <sandy.santori.mla@leg.bc.ca>. The Provincial Archivist is Gary A. Mitchell, CRM, Phone 250.387.2992, Fax 250.387.2072. E-mail <Gary.Mitchell@gems8.gov.bc.ca>. Please send a copy of your message to John Lutz, History Department, University of Victoria, PO 3045, Victoria BC, V8W 3P4, Phone 250.721.7392, Fax 250.721.8772. E-mail <jlutz@uvic.ca>.

—John Lutz

NORTHERN LIGHTS

On 1 September 1992, Jas. A.C. Durham-Reid, the last keeper of Cape St. James light station pulled out with his crew and the station cat, bringing to an end 79 years of North Coast history. As they circled the rock in the helicopter, one of his crew commented: "Well, at least we lasted longer than the Soviet Union." "Small consolation, if any," writes Durham-Reid.

For some 15 years Durham-Reid has been labouring on his book *An Anecdotal History of Cape St. James Lightstation 1914-1992*. He has come to the conclusion that we are living in a country that does not value even its recent past. As an example he refers to the story in Donald Graham's *Lights of the Inside Passage*, telling about the wanton destruction of records in the 1960s when half a century of human history was going up in smoke in a bonfire fed by clerks with folders labelled: "Green Island, Lawyer Island, Boat Bluff, Cape St. James... all the rest of the northern lights."

Reading the story of his quest for information it is clear that it has been an uphill battle for Durham-Reid to find any records. Even the "dull, pedestrian Ottawa end of official

correspondence" are not complete; the file for the period 1937 to 1960 is missing. "All I want really is some file which will give me the Keepers at Cape St. James between 1937 and 1941... to nail down the exact order of the Keeper staff." Of course he has a multitude of other questions asking for a reply. If you think you can in any way to help him reconstruct the past of Cape St. James light station, please write to Jas. A.C. Durham-Reid, 1105 Marine Drive, West Vancouver BC V1T 1B3

THE CALL OF THE CROW

The Crowsnest, Highway No. 3, leaves the Trans-Canada at Hope, 140 kilometers inland from Vancouver. From there the Crowsnest Highway lazily uncurls itself across the topography of southern British Columbia, eases through the Rockies via the Crowsnest Pass, and drifts to Medicine Hat where it reconnects with the Trans-Canada. Eighteen-hundred kilometres in length, the Crowsnest Highway is a traveller's delight. That can also be said of Donald Wilson's informative and entertaining Web site dedicated to the history of southern BC. A call of a crow fittingly welcomes the visitors to the Web site and historians will enjoy following the virtual highway, visiting today's communities and reading their stories from the past. The URL is <www.crowsnest-highway.ca>.

BCHS AWARDS

Last year the BC Heritage Society created the "Ruby Nobbs Outstanding Volunteer Achievement Award" to recognize exceptional long-term volunteer commitment to heritage conservation. The first winner of this new award was Anna Cail, Vernon, founding member of the North Okanagan Heritage Society, now the Vernon and District Heritage Society. After retiring to her hometown her dedication to the preservation of Vernon's heritage blossomed.

Among the many other awards announced by Helen Edwards, HSBC's Awards Committee chair, was an Outstanding Achievement award for Sheila Nickols ("Up with the Petticoats! Down with the Trousers" *BC Historical News* 34:3) for dedicating thirty years of her considerable knowledge and energy to the history and heritage of Maple Ridge.

Federation News

W. KAYE LAMB ESSAY SCHOLARSHIPS

The Scholarship Committee, chaired by Robert Griffin, recently decided that the W. Kaye Lamb Scholarship for 2001/2002 should be awarded to Marki Sellers for her paper "Negotiations for Control and Unlikely Partnerships: 1849-1851." The paper was recommended by Dr. Paige Raibmon of Simon Fraser University.

The committee felt that this was a very well written and argued paper. The issues regarding the miners at Fort Rupert and the conflict with the Nahwitti have been discussed in the literature prior, but Marki Sellers's approach of combining the conflicts into a connected issue was innovative and considered sufficient reason to justify the committee's selection.

BCHF WEB SITE

Webmaster Christopher Garrish—winner of the 2001 BC History Web site prize—took over from our technical wizard at Cedar Place. He "refreshed" the design and updated the pages. Inspect our site at <bchistory.ca>.

PRINCE GEORGE 8-11 MAY 2003

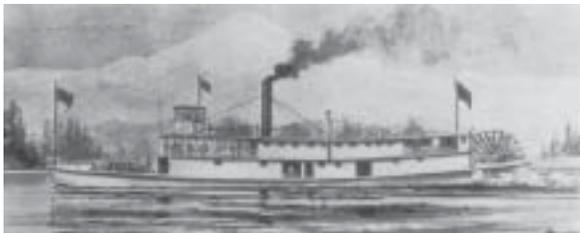
The Winter issue of *BC Historical News* will include information and a subscription form for the conference in Prince George. Form and information will also be made available on our Web site: <bchistory.ca>.

The theme of next year's conference "Work and Society: Perspectives on Northern BC History" will provide participants with a unique look at BC's industrial heritage and on the communities that diverse peoples created in British Columbia's north.

Hosted by the University of Northern BC and Prince George's heritage supporters it will combine local tours of industrial and transportation heritage sites with presentations by UNBC students and local historians focusing on the events and people who have shaped the North. Tours of railway and sawmill sites are planned as well as walking tours of the surrounding communities.

Contact: Ramona Rose, Conference Chair, BCHF 2003 Prince George Organizing Committee. <roserm@unbc.ca>

Steamboat Round the Bend



Page 34 of the summer issue (35:3) shows this image (left) of the Colonel Moody. The caption speaks about the skillful manipulations by Helga Martens, Art at Works Productions, giving the vessel a new environment.

On the right is the image that should have been shown. Sincere apologies to Helga Martens and Edward Affleck for this error. It should not have happened.



Str. COLONEL MOODY full steam ahead on the Fraser River.

MANUSCRIPTS submitted for publication in *BC Historical News* should be sent to the editor in Whonnock. Submissions should preferably not exceed 3,500 words. Submission by e-mail of the manuscript and illustrations is welcome. Otherwise please send a hard copy and if possible a digital copy of the manuscript by ordinary mail. All illustrations should have a caption and source information. It is understood that manuscripts published in *BC Historical News* will also appear in any electronic version of the journal.

W. KAYE LAMB Essay Scholarships

Deadline 15 May 2003

The British Columbia Historical Federation awards two scholarships annually for essays written by students at BC colleges or universities on a topic relating to British Columbia history. One scholarship (\$500) is for an essay written by a student in a first- or second-year course; the other (\$750) is for an essay written by a student in a third- or fourth-year course.

To apply for the scholarship, candidates must submit (1) a letter of application; (2) an essay of 1,500-3,000 words on a topic relating to the history of British Columbia; (3) a letter of recommendation from the professor for whom the essay was written.

Applications should be submitted before 15 May 2003 to: Robert Griffin, Chair BC Historical Federation Scholarship Committee, PO Box 5254, Station B, Victoria, BC V8R 6N4.

The winning essay submitted by a third- or fourth-year student will be published in *BC Historical News*. Other submissions may be published at the editor's discretion.

BC History Web Site Prize

The British Columbia Historical Federation and David Mattison are jointly sponsoring a yearly cash award of \$250 to recognize Web sites that contribute to the understanding and appreciation of British Columbia's past. The award honours individual initiative in writing and presentation.

Nominations for the BC History Web Site Prize for 2002 must be made to the British Columbia Historical Federation, Web Site Prize Committee, prior to 31 December 2002. Web site creators and authors may nominate their own sites.

Prize rules and the on-line nomination form can be found on The British Columbia History Web site: <<http://www.victoria.tc.ca/resources/bchistory-announcements.html>>.

Best Article Award

A CERTIFICATE OF MERIT and fifty dollars will be awarded annually to the author of the article, published in *BC Historical News*, that best enhances knowledge of British Columbia's history and provides reading enjoyment. Judging will be based on subject development, writing skill, freshness of material, and appeal to a general readership interested in all aspects of BC history.

British Columbia Historical Federation

Organized 31 October 1922

Affiliated Groups

Archives Association of British Columbia
Women's History Network of British Columbia

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PO Box 819, Nakusp BC V0G 1R0
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PO Box 111, Atlin BC V0W 1A0
Boundary Historical Society
PO Box 1687, Grand Forks BC V0H 1H0
Bowen Island Historians
PO Box 97, Bowen Island, BC V0N 1G0
Bulkley Valley Historical & Museum Society
Box 2615, Smithers BC V0J 2N0
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6501 Deer Lake Avenue, Burnaby BC V5G 3T6
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PO Box 1014, Duncan BC V9L 3Y2
District 69 Historical Society
PO Box 1452, Parksville BC V9P 2H4
East Kootenay Historical Association
PO Box 74, Cranbrook BC V1C 4H6
Finn Slough Heritage & Wetland Society
9480 Dyke Road, Richmond BC V7A 2L5
Fraser Heritage Society
Box 84, Harrison Mills, BC V0M 1L0
Galiano Museum Society
20625 Porlier Pass Drive
Galiano Island BC V0N 1P0
Gray Creek Historical Society
Box 4, Gray Creek, BC V0B 1S0
Gulf Islands Branch BCHF
c/o A. Loveridge S22, C11, RR # 1
Galiano Island BC V0N 1P0
Hedley Heritage Society
PO Box 218, Hedley BC V0X 1K0
Jewish Historical Society of BC
206-950 West 41st Avenue,
Vancouver BC V5Z 2N7
Kamloops Museum Association
207 Seymour Street, Kamloops BC V2C 2E7
Koksilah School Historical Society
5213 Trans Canada Highway,
Koksilah, BC V0R 2C0
Kootenay Lake Historical Society
PO Box 537, Kaslo BC V0G 1M0

Langley Centennial Museum
PO Box 800, Fort Langley BC V1M 2S2
Lantzville Historical Society
c/o Box 274, Lantzville BC V0R 2H0
Lions Bay Historical Society
Box 571, Lions Bay BC V0N 2E0
London Heritage Farm Society
6511 Dyke Road, Richmond BC V7E 3R3
Maple Ridge Historical Society
22520 116th Ave., Maple Ridge, BC V2X 0S4
Nanaimo & District Museum Society
100 Cameron Road, Nanaimo BC V9R 2X1
Nanaimo Historical Society
PO Box 933, Nanaimo BC V9R 5N2
Nelson Museum
402 Anderson Street, Nelson BC V1L 3Y3
North Shore Historical Society
c/o 1541 Merlynn Crescent,
North Vancouver BC V7J 2X9
North Shuswap Historical Society
Box 317, Celista BC V0E 1L0
Okanagan Historical Society
PO Box 313, Vernon BC V1T 6M3
Princeton & District Museum & Archives
Box 281, Princeton BC V0X 1W0
Qualicum Beach Historical Society
587 Beach Road,
Qualicum Beach BC V9K 1K7
Revelstoke & District Historical Association
Box 1908, Revelstoke BC V0E 2S0
Richmond Museum Society
Minoru Park Plaza, 7700 Minoru Gate,
Richmond BC V6Y 7M7
Salt Spring Island Historical Society
129 McPhillips Avenue,
Salt Spring Island BC V8K 2T6
Silvery Slocan Historical Society
Box 301, New Denver BC V0G 1S0
Surrey Historical Society
Box 34003 17790 #10 Hwy. Surrey BC V3S 8C4
Terrace Regional Historical Society
PO Box 246, Terrace BC V8G 4A6
Texada Island Heritage Society
Box 129, Blubber Bay BC V0N 1E0
Trail Historical Society
PO Box 405, Trail BC V1R 4L7
Union Bay Historical Society
Box 448, Union Bay, BC V0R 3B0
Vancouver Historical Society
PO Box 3071, Vancouver BC V6B 3X6
Victoria Historical Society
PO Box 43035, Victoria North
Victoria BC V8X 3G2
Yellowhead Museum
Box 1778, RR# 1, Clearwater BC V0E 1N0

The British Columbia Historical Federation is an umbrella organization embracing regional societies.

Local historical societies are entitled to become Member Societies of the BC Historical Federation. All members of these local historical societies shall by that very fact be members of the Federation.

Affiliated Groups are organizations with specialized interests or objects of a historical nature.

Membership fees for both classes of membership are one dollar per member of a Member Society or Affiliated Group with a minimum membership fee of \$25 and a maximum of \$75.

Questions about membership should be directed to:
Terry Simpson
Membership Secretary,
BC Historical Federation
193 Bird Sanctuary,
Nanaimo BC V9R 6G8
Phone: 250.754.5697
terryroy@nanaimo.ark.com

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BC Historical News welcomes stories, studies, and news items dealing with any aspect of the history of British Columbia, and British Columbians.

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THE BRITISH COLUMBIA HISTORICAL FEDERATION INVITES SUBMISSIONS OF BOOKS FOR THE TWENTIETH ANNUAL COMPETITION FOR WRITERS OF BC HISTORY.

Any book presenting any facet of BC history, published in 2002, is eligible. This may be a community history, biography, record of a project or an organization, or personal recollections giving a glimpse of the past. Names, dates and places, with relevant maps or pictures, turn a story into "history." Note that reprints or revisions of books are not eligible.

The judges are looking for quality presentations, especially if fresh material is included, with appropriate illustrations, careful proofreading, an adequate index, table of contents and bibliography, from first-time writers as well as established authors.

The Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing will be awarded to an individual writer whose book contributes significantly to the recorded history of British Columbia. Other awards will be made as recommended by the judges to valuable books prepared by groups or individuals.

Winners will receive a Certificate of Merit, a monetary award and an invitation to the BCHF annual conference to be held in Prince George, May 2003.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS: All books must have been published in 2002 and should be submitted as soon as possible after publication. Two copies of each book should be submitted. Books entered become property of the BC Historical Federation. Please state name, address and telephone number of sender, the selling price of all editions of the book, and, if the reader has to shop by mail, the address from which it may be purchased, including applicable shipping and handling costs.

SEND TO: BC Historical Federation Writing Competition
PO Box 130, Whonnock BC V2W 1V9

DEADLINE: 31 December 2002