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Reading the Canadian Battlefield at Quebec, Queenston, Batoche, and Vimy

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Graduate Program in English
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Doctor of Philosophy
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Reading the Canadian Battlefield at Quebec, Queenston, Batoche, and Vimy

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

Rebecca Anne Campbell

Graduate Program in English

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in English

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada

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Abstract

Early Canadian cultural history is punctuated by a series of battlefields that define not only the Dominion's expanding territory and changing administration, but also organize Canadian time. This dissertation examines the intersection between official military commemoration, militarism as a social and cultural form, and the creation of a national literature, with specific reference to poetry. By outlining the role war has played in defining Canada's territory and the constitution of its communities, this dissertation will also uncover both the military history of the post-colonial nation, and the construction of belonging and territory in the "empire" of Canada, from its cultural origins at Quebec, the consolidation of its southern borders during the War of 1812, its claims on a white settler west during the Métis Resistance of 1885, and finally the invention of an international military identity on Vimy Ridge.

War is cultural practice as well as political action and a traumatic dislocation, and the cultural history of war extends far beyond combat to inform both the civilian and the soldier, despite the distinctions we might make between the battlefield and the home front. Drawing on theorists of militarism and memory, as well as critics of Canadian cultural history, this dissertation seeks to reveal the underlying structures that govern not only military commemoration in Canada, but also the kind of space such military epistemologies produce, whether through memorials themselves, or through the geographic and literary legacies of a history punctuated by battlefields.

Keywords

Canadian Literature, War Literature, Commemoration, Cultural Nationalism, Military Geography, Poetry

Dedication

FOR DAVID STIRLING CAMPBELL

(1944 – 2009)

FAIR THESE BROAD MEADS - THESE HOARY WOODS ARE GRAND
BUT WE ARE EXILES FROM OUR FATHERS' LAND

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Finally, I must mention Donald Bourne, who has been patient with my visits to memorial sites in Canada and America, who is good at remembering dates, knows about firearms, and always asks interesting questions. Most of all I want to thank him because he was there even when *the Lord who moveth mountains didn't seem to help my labours*, and for that I will be always grateful.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Dedication	iii
Aknowledgements	iv
Table of Contents	v
Introduction	
1.1 The Canadian Thermopylae	1
1.2 Nation, Memory, War	13
1.3 A Sense of Place	37
Chapter 1: Staging Quebec, 1759	
2.1 Approaching Quebec	43
2.2 Architectures of War and Memory	58
2.3 Scenography	68
2.4 Sanguinaria	84
Chapter 2: The Militia Myth on Queenston Heights, 1812	
3.1 Re-Enacting 1812	90
3.2 Sarah Curzon and the Heroines of 1812	104
3.3 Engendering Canada	123
3.4 The Militia Myth at Fort York, Vimy, and Kandahar	133
Chapter 3: The Small War at Batoche, 1885	
4.1 A Mari Usque Ad Mare	139
4.2 Guerillas, Civilized and Savage	156
4.3 Back to Batoche	173
4.4 A Place to Stand	189
4.5 A Battle Lost	200

Chapter 4: The View from Vimy Ridge, 1917	
5.1 The Problem of Distance	204
5.2 Time's Wrong Way Telescope	214
5.3 Mapping the Page	222
5.4 On the Ridge	239
Coda: Under the DEWline	249
Bibliography	261
Curriculum Vitae	287

INTRODUCTION

1. The Canadian Thermopylae

*Truth-loving Persians do not dwell upon
The trivial skirmish fought near Marathon.
As for the Greek theatrical tradition
Which represents that summer's expedition
Not as a mere reconnaissance in force
By three brigades of foot and one of horse
(Their left flank covered by some obsolete
Light craft detached from the main Persian fleet)
But as a grandiose, ill-starred attempt
To conquer Greece – they treat it with contempt*

Robert Graves. "The Persian Version." 1946.

Archibald Lampman's poem "At the Long Sault, 1660" recounts an historical confrontation between French and Iroquois forces on the Ottawa River, using the brief skirmish to describe a kind of productive tension between two sorts of space: the natural world of the opening lines, and the settled landscape of the work's second half. The poem constitutes what D.M.R. Bentley calls a "scale model of the baseline-hinterland dichotomy of Canadian poetry" (*The Gay]grey Moose* 38): a spatial, economic, and conceptual division between wilderness and human activity that Lampman renders not only in the racialized distinction between civilized white defence and savage indigenous attack, but also in the tension between free and formal verse.¹ From a military

¹ According to Bentley, Lampman "employs fractured lines and irregular rhythms — a form bordering on free verse — to present the workings of a non-teleological, Darwinian nature in an area of conflict far from the baseland, but returns aptly to regular quatrains for the poem's final, heraldic vision of a feudal and

perspective, however, the poem describes three spheres of settler experience, with the baseline and its hinterland bound together by the intermediary battlefield. Between the uncivilized wild, where the wolfish Indigenous warriors dwell, and the “frail-walled town” (26) occupied by “mother and matron and child” (27), lies battlespace: liminal, productive, both violent and civilized, and figured through a ruin, the “broken palisade” of the opening stanza, as though in the moment of combat the battlefield is already ancient.

Lampman’s poem describes the role of memory at the intersection of landscape and community, using the peculiar exigency of the battlefield to present a narrative of transformation. Successful settlement means the constant reiteration of national community as well as defence, and so Daulac dies for a nascent “Canada” in the village beyond the rapids. For those who remember it, the ruined battlefield, like the dead soldier, becomes a benchmark² in the new landscape, one that renders it comprehensible, and makes it *home*.

The poem also assumes many of the premises that this dissertation will explore: that war and its representation are central to the creation of community as a place, or a people; that a successful defence, like a successful invasion, authorizes the victor’s sovereign possession of a landscape, both the right to occupy and the right to represent; that war poetry, like commemoration, is location-work in time, space, and culture.

urban order that has been preserved at the cost of the lives of Dollard des Ormeaux and his men” (“A New Dimension” n.p.).

² In the case of General James Wolfe’s death in 1759, it is literal: in 1790 Surveyor-General Major Samuel Holland, who had been with Wolfe at Louisbourg and Quebec, established the site of Wolfe’s death as a benchmark (“A Rallying Site” n.p.).

Though it was written long after 1660, “At the Long Sault” celebrates the site’s military history as both liminal and original. This introduction explores a theoretical and historical framework that establishes the continuity between war and community in a specifically Canadian context, in preparation for a more detailed examination of four particular battlefields and their representation in inscription and poetry as sites of Canadian space/time: The Plains of Abraham, Queenston Heights, Batoche, and Vimy Ridge. These sites are represented by their inscriptions and their social history as well as representative poetry by early Canadian poets like Thomas Cary, Charles Sangster, Sarah Curzon, Isabella Valancy Crawford, and Charles G.D. Roberts, as well as contemporary poets including Al Purdy, Tim Lilburn, and Marilyn Dumont. I have chosen these four battlefields because they trace a trajectory of Anglo-Canadian domination in both military and representational terms. Each of these battlefields literally consolidates the space called Canada, but in their re-iteration, as they are represented in poetry and inscription, they also consolidate white, Anglo-Canadian settler military culture.

The three landscapes of Lampman’s poem—enemy territory and homestead mediated by the space of officially sanctioned violence—also form a “scale model” of the battlefield’s structure during conflict, and its cultural meaning long after combat has ended. When battlespace becomes the space of memory, it witnesses not only the difference between friendly and enemy territory, but also the passage of time. May 1660 on the Ottawa River’s Long Sault is both the subject of the poem’s commemoration, and a narrative mechanism through which Lampman imagines Quebec’s successful European settlement. In Lampman’s poem—as in many other historical works written between 1867 and 1914—military conflicts function as border-stones and benchmarks for

Canada's national landscape and history. More than two hundred years after the skirmish on the Ottawa River the Long Sault becomes a way for the poem's nineteenth-century readers to imagine a bit of what they knew as Canada transformed from territory into homeland by reason of a successful and terminal defence. Representing violent death as chivalric sacrifice at the site of that violence does more than confirm the battlefield as a *lieu de mémoire*: the monuments at the Plains of Abraham, Queenston Heights, and Batoche, and the poems that integrate those spaces into the Canadian imaginary, while arguing that Anglo-Canadians are heirs to a "homeland" rendered natal by reason of blood shed generations earlier.

It is also within the act of commemoration that civilians—often separated from combat, as they are in Lampman's poem—can perceive the conceptual order of militarism as it informs the construction of their community. The critical geographer Rachel Woodward calls this the "moral order" of militarism, an order which assumes that national territory is coherent, limited by non-porous borders, occupied by a loyal citizenry, and defended by a standing army. Militarism's conceptual order finds its most transparent expression in representations of combat, particularly combat in the service of homeland defence or heroic national policy. However, military structures, meanings, and concerns stretch far beyond the battlefield. Lampman's poem defines wilderness and domesticity as they lie on either side of conflict, and Canadian history as it lies on either side of a defining military event. To borrow Bentley's terminology, if not his argument, the poem is also a scale model of military commemoration, mapping the construction of human history and space through the ternary structure of attacker, defender, and defended, suggesting, in turn, that a community's capacity for self defence is

foundational to its being. Further, the structure emerges in both the moment of conflict and its representation; it is a literary as well as a spatial structure, a structure of public memory as well as narrative history.

Attack, defence, community, memory, landscape—these concerns all coalesce in the poem’s measured final stanzas, which terminate in a Canadian lily transfigured by military sacrifice into something like a *fleur-de-lis*, just as the “frail-walled town” of Ville-Marie will become the city of Montreal:

The numberless stars out of heaven
 Look down with a pitiful glance;
 And the lilies asleep in the forest
 Are closed like the lilies of France. (94 – 97)

The poem that opened in unmeasured lines and stanzas concludes in quatrains rhymed—though not metred—like a ballad, just as the flowers in the woods are transformed into national-heraldic emblems, and “Mere youngsters” who defend the fort grow “in a moment to men” (19) with their deaths. The lilies, like the new citizen-soldiers, and the village for which they die, mark the creation of both a military community and a community of remembrance represented by a perennial flower. The term “citizen-soldier” is an anachronism for a seventeenth-century character, but Lampman invokes the later tradition in his description of Daulac’s force, especially their spatial and ethical relationship with the settlers they defend, and the transformative nature of their sacrifice.

Popular nineteenth-century representations of Daulac’s skirmish with the Iroquois use familiar conventions for military commemoration, whether in monument or narrative. Historians and popular writers invoked earlier, radically dissimilar conflicts in their

descriptions, calling the Long Sault a “Canadian Thermopylae” (Kennedy n.p.). After all, aligning the Iroquois with the Persian invaders neatly flips the dialectic of Canadian settlement, and associates the Long Sault’s defenders with the heroic origins of western democracy in the face of Persian invasion. Daulac’s defence as it is celebrated in Lampman’s poem actively conceals some of the event’s true character, whether Daulac’s tendency to adolescent bravado (Vachon n.p.), or the fact that he more accurately parallels Darius I’s or Xerxes I’s invading Persians than the defending Greeks of either Thermopylae or Marathon.

In casting the Long Sault as a Canadian Thermopylae, nineteenth-century writers represented Canada’s imperial and settler history in terms recognizable to the classical and European traditions of nation-building. While Lampman wrote the poem for a nineteenth-century audience, his first readers were Canadians of the Second World War, when the long, celebrated history of European warfare—whether Spartan, French or *habitant*—returned in the face of a new kind of communal threat. According to Bentley, it is no

coincidence that Brown and Scott published *At the Long Sault and Other New Poems* in 1943, for the subject of the title poem in this selection of Lampman’s thereto unpublished work—Dollard des Ormeaux’s supposed saving of Quebec from destruction by the Iroquois in May 1666 [sic] — perfectly suited the nationalistic tenor of the war years. Whether positive or negative, however, the attention given to Lampman before, during, and after the Second World War consolidated his position as a Canadian literary icon, as a writer whose work had

to be reckoned with because it seemed to be an authentic representation and integral part of Canada. (*Mnemographia Canadensis* 322)

The poem's military and narrative action has a dual effect. Within the world of the poem it confirms the distinction between Bentley's baseline and hinterland, between the landscape in which one fights and the landscape for which one fights. Military sacrifice, Lampman's verse implies, transfigures the natural world and forges a community of mourners who are doubly created: by the act of defending the settlement, establishing their possession of a site by nature of their ability to control it, through the shared memory of that sacrifice long after the fact. To become "Native"—or to render the land "natal"³ in Louis Riel's terminology of the Red River Rebellion of 1869—requires a successful defence of the landscape in which one dwells. Within the world of Lampman's reader the poem preserves an originary moment of defence that confirms the right of contemporary citizens to occupy the territory for which Daulac died. The poem also extends the defended community from seventeenth-century *habitants* on the Ottawa River to nineteenth- and twentieth-century Canadian readers *a mari usque ad mare*. Canada will be safe and well-ordered, such commemoration promises, as long as its citizens are willing to re-enact Daulac's death, whether yeoman in 1812, or volunteers in 1914.

The Canadian culture that emerges combines the forms and narratives the emigrant brings with them—the arquebus, the story of Thermopylae, or the *fleur-de-lis*—

³ Riel's "To the Inhabitants of the North and the North-west" (1870), written during the Red River Rebellion (1869 – 1870), declares that the Métis "possess to-day, without partition, almost the half of a continent. The expulsion or annihilation of the invaders has rendered our land natal to its children" (78). Métis possession of the landscape, then, is confirmed in multiple terms: familial inheritance, defence, occupation, settlement, and the treaties that pre-existed Canada but were inherited by Ottawa after Confederation.

with the raw material of the immigrant's new landscape: successful settlement requires both the soldier and the poet, both action and its representation. In finding the moment at which the community came into being by reason of defence, and in re-iterating it, the poet turns the soldier into the object of national contemplation, an aesthetic as well as a military subject. Poetry, like commemoration, becomes a means for civilians to locate themselves in relation to the otherwise exclusive space of battle, though its mechanism is not the shared space of a cenotaph or a public part, but rather the more private experience of the reader.

Further—and significantly—Lampman's lily also presents commemoration as natural sympathy rather than human creation, an elegiac convention that recurs often in Canada's military literature.⁴ Peter Sacks argues that the elegy is a genre of public mourning and a means of reconciling the living with the dead, and usually contains a turn away from sorrow toward consolation in the natural world, to the "fresh fields and pastures new" of Milton's "Lycidas," a work that informs Sacks's account of the English elegy. Sacks links the elegy with the eulogy and the public expression of grief at the funeral, arguing that the elegy's speaker—like the eulogist—is the funeral's chief mourner, a role associated most often with the eldest son and, therefore, with inheritance as well as loss. This reading of the elegy suggests that Lampman's reader is a kind of

⁴ The sleeping lilies of Lampman's Long Sault are in that category of flowers produced or transformed by the blood of the fallen, and which return to the living in a seasonal reminder of loss or consolation: the *sanguinaria* of the Plains of Abraham, the red poppy of no man's land, the anemone's association with fallen Adonis, and the Hyacinth with a Spartan soldier beloved of Apollo. These flowers can be a mark of both military defeat and failed settlement, as in William Wood's account of Louisbourg after the French defeat of 1758, where "Nothing remains of that dead past, anywhere inland, except a few gnarled, weather-beaten stumps of carefully transplanted plum and apple trees, with, here and there, a straggling little patch of pale, forlorn narcissus, now soothing the alien air in vain, round shapeless ruins, as absolute and lone as those of Louisbourg itself" (137).

impersonal heir to Daulac, inheriting the landscape for which he died, a trope that will return in representations of both Major-General James Wolfe's and Major-General Sir Isaac Brock's battlefield deaths.

To borrow Ernest Gellner's terminology, Daulac's story is one among the narrative "shreds and patches" (56) that are knit together in the illusive whole cloth of national culture. In this case, a young man's foolish, ambitious confrontation is re-made—by Lampman, by his readers, by any number of nineteenth-century historians and sculptors—into a natal moment for post-Confederation Canada. Daulac is neither a Canadian, nor a hero, nor "native" to the land he defended, nor a subject of the kind of nation-state Canada now is. Instead, his story is the raw material for literary representations of these concepts. This is the nation-state's sleight-of-hand, where poets transform anecdotes into epics, and conflicts are arbitrarily selected to become moments of destiny. As Gellner observes, "Nationalism is not what it seems, and above all it is not what it seems to itself. The cultures it claims to defend and revive are often its own inventions" (56).

Ralph Gustafson's poem "Dedication" (1944) links monuments not to memory, but to forgetfulness, unsettling in its opening stanza the familiar refrain—"lest we forget"—from Rudyard Kipling's "Recessional" (1897). Rather than calling visitors to remember, Gustafson's imagined monument is a paradoxical proof of human forgetfulness in the face of war's trauma, the imposition of formal, monumental language on the chaos of human experience: "Let us impose, since we forget / The hopeless giant alphabet" (2-3). In keeping with the poem's anxious relationship to memory, this dissertation is concerned less with critical responses to war, or with the literature of

trauma, than with the “hopeless giant alphabet” of the memorial, whether it appears in a literal inscription, or the same sentiments reproduced in verse.

This is not to discount the vast archive of literature that challenges the logic of the monument, nor the myriad counter-narratives to the giant alphabet of institutional memory, but rather to focus on the mechanisms by which war is placed at the centre of a community. For this reason the texts I have selected include not only inscriptions, but also the clichéd and formally un-experimental lyrics of unapologetic patriotism. These are the works that A.J.M. Smith was discussing when, in 1944, he wrote that “colonialism reveals itself most surely in the abstract and conventional patriotic poetry... while true nationalism rises out of the local realism of the pioneer” (75), suggesting that patriotic poetry actively inhibited Canada’s developing national culture, and therefore positioning the kind of war-verse described in this dissertation as imitative and secondary to “true” nationalist poetry. Patriotic war poetry, however, reveals the continuity between home- and battle-front, between domestic and national spaces, between cultural production and rationalized violence, between race, gender, and war. The texts explored here represent Canadian patriotism from the “inside” of a militarized national community. They were written from the point of view of victors rather than vanquished, since the victors can imagine history in terms of their own destiny. After all, their destiny is not *debellatio* nor displacement, but ascendance, and patriotic literature only enhances the teleological “truth” of their victory.

The problem with a history of patriotic sentiment and imperialist military commemoration is that it forecloses on narratives outside the national. This leads me, also, to the problem of representing non-white, non-settler, and non-Anglo perspectives

on these conflicts. On my first visit to the Plains of Abraham in 2009, I went to Wolfe's column in Battlefields Park and saw a spray-painted "X" on the English-language plaque that commemorated Wolfe's death, the two graffitied lines having obviously been removed and re-sprayed many times. There is a similar story regarding the first commemorative plaque installed at Batoche in 1925, when the village of Batoche was still a living village, not yet exclusively a museum and memorial site. At some point in its early history, the plaque was revised by means of a chisel (McCullough 167), though no public record exists regarding *who* chipped words out of the memorial text, nor even which words they chose to revise. These two anecdotes cautioned me to remember that the vanquished of the Plains of Abraham and Batoche co-exist with the battlefields' nominal victors: the Front de libération du Québec (FLQ) and the Métis renaissance of the last forty years remind contemporary Canadians that neither conflict has ended; they have merely been transformed. While Anglo-Canadian victors attempted to render history beyond reinterpretation, sites like Quebec and Batoche remain politically significant because they are still contested, and because the stories of the defeated do not evaporate on the morning after the battle.

This is intended to frame my dissertation with a warning to myself as well as my readers: that for all the banality of national commemorative language in poetry, for all its clichéd excesses, for all these repeating attempts to fix the past and its interpretation, the battlefield remains dynamic. It may be planted over with trees, and studded with immovable commemorative boulders, but the events of the past have not been resolved, only transfigured. While the defeated polities of Canada's past were violently

subordinated to the perfect unity of a nation-state, such unities are fictional, even when they are written in stone.

Despite all that changed between 1660 and the present day, Canadian military commemoration continues to be preoccupied with the battlefield. In the last decade the call to remember has echoed through Canadian popular culture, including films like *Paaschendaale* (2008), the provincially-designated “Year of the Métis” in 2010, commemorating the 125th anniversary of the Resistance of 1885, and the various bicentenary celebrations of the War of 1812 in Ontario and Quebec. Further, these sites of memory are themselves contested, and these large, public projects are also opportunities to challenge national narrative. In 2009 the National Battlefields Commission planned a re-enactment of the Battle of the Plains of Abraham for the 250th anniversary, then cancelled it after Quebecois sovereignty groups planned protests in response. The Commission cited security issues in their statement, a reminder that the park’s peaceful green spaces do not mark the end of hostilities, but rather their transformation into new forms.

Finally, while this is an academic work, it is always challenging to disentangle one’s critical work from one’s personal and familial experience of one’s nation. For that reason I want to include a few statements regarding my personal experience of these battlefields since they have informed my thoughts. In July 2010 I visited the Gabriel Dumont Institute in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan in order to research the chapter on Batoche. I had an illuminating conversation with Métis writer and historian Darren Prefontaine, who spoke about his own uncomfortable relationship with military commemoration at Batoche, and particularly his rejection of re-enactment as public

spectacle, considering it is his own family whose deaths are being performed. His personal stake in the matter reminded me that my own history is a direct result of two of the conflicts represented here. The Seven Years War (1753-1760) and the North West Resistance (1885) are central to my own family history, since Anglo-Canadian victory allowed my ancestors to settle first in the Province of Quebec and then in Saskatchewan. My family history is—in a very direct way—dependent on the fall of Nouvelle-France and the extinguishment of Métis claims in the North West. This knowledge informs my critical desire to understand the role militarism and its commemoration plays in the creation of a settler community, and I wish to begin by recognizing that my thoughts on the matter emerge from complicity as well as curiosity.

2. Nation, Memory, War

Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living. And just as they seem to be occupied with revolutionizing themselves and things, creating something that did not exist before, precisely in such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service, borrowing from them names, battle slogans, and costumes in order to present this new scene in world history in time-honored disguise and borrowed language.

Karl Marx. *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. 1852.

The nation, according to many of its theorists, requires a dual action on the part of its constituents, a strategic combination of memory and amnesia that is both selective and obsessive, refining the morass of human experience into an appealing national imaginary complete with origin and destiny. In arguments by Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, and

Benedict Anderson, national military commemoration is the public performance of this paradoxical amnesia. For the artist-critic, Kyo Maclear, amnesia is, in fact, the true function of the public memorial, and individuals forget the particular horrors of war when the cenotaph in the middle of town does the work of memory for them, because “in our attempts to *enshrine* the past through material forms of representations... we may truncate memory, creating, ultimately, the conditions for forgetfulness” (83). Despite the claim made by the name “memorial,” a public monument can appropriate memory in the service of an orthodox, politically expedient interpretation of history. Maclear’s mistrust of monumentality is part of a larger, reasonable wariness of collective memory, rooted in both its colonial, nineteenth-century origins, and its problematic relationship to the twentieth century’s totalitarianism and violence, when the past was so often became a means of controlling a community’s present nature and its future ambitions. As Hobsbawm argues in the introduction to *Invented Traditions*, the past becomes a rhetorical tool, giving “any desired change (or resistance to innovation) the sanction of precedent, social continuity and natural law as expressed in history” (2). The national past today persists in the shadow of Nuremberg and Himmler’s Sachensenhein.⁵ Despite

⁵ The Nazis appropriated Nuremberg in part because it was central to the First Reich, the Holy Roman Empire. Sachensenhein is the grove that Heinrich Himmler commissioned to mark 782 C.E.’s Massacre of Verden, where Charlemagne terminated a revolt by executing hundreds of pagan Saxon prisoners. In both cases, the Nazi future became a product of the redeployed military past, in much the way that the victory of German tribes against Roman invaders at the Battle of Teutoburg Forest (9 C.E.) was central to German romantic nationalism in the nineteenth century. In each case, ceremony and narrative carefully elided the centuries of difference between the contemporary *völk* and the historic German tribes, as though *völkischness* is ahistorical, existing in 1935 exactly as it did in 9. This ahistoricity is in keeping with Gellner’s argument that the Reich made itself the religious-aesthetic object of ceremony, presenting “Germanness” as an eternal and spiritual quality manifesting in the beauty of German bodies and the productivity of the German countryside. While contemporary nations may reject that inheritance, Gellner warns that it remains the shadow of patriotism: “In a nationalist age, societies worship themselves brazenly and openly, spurning the camouflage. At Nuremberg, Nazi Germany did not worship itself by pretending to worship God or even Wotan; it overtly worshipped itself” (56).

this ample evidence that battlefield memorials are as likely to preserve violence as they are to resolve it, they retain their reputation as a potent national signifier of peace, and a point of return for the synthetic national family.⁶

The past of the public memorial is *tromp l'oeil*, a vista painted on the walls of the present that creates only the impression of a deep and picturesque panorama. While the present might imagine itself as a product of that long, synthetic vista, it is not the case, and the nation paints a vision that necessarily culminates in the present's existence, as Virgil includes Augustus in Aeneas's vision of Rome's future in the *Aeneid's* sixth book. According to Gellner, it is "nationalism which engenders nations, and not the other way around" (55), and in Ernest Renan's phrase, the cultural form "presupposes a past" (19) more than it possesses one. Through a kind of political omphalism, nation-states are born already ancient.

Anderson argues that the "imagined community" of the nation-state exists in the shared, conceptual space of print capitalism. Hobsbawm's "invented traditions" describe, similarly, the new ceremonies of mass culture, whether mass sporting events, televised coronations, or the sovereign's Christmas address on the radio. Such critics of national community historicize the creation of a cultural form that, in their arguments, actively effaces its own historicity. National culture, they argue, presents itself as a "natural" formation that emerges from some ancient *völkisch* will, when that nation is rather the

⁶ Of course, battlefields are not the only kind of history to be redeployed in the service of the present. Benito Mussolini excavated the ancient Roman port at Ostia and claimed it as a site of origin, as he claimed the fasces of Etruscan kings in his new fascist Italy. In the service of nineteenth-century France, Eugène Viollet-le-Duc rebuilt Carcassonne as an idealized and impossible city of the French middle ages.

product of institutions that belong exclusively to the age of capital and the technologies of mass culture to create their large, synthetic communities.

The difficulty in any discussion of the nation-state is negotiating between the conceptual space of print capitalism and the specifics of history, landscape, and the individual's encounter with both. Addressing this difficult intersection of materiality and culture, Henri Lefebvre asks in *The Production of Space* (1974), "what is an ideology without a space to which it refers, a space which it describes, whose vocabulary and kinks it makes use of, and whose code it embodies?" (44). The battlefield park is such a site, powerful because it is shaped by the ideology of the nation-state for which it is synecdoche, and to which it refers in text and ceremony. Memorial space and its artifacts—the cenotaph, the cairn, the inscribed plaque, the commemorative coin, the historical poem, the epitaph—is informed by the national imaginary, but its roots lie in the specifics of the human landscape in the same way that the abstractions of national politics find their war-time expression in the destruction or defence of particular human bodies. Significant points and moments—strategic or tactical, historical or political—once distinguished by the textual and aesthetic apparatus of public memory become a point of contact for the individual citizen, a way for them to locate themselves in the larger narratives and landscapes of their community. These ceremonies of location strengthen with repetition, and each Remembrance Day service re-enacts the community's emergence in an originary act of violence.

If ideology and space produce one another, as Lefebvre argues, the battlefield park becomes one public declaration regarding the relationship between war and community, between strategy and memory. The problem of representing this relationship

recurs in many different ways. While “war” is far more complex than a morning’s combat and reaches far beyond the space defined as “The Plains of Abraham,” for example, the truth of its complexity does not necessarily make for good national theatre. In *War and Peace* (1869), Leo Tolstoy writes that the names of great generals are a means of organizing the cataclysmic uncertainty of human conflict, part of the retroactive continuities that the nation constantly invents for itself. “Napoleon” or “Kutuzov,” like “Wolfe” or “Riel” are “but the labels that serve to give a name to an event, and like labels, they have the least possible connection with the event itself. Every action of theirs, that seems to them an act of their own free-will, is in an historical sense not free at all, but in bondage to the whole course of previous history, and predestined from all eternity” (571). The named battlefield, like the named General, is shorthand for an otherwise inaccessibly complex history. “The Plains of Abraham,” or “Batoche,” or “Austerlitz” are similar synecdoches for the entangled forces that bring communities into being, and mark their endings and transformations. The familiar names of heroic military history are, in Lefebvre’s terms, one way in which “Representational space is alive: it speaks. It has an affective kernel or centre... it embraces the loci of passion, of action, and of lived situations, and thus immediately implies time” (42).

Within this heroic tradition the battlefield is liminal, a location and a moment of metamorphosis, where subjects are created and political landscapes are transformed.⁷ The

⁷ In an exceptionally compelling exploration of the battlefield’s liminality, Tolstoy’s Nikolai Rostov experiences 1805’s Battle of Schöngrabern as an extraordinary space of joy and terror, with the line between Third Coalition and French Empire as absolute and as disorienting as the distance between life and death. At Schöngrabern, one step beyond that boundary line which resembles the line dividing the living from the dead lies uncertainty, suffering, and death. And what is there? Who is there?—there beyond that field, that

“thin red line” of Balaclava describes not only the Sutherland Highlanders on 25 October 1854, but also imperial margins, the “small wars” of Empire, and “Greater Britain” as a conceptual unity enforced by the bodies of fighting men. Vimy Ridge is not only a moment of literal unity for the Canadian Expeditionary Force of 1917, but a retroactive point of unity for the nation those soldiers are supposed to represent. Daily civilian commemoration allows the nation to integrate that moment of transformation into their secular life, through quotidian reminders like the images of Vimy on the twenty dollar bill, or the patriotic verses in an elementary school textbook.

From this liminal battlefield emerges a particular kind of national subject: the citizen-soldier, for whom military service is indistinguishable from patriotic passion, and whose voluntary death is central to twentieth-century military commemoration. The citizen-soldier emerged from the French and American revolutions as a figure of

tree, that roof lit up by the sun? No one knows, but one wants to know. You fear and yet long to cross that line, and know that sooner or later it must be crossed and you will have to find out what is there, just as you will inevitably have to learn what lies the other side of death. (116)

The frontline may be within sight of either side’s rear echelon, but nevertheless belongs to a different order of existence. Combat changes the young man’s nature whether it renders him victim or killer; it also changes the nature of the landscape on which the exchange takes place. Given Schögraben’s political significance—the last Coalition victory before the defeat at Austerlitz and the eventual dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire—the Rostov’s private experience of liminality echoes the battle’s historical meaning. This liminality—both individual, and collective, both cultural and geographical—informs much war literature. For Tolstoy’s young Hussar, it produces a physiological response, a “keenness of impression” and “glamour” (116) impossible outside of combat, and a sublime, pleasurable terror at the possibility of death or murder. This conviction that the battlefield belongs to a different order of experience, inaccessible to those who have not shared it—dubbed “combat Gnosticism” by the critic James Campbell—dominated many representations of war, whether in Tennyson’s “The Charge of the Light Brigade” (1854), Henry Newbolt’s “Vitaï Lampada” (1892), or Wilfred Owen’s “Dulce et Decorum Est” (1920). In many cases combat literally transforms the political identity of active combatants, particularly when they are wounded, as in the case of the French Foreign Legion, where “France has adopted its legionnaires, awarding them—and their children—French nationality, conditionally and upon request, after three years service” (Varin 65). The policy of *Français par le sang versé* is idealistic, but often limited by race in practice, particularly for soldiers from France’s North African colonies. Consider also the promise in *Henry V*’s St Crispin’s Day speech, where the “happy few” (4.3.59) combatants of Agincourt are bound in a brotherhood that transcends rank by reason of their shared experience on the battlefield.

democratic vigour and national defence, as well as changing military formations; the mass armies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries required widespread support from—and the bodies of—the nation-state’s male citizens. For popular historian Leo Braudy, the era of the citizen-soldier is one in which “military service [is] the prime form of masculine citizenship” (246). In Canada, this figure was established and consolidated during the defensive volunteer actions during the War of 1812, the Fenian Raids of the late 1860s, and the North West Rebellion, and found its ultimate expression in the mass enlistment of Autumn, 1914. Along with mass armies, colonial actions, and rapidly evolving military technologies, the nineteenth century also saw the rationalization of war, as witnessed by the treaties and declarations governing legal military practice.⁸

The trauma of the battlefield disrupts a soldier’s private relationship with memory; battlefield commemoration reflects that dislocation on a communal scale, suggesting that a battle transfigures not only its combatants, but also the earth on which they fight. Lampman, like many of the writers in the following chapters, belongs to an English literary tradition that presents the battlefield as a figure of transformation for both soldiers and communities. As it was in Tolstoy’s *Schöngrabern*, the Canadian battlefields described in this dissertation are liminal, homosocial, and separated from the every day life of the community. Though soldiers die *for* their nations, the battlefield remains

⁸ In the same era, *The Oxford Manual* (1880) codified how war ought to be carried out by civilized, nineteenth-century nations; it was one of the early international documents regarding the ethical and legal practice of war in the era of *realpolitik*. Rather than invoking right intention or right authority, and defining Just War in the Augustinian terms, the Manual frames violence as the natural and inevitable consequence of the nation-state as a cultural form. Its first sentence rejects the possibility of enforcing peace in favour of regulating war:

War holds a great place in history, and it is not to be supposed that men will soon give it up—In spite of the protests which it arouses and the horror which it inspires—because it appears to be the only possible issue of disputes which threaten the existence of States, their liberty, their vital interests (“Preface” *The Oxford Manual*)

irreconcilable with its domestic life, as combat veterans are distinct from civilians even when the former are repatriated, and as the site of violence becomes a national park, separated by the apparatus of memory from the land that surrounds it.⁹

Despite the persuasive power of the state's monumental history, the separation between civil landscape and battlefield park is necessarily more porous than such structures suggest. Despite the primacy of male, uniformed citizenship, war cannot be isolated from the society that wages it, and battles require a huge network of support, both practical and moral, in both combat and commemoration. Though there seems to be an existential line between living and dead, between the Third Coalition and the French Empire, Schöngrabern can not be isolated from its history, any more than the Long Sault can be separated from Ville Marie, or Daulac from the Iroquois he fought, and the settlers he defended.

The battlefield remains as an "affective kernel" (42) in Lefebvre's words, the site and idea around which a community can coalesce, where real events are reconfigured, revised, re-imagined, remembered. An appealing and fictional Canadian story emerges at these sites, from the Long Sault to Vimy Ridge, one that describes a trajectory from

⁹ More specifically, when war appears in English poetry after the First World War, it is most often as a point of dislocation, whether the battlefield serves as a spatial correlative of the surviving soldier's trauma, and from which he rarely escapes, or more generally as an articulation in shared history. War, such poetry suggests, is also a thin red line between the past and the present. In Philip Larkin's "MCMXIV" (1964) 1914 remains as an absolute articulation between the past and the present, and between rural idylls and industrial slaughter. "Never such innocence," Larkin says of the war's original moment, "Never before or since, / As changed itself to past / Without a word" (25 - 28). The inescapable space of violence also persists in the domestic world, as in "Dust as we Are," from *Wolfwatching* (1989), Ted Hughes' meditation on his father's First World War experiences. The poem describes an emotional and familial inheritance rooted in combat, as the poem's child-speaker is "filled / with [his father's] knowledge" (34 - 35), combat being "soul's food" (37) to him. In the same collection, "For the Duration" describes combat as the defining moment to which his father—and by extension his whole household—returns nightly in dreams. "I could hear you" the speaker says, "No man's land still crying and burning / Inside our house, and you climbing again / Out of the trench" (42 - 44).

exploration, through settlement, defence, to unity and belonging. Writing in the nineteenth century, Renan identified the same link between military and national histories: “a nation is above all a dynasty, representing an earlier conquest, one which was first of all accepted, and then forgotten by the mass of the people” (12). In his most famous formulation, Renan parallels the dual amnesia and remembering with a dual preoccupation with memory and the military past in the present day. The narrower perspectives of the individual citizen must co-exist with the broad, collective narratives of belonging and community. As the narratives of nationalism oscillate between the community’s heroic past and its utopian future so it is also continually re-made in the community’s present. Renan describes the nation as

a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future. It presupposes a past; it is summarized, however, in the present by a tangible fact, namely, consent, the clearly expressed desire to continue a common life. A nation’s existence is, if you will pardon the metaphor, a daily plebiscite (19)

Renan’s argument puts conquest at the heart and origin of nationalism. In time of war his notion of a daily plebiscite raises and equips an army, and in time of invasion, it mobilizes civilians in the *levée en masse*,¹⁰ the conscription of an entire society into war-work as soldiers, or in the production and distribution of goods. In time of peace it finds

¹⁰ The Committee of Public Safety declared the first *levée en masse* during France’s revolutionary Reign of Terror, on 23 August 1793. “From this moment until that in which the enemy shall have been driven from the soil of the Republic,” the first Article reads, “all Frenchmen are in permanent requisition for the service of the armies. The young men shall go to battle; the married men shall forge arms and transport provisions; the women shall make tents and clothing and shall serve in the hospitals; the children shall turn old linen into lint; the aged shall betake themselves to the public places in order to arouse the courage of the warriors and preach the hatred of kings and the unity of the Republic” (*Levée en Masse* n.p.).

its expression in remembrance. In either circumstance, violence and consent are central to the cultural form called nationalism, suggesting that the popular distinction between the nation's civilian and military spheres is fiction, and elides the continuity between a nation's social, cultural, and economic identity and the military fiat that confirms its sovereignty.

Making a similar argument in *Society Must Be Defended*, Michel Foucault uses the definition of "Nation" within the *Encyclopédie* to describe a human community, its shared territory and frontiers, as well as its shared ethical agreements (142), suggesting that the nation's people cannot be disentangled from its shared beliefs, its state apparatus, or its location. The association between the construction of national community and its military context continues through *Society Must Be Defended*, identifying the structures of government with the authority of conquest, whether its origins are in the Roman occupation, in the Frankish recovery of Gaul, the Gothic destruction of Rome, or the Norman invasion of Britain. Each time it is newly-imagined, the French nation begins with a successful invasion, and sovereignty is the inheritance of victory long after the fact. Foucault goes so far as to

invert Clausewitz's proposition and say that politics is the continuation of war by other means... power relations, as they function in a society like ours are essentially anchored in a certain relationship of force that was established in and through war at a given historical moment that can be historically specified... Politics, in other words, sanctions and reproduces the disequilibrium of forces manifested in war. (15 -16)

The last battle, then, does not end the conflict, but transfigures it.¹¹ The effect is most obvious in explicitly imperial conflicts—at Quebec and Batoche, for the purposes of this dissertation—but it extends to commemoration more generally. If war is politics by other means, then official commemoration is less the resolution of past violence in the present, than its persistence in a new form. Consider that Donald Creighton opens *The Commercial Empire of the St Lawrence with the Plains of Abraham*:

When, in the course of a September day in 1759, the British made themselves the real masters of the rock of Quebec, an event of apparently unique importance occurred in the history of Canada...For Europe the conquest was the conclusion of a drama; for America it was merely the curtain of an act. On the one hand, it meant the final retirement of France from the politics of northern North America; on the other, it meant the regrouping of Americans and the reorganization of American economies. (1)

The sutures that bind Canada together in the aftermath of violence are productive, “great vortices of energy and power,” according to Marshall McLuhan, “that can spiral and erupt everywhere” (80). Commemorative spaces are valuable not only as an iteration of official narrative, but also as sites in which the past is contested contestation, where the nature of the community’s past continues to be debated. National commemoration is far

¹¹ Abraham Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address” is a near-perfect example of Foucault’s inversion. Lincoln’s eulogy confirms a new sort of community, framed as one more articulation in the ongoing revelation of freedom that is America’s history. In his words, the living “can not dedicate... consecrate [or] hallow... this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract.” The battle, complete, demands of the living not only that they remember, but also that the battlefield’s labour continue in a different, civilian form: “It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced” (“The Gettysburg Address”). At Gettysburg the battlefield is productive in terms parallel with Foucault’s contention that state politics preserves the outcome of the last battle, with “a new birth of freedom.”

more mutable than the stone inscriptions suggest, filled with the possibility of counter-histories and new interpretations of ancient events. Monuments may seem beyond the dialectics of history—sepulchral and absolute—but monuments also possess their own histories. The battlefield park preserves a particular version of Canada, but it exists as a trace of contestation and debate in itself. The battlefield park, after all, is powerful because it seems to disrupt time's unidirectional flow, containing an enduring piece of the past in the present day, as well as a pledge regarding the community's future.

The mathematician and game theorist Anatol Rapoport introduces his 1968 translation of Karl von Clausewitz's *On War*¹² (1832) with a brief summary of three philosophies of militarism. He associates the political view of militarism with von Clausewitz's opus, which imagines militarism as an instrument of politics; in contrast, the "cataclysmic" view of militarism imagines that war is innate and inevitable in human nature, and therefore a permanent condition of human society. The third view Rapoport describes is the eschatological, where war is terminal and transformative, essential to a teleological view of history, whether the on-going revelation of divine truth, or a Marxist dialectic, or a "war to end all wars" heralding millennia of peace. The first two conceptions of war apply in *real politik*, where war may appear as both an instrument of international policy and as a disaster to those in the line of conflict. Commemorative practice in Canada, however, favours the eschatological view. The Plains of Abraham, Queenston, Batoche, and Vimy are all framed as moments and locations of destiny, their legacy a secure frontier, and future peace. The progressive national narrative that finds its

¹² Von Clausewitz's work is a codification of Napoleonic military practice, and a prescient description of the relationship between the Nation-State as a political form, and the industrialized militarism that would dominate the following centuries.

origins in Wolfe is revisited in Queenston's York Militia, by Ontario's defenders during the Fenian Raids, and in the volunteers on Vimy Ridge. While commemoration at the two hundredth anniversary of Queenston Heights argued that the world's longest undefended border is the "true" memorial to the war of 1812—that is, a war commemorated paradoxically by peace—the eschatological promise is rarely fulfilled. The Canadian regiments who placed their colours on Wolfe's tomb in 1916¹³ died on Vimy Ridge the next year, as in later generations they died on Sicily, or on Cyprus, or in Kandahar, despite wars that end war.

The French school of history *nouvelle histoire*, rejects both the progressive or teleological approach that was once popularly known as "whig history," and the appealing meta-narratives of Marx, finding its most popular practitioner in Pierre Nora. Nora's vast project, *Les Lieux des Memoire* (1984 – 1992), addresses the past's *mentalitiés*, imagining earlier eras, not as stepping stones to the present, but as places of difference that nevertheless contain revelations regarding the shape that present-day culture takes. *Nouvelle histoire*, then, rejects exactly the kind of eschatological history that contemporary military commemoration produces. Canada's battlefield history has been framed by the teleologies of the nation. Between Confederation and 1936 these sites of memory presented a distinctly teleological history, which begins with Wolfe and ends with national "maturity" in the present day's battles, whether in Canada's North West, in South Africa, or on Vimy Ridge. Nora's approach to the history of monumentality resists

¹³ Herbert Gustav Schmalz's painting "Banners of Empire" (1916) illustrates this moment, making the sentiment even more explicit with a caption that reads: "Flags of Canadian Regiments placed on General Wolfe's Tomb, in Westminster Abby [sic] while the men are fighting in France." Emily Warren's "Placing the Canadian Colours on Wolfe's Monument in Westminster Abbey" (1919) dramatizes the same event.

the pervasive message at the heart of so much of Canada's military commemoration, which celebrates the Dominion's origins and its destiny, renders Ottawa's Pacific dream inevitable, and promises that shared memory brings cohesion in the face of multiple solitudes.

Les lieux des memoire are sites in which public memory intersects with space, a particular manifestation of history that belongs to the discontinuities of the industrialized west. In this formulation, the site of memory—the *lieu*—is what remains of the *milieux de memoire* that guided pre-industrial society, by which he means the “authentic,” unconscious repetition of ceremony, represented in his specific French context by the *ancien régime*. In Nora's argument the nation-state exists in the era of history—that is, the conscious, rationalized narratives of the archive and the museum rather than the unconscious, “natural” communal narratives of memory. In Nora's France, civic ceremony replaces “authentic” village life in the pre-industrial idyll of France's past, suggesting that a preoccupation with tradition only exists when citizens no longer live in a world guided by tradition, and the invented continuities of the nation exist to hide that discontinuity. For this reason, Nora argues, *les lieux*

are fundamentally remains... They make their appearance by virtue of the deritualization of our world, producing, manifesting, establishing, constructing, decreeing and maintaining by artifice and by will a society deeply absorbed in its own transformation and renewal. ...Museums, archives, cemeteries, festivals, anniversaries, treaties, depositions, monuments, sanctuaries, fraternal orders—these are the boundary stones of another age, illusions of eternity...they mark the rituals of a society without ritual. (12)

Nora identifies this historical consciousness and the concomitant loss of lived memory with what he calls the “scaffolding” of memory: the archive, recording, the completed collection. That is, living after memory, in the realm of history, the contemporary nation-state is obsessed with the detritus of recollection and with re-assembling the past, so that it may be collectively preserved rather than privately remembered. This “scaffolding” extends to the contemporary re-enactments, costumed actors at historical sites as well as museums, databases and annotation.

Significant differences in settler history mean that one cannot import Nora’s concepts whole into a study of Canada’s war memorials and their accompanying texts.¹⁴ However, his well-established approach is helpful, as is the language he developed to describe the relationship between history, memory and place, and to interrogate these sites and texts with his terms and preoccupations in mind: the tension between a rationalized history and a fluid, responsive memory witnessed by the *milieu* and *lieu*. While Nora argues that contemporary western society has already been exiled from the “natural” order of the *milieu*, the *lieu* is still far more flexible than its monuments

¹⁴ In *Heroines and History: Representations of Madeleine de Verchères and Laura Secord* (2002) Colin M. Coates and Cecilia Morgan qualify their use of Nora’s critical work, and unsettle the relationship between *milieux* and *lieux* that he describes. As a colonial culture Canada is more distantly separated from the medieval cultural forms that are supposed to be foundational to the nation-state: it is impossible to pinpoint a moment when the Anglo-Canadian experience moved from the agrarian idyll of Nora’s *milieux* to the mediated experience of history that is his *lieux*. The conscious invention of Canadian history has always been built with the scaffolding of the archive, in the voice of the historian. As Coates and Morgan write, memory and local tradition had no legal status in a place where written deeds and contracts preceded most Euro-Canadian settlement. Folkloric stories circulated, of course, acquiring layers of social commentary leading far away from the original ‘facts’ of the instance... it is not possible in the Canadian context, as in Nora’s work, to construct a narrative of a ‘pure’ Euro-Canadian living memory being tainted and overcome by the work of the historians. (7)

Written history has been a part of the Canadian landscape since Europeans first settled, a reminder that there is no un-mediated *völkisch* past to which settlers can return for an “authentic” sense of Canadian culture. Canadian ceremonies of remembrance are conscious inventions rather than the “spontaneous” ceremonies that are supposed to mark the *milieu*, and as such they are open to revision, which means that the battlefields described in this dissertation have shifted in meaning before, and are likely to keep changing in time with the culture that values them.

suggest. Many of these monuments associate their subjects with the landscape's sublimity: Brock and Niagara Falls, Wolfe and the Heights of Quebec, as well as the Astronomical Meridian that marks the site of his death. The association between heroic soldier and geographical feature suggests that battlefields are not the product of human history, but have been waiting for their generals since creation, and now gesture forever backward to the moment of battle. While the idyll of gardens and wide, treed boulevards seem to promise wholeness and pastoral resurrection, this is, of course, a carefully constructed fiction of arborists, sculptors, and landscape architects. And—most important for this dissertation—those who deal in text, the poets and inscriptionists who tell citizens how to read the landscape in which they dwell.

In contrast to *nouvelle histoire*, preoccupied as it is with the layers of representation that collect around the past, military geography is an applied discipline based on the pragmatic application of geographical knowledge and technique to military problems. It emerged as a discipline in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in concert with European exploration and imperial expansion.¹⁵ In the early nineteenth seventies the French geographer Yves Lacoste founded the critical journal *Hérodote* and in 1976 he wrote the essay “la géographie ça sert d’abord à faire la guerre” identifying the discipline with both war and empire. Lacoste links the representation of space with its control, whether through external imperial expansion, direct military conflict, or the many varieties of imperial action that take place within a nation’s own borders.

¹⁵ In the United Kingdom the integration of geography and military science was never formal; however, the Royal Society’s work on navigation served the British Navy as well as the East India Company’s Fleets. The link between disciplines was institutionalized in America with the School of History, Geography and Ethics at WestPoint, founded in 1818. In keeping with their British origins, the Canadian Royal Military College at Kingston does not have a dedicated Department of Geography.

While Lacoste's aphorism inaugurated critical geopolitics, military geography itself remained largely untouched by critical or political questions, being intent instead on the practical creation and dissemination of knowledge regarding the earth's human and natural resources. Contemporary textbooks of military geography tend toward either description or a kind of geographical determinism, where a nation's "global setting" becomes a way of explaining frontier locations, northern and southern power differential and global economic disparities. The elision of politics is not only academic, of course, since military action is necessarily secretive, because it is concerned with national security and the control of information, which overflows the borders of the traditional nation-state. The self-definition of military geography as an applied science further elides the link between geographical technologies and communal violence. In keeping with its practical history, classical military geography presumes that the discipline's work is the transparent representation of reality, distinct from its use in the theatre of war. If classical geography stresses the objectivity of the geographer's perspective—whether the God's-eye-view of the map, or the Cold War's surveillance satellites—the new critical military geography reminds its students that this perspective is situated and incomplete and rejects the illusion of transparency in geographic representations of space.

In keeping with Lefebvre's precept that power and space produce one another in collaboration, Woodward specifically identifies an emerging discipline—the "geographies of militarism"—that examines, "the shaping of civilian space and social relations by military objectives, rationales and structures, either as part of the deliberate extension of military influence into civilian spheres of life and the prioritizing of military institutions, or as a byproduct of those processes" ("From Military Geographies to

Militarism's Geographies" 721). Woodward explicitly locates representation in this matrix, pinpointing the intersection of human geography and literary study, arguing that,

we should consider here the cultural geographies of military representation.

Representation, a social practice and strategy through which meanings are constituted and communicated, is unavoidable when dealing with militarism and military activities. Armed Forces, and defence institutions, take great care in producing and promoting specific portrayals of themselves and their activities in order to legitimize and justify their activities in places, spaces, environments and landscapes. There is a growing body of work that attends to these representational practices in order to tease out the narratives which are produced to explain military power and presence. ("From Military Geographies to Militarism's Geographies" 729)

Woodward contends that militarism's influence is both foundational and elided. This, in turn, suggests that Canada's military context can be seen to inform not only its borders and the location of its cities, but also the way citizens imagine its landscapes in both maps and memorials. However, the problem in any critique of the intersection of war, geography, and memory lies in locating oneself—and one's private experiences—in the history of war as it informs the spaces of nationalism. This dissertation addresses the myriad ways by which our culture teaches us to imagine our communities, and landscapes, in these terms. Such structures of public memory represent the state's official history, but they also become means of contestation, occasionally violent and often passionate: battlefield commemoration contains the possibility of its own revision, of new histories and communities arising from a contested past. In Quebec's twentieth-century

history such contestation plays a central and public role in recurring uses made of commemorative spaces, whether official or unofficial. Consider recurring FLQ graffiti one can often see on the walls of Quebec's citadel, visible from the Promenade des Gouverneurs, or the stubborn, spray-painted "X" on the Wolfe Memorial in the park already mentioned above. In May, 1963, the FLQ bombed the monument to Dollard des Ormeaux in Montreal, an event dramatized in the 2014 Québécois film *Corbo*. In both cases, vandalism takes its meaning, in part, from the contrast between the political aim of the graffiti and the site's commemorative intentions.

Between 1806 and 1808 Jean-Baptiste Duberger built a meticulous scale model of Quebec, the city and the citadel and some of the surrounding farmland, as it existed before the War of 1812. Half of the original model is on display in the Fortifications of Quebec National Historical Site; the other half of the model was deliberately destroyed during its time at the Royal Artillery Museum at Woolwich, England because of its enormous size. The whole model was initially presented to the English museum on its completion, and the surviving half was repatriated a century later, for the Quebec centenary of 1908. It was charmingly—if clumsily—restored by one Father O'Leary in 1909-1910; O'Leary did not possess Duberger's grasp of proportion nor scale. The model places its observers in a god-like position above the landscape, taking in the human and natural resources with a glance, and reproducing the perspective of the map-maker, allowing them to conceive Quebec's strategic significance at the entrance to North America, as well as allowing them to grasp the whole of Wolfe's campaign, and Montcalm's defence. The elevated, far-reaching gaze of Duberger's work represents, also, the site's multiple military, imperial, and political meanings, from the consolidation

of the British Empire, to the control of the *Canadien* low ground by the British garrison of the heights (*Mnemographia Canadensis* 95). At the same time, the model represents a very particular relationship between the military gaze and the work of settlement, where the military engineer's work foregrounds the link between a settled landscape, a militarized landscape, and a landscape represented in aesthetic terms.¹⁶

This combination of settlement, military meaning, and landscape aesthetics are unified in the military-aesthetic appeal of high ground. While the view from high ground has specific tactical associations in wartime, it also has a long history as a poetic convention in peace as well. Canada's colonial literary history, with its topographical long-poems are associated with the view from high ground, just as the Quebec model thematized the all-encompassing gaze of the strategist and the poet. Such elevated perspectives were a means of assimilating new spaces into the imagined nation *and* into its emerging literature. In *Canadian Architexts* D.M.R. Bentley describes the role that high ground plays in integrating space into the aesthetic and imaginative life of the emerging nation. He argues that early topographical poems—such as Thomas Cary's *Abram's Plains* (1789), Adam Hood Burwell's *Talbot Road: A Poem* (1818) and Charles G.D. Roberts' "Tantramar Revisited" (1883)—the first associated with a colonial battlefield and the second referencing the War of 1812—thematize the link between the

¹⁶ While Duberger's model combines military, geographical, commemorative, and aesthetic perspectives in a remarkable and powerful object, elsewhere the military gaze has a more practical and concrete influence on Canada's civil and cultural life. James Cook charted the mouth of the St Lawrence when he was Master of the *Pembroke*, part of the fleet that carried Wolfe to Quebec in 1759; the Royal Canadian Engineers have been at work surveying Canada since their creation in the nineteenth century and they were responsible for mapping much of the Arctic, working on projects like Canol and the Alaska Highway; a howitzer memorial in Roger's Pass reminds passers by of the Canadian Armed Forces' contribution to avalanche control in the Canadian Rockies. Working knowledge of the Canadian landscape has often been the product of military technology and labour.

seeing subject, the landscape the poet sees, and the poem that represents that landscape to his community. In Bentley's argument, such works produce both private and shared identities as functions of location. A view from the high ground becomes one of the most explicit articulations of this "place-based personal and cultural identity" (171) in part because it grants the poet-seer the perspective of the mapmaker. That is, the viewer is able to make sense of one's landscape in a single glance from above, rather than patching that understanding together from the fragmented prospects of the valley.

According to Bentley the first of these "watch towers of nationalism" (170) is in the upper city of Quebec. During the nineteenth century Queenston Heights—high ground made even higher by a series of looming memorials to General Brock—became the prime viewpoint from which one saw and imagined Canada. Brock's towers link the act of looking over a landscape, from above, with the possession of that landscape, as well as enforcing in its visitors a national gaze: the significant sight line from the park at the base of the tower directs our eyes toward the Niagara River and, particularly, the opposite American shore. The singular perspective from the tower allows the settler to integrate the landscape as a whole, not only topographically but also historically. From the memorial tower one sees the division between Canadian and American soil, but the site is significant for its British Imperial history, meaning that one does not only see Canadian territory from the top of the tower, or from Quebec Hill, but a piece of the Empire.

Seeing and comprehending the landscape below allows the immigrant to become the citizen, and experience citizenship in terms of space and—in the case of Queenston—military geography. In Bentley's words, "looking on and over a locale and taking it up

and in were and are key components of the phenomenological dialectic through which people consolidate their connection to place and achieve the condition of dwelling” (171). To apply Bentley’s arguments regarding the literary to the military gaze, “looking on and over” a landscape is the first act of the strategist, whether “in actuality” or “on paper” or—if we are to extend this model to the present day—via the electronic representations that dominate current conceptions of battlespace. Further, the creative genius of the tactician lies in a sudden and totalizing insight, the *coup d’oeil* or striking glance that takes “up and in” the landscape before him, and imagines it deployed in battle and held in peace. This glance—this military gaze—mobilizes vision, rewrites terrain in military terms, weaponizing perspective as the poet aestheticizes it. These glances are not identical, but they share a preoccupation with landscape, insight and its representation. In both cases vision leads to the re-interpretation of space, whether it is the poet imagining “home,” or the tactician seeing and renaming the landscape in military terms.¹⁷

The military-aesthetic appeal of high ground recurs in Canadian poetry and commemoration, militarism’s geographies influence not only the strategic location of a nation’s cities, borders and military bases, but also the way a citizen *knows* the landscape. The military’s representational technologies are continuous with its military epistemologies, which assume that to see is to know and to know is to control. In the case of representation they also assume the objectivity of that knowledge: the landscape seen

¹⁷ These terms are a military technology. In *War* Gwynne Dyer describes the translation of living subjects into tactical objects as a function of terminology; that is, military training and technology colonize the distance between a weapon’s object and its subject, rendering the opposite side’s soldiers inanimate, or sub human. He writes, “gunners fire at grid references they cannot see; submarine crews fire torpedoes at ‘ships’ ... pilots launch their missiles at ‘targets’” (*War*), describing the language and technologies that turns “killing” into “military science.” Military technologies—grid references, radar, satellite images—re-define people and spaces, and the distance between combatants makes that insulating mediation possible.

and known is represented transparently by the map, the model, or the Geographical Information System. Western militarism's preoccupation with the visual also means that to see and represent a place is to control it, if only by one's foreknowledge of the site's strategic resources and weaknesses. Any further work—as engineer, or architect, artist, or writer—on the Canadian landscape must engage with the way that landscape has been mapped and organized. While militarism will never be the sole influence on the landscape's representations, its influence stretches beyond Canadian Forces Bases or testing ranges, and includes sites whose military meaning is historic rather than active, like Queenston Heights or Batoche.

Classical Military Geography theorizes three different scales for action: the strategic, the operational and the tactical. The first describes the largest scale for both organizing and deploying military resources, as well as the aims of such deployment. The last describes the particular conditions of a specific engagement: both the resources at hand and the physical details of the landscape in which these resources are deployed. The Operational level links the Strategic and the Tactical, because it is concerned with the movement and administration of resources in service of the larger, strategic goals. To these three official scales, might be added a fourth degree of magnitude: that of the private soldier in action in the immediate range of combat, that is, the battlefield. To borrow a phrase from the popular historian Donald E. Graves, “a fighting soldier's war is rarely more than ten yards wide” (14). Each of these four categories denotes a different perspective: from the godlike view of a small-scaled continental map, to the human eye, six feet off the ground in a ten-yard space. Each category produces a different kind of knowledge, situated in a different context, from the private, to the hemispheric, from the

private perspective of the individual soldier to the global point of view of the surveillance satellite. These perspectives—the global and the personal, the local and the national—intersect in Canada’s culture of memory in both the private lyric or an official monument. Whether one limits war literature to the texts of combat, or extends it to include the various social and cultural facets of militarism that Woodward identifies, the problem of these multiple, conflicting perspectives persists in representation: private and professional, local and global, historian and mourner, citizen and soldier.

Canada’s nineteenth-century war literature is preoccupied with the strategic and tactical, eliding the private scale while preoccupied with conflicts that were spatially or historically distant from central Canadian writers. For writers of the Confederation era eager to claim cultural “maturity” by means of battlefield baptism, the Boer War (1899 – 1902) or the Nile expedition (1884 – 1885) furnished opportunities to represent a new Canadian military nationalism. W.D. Lighthall’s *Songs of the Great Dominion* (1892) frames post-Confederation Canadian poetry with the claim that “Canadians are the descendants of armies, officers and men, and every generation of them has stood up to battle” (xvii), matching literary maturity with war. In the same era military history became a staple of Canadian literature, with Sarah Curzon turning to Laura Secord, Gilbert Parker to Quebec, Charles Mair to Tecumseh, and Lampman to Daulac for suitable material. The narratives and memorials established to represent earlier conflicts were revised to represent new, global wars during and after the First World War. By the middle of the twentieth century the literature that represented war thematized the tension between the god-like strategist and the ten-yard-space of the private soldier, whether by the tension between private experience and public history, between frontline and rear

echelon, or between home- and battle-front, all conventions of war literature after 1918.¹⁸ The literature of war is often and problematically imagined exclusively as the literature of combat, an assumption this dissertation intends to unsettle, instead illuminating the continuities between soldiers and civilians, between war and memory.

3. A Sense of Place

*Again the guns disturbed the hour,
Roaring their readiness to avenge,
As far inland as Stourton Tower,
And Camelot, and starlit Stonehenge.*

Thomas Hardy. "Channel Firing." 1914.

In Vancouver's Stanley Park the nine o'clock gun—British Naval issue ca. 1816—has been setting shipboard chronometers and local watches since it was first fired in 1898. Like Halifax's noon gun, a daily feature since 1749 and the noon guns in Hong Kong and Cape Town, the old twelve-pounder does the work of church bells, synchronizing those who hear it, and so establishing shared time as well as a geographical community defined by the auditory range of its roar. The difference, of course, is that the community forged every evening at 9 o'clock is created, not by doctrinal time, but by military fiat, a daily reminder that the space of Canada's larger community is similarly defined by military

¹⁸ Canadian examples include Alden Nowlan's "Foye Buckner of Hainsesville, New Brunswick, Recalls His Service with the Connaught Light Infantry 1914 – 1918" (1967), which begins "[t]hey told us afterwards we'd been in France" (1). The sense of contradiction between the formally epitaphic title—complete with years, names and locations in capitals—and the personal and disoriented perspective of the poem itself is a recurring trope in mid-twentieth-century Canadian war poems. To return to Gustafson's phrase, while the title belongs to the "hopeless giant alphabet" (3) on the "great stones above the general dead" (4), the poem belongs to a smaller alphabet, functioning like graffiti on a monument, an alternative commentary on official history, just as the spray-painted "X" on the Wolfe memorial reminds visitors of the FLQ's more hostile relationship with the Plains of Abraham.

technologies, whether representational, geographic, or surveillant. A piece of Napoleonic naval technology allows a present-day citizen to locate herself in Vancouver's time-space; a century of nightly reiteration defines the civil landscape, linking present-day evenings with the city's and the Empire's past.

It is my argument that the structures of military commemoration do similar work, rendering Canada's history in space, and allowing present-day citizens access to that history through an aesthetic experience that twins war and contemplation, private experience with collective ritual, the landscape's beauty with its military meaning. Citizens participate in the rituals of memory as audience or celebrant, sacrifice or mourner, or simply as passers-by who glimpse the Brock Monument from the village of Queenston, or walk in the shadow of Walter Allward's South African War memorial on University Avenue in Toronto. Calls to memory permeate Canada's substance in an archive that includes cenotaphs and stained-glass windows, calligraphic casualty lists on chapel walls, inscribed plaques, park benches, memorial gymnasiums and community halls. Words from "In Flanders Fields" appear on the ten dollar note, on elementary school colouring sheets covered in poppies, or the French ridge held in perpetuity for Canadian People by the Government of France.

In this version of Canada, its history is punctuated by military engagements, its eras delineated by 1812 and 1914, by the distance between Vimy Ridge and Operation Attention in Kabul, between the Yeoman Militia of Southern Ontario or Lester Pearson's Blue Berets. This is not unusual, given the place of originary violence in western nation-states from Culloden through Juno Beach, from Kosovo Field and Agincourt to Suvla Bay. It is not only that the nation-state presents history in terms of military action that

resolves in peace, but that these terms also influence the way we organize and represent space outside the particular point of engagement.

Epitaphs and elegies can also serve as testaments, where present-day speakers voice the dead as witnesses, weighing the inheritance of land or identity and distributing it among the living. In this version of history the battlefield park becomes the mechanism of a kind of entail, binding the rights of ownership to the Canadian state by reason of military occupation and the blood of soldiers mixed with its soil. The continuity between violence, territory, and inheritance is literalized by the intersection of stone and text that is the battlefield memorial. The imagined Canada established in late-nineteenth-century texts about Queenston Heights, Batoche or Quebec is continuous with the military technologies that produced that nation in space: the maps; the citizen-army or militia; the canals, roads and railways that allow troops and resources to travel across the country; the boundary that marks its southern limit; the locations of its cities. In turn, battlefield memorials reproduce an imagined Canada in culture as battlefields once enforced the geographical space of the nation.

Woodward argues that militarism creates a carefully-policed division between military and civilian landscapes, an impermeable barrier between the battlefield of Daulac's defence and the frail-walled town for which he died. The soldier is defined by his presence within the battle's time/space, by his initiation into that landscape of transformation, which changes both his identity, and the meaning of the landscape around him. This is the trick of militarism: it hides the link between war and peace by imagining the battlefield as a different sort of space, one of sacrifice, and the transformation of power. This dissertation's four chapters seek to trace the construction of Canadian

landscapes and subjects through four historical battlefields. While it is beyond the scope of this project to address each site through all lenses, motifs recur across them. The relationship between community and fortification that dominates the chapter on Quebec also informs the rifle pits dug by Métis soldiers at Batoche. The military-aesthetic value of high ground holds true at Queenston and at Vimy, and even in the stratospheric viewing platforms of the Cold War satellite.

The first chapter surveys military commemoration on the heights of Quebec after the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759, addressing the relationship between the pastoral of the memorial park, the old fortifications, and the experience visitors are supposed to have of the site's beauty and military history. This chapter establishes the role that military commemoration plays in confirming Anglophone settler's rights to the territory. I also argue that the battlefield park functions as a kind of elegiac landscape, a place of memory and consolation in Sacks's terms, associated with inheritance as well as grief, positioning present day visitors as chief mourners and heirs to Wolfe.

The second chapter takes on the Battle of Queenston Heights during the War of 1812, with particular reference to the role the battle places in the creation of a local Canadian defence force. This is the narrative J.L. Granatstein calls the "Militia Myth" in *Canada's Army: Waging War and Keeping the Peace* (2002), that is, the persistent contention that an local, unprofessional defence force was provoked into being by American aggression, giving rise to a distinctly Canadian society. As a structure of citizenship, the Militia Myth intersects with the gendered discourses of nineteenth-century domesticity and patriotic maternal feminism, and the battlefield becomes a locus for the construction of a new kind of Anglo-Canadian subject. It is particularly significant

in the poetry of Sarah Curzon in her poetry, and in historical romances by the authors like Agnes Maule Machar, and William Wilfred Campbell. This chapter argues that the legacy of the war is not only the 49th parallel as an imaginary limit to Canadian space, but also a distinctly Canadian family, produced by war *and* marriage.

The third chapter approaches the limits of classical military commemorative tradition, through the Battle of Batoche and its uncomfortable—but popular—place within Canadian history. Batoche's meaning has been the least stable of the four battlefields here explored, and the texts that represent it are equally uneven, from imperial accounts that describe the uncivilized Métis revolt, to contemporary works that celebrate Riel's original and utopian project in the North West. As a site of both imperial shame, and anti-colonial resistance, the battlefield is a site of productive contestation, a touchstone for Métis nationalism, western separatism, and utopian multi-culturalism long after the end of open hostilities. Because Batoche stands a little outside the discourses of military commemoration as they have been established in Canada, it is a productive place from which to interrogate those discourses, and to imagine alternative forms for public memory.

The fourth chapter addresses Vimy Ridge, a site that is, perhaps, the most popular of the four battlefields, and certainly the most often reproduced and most instantly recognizable in Canada's popular culture. It comes at the end and apex of the classical military commemorative traditions, part of the mass movement to commemorate not only the 66 000 Canadian dead, nor only the 11 000 dead whose names are inscribed on the monument, but also the millions of allied dead. Death on that sort of scale necessarily required the modification of commemorative forms, and after Vimy, the Mass graves of

earlier conflicts—whether in the Aux Braves cemetery of Quebec City, or the nine Métis men buried together in the graveyard at Batoche—give way to tombstones, and the recitation of dead men’s names.

The narratives established there—of national unity and sacrifice—pre-exist the battle, and emerge in the Militia Myth, in the celebration of Canada as a spectacle of bodies in uniform familiar from the scenography at Quebec, but they find their most perfect expression on the Vimy Memorial, and the recurring celebration of Canada as a community represented through aesthetic experience of landscape—especially high ground—to allow civilians access to that imagined community. Green parks, following on violence, is consolation, but so too is the community produced in the aftermath of battle.

CHAPTER ONE: STAGING QUEBEC, 1759

1. Approaching Quebec

*O show us
History the operator, the
Organiser, Time the refreshing river*

W.H. Auden. "Spain 1937." 1937.

Thomas Cary begins *Abram's Plains* (1789), a long-poem about Quebec and the St Lawrence River system, by describing his speaker's own position on the Plains of Abraham thirty years after the battle, using the conventions of the topographical poem to locate his readers in the emergent colony's geography and history. The poem's speaker contemplates his view and arranges the site's political, geographical, and historical landscape around his own position, both his literal location on the heights, and his conceptual centrality to the colony as one who observes and understands its significance. Cary places the Plains of Abraham—and the poet—at Quebec, where he sits and observes the river while "hid in shades," and "court[s] the muse" (2).

These opening lines are careful location-work in the geographical and literary senses, describing the nascent Canadian pastoral that surrounds the speaker, as he claims a still point from which to describe the dynamic natural landscape full of "grazing herds" (12) and "shy songsters" (13). From his position on the Heights, Cary catalogues the human and natural resources of the new colony, as well as the activities that bring its goods to market, and describes them all from the perspective of a free-traveling muse who overlooks the whole region, a familiar convention in eighteenth-century Whig heroic

verse. In contrast to the noise and movement of trade, poetry is produced in stillness, a function of Quebec's centrality to "the empire of the St Lawrence." The Heights of Quebec, whether Cary's open plain or the contemporary battlefield park, is the place from which one sees and imagines Canada.

According to Bentley, Cary accomplishes a number of generic and ideological tasks at this origin for Canadian poetry: he establishes the long poem as a privileged Canadian form; he invokes the "janus-faced"¹⁹ nature of Canadian culture and literature, balancing the dialectics of east and west, coast and interior, old and new worlds on the fulcrum of his perspective; finally, in establishing Quebec as the primary place from which one perceives the Canadian landscape, he confirms the city as a cultural and commercial nexus. In the early hours of Canadian literature *and* commemoration at Quebec, Cary establishes the Plains of Abraham as the keystone in Canadian time and space, its meaning revealed by the poets who describe it. Bentley addresses the dualities of Cary's Quebec in *Mimic Fires*, arguing that Janus is one of the defining figures of early Canadian literature, the twofold god not only of duality, but also of doorways, presiding over articulations in human and divine life, the bridges and thresholds from which one looks forward or backward. Such a reading is particularly useful in understanding Quebec's military and commemorative role, which is entangled with its geography as well as its history.

¹⁹ Bentley associates the river poem, as a form, with Janus and his purview, and Quebec's location further links the city with liminality. The name "Quebec" is derived from "kebec" an Algonquin word that refers to the narrowing of the river, placing Cap Diamant between the Gulf of St Lawrence and the Laurentian river system. Geologically, Quebec is also at the confluence of three different landscapes: the north-western edge of the Appalachians, the southern edge of the Canadian Shield, the eastern edge of the St Lawrence Platform.

This chapter begins with the stillness and peace from which the speaker's voice emerges, a quality that particularly contrasts the fluidity of the poem's subject matter, whether the river, the breeze named "Zephyrus" (9), the colony's heroic, military past or its vigorous, commercial future. In contrast to such movement, the speaker's stillness parallels the stone edifices that confirm Quebec's military and imperial significance: the black Appalachian shale that constitutes Cap Diamant, the limestone walls of the old city, and the sandstone star fort that both guards and polices the city's population, whether indigenous or settler, French or British. If the river poem, like the river, is Janus-faced, deploying dualities to organize and capture the landscape, *la Citadelle* on Cap Diamant is the third element that makes possible the dual perspectives of the river-poem: it is the space of the threshold itself, which provokes the poet and the visitor to think of the past and the future, up- and down-river, interior and coast.

For the first centuries of Quebec's European history, those who held the promontory held the St Lawrence, making Quebec the "Gibraltar of the West"²⁰ and allowing its masters to control the flow of people, goods, information, and armies from one theatre to another. It was the choke-point in the Laurentian thesis,²¹ lying at the

²⁰ The Gibraltar typology for Quebec seems to emerge in the nineteenth century, though according to William Wood, on the night Quebec surrendered "The watchword was... 'Gibraltar,' the symbol of strength" (*The Winning of Canada* 123). The association is often credited to Dickens' *American Notes for General Circulation* (1842) where he describes "The impression made upon the visitor by this Gibraltar of America" including all the elements that will inform writing about Quebec, particularly the *frisson* of both military history and natural grandeur, with "giddy heights; its citadel suspended, as it were, in the air... the splendid views which burst upon the eye at every turn: is at once unique and lasting" (201). In the guidebook for the Tercentenary celebrations in 1908, the anonymous author describes Quebec as "the 'Gibraltar of America' crowned with her frowning battlements" (8). The "Gibraltar" shorthand is popular, however, and invoked in many other places: Key West; Bermuda; Fort Fisher, North Carolina; and Columbus, Kentucky have variously been named the Gibraltar(s) of the west, south and north.

²¹ The Laurentian Thesis emerged as a theory of Canadian history and geography in the middle of the twentieth century in works like Donald Creighton's *The Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence* (1937), and Harold Innis's *The Fur Trade in Canada* (1930). The theory argues that "Canadian economic and

articulation between salt water and fresh, interior and coast, Appalachian highlands and Canadian Shield. Its geographical centrality parallels its historical significance, and in military commemoration it also represents the moment when the Canadian *Ancien Régime* gave way to the British Empire. Quebec, as a fortress and a *lieu de memoire*, is a convenient and accessible shorthand for these dialectics, and the apparatus of commemoration on site only enhances the city's reputation as the keystone in Canadian memory and military geography. The carefully-preserved material of the past—the old walls, the recreated eighteenth-century architecture, the markers of Wolfe's death and the old cannons that face the river—suggest that present day visitors should glimpse an earlier moment, and political articulations can be made accessible through the tourist's picturesque, and the Janus-faced nature Cary's Quebec applies to time as well the river.

This timelessness is predicated on the preservation and restoration of the site's military meaning, primarily through the preservation of its architecture and its battlefield. The Plains of Abraham offer a perspective framed not only by memorial texts and performances, but also by the vistas of both the present-day park, and the distant blue Laurentides. Carefully landscaped in the first years of the twentieth century and stripped of the markers of modernity and urbanization, it is easier now than it was a century ago to imagine Cary's pastoral vision. On the Heights of Quebec the sensitive visitor can grasp Canada's relationship with both time and the St Lawrence. This is not, as the park's

national development derived fundamentally from the gradual exploitation of key staple products... by colonial merchants in the major metropolitan centres of the St. Lawrence River system" (McKillop n.p.); it is, therefore, largely imperial in its conception of Canada's westward expansion, with each new colony dependent on an imperial centre at Paris, London, Montreal, or Toronto.

pastoral might suggest, a natural window on the past, but is rather a creation of the present, and despite the promise of timelessness on the heights, the Plains of Abraham have a history.

Cary's poem and later memorial inscriptions frame the site and ensure interpretive orthodoxy on the part of visiting citizens, so the space is informed by poetic conventions, particularly the Pastoral Elegy. What the elegy does in text—describe grief, inheritance and consolation in the aftermath of death—the battlefield park does in space. Citizens become chief mourners at a perpetual funeral, and therefore heirs within the elegiac landscape, inheriting a citizenship predicated on Wolfe's death. On hearing the cannonade of Canada's military history, rendered beautiful by the intervening years, the visitor partakes of that heroic past and confirms their rights as Canadian citizens to the bit of soil that caught the last drops of Wolfe's blood, to the detriment of those unborn generations who will not only inherit the Plains, but will die for them. Like the elegy it emulates, the park seems to suggest that the consolations of the literary form extend from the page to the possibility of a peaceful and productive nation.

The First Battle of the Plains of Abraham took place on 13 September 1759, during the Seven Years War, a global conflict between the French and British Empires. The British, under the command of Major General James Wolfe, besieged and then attacked French forces in the city of Quebec, led by Lieutenant-General Louis Joseph de Montcalm-Gozon, Marquis de Saint-Veran. In the course of the battle both commanders died, and Quebec changed hands, though the terms of surrender were favourable to those who chose to remain in New France, and the articles of Capitulation guaranteed the city's citizens freedom of worship and continuity of property. Under General James Murray, the

British occupied Quebec for the winter, but French forces under François de Gaston, Chevalier de Lévis returned and besieged it again in the spring of 1760, until the Royal Navy arrived to relieve the British. The conflict ended in 1763 with the Treaty of Paris, confirming British sovereignty north of Louisiana, and the idiosyncratic, negotiated peace of the Province of Quebec was further ratified in 1774. The Quebec Act wrote the outcome of the Seven Years War into Canada's legal substance, as though only the two founding nations that met on the Plains of Abraham contributed to the community, thus establishing one version of Canada that is exclusively bi-cultural in language, religion, and law.

In the years between the battle and the battlefield park, rumours of the original event became traditions, then legendary truths: on the night before the battle Wolfe recited from Thomas Gray's *Elegy Wrote in a Country Churchyard*, including the prescient line "the paths of glory lead but to the grave," and told his fellow officers, "Gentlemen, I would rather have written those lines than take Quebec tomorrow"; when he learned the French were retreating he said "I die contented" and expired in the field, his body repatriated to public mourning and a hero's monument in Westminster Abbey. A day after the battle Montcalm, dying, said, "I am happy I will not live to see the surrender of Quebec," and declined to give further orders for the defence or surrender of the city, rejecting his military duties and dedicating his remaining hours to prayer. The Ursulines buried Montcalm's body in a shell hole beneath their chapel, but sixty years later they exhumed his skull and leg bone to display in their parlour. Much later still, Montcalm was re-assembled and re-interred in a mausoleum at Cimetière du Parc des Braves, not far from the Plains.

During those years the Plains of Abraham served many purposes unrelated to commemoration, and as the city expanded it was occupied by houses, a gaol, a golf course, a racecourse, an execution ground, and a refuge for sex workers, all in addition to several monuments to Wolfe. Much of the land that is now Battlefields Park was owned by the Ursulin Sisters, and leased to the British and then Canadian militaries. In the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, public historians “recovered” the battleground from private ownership and Quebec’s expanding suburbs. As a response to this growing public interest in Canada’s military history, in 1908 parliament established the National Battlefields Commission, tasked with the preservation of the Plains of Abraham as a public park and as Canada’s first national historic site one-hundred-and-fifty years after the two battles for which it is named. The park now occupies the southeastern portion of the Plains of Abraham, taking in the site of the British right flank in 1759 and the French left flank. It also includes the sites of Wolfe’s and Montcalm’s mortal wounds, the well from which Wolfe drank, and the location of his death.²² Drawing on this history, the park’s sentimental meaning has been further refined in travel guides, picture postcards, maps, patriotic songs, and historical novels, culminating in the international pageants and re-enactments of the tercentenary of Quebec’s founding, in 1908, and the sesquicentennial of the battle, in 1909. Today—as in Cary’s poem—the mechanism of commemoration is conspicuously pastoral, in the refined natural greenspaces that dominate the park’s design.

²² Though the park is large, it does not take in the whole of the site’s history, which bleeds into the surrounding neighbourhood: a few blocks northwest of Wolfe’s obelisk, Parc des Braves commemorates the battle of Sainte-Foy, in April 1760; Cimetière des héros in Basse-Ville contains both Montcalm’s final resting place and a memorial to the many named and unnamed dead of the Seven Years War, including the mass grave that followed the battle of 1759.

Before the tercentenary of Quebec, the Battlefield Landmarks Committee co-authored *The First Report of the Quebec Landmark Commission* (1906), describing the demand for official, public commemoration at Quebec in an argument that blends military and aesthetic views of Canadian history. Major General James Wolfe and Louis-Joseph de Montcalm-Gozon, Marquis de Saint-Veran, arrayed against one another in the pageant of Quebec the *Report* describes, are the artists that create Canada:

statesmen and leaders in religion have continually been forced to deal with the differences which still form living issues of division in our midst; and, as yet, we have not had one man whose hand could wield the pen, or brush, or chisel, with half the skill with which the sword was wielded by Montcalm and Wolfe (39)

The Committee's language echoes the familiar contention of the Durham report, that Canada is "two nations warring within the bosom of a single state," held in balance at Quebec by the symmetrical deaths of the Wolfe and Montcalm, and their commemorative apparatus.

For the present-day visitor, history, like the river, stretches in two directions: toward and away from 13 September 1759. Even more precisely, time and space array themselves around the progress and death of General James Wolfe. Though the fortified city and the Plains saw more events than 1759's siege and battle, Wolfe's death becomes the primary articulation in Canada's early history, an explanation for our current geopolitical shape, and the origin point for a native nationalism. As *la Citadelle* persists in time, despite bombardment, restoration, and modernization, General James Wolfe becomes a still point in the history of Quebec, his progress from Île d'Orléans to the Ursulin Convent and Westminster Abbey made central to commemoration at Quebec.

This manifests in many ways, but most conspicuously in the topographical narrative of the Park itself, beginning at l'Anse aux Foulon, Wolfe's landing-site, and passing through the battlefield to the Church of the Ursulines, where Eli Dawson preached a sermon of thanksgiving for Victory a few days after Wolfe's death. Patriotic soldiers of the CEF extended the stone narrative across the Atlantic, where it concludes in his grave at Westminster, when they laid their colours in 1914, two of which are still on the tomb.²³ Wolfe's conceptual centrality to the Plains is further reflected in his literal centrality to poetry: in Cary's *Abram's Plains* Wolfe appears at the centre of the narrative, line 282 of 598; in Charles Sangster's *The Saint Lawrence and the Saguenay* Wolfe appears at line 594 of 1260; in J. Mackay's *Quebec Hill* Wolfe appears at line 180 of 362; in Cornwall Bayley's *Canada* he is not nearly so central, as he appears early, in line 165 of 515.

In this manner the literature of the battlefield, like its onsite commemoration, sets Wolfe's progress at the heart of poetry as well as landscape, of national pageantry as well as military romance. The words from Gray's *Elegy*—"the paths of glory lead but to the grave"—recur in popular histories and apocrypha. The poetic reminder is also a kind of instruction to visitors, retroactively framing the history of Quebec in elegiac-pastoral terms, as though Gray wrote the lines with Wolfe in mind in the same manner that memorialists suggest God created the amphitheatre of the Laurentides for the great spectacle of Wolfe's death. Like the beauty of the park's situation, this refrain encourages the visitor to appreciate the tension between permanent stone and temporary human life.

²³ The ceremony of presenting Canadian colours at Wolfe's tomb has been celebrated in many places, including the painting "Placing the Canadian Colours on Wolfe's Monument in Westminster Abbey" by Emily Warren (1919), which hangs in Currie Hall at the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario. According to Westminster Abbey's website the two remaining flags were placed there in 1922 "As a perpetual reminder of Canada's help to the mother country during the Great War" ("James Wolfe").

Military commemoration becomes the location work of citizenship, as the living find themselves partaking of two time streams: the individual's lifetime and the lifetime of nations; private death and collective persistence; the paths of glory and the grave.

The question remains, however, what these carefully cultivated dualisms produce. Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, the nineteenth-century French architect and theorist of restoration, wrote his *Annals of a Fortress* (1876) about an imaginary site of French resistance, tracing its history through centuries of occupations and siege warfare. He concludes that the fortress is only one element of defence, and its power is in part symbolic of the nation's "true" fortifications, which invoke the *levée en masse*: "the most reliable fortress," he writes, "is a good and well-commanded army, and a well-educated, brave, and intelligent population, resolved to make every sacrifice rather than undergo the humiliation of a foreign occupation" (380). Writing nearly a century later, the French military and cultural theorist Paul Virilio makes a similar observation regarding the relationship between a nation's fortifications and its citizenry. Fortresses require more than just the consent of the people who dwell within its territory; rather, fortresses are physical manifestations of a collective will to defence or occupation. "In fact," Virilio writes, "strategic defence is only possible with the active and unconditional participation of the population, as the Chinese leader once again put it, 'Only the people can build such fortifications, and only they can supply them'" (*Bunker Archeology* 28).²⁴

²⁴ I have been unable to identify the "Chinese leader" of Virilio's un-cited quote, but the sentiment suggests Mao Tse-tung's "On Protracted War" (1938), an essay on the relationship between civil and military life during violent revolution, invoking many familiar ideas of the *levée en masse* and Total War and rejecting the distinction between home- and battle-fronts, celebrating instead total continuity between civilian and military spheres, particularly in pursuit of a renovated society.

In keeping with the dualisms already described at Quebec, Virilio describes siege warfare as a dialectic, in that a siege requires two elements: one that is immovable and one that moves (*Popular Defense and Ecological Struggles* 16).²⁵ Though for Virilio the dialectic is limited to an explicitly military context, the tension between dynamism and stillness informs representations of Quebec far beyond the events of the Seven Years War, or the later siege of 1775. As a heritage site, Quebec is staged to locate the visitor metaphorically within Virilio's dialectic, set above the flood of the St Lawrence, and set outside contemporary history by the work of historians, landscape architects and the National Battlefields Commission. Where the will to defend or occupy was previously represented by fortification, it is now represented by commemoration. The work of the landscape architect or monumental designer is in reframing the original military site in aesthetic terms and therefore rendering its political and military meaning accessible to a visiting member of the populace both Viollet-le-Duc and Virilio describe.

This chapter describes some of the mechanisms of that transformation, the relationship between the site's military and civil meanings, and the means by which a battlefield becomes a battlefield park. The texts that describe the site reflect, critique, and interpret its military designation as the "Gibraltar of the West," re-deploying the site's military apparatus in order to imagine a peaceful community predicated on past violence. The ongoing processes of commemoration are not only informed by a site's military context and the exigencies of national self-invention, but also by nineteenth-century arguments regarding restoration, preservation, and the role that history plays in the

²⁵ Viollet-le-Duc formulates war through the same dominating dialectic, writing that "Attack implies a shock or onset; defence is a resistance to this onset" (*Annals* 357) on any scale, whether artillery and fortresses, warring nations, or individuals attacking and resisting one another.

construction of place. Viollet-le-duc, Alois Riegl, and John Ruskin all contribute to the park's ideological and aesthetic context of the park's first patrons, builders, and visitors. The tension between history and preservation, between restoration and memorial—and the political contexts of each position—necessarily inform the creation of Quebec as a *lieu de memoire*. This is also a literary creation, from Cary's *Abram's Plains* through Charles Sangster's *The St Lawrence and the Saguenay* (1856), and including tourist accounts of Quebec from Henry James and Rupert Brooke, as well as historical accounts of the site from Arthur Doughty.

During the years in which Battlefields Park was planned, the Austrian art historian Alois Riegl theorized exactly what memorials are intended to accomplish. Riegl's "The Modern Cult of Monuments" (1903) explores the conflicting intentions of historians, conservationists and memorialists, as they can be understood through the objects they choose to preserve.²⁶ For Riegl a well-preserved monument to the dead functions as a collective denial of death, a rejection of temporality within an object that seems, or promises, to remain outside of history. Monuments have "the appearance of absolute completeness and integrity unaffected by the destructive forces of nature" (78). Similarly, the appeal of Quebec as a *lieu de memoire* is not so much the physical traces of war, but of wholeness, as witnessed by the Park's design, which removed the signs of modernity and industry from the landscape, restoring it to the "natural" contours it might have possessed before European settlement. Such actions suggest that the battlefield park represents a return to some state of nature and wholeness, and the pastoral becomes a

²⁶ Less concerned with aesthetic evaluations than with the cultural work of the historical object, Riegl identifies four kinds of value that describe ways a culture understands and exploits historical objects: age-value, historical-value, commemorative-value and use-value.

physical correlative for the act of collective memory, or for the afterlife of heroes. It is a site that deploys a virtual impression of Canada's "ancient" European history in the service of something very contemporary: the political omphalism mentioned in the Introduction.

Riegl's work critiques nineteenth-century precepts for the preservation of architecture and history, particularly those in Viollet-le-Duc's *On Restoration*. These precepts seem to inform the National Battlefields Commission, who were at work on Battlefields Park in the same decade he published his work. Riegl describes different relationships with the past as they are expressed in the values communities place on objects, describing "age-value" and "commemorative-value," concepts that illuminate contemporary debate regarding preservation. For Riegl, the value placed on age, and the value placed on commemoration are irreconcilable. For an object to maintain its commemorative value it must belong to the present day, resisting entropy and declaring to the living an immutable interpretation of the past, primarily in the form of its still-readable inscription. An object with age-value, however, is produced in collaboration between man and nature. For Riegl, as for John Ruskin, the ruin is not only an important and valid state of being for the work of human hands, it is also the necessary, material expression of earthly temporality and natural cycles.²⁷

²⁷ In Riegl's argument, "Man" and "Nature" are collaborators, as human productions begin in wholeness and newness, and end in disintegration and asymmetry, where the "destructive and disintegrative elements" of nature are "granted equal standing with the creative rule of man" (73). Riegl's collaborative ruin foregrounds the possibility of a natural renewal that requires both creation and destruction, both history remembered and history forgotten. What satisfies us about an object's age-value, according to Riegl, is this almost elegiac promise, because, in nature, life follows quickly on death. For Riegl, "The modern viewer of old monuments receives aesthetic satisfaction not from the stasis of preservation but from the continuous and unceasing cycle of change in nature" (73); if a building's commemorative-value witnesses the

Though the memorial may promise elegiac consolation in its text, it implicitly contradicts natural cycles in its subtext. The return promised by the national monument relies on human memory rather than natural order:

Deliberate commemorative value simply makes a claim for immortality... The disintegrating forces of nature, which work against the fulfillment of this claim, must therefore be fought ardently... A memorial column, for instance, with its inscription effaced, would cease to be a deliberate monument. Thus the fundamental requirement of deliberate monuments is restoration (Riegl 78)

Quebec seems to possess the texture of age Riegl so values; however, the apparatus of commemoration rejects a material sense of time in favour of a synthetic sense of history, just as the idealized pastoral of the park synthesizes the curving paths and green thickets of the natural world. Both are created in service of a national ideal. Commemoration at Quebec belongs to Viollet-le-Duc's claim that restoration does not preserve objects in their "natural" state, nor returns them to some original state of being, but re-invents them in the service of the present. According to Viollet-le-Duc, "to restore a building is not to preserve it, to repair, or rebuild it; it is to reinstate it in a condition of completeness which could never have existed at any given time" (9). The aphorism haunts many sites of Canadian memory, from the re-created village of Louisburg, to the re-invented Place

permanent mark of man on nature's landscape, then age-value witnesses the mark of nature on man's landscape.

Royale at Quebec.²⁸ For Viollet-le-Duc, the progressive model of history is linked to the consolidation of the past, which acts—in his argument—as national capital for its militarized future.

The years that established Quebec's commemorative-value also established the forms and precedents that would be deployed in the great memorials that followed the First World War, from the Vimy Ridge monument to the National War Memorial in Ottawa. In keeping with this relationship, the link between Quebec's historical meaning and contemporary military action is often direct and explicit. F.G. Scott begins his memoir of the Western Front, *The Great War as I Saw It* (1922) in Quebec with news of the Great War's declaration, and his thoughts on the St Lawrence and Wolfe characterize Canada as Scott sails for Europe with the troops in September and October 1914, traveling from the nation's interior to the Gulf of St Lawrence. Inverting the perspective established in Cary's *Abram's Plains*, Scott glances up and back from the "Island of Orleans" toward Quebec, where he sees "the familiar outline of the Terrace and Château Frontenac and, over all, the Citadel, one of my favourite haunts in times past" (25). Both his nostalgia and his sense of loss are reflected in the landscape, where "a deeper crimson flood[s] the sky, till the purple mists of evening hid Quebec from our view" (25). This change in position is also a moment of transformation: on the river with the Canadian

²⁸ Ruskin—another significant influence on the practice of architecture and memory—emphatically rejects the precepts of restoration, writing "Do not let us talk then of restoration. The thing is a Lie from beginning to end. You may make a model of a building as you may of a corpse... but the old building is destroyed" (*Seven Lamps* xx). Riegl further identifies restoration *not* with the preservation of history or the passage of time, but with the "reinstatement of a document into its original state" where "any striking trace of natural decay was to be removed, any loss or fragment was to be repaired the work was to be restored to a complete, unified whole" (81). The restored building is recognizable to the contemporary visitor as referent to an earlier time, valuable not because it measures the passage of time in its decay, but because it is whole, a site of contemporary meaning masquerading as a piece of history.

Expeditionary Force of 1914, Scott feels himself “at last merged into the great army life” now “a great gulf separated us now from the life we had known” (25). Even from the tideline, and one hundred and fifty years after the battle, the Heights of Quebec offer a place from which to imagine a cohesive Canadian military community as it is deployed to fight an entirely different kind of war.

2. Architectures of War and Memory

*Approach and read (for thou can 'st read) the lay,
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.*

Thomas Gray. “Elegy Wrote in a Country Church Yard.” (1751)

Virilio argues that the battlefield precedes the battle, that the fortified landscape is the precursor to both organized, collective violence *and* the city as a coherent and defensible social unit. According to *Ecological Struggle and Popular Defence* (1990) the first work of the strategist is environmental and the dialectics of war first manifest as an intervention in the natural landscape, where they reconfigure the world to favour defence and control for those who occupy it, as though human architecture is provoked into being by the possibility of attack.²⁹ Virilio also argues that the twinned forces that constitute war are rendered visible in the landscape because they “split on this terrain to form two elements of a single dialectic: the former becomes synonymous with speed, circulation, progression and change; and the latter with opposition to movement” (*Ecological*

²⁹ In Virilio’s words, the first concern of the defender is rationalizing and controlling their space: “the ambition of *conducting* a war begins with the planning of its theater, or the creation of *artificial environmental conditions* which will form the infrastructure, the stage on which the scenario should be played out—scenario prepared in advance by whatever adversary claims to dominate the other” (*Popular Defence* 14 - 15).

Struggle and Popular Defence 15 – 16). Once the landscape has been recast and rebuilt in military terms—that is, once the promontory of Appalachian shale has become the walled city of Quebec—its denizens inherit a space structured by military concerns. For Virilio, the conceptual categories that divide the earth in contemporary, geopolitical terms find their origins here, as concepts like “frontier,” “territory,” or “sovereignty” all presuppose the original opposition between defender and attacker. Finally—and most significantly within this argument—defence informs a landscape’s meaning long after the time of war. Action and inertia, violence and resistance are written into the landscape by the architecture itself: the fort, the wall, and the defensible city all assume the inevitability of attack.

Virilio imagines this re-created landscape exclusively in terms of defence; however, fortification also have social effects on the citizens defended. In *Space and Power: Politics, War and Architecture* (2005), political theorist Paul Q. Hirst argues that the fortified city of the Renaissance articulated more than the technologies and exigencies of the military state. It is also the trace of a specific aesthetic and an epistemology of space that cannot be disentangled from social nor military structures; the same argument may be made for the military architectures of other eras, including Quebec of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Hirst writes that, “to Renaissance intellectuals the *form* of the fortress also signified, since geometry had a symbolic value... Symmetrical forms, regular polygons, were not mere conventional geometric figures but examples of the order inherent in the universe” (193). That is, while Quebec’s citadel takes the star-form mandated by military technology of the time—specifically, cannonballs—the geometries that govern its shape have significance beyond deflecting enemy ordnance, in

keeping with Virilio's argument that military architecture is about defending against attack *and* rationalizing the supposed chaos of nature. The eighteenth-century military engineer applies geometry to defence and therefore prepares a suitable theatre for collective violence. In so doing he recasts the natural world in rational, symmetrical terms, terms recognizable not only to enemies, but also to citizens. As Hirst argues, "artillery fortification in its developed form was governed by geometry, with space being dominated by functional demands, and the resultant structures are consequences of this logic rather than of stylistic consideration," and for this reason, fortification "subjected the whole space beyond the walls of the city to rationalization" (182). This rationalized landscape locates citizens as well as enemies: while walls make an interior and an exterior, they also remind those who dwell within that they must be defended.³⁰ Quebec's rationalized landscape is part of this discourse, whether for the defence of its city or the interpellation of its citizens.³¹

³⁰ The rhetoric of fortification might begin in defence, but its forms are culturally significant as well as practical. According to Jonathan Meades' history of architectural Brutalism, the aesthetics of defensive architecture are as significant as their military service. The Nazi fortifications of France's Atlantic coast—explored by Virilio in *Bunker Archaeology*—are the work of Friedrich Tamms, an architect of Albert Speer's monumental Germany. Tamms "created the designs for 60 different types of gun emplacement, bunkers, shelters, flak towers, U-boat bases, etc. Tamms was, arguably, the first brutalist... The forms he used were seldom functional. Rather, they employ the imagery of might—vizors, chainmail fists, anthropomorphism and zoomorphism" ("The Incredible Hulks" n.p.). According to Meades the bunkers' representational nature meant that they were terrifying for both their potential violence and for what they said about Nazi culture, existing as "graphic warnings to the people of occupied countries" (n.p.).

³¹ The French forces replaced the original wooden stockade of 1608 with walls of black shale, limestone and sandstone. This eighteenth-century work followed the precepts of Sébastien Le Prestre de Vauban, who dictated not only the codes of fortification in the age of gunpowder, but identified advantageous locations for those forts, and whose beautiful, rationalized star forts—also known as the *trace italienne*—still survey the western European landscape. While Vauban did not design *la Citadelle* as it is today—that was nineteenth-century British work—Quebec's early stone fortifications were built in 1701, during his term as Louis XIV's premier military engineer, and he commented in letters on its strategic and tactical significance.

Virilio's dialectic and Hirst's cultural reading of the fortress persist long after the site's strategic significance has faded, organizing the commemorative landscape as they organized the defensive. At Quebec, the space once reconfigured by French and English military engineers was recovered by civic memorialists, and remade into a site of contemplation rather than action. The battlefield, now the battlefield park, maintains the forms of its military history, redeploying them in a kind of literary and aesthetic colonization of Canada's history. While in the present-day age of the satellite the heights of Quebec offer little advantage to the defender, or obstacle to the invader the view from the Château Frontenac³² and the wide, green expanses of Battlefields Park possess a potent aesthetic and emotional appeal that lies in the *idea* of the fortress.

The architecture of the fortress preoccupies Virilio in his analysis of war as a cultural practice; Viollet-le-Duc is concerned with the restoration of a nation's military-architectural past. Despite the seeming historical distance between the nineteenth-century architect and the twentieth-century critic, Virilio's urban origin myth parallels Viollet-le-Duc's *Annals of a Fortress*, where a pre-historic French community forms only in the face of foreign, blond invaders who wish to occupy an otherwise peaceful valley in an un-named northeastern department. Though the village of the proto-French settlement pre-existed this proto-German attack, the first moment in its history that is imaginable—according to Viollet-le-Duc—is the moment in which it coalesces as a patriarchal community. That is, when an invasion provokes France into being, and the community and its landscape become objects for which its citizens might die. This moment of

³² Château Frontenac was built on the site of the Château Haldimand, the British Governor's residence. The hotel opened in 1893, and was itself declared a national historic site in 1980.

coalescence is further formalized through the early architecture of the fort, which may change through the centuries as military technology evolves, but which remains continuous with that first, instinctive will to defend.³³

In Canada, the fortress has taken on a different kind of cultural significance, associated not only with military occupation, but also with fortified trade centres and the construction of an insular community. According to Northrop Frye, the dialectic of the Canadian fort is not stillness and dynamism, but within and without. While Virilio's chaotic natural world³⁴ figures in Frye's model for Canadian culture, it is not war that Frye fears, and the most significant context of the Canadian fort is not military, but natural. He writes,

Small and isolated communities surrounded with a physical or psychological 'frontier,' separated from one another and from their American and British cultural sources: communities that provide all that their members have in the way of distinctively human values, and that are compelled to feel a great respect for the law and order that holds them together, yet confronted with a huge,

³³ It may overstate the relationship between attack, defence and the construction of national narrative, but Viollet-le-Duc's book was published only a few years after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870.

³⁴ Frye's peculiar anxiety regarding the un-broken vision of the natural world parallels a strange moment at the beginning of the "Memory" chapter in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. Ruskin writes of an attempt to imagine a Swiss landscape without any human context, but this attempt provokes, a "sudden blankness and chill" (147) when he attempts to imagine it without the imprint of history—a kind of thought experiment that draws on the horror of an "uninhabited" North America, and the "aboriginal forest of the New Continent." For Ruskin, even "ever springing flowers and ever flowing streams" are valuable, and accessible, only insofar as they are "dyed by the deep colors of human endurance, valor, and virtue" (47). Tellingly, it is not his own human, perceiving eye that rescues Ruskin from "blankness and chill," rather it is knowing that the "four-square keep of Granson" (147) lies eastward of his position. Like Frye's Garrison, the site's military architecture becomes a way of locating himself within this otherwise terrifying landscape.

unthinking, menacing, and formidable physical setting—such communities are bound to develop what we may provisionally call a garrison mentality. (227)

For Frye, the garrison is a social as well as an architectural structure, a contained space *and* a community, in the same sense that a garrison may be the corps of soldiers as well as the space those soldiers occupy. Further, the word is not only a noun; as a transitive verb, it also describes the act of provisioning that body of men for defence and occupation, suggesting that “garrison” is a process by which one constructs a community, as well as the space and community defined by the garrison’s walls. This construction of enclosed, defended enclaves in both military and cultural terms is the work of fortification, the ongoing process by which Canada defines and contains itself within the landscape.³⁵

Only in Frye’s formulation, however, is the military metaphor of defence so isolated from its antithesis, which is not the natural world outside the walls, but the dynamic human forces that oblige colonists to fortify their settlements in the first place. While Frye may see the literal walls of the community as a way of blocking the settler’s gaze from the terrifying, unsettled wild of the Canadian north and west, in reality Quebec’s walls existed for defence rather than existential anxiety, as witnessed by three very real sieges in the city’s history. Further, living inside or outside the walls of the

³⁵ Compare Virilio’s argument that human communities struggle not only against one another, but also against “the chaos of the natural environment and the spontaneous movements that can occur within it. This is its primary definition, which founds the coherence of the realization of the concept of war—its *conductibility*—in time and space” (*Ecological Struggle and Popular Defence* 14). If the natural world is chaotic, resistant to military intelligence, and an obstacle to rational defence, the work of the strategist and military engineer is in rationalizing that chaos, and thus rendering human habitation defensible. After all, “It is no longer enough to be quickly educated about one’s surroundings; *one must also educate the surroundings*. In other words, one must try to preserve, *on that very spot*, one’s *head start* over the enemy” (*Ecological Struggle and Popular Defence* 15). War is “conductible” when its variables can be defined and controlled, and the natural world, remade by human intervention, grows conducive to human violence.

community binds either party to the other *through* the figure of the fortress or the garrison.³⁶ However, in light of Virilio's dialectic, and Hirst's observations regarding the cultural role of the fortress, fortifications are not only a measure of military colonization, protecting the colony's tenuous lines of communication and trade, but also symbolic of the occupier's relationship to that landscape, its expectations of the people who live outside the walls, and its own potential violence. Hirst, Frye, and Virilio all address the specifics of the fortress as a cultural form. In commemoration, the fortress takes on further significance as a site of memory as well as action. In the nineteenth century several theorists of architecture and memory addressed the possibility of an ethical relationship with the objects of the past, informing local debates regarding the role that Quebec might play in the new Dominion.

Among those theorists of architecture, John Ruskin specifically addresses memory as the sixth of *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. For Ruskin the imperative is not restoration in Viollet-le-Duc's terms, but the preservation of a site's integrity as an historical survivor. Ruskin specifically imagines the human relationship with the past in terms of speech, and architecture becomes an urn of memory containing not the objects of the past, but its echo, just as present-day actions and words echo through the lives of the unborn (154). For Ruskin, architecture's "glory is in its Age, and in that deep sense of

³⁶ In his history of Nazi-occupied France, *Les Secrets de la propagande en France occupée*, historian R.G. Nobeourt addresses an issue that parallels Frye's argument, though speaks explicitly to occupation, rather than defence, an element Frye elides in his brief discussion of the Garrison Mentality. Nobeourt sees a symbiotic relationship between the internal, defensible space, and the external, threatening landscape, writing "The fortress had important psychological value, for it tended to unite the occupier and the occupied in the fear of being swept away; the fortress provided unity and identity where there was none" (R.G. Nobeourt as quoted in Virilio 1994). *La Citadelle* does similar social and cultural work, work later taken up by Battlefields Park, which unites French and English in the idea of the battle, while at the same time reminding both sides of the unfinished struggle contained within that conceptual unity.

voicefulness... which we feel in walls that have long been washed by the passing waves of humanity. It is in their lasting witness against men, in their quiet contrast with the transitional character of all things” (155). Ruskin’s “golden stain of time” (155) cannot be produced in a single moment, but develops like the green patina of age on a copper roof.

Françoise Choay argues that national commemoration is civic theatre, whether literal ceremony or the “set dressing” that produces Quebec as a picturesque site of memory. She identifies the tension between commemoration and restoration at Quebec: “the center of old Quebec, listed as World Heritage, results from a vast nationalist and touristic project, launched in 1960, which led to the destruction of a group of ancient buildings only to reconstruct them, with no scientific basis, in the style of eighteenth-century French architecture” (145). Though she does not name the site in her text, one can guess that this is a reference to Place Royale, in the old lower town, which underwent extensive renovations during the 1960s and 1970s.³⁷ The square was restored not to an earlier state, but to a version of eighteenth-century Franco-Canadian architecture that supported Quebec’s reputation as a “French” city in the new world. Three quarters of Quebec’s buildings were destroyed during the British bombardment of 1759; these and later fragments are the basis for contemporary restorations, the architectural “residue” of

³⁷ The restoration work at Place Royale was part of a civic plan to make work locally and to confirm Quebec City as an historic site worthy of tourist dollars. To that end, the site was renovated to enhance the city’s reputation as a fragment of pre-industrial Europe on North American Soil. According to the *Canadian Encyclopaedia*, “After restoration work done here and there—the Chevalier hotel, the Maison Fornel, Notre-Dame-des-Victoires church—the Government of Québec, seeking to recreate the ambience reigning in the 18th century, launched a major initiative aimed at giving the square the appearance it might have had at the end of the French Regime. Several buildings were renovated between 1970 and 1979. The result has a certain pedagogical value for illustration purposes, but very little historical value... Today’s historians consider this work as a product of Québec’s cultural policy in the 1960s and 1970s and, in terms of historical value, as a reminder of this period” (“Place Royale”). This is the same era that saw the re-creation of Louisbourg, Nova Scotia, in an effort to consolidate its historical significance, and to counter local unemployment after the decline of the mining industry in Cape Breton.

what went before, redeployed to meet the new nation's need for a history. Choay's study of historical monuments begins with the revival of classical culture in late medieval Europe, describing the process by which something "old" becomes "ancient" and "hallowed," writing that, "the adoption of distance with respect to the buildings of the past requires a long apprenticeship, one experience over a period of time that knowledge cannot contract, and that is required before familiarity can be replaced by respect" (38). A settler community like Canada, with its relatively short European history, requires memorialists to abbreviate this apprenticeship, and actively cultivate Ruskin's "golden stain." A site like Battlefields Park instructs present day Canadian citizens to appreciate their own past without benefit of the appealing "ancientness" associated with European cities.³⁸ Once established as "hallowed" in recognizable terms, Battlefields Park becomes a means of locating citizens in the landscape of their history.

While the old city walls, the gates, the Martello towers and the star fort all form an explicitly military landscape, they also possess cultural and aesthetic meanings beyond

³⁸ Despite pledges to memory at Quebec, several nineteenth-century writers and travelers in Canada declared that the colony was without a sense of the past represented by remains: ruins, memorials, ancient architecture. In *Mnemographia Canadensis* D.M.R. Bentley examines the memorialization of First Nations war heroes—particularly Tecumseh, Pontiac and Joseph Brant—in early nineteenth century writings by Anna Jameson and George Proctor. Citing Jameson's desire for a sense of history Bentley examines the way the "declining Indian" of the early nineteenth century influences the way these military men were remembered, or forgotten. A landscape without memory is a landscape without continuity of property for families or nations. The empty country that George Proctor describes in *Lucubrations* is not only unoccupied in European terms, but also shows no trace of prior claims in the form of significant architecture or memorials. In Proctor's words, "the hand of man has left not a vestige of antiquity" (57 – 58) in Canada. Proctor writes that it is a landscape without romance, where "all is coarsely flat, tame and uninteresting" (322) and unstuck from any significant past, unmaped by European sentiment or association. The only monument Proctor sees is biological: "There is to be found but one link which binds the present to the past, but one monument of other times, and that monument is a living ruin. The existence of the Indian Tribes is become to America what the shattered column, the broken arch, and the falling cloister are to the old world" (322). Proctor renders the "remnants" of the original inhabitants not heirs to the land in settler terms, but evidence that they have lost their rights to occupy it, along with their civilization.

the immediate exigencies of occupation. The military meaning of the walled city is transformed by commemoration into the urn of memory. The history of Battlefields Park is a history of this articulation, as military defensive architecture turns the Quebec promontory from hill-top to fortress, and the apparatus of memory turns it from fortress to theatre of commemoration. As a battlefield park, rather than an historical relict, Quebec is dressed in the tropes and conventions of the past, while serving the political needs of the present. Where before the battlefield and *la Citadelle* served to protect the site's English or French masters, the memorial park takes up similar work in cultural rather than explicitly military terms. After all, the park contains Avenue George VI, and Avenue Ontario—reminders of who possesses the right to name the landscape, just as L'anse au Foulon became Wolfe's Cove in a civil act of re-naming that nevertheless continues the work of war.

The stated intentions of the National Battlefields Commission seem to follow Ruskin rather than Viollet-le-Duc, constantly describing inheritance, and the preservation of Canada's English and French past for Canada's bicultural future. The staging of Quebec as an historical site accessible to citizen and tourist owes much to the eschatological view of war and Viollet-le-Duc's model for restoration. To re-create Quebec as it might have been—but never was—is to preserve a moment outside of time, the origin point for the young Dominion of 1867, insofar as that young Dominion is British and Anglophone. It is, however, the rebuilt city of Quebec that seems to contain the site's history. Writing of his imagined French fort, Viollet-le-Duc describes the experience the perceptive visitor should have, sensing “all the events which this little nook of ground has witnessed, of the ruins that have been accumulated by human

passion, and the blood that has been so lavishly shed. We fancy we hear the shouts with which these walls have so often echoed” (383). To be such a visitor is, also, to recognize oneself as a part of those events, as a listener and as a member of the community established in violence. The site’s scenography—its tourist picturesque, the appeal of its heroic legends and its monuments—is one way to make military history accessible, to enhance visitors’ experience of themselves as subjects of the Heights, as F.G. Scott looked up at Cap Diamant and felt himself absorbed into the vast, heroic body of Canadian Expeditionary Force.

3. Scenography

*La victoire avant tout sera
De bien voir au loin
De tout voir
De près
Et que tout ait un nom nouveau*

Guillaume Apollinaire, “La Victoire.” 1917.

In the weeks following the first battle of the Plains of Abraham there were two pledges to memory that still resonate in present-day commemoration at Quebec. First, a group of soldiers rolled a stone to the site of Wolfe's death (“A Rallying Site”), where it became the first of a series of markers, the most recent of which is Battlefields Park. Second, a few days after the battle, on 27 September 1759, Reverend Eli Dawson, a Royal Navy chaplain, preached a sermon of thanksgiving at the Ursulin Convent in Quebec, in a chapel which also temporarily housed the bodies of Wolfe and Montcalm. Dawson describes the British Victory—and its future commemoration—as an ontological change

in the battlefield's earth, produced by blood, sacrifice and divine will. He calls on the landscape as a permanent witness to Wolfe's death, saying,

Tell how he fell, ye proud Towers!—Ye Ramparts!—were ye not Witnesses?—
 Speak with what a Blaze of Glory you saw the Heroe surrounded!—Tell how ye
 shook to your Foundations at the presence of the Conqueror!... Ye Mountains of
 Abraham, decorated with his Trophies, tell how vainly ye opposed him when he
 mounted your loft Heights with the Strength and Swiftnes of an Eagle!—Stand
 fixed forever upon your rocky Base, and speak his Name and Glory to all future
 Generations! (15)

Wolfe's death shakes nature itself and reconfigures it in British terms. Dawson calls his audience to attend the transfigured landscape, which seems to witness Canadian history from the perspective of eternity, as though it has been awaiting Wolfe's victory and death since its creation. As long as Quebec contains the reverberations of the English victory, Dawson tells us, it will confirm the English right to control the St Lawrence River, a right possessed even by the unborn generations who will know their birthright on hearing the echo of Wolfe's death.

Significantly, in any discussion of memory and the geographies of militarism Dawson imagines the landscape as an agent of memory, not only permanently marked by the events of September 1759, but also a medium for new meanings, the repository of a permanent chronicle to which citizens can return when they need reminders of their heroic origins, often in time of war. His sermon establishes a set of conventions for Canadian military commemoration that recur beyond the particulars of Wolfe's death. In imagining a relationship between the witnessing landscape and the perceptive citizen, he

presents commemoration as a kind of collaboration, a view that will dominate Canada's domestic military memorials until the twentieth century, from Sarah Curzon's descriptions of Queenston Heights in the 1880s, to Al Purdy's "The Battlefield at Batoche" in 1973. The work of the official memorialist, whether writer, architect, administrator or gardener, is to tease out that collaboration, to frame the landscape in such a way that the citizen can recognize its military meaning, and find themselves within the patriotic narratives of defence and sacrifice.

Despite the abbreviated apprenticeship that Choay describes, it is a long process of transfiguration. For Eli Dawson, Quebec's topography witnesses political transformation and calls citizens to an act of memory. Dawson also describes the possible articulation between a military and a civic site, since the city, once taken in battle, must be re-framed as a civic space, promising its constituents a world of peace, despite the constant threat of war. Dawson's witnessing mountains pinpoint the movement from action—from the explicitly military use of space—to representation, and the civil discourses that inform space. As the landscape is an agent of war—that is, its geography is a military asset to those who defend the St Lawrence system—so it is an agent of memory after the fact. The Plains of Abraham are important because this location is the point from which the right sort of citizen can imagine possessing the St Lawrence in the terms Dawson sets: as heirs to an earlier possessor.

The ideal visitor at Quebec hears Dawson's echoing landscape, perceives that the site's beauty is both a natural and human memorial to the past's sacrifices, and experiences some pleasurable terror at the prospect of its heights, a hint of sublimity that pairs—inevitably—with the historical interest of the plains, and its national significance.

They may imagine history as a performance staged in an amphitheatre built by God, and so absorb the city's message regarding Anglo-Canadian superiority. This visitor encounters a mnemonic geography,³⁹ where the site's meaning is represented and enhanced by its staging and by its aesthetic power. Quebec's status as a beauty spot, partaking equally of historical significance and natural charm, is often represented as though it is *already* a work of art, even before the arrival of Wolfe, Frontenac or Donnacona, as though it was designed at the beginning of time with those figures in mind.

As discussed above, Cary's Janus-faced perspective on the St Lawrence in *Abram's Plains* relies on the still point his speaker occupies, a perspective associated with a tactical advantage to those who hold the fortified city and control the Atlantic access-point to the North American interior. Cary's place in the landscape is also closely associated with the freedom of his muse to explore, exclaim and celebrate the vigorous Britishness of the Canadas, a vigor Cary associates with Roman and Trojan virtue: not imperial, but republican; not Tory, but Whig. Honour, for Cary's heroes, is in cultivation and defence, not imperialism and attack. Cary's distinction between Whiggish commerce and Tory militarism implies that the two positions are incompatible, as though commercial empires require no soldiers, and military empires do not facilitate trade. The rhetorical opposition, however, allows Cary to consign military action to the past within the poem. The now-peaceful walled city of Quebec is no longer a product of blood and heroism, but is the physical correlative of agrarian and commercial productivity, in large part because it allows the viewer—whether general or poet—a means of overlooking, and

³⁹ I have borrowed the term "mnemonic geography" from Erica Leighton with her permission.

controlling the St Lawrence from the Great Lakes to the Gulf. Cary effects this transformation, re-casting Quebec as a civil rather than a military centre, in a number of ways, whether through describing the local benefits of imperialism, or by framing poetry itself as the work of peace and leisure.

The first reference to Quebec's military significance comes early in the poem, when Cary describes the blessings of a peace associated less with the resolution of hostilities than with the "civilization" of Indigenous peoples, as "scalping-knives to pruning hooks give way" (61). Later, the same loving, peaceful imperialism extends to the Québécois, who should be "thankful" that "Britannia's conqu'ring sword, / Releas'd [them] from [their] ancient sov'reign lord" (434 – 5). Though punctuated with references to Wolfe's valour and Britain's military might, most of the poem consists in a catalogue of the colony's commercial virtues and resources. However, Cary's muse returns to the military architecture of Quebec in the second half of the work. Where Cary sends his muse to "attack" (452) the city's walls, which triggers a poetic exploration of the relationship between commemoration, representation and place in an extended military metaphor. Where before Cary's muse was the playful, far-seeing explorer who followed the St Lawrence from its source to the Gulf, now she takes the part of the attacker, the dynamic half of Virilio's dialectic. Before the Muse enters the city of Quebec she approaches the walls—which cannot hope to resist her, though her only weapon is "a grey-goose quill" (459)—with the aim not of overpowering, nor destroying them, but of "capturing" them within Cary's poem. This "capture" takes on a dual sense, whether as Cary "captures them" as a representative of an Anglo-Roman republican tradition, or in the sense of representing them to the future, and within the heroic literary tradition to

which Cary imagines himself belonging, not the poet of the Tiber, perhaps, but the poet of the St Lawrence. Once the muse approaches the walls she “make[s] a lodgment on the covert-way” (456)—that is, she takes a foothold in the city’s fortifications.⁴⁰

Here Cary seems to reconcile with his careful rejection of Tory imperialism. The outcome of this “attack” isn’t the overthrow of British control, but rather *Abram’s Plains* and the preservation of Quebec’s history. In other words, he uses the site’s explicitly military apparatus to both raise and dismiss the site’s military meaning, effecting a kind of transformation, where the exclusively military associations of the site’s architecture—the walls, the ditch, the bastions and batt’ries—are transfigured as they “fall” to the curious muse, and become the appealing raw materials for a heroic national story. Cary’s muse may use military metaphors, and may leap the ditch that surrounds the fortifications, but “She seeks not in thy walls to make a breach” (467). In these lines Cary both confirms Quebec as a military rather than a civil site, and effects a careful sleight-of-hand that renders those fortifications irrelevant in the military sense, subject instead to a quill-pen and a playful attack. The curious muse is no spy; she is an artist and memorialist who frames the city with its heroic context, teaching the poem’s readers to read the space differently, translating its military meaning into a new, civilian meaning. Quebec is ultimately indefensible against the muse’s intent, which is the shift from an active military landscape to a landscape of memory.⁴¹

⁴⁰ According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a “lodgement” is also a kind of counter-fortification, built to defend an initial military incursion into defended space: “A temporary defensive work made on a captured portion of the enemy’s fortifications to make good the position of the assailants and protect them from attack” (“Lodgement” n.p.).

⁴¹ In *Anxious Allegiances* (1998) Chaim David Mazoff argues that the early Canadian topographical poem is informed by the metaphor of Holy War, and that Cary’s work invokes the righteous “war” of colonization, turning the savage land to civilization. While Mazoff accurately describes the violence of

The muse is still potentially war-like, though the only reason to fight after Wolfe is if republican virtue is threatened by the Empire. The muse will only come to arms in “some Trojan’s cause; / Or else some hero’s of renowned Rome, / E’er sunk to slav’ry, Caesar seal’d her doom” (461 - 3). Cary’s careful sleight of hand produces a sense of Quebec as a military site whose military meaning is ancient, valuable, but no longer primarily war-like, and therefore associated with the pastoral virtues of the colonized nations, rather than bloodshed. Such an interpretation of the site submerges the role that military meaning plays in a nation’s civic life. The elision is effective: Quebec preserves the potential violence of its battlements, and the persuasive power of its military history while preaching peace. Cary and his muse establish the form for a relationship between military and civil space at Quebec, effectively reclaiming Cap Diamant for poetry.⁴²

Cary’s chosen language—and the political implications of the occupation of an already-occupied landscape—his work is also transfiguration, turning the raw material of military history and place into the stuff of civic legend, the basis for a new, living culture.

⁴² Also addressing the tension between peaceful commerce and warlike empire, and similarly eliding the continuities, Cornwall Bayley’s *Canada, a Descriptive Poem* (1806) argues that the martial and literary spirit of Rome resides in the St Lawrence as it is matched with British military dominance. Bayley even parallels his own work with Virgil, the poet of the Tiber, to his poet of the St Lawrence:

Ah! little thought she when her Tiber’s wave,
Had wept for arts and wash’d fair Freedom’s grave;
That Freedom’s spirit—tho’ an exile thence,
Should here a purer lasting sway commence,
Where Lawrence op’ning thus his golden reign,
Recalls the Poet’s tributary strain! (431 – 436)

Like Cary’s peaceful, Whiggish Quebec, Bayley’s *translatio imperii* meshes Viollet-le-Duc’s philosophy of restoration and an eschatological model of war with a pastoral and Elysian Quebec. Also like Cary, Bayley parallels the imperial Tiber and the commercial St Lawrence, suggesting that international trade is the peaceful result of war, now consigned to the past. Rome, having lost its republican authority over people in Caesar’s pursuit of empire, has also lost the spirits of poetry and democracy to a new community in Anglo Canada. In an act of excessive hubris, he identifies his own work with the poet of Tiber, Virgil, punning on “tributary” to describe the flow of water from river to river, the flow of wealth in “tribute,” and the flow of poetic tradition from past to present. Placing himself firmly in the Virgillian tradition—and therefore

In the same tradition as Cary's *Abram's Plain*, Charles Sangster's *The St Lawrence and the Saguenay* (1856) is a river-poem dedicated to the St Lawrence. It is a dual narrative, describing both the speaker's progress from Lake Ontario to Trinity Rock and his passion for a young woman who haunts the narrative in various forms. Midway through the poem the speaker arrives at Quebec, and encounters—in order, west to east—three markers of the Seven Years Wars: Cap Diamant, the twinned figures of “WOLFE and MONTCALM!” (604), and the City of Quebec itself. As Dawson did before him, Sangster divides human and natural commemoration, distinguishing between the geographical and pastoral witness of the heights and human attempts to contain the site's heroic history. “QUEBEC!” (595) the city is “Undmindful of the sanguinary fight” (596), that “gave the place a glory and a name” (600). In contrast, “CAPE DIAMOND” (587) is inseparable from memory in its substance, veiled from the moon “As if the mournful Night had thrown a shroud / Over this pillar to a hero's dust” (588 – 589). Wolfe's human memorials may “crumble on the plain” (591), but the landscape itself will remember, particularly the “pile” of the Cape—the term suggesting both substantial architecture and, perhaps, a funeral pyre—as it “dares the rebel's lust / for spoliation” (592 – 594). In a claim that echoes Dawson's sermon, the events of 1759 are so powerful they surpass human commemoration, and events of the battle are inherent to the material of Cap Diamant itself.

Stanza 53 reinscribes the same opposition between fragile human memorials and

identifying with the ascendant Whiggish spirit in eighteenth century Britain—Bayley's work employs a perspective similar to Cary's.

permanent natural witness, again identifying military action with the natural world: “What were... the monuments / Upreared to human fame” (621-624) compared to the Laurentides, “Those ancient hills stood proudly ere the tents / Of the first Voyageurs... were pitched” (625 – 626). Settlement, then, is a temporary human endeavour, while war is inseparable from the substance of a place. Sangster associates Wolfe in particular with natural metaphors: “a young oak” and the sun. He also refers to the heights as a “granite seal” (594) suggesting both the promise of memory, and the material representation of authority and identity. A seal is like a signature, pledging that the text enclosed is from the hand of the author so named; this particular seal is also associated with the interruption of the text with the epithet “—brave Wolfe!” (594). Wolfe will endure beyond the man-made cenotaphs on the Plains of Abraham, who will endure as long as the stone of the Heights endure, but his named arrival also disrupts the poet’s art.

The artist-generals who collaborated on the creation of Canada take for their medium the heights themselves, which are both ancient and transformed by historical sacrifice, transfigured from geography into representation by the nature of the battle. Significantly, they also function as a warning to future “rebels” who might disrupt the community defended by *la Citadelle*, and represented by the rock of Quebec itself. Sangster returns to this productive settler pastoral, viewed from above at a site of military significance, and rendered in poetry in “From Queenston Heights”—discussed in the next chapter—which similarly balances the private experience of landscape and the public history of the place.

While Dawson’s sermon is an explicitly memorial text, and Sangster’s and Cary’s works are panegyrics to the St Lawrence, Quebec’s military-memorial meaning pervades

many representations of the place. In *Greater Britain* (1868) the English travel writer and politician Charles Wentworth Dilke describes Quebec's appealing historical picturesque in a way that echoes the far-reaching gaze of Cary's muse. "There is not in the world a nobler outlook than that from off the terrace at Quebec," Dilke writes, before a catalogue of the site's commodities and international trading partners: "Acre upon acre of timber comes floating down the stream above the city" and there are "fleets of great ships, English, German, French, and Dutch" (55).

Henry James described his approach to Quebec and his time there in 1871 as a series of satisfied expectations, as he recognizes and appreciates the landscapes before him, whether for their historical value, or for their adherence to the tourist's picturesque expectations.⁴³ He writes in the imperative of the travel guide, telling us what tourists will see, and what they will appreciate should they approach the city with his knowledge and sensitivity: "You enjoy from here, however, a revelation of the noble position of the city. The river... leads the eye far down to where an azure mountain gazes up the channel and responds to the dark headland of Quebec" (771); the city possesses, he concludes, "an extremely sketchable effect" (772). Years later, in 1913, Rupert Brooke describes Quebec in similar terms, beginning at the Dufferin Terrace, and orienting the landscape around the viewer in terms and relationships familiar to the landscape painter: "the old Lower Town sheer beneath you, and the river beyond it, and the citadel to the right, a little above, and the Isle of Orleans and the French villages away down-stream to your

⁴³ Rudyard Kipling's *Letters to the Family*—an account of his Quebec-to-Esquimaux journey of 1907—describes the Heights with his characteristically bemused humour, writing of Quebec that, "in spite of jails on the one side and convents on the other and the thin black wreck of the Quebec Railway Bridge, lying like a dumped carload of tin cans in the river, the Eastern Gate to Canada is noble with a dignity beyond words" (Kipling).

left” (42). According to J.M. Harper, whose *The Greatest Event in Canadian History: the Battle of the Plains* (1909) is part history, part travel guide and part long poem, one begins to understand Quebec on the Dufferin Terrace in front of Champlain’s monument. There, he says, “one stands upon the most romantically interesting spot in the whole of Canada, if not of the continent of America” (12). Also from the Dufferin Terrace “the whole plan of Wolfe’s first attempt to bring Montcalm out into the open for battle can be read from the landscape” (21). The rest of his collection combines a tourist’s view of the promenade and the battlefields with pedagogical reminders of what a visitor ought to hear—the distant cannonade of history—and how they ought to feel.

Arthur Doughty, the dominion archivist who organized the recovery of the Plains of Abraham, also uses picturesque scenography to make Quebec’s history accessible to his audience. His historical and archeological accounts let the informed visitor locate themselves in geography and history in the same moment. Both authors declare the city's romantic and historic interest, and in so doing develops a progressive narrative that begins in a European war and terminates Canadian peace and commonwealth. Doughty imagines a kind of proto-pacific dream in Wolfe's mind as he approaches Quebec, writing, “at these Narrows of Quebec, lay the fit meeting-place of the Old World with the New. For the westward river-gate led on to the labyrinthine water-ways of all America; while the Eastward stood more open still—flung wide to all the Seven Seas.” (29). The stated goal of the Commission is the preservation and revelation of that landscape, which still reverberates with Wolfe's moment of insight, as it does with Dawson’s sermon. In “The National Battlefields Commission”—included in *Quebec Battlefields: An Appeal* (1908) the unnamed author—presumably Arthur Doughty—describes the view from

Quebec's high ground as a stage set for the pageants of war *and* memory. He writes,

All Nature contains no scene more fit for mighty deeds than the stupendous amphitheatre, in the midst of which Wolfe was waiting to play the hero's part.

For the top of the promontory made a giant stage, where his army now stood between the stronghold of New France and the whole dominion of the West.

Immediately before him lay his chosen battlefield; beyond that, Quebec. (28)

If those who "hear" the past imagine the collapse of the years between then and now, Doughty understands intervening history in terms of the landscape he sees and interprets. While the battlefield's memorials are supposed to be beyond misinterpretation—literally written in stone—the paper-and-ink text can be revised. The model Dawson sets forth, where memory is produced in collaboration between the speaking landscape and the listening subject, with the text a trace of that collaboration, means that these spaces can also be renegotiated, that repetition and return are not necessarily re-enactment. The literary conventions of the public elegy—whether represented in text or in space—give us a form by which to revise our relationship with the battlefield.

For Dilke, James, Brooke, Doughty, and Harper, the conventions of the picturesque and the pastoral become ways of representing Quebec's value, a visual rhetoric instantly accessible to a civilian eye educated by the picture postcard. Further, this traveler's picturesque description renders in aesthetic and spatial terms Quebec's history, and allows citizens—whether as readers or visitors—to locate themselves in a landscape of power, as they are located in the narrative of its history. This narrative includes Dawson's prophecy, the literal structures of military power that are *la Citadelle* and the walled city, and the better-than-natural greens of Battlefields Park. After all, if

Wolfe's actions are represented by an elegiac landscape, a mnemonic geography, contemporary citizens are part of the elegy's consolation, and the elegiac inheritance is an Anglo-Canadian citizenship that finds its origins in Wolfe's death.

By 1903 there was the threat of further suburban expansion, even to the site of Wolfe's death. In particular the unsightly and industrial Dominion Rifle Factory troubled many who wanted the site preserved. The factory was significant because it produced the Ross Rifle, part of an attempt to repatriate the Canadian arms industry, and supply the emergent military, the militia, and the North West Mounted Police with Canadian-made weapons, rather than depending on British and American suppliers. Despite the nationalist and military significance of the rifle factory, it was still perceived as a "desecration" of the site, and upset a number of eminent gentlemen, some of whom organized to form the National Battlefields Commission and have the Plains declared the first National Historic Site in Canada, as well as an urban park like Parc du Mont-Royal in Montreal or Stanley Park in Vancouver. One hundred and forty seven years after Wolfe's death, in 1906, the Quebec Landmarks Commission published their report on the Plains of Abraham in preparation for the tercentenary and the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the first battle. The report surveys the contemporary state of the Plains and the most recent memorial marking his death, erected in 1849. It also describes the unsightly presence of the Quebec gaol (constructed in 1867) and the Dominion Rifle Factory, and warns that if the city's suburbs advance further, all trace of the battlefield will be lost and with it the sacred soil on which Wolfe planted firm Britannia's flag. The eminent gentlemen of the Commission seem to suggest that Dawson's witnessing landscape will no longer be audible if it is modernized and industrialized. There was a

great deal of anxiety regarding this loss. Dawson's call to listen resounds through the literature that represents the Plains of Abraham, and the citizen's encounter with history is often imagined in terms of sound—the distant clash of arms, and the artillery bombardment of the siege echo generations later in the imaginations of those who commemorate the battle. In 1860 Charles Sangster encounters the “sacred” earth of Quebec and hears the battlefield in his poem “The Plains of Abraham” and “The Death of Wolfe” which includes Wolfe's famous death-dialogue and borrows the form and language established by Cary seventy years before (*Mnemographia Canadensis* 135). In 1908 the educator Sir George Ross tells his audience in Hamilton's Canadian Club to “hark” to the sound of battle as he celebrates three hundred years of Anglo-Canadian constitutional history. When one stands at Quebec with a properly patriotic spirit, Ross intimates, one is granted an unmediated access to the sounds of the past; the intervening years are irrelevant and history is present to the sensitive observer. The work of the Landmark Commission is to make the place reflect that synchronicity, and to stage history as a civil spectacle.⁴⁴ This is the space defined as the “horizon of silence” (161) by the phenomenological philosopher Don Ihde (161), which is to say the location limited and defined by the perceptions of the listener, and constitutes a recurring motif in war

⁴⁴ Both John Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc use the figures of speech and listening to describe the ideal relationship with history. Like Ruskin, Viollet-le-Duc uses the metaphor of voice and listening to describe the visitor's experience of an historic site. At the end of *Annals of the Fortress* he imagines the ideal visitor encountering the accumulated strata of French history, thousands of years of human experience contained by a bit of fortified earth. When the site is properly understood by its visitors, they “are reminded then of all the events which this little nook of ground has witnessed, of the ruins that have been accumulated by human passion, and the blood that has been so lavishly shed” (383). Just as ghostly speech recurs in the poetry of Quebec, Viollet-le-Duc “fancies” that they “hear the shouts with which these walls have so often echoed” (383).

literature: the call to listen to the battlefield, to be part of the shared space of speech, and therefore a part of the possible community of hearers.

Once the markers of modernity had been removed, the Battlefields Landmark Commission planned to recreate an earlier, pastoral version of the site, while reconfirming Quebec's strategic and historical meaning in a series of spectacles and re-enactments. For the tercentenary of the city in 1908 the Commission organized an international celebration of Canadian history billed as "The Coming of Age of the World's Youngest Nation. Greatest Spectacular event ever held in America" (*Daily Programme and Guide for the Quebec Tercentenary* iii) which would include "twelve thousand Canadian Troops and the Largest Naval Review of British, French and American Battle Ships ever seen together" (ii). For two weeks in July of 1908 the daily historical pageant traced the whole history of Quebec from the "Indian festivities" that greeted Cartier in 1585 through the end of French rule in 1759. It ended with Wolfe and Montcalm marching and countermarching on the plain before they received a salute from the warships on the river.

In the same era, a number of popular texts were published that advocated for a version of Canadian history that found French and English origins on the Plains of Abraham. One or two are addresses from Canadian Club gatherings, as well as essays from the Royal Society of Canada, pamphlets and miscellanies written by public men with an active interest in official history: Arthur Doughty, who was the first Dominion Archivist in Ottawa; Sir George Ross, who was then minister for education, as well as a teacher and politician in Ontario; J.M. Harper, who was a provincial education minister

and poet-historian; and Lieutenant-Colonel William Wood, a militia man and a co-founder of the Quebec Landmark Commission.

These texts suggest that, for the sensitive and correctly-educated visitor, Battlefields Park produces in space what Doughty and Harper produce in their histories, what Sangster and Cary produce in their long poems, what Dilke, James, Kipling, and Brooke record in their travel accounts. The park's design strips away the unattractive marks of modernity and industry in favour of the wild and green, the uninterrupted views of the River and the hills. Frederick G. Todd's design interrupts the urban with an idealized version of nature, a kind of managed wilderness full of native plants and curved walkways that follow the natural contours of the field (Nelles 309). Having stripped away the intervening years the park reveals what was, ostensibly, always there: the natural amphitheatre, the witnessing landscape that Dawson described in his sermon. However, in order to "hear" the landscape, the park required an interpretive apparatus, a series of inscribed stones that— among other things—track Wolfe's progress from man to corpse over the course of the battle. In the words of popular historian H.V. Nelles', "visitors would thus be able to guide themselves over the ground, from place to place, to receive a physical sense of the situation, reading the land like a book" (309), reminding visitors again of the literary dimensions to the creation of national landscapes. Wolfe's story is central to the production of space, his death the kernel around which the site's meaning accumulates, rendered as romance by hindsight, as the paths of glory lead inevitably and appropriately to the grave.

This familiar and appealing narrative is one way the park locates visitors in militarism's time and space. While the present day visitor may not be able to understand

the strategic significance of a particular site, or to understand the events of that morning in September, or to understand why Quebec matters in geopolitical terms, we have been well taught to understand the appeal of high ground and tragic heroes, and what we lack in strategic insight we may make up in an appreciation of the park's scenography, especially as it conforms to the tourist's postcard picturesque. As visitors find themselves framed by the geographies of war and commemoration, they also find themselves within Woodward's moral order, and the nation-state supported by militarism's later forms. While Dawson argued in 1759 that the Providence of war ensured British victory at Quebec, that Providential order re-appears in the pastoral order of the park and the beauty of its situation among the Laurentides.

4. Sanguinaria

*Alive, the foe thy dreadful vigor fled,
And saw thee fall with joy-pronouncing eyes;
Yet they shall know thou conquerest, though dead!
Since from thy tomb a thousand heroes rise.*

Oliver Goldsmith. "On the Taking of Quebec." 1759.

Poetry is the language of military commemoration in Canada, not only because Kipling's "Recessional" and McCrae's "In Flanders Fields" recur in inscription and ceremony, but also because nineteenth-century poets like Sangster or Curzon argue that it is the work of literature to teach the present-day patriot how to "hear" their history. However, other spaces and practices of remembrance are informed by poetic convention more indirectly. The inscriptions that inform Quebec's historical meaning share much in common with poetry, as is the case with the stones that mark Wolfe's terminal moments. With its

careful line breaks, the typographical emphasis in the original inscription, and its heroic language, once written on paper, the text reads like a poem:

HERE, ON THE VERY EVE OF VICTORY,

WOLFE

RECEIVED HIS MORTAL WOUND, AND AT ONCE WAS

CARRIED BACK TO WHERE HE DIED VICTORIOUS.

The inscription suggests that the Plains of Abraham exist at the intersection of space and literature, of poetry and history.

While this poetic history seems to stretch back to 1759, it is also a product of commemorative traditions established in the nineteenth century. In the first decade of the twentieth century, a group of historians, civil servants and public men formalized the Plains of Abraham as a site of national memory in Canada's literature *and* in its new system of historic sites. The Edwardian memorialists who designed the park framed Wolfe's death as a productive, originary point in Canadian history, with the contemporary, Anglophone nation imagined as a product of past conflict, its current state of peace and prosperity represented by the shared green space of the park and the monuments that punctuate it. For the tercentenary of the battle, the site was carefully revised into a pastoral ideal, one whose meaning is further confirmed by the granite slabs that mark Wolfe's progress from his landing with the British forces, to his death at the hands of a French Infantryman. It is a literal "path of glory" and like Gray's *Elegy*, these inscriptions promise to voice the dead. However, at Quebec the chief mourner is not the poet who gives voice, but the citizen who traces Wolfe's path from the river to the battlefield, grieves, and recognizes themselves as a Canadian patriot in the process. The

real memorial, then, is in the experience of being located in national space-time, of orienting oneself in the landscape, and recognizing its significance.

Viollet-le-Duc's *Annals of a Fortress* ends with a meditation on the human costs of war, especially in contrast to the constant renewals of nature: "the meadows continue to be enamelled with flowers, and clothe with a mantle of beauty the ruins that have been heaped up by the fury of men" (383). Faced with both beauty and desolation, "A feeling of deep sadness comes over us, and we say to ourselves : "What use is it all?" 'What use!' replies at once a voice in the depth of our soul. 'What is the use of independence. What good is the love of our country? What use is the memory of self-sacrifice?'" (383).

Though he recognizes these very reasonable questions regarding the cost and necessity of war, Viollet-le-Duc rejects such inquiry into the links between violence and patriotism, especially in the nineteenth century. Citizens, he writes, should

be silent before centuries of struggle — before that layer upon layer of the bones of the dead, and those heaps of successive ruins which have formed our country's soil. Though often ravaged, this hill has never been abandoned by its inhabitants; the more affronts it has had to sustain, the more its children have become attached to its side, the more they hold to the soil that has been impregnated with the blood of their ancestors, and the more hatred they feel towards those who would attempt to detach them from this ancestral tomb. This is patriotism; and it is the only human passion that can be dignified with the title of holy. War makes nations... War is struggle, and we find struggle everywhere in nature; it secures greatness and duration to the best educated, the most capable, the noblest, the most worthy to survive. (383)

Where before Viollet-le-Duc imagined the continuous renewal of nature in contrast to the cycles of destruction that mark his history of France, in the end of his imagined history he sees a kind of sacred Darwinism at work in both human and natural worlds.

Despite the peaceful, green space of the park, it is difficult to read accounts of Quebec sesquicentennial commemoration without thinking of the inevitability of war, especially in light of events a few years after 1908. The Dominion Rifle Factory produced the Ross Rifle, which was notorious in Canadian history for being too well made to survive the filth of trench warfare, and likely to jam during combat; eight years after the Pageant on the Plains, Canadian soldiers at the Battle of the Somme threw their mud-jammed Ross Rifles at the enemy rather than trying to fire them. The ancient fields of Abraham, which had seen three sieges and four battles, and which were, in 1909, the site of peaceful celebration predicated on past violence, are also the place where Canada prepared for its future wars. Once in England, the Canadian Expeditionary Force lay their regimental colours on Wolfe's tomb in Westminster before they were deployed in France and Belgium, invoking the original Anglo-Canadian military hero in an entirely different war. In 1918 the Duke of Westminster made a present of Benjamin West's "The Death of Wolfe" to the Canadian people, and in 1919 it was displayed along with all other works of contemporary Canadian war art.

The experience of natural and historical beauty so celebrated by Ross and Harper and Doughty is predicated on denial, on the elision of contemporary military action in favour of its representation as an aesthetic form, whether in the war memorial or the idealized pastoral of the park. At Battlefields Park, on the heights of Quebec, in the Plains of Abraham, the citizen hears the cannonade of Canada's military history rendered

beautiful by the intervening years and the work of a landscape architect. The travel guides and addresses and poems all tell visitors what to see, and how to feel, and confirm their rights as Canadian citizens to possess the heights.

There will also be unborn generations who will not only inherit the Plains, but will also shed blood for them. The *Montreal Star* published an essay in April 1899 that was later reprinted in a chapbook full of articles and letters regarding the battlefield which was published to cultivate public sentiment regarding the site. The essay describes a landscape of memory that blends the natural and human worlds as perfectly as do the sleeping lilies of Lampman's Long Sault, or the "granite seal" of Sangster's heights. The iconography of military commemoration—flowers and blood—blend with the green fields of a city park:

The young ladies of Quebec who stroll in groups about the plains on the lookout for the hepatica and violets, the trilliums and trailing arbutus, and other early flowers that bloom in the spring, are reminded of the blood-stained character of the ground upon which they tread each time that they pluck the pure white, bud of the sanguinaria, or Blood-root, and chance to break its brittle stem and tuberous root, from which the red drops fall like blood (8)

Successful commemoration not only transfigures the earth—as the sanguinaria does, or the poppy, or the witnessing Laurentides of Eli Dawson's sermon—but transfigures the individuals who dwell in the shadow of *la Citadelle*.

Nearly a decade before Battlefields Park was established as the first national Historic Site in Canada, the flowers described might be read as the consolatory evidence of return and renewal that often ends formal elegies before the twentieth century.

However, the women who gather those flowers on the Plains of Abraham were left—figuratively at least—with blood on their hands. While the sanguinaria was framed as a reminder of military history, in retrospect it also reads like a pledge regarding future, unimagined wars. If true fortification lies not in the soldier nor the stone wall, but in the citizenry, then the most powerful and persuasive memorial is not the site, but the citizen. At Queenston Heights—the subject of the next chapter—the relationship imagined between civilian and military spheres finds its expression in the Militia Myth, and the militarized history of southern Ontario after the War of 1812.

CHAPTER TWO: THE MILITIA MYTH ON QUEENSTON HEIGHTS

1. Re-Enacting 1812

And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.

Micah. 4:3 – 4.

13 October 2012—a Saturday—saw the two-hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Queenston Heights, and with it a massive, multi-day reenactment of events leading up to and following the encounter: a quick march from Niagara-on-the-Lake in the early hours of Saturday morning, then the battle itself on the Heights, and Major-General Sir Isaac Brock's funeral on the Sunday. The event drew more than 40,000 visitors, and thousands of re-enactors from all over the world, as well as Brock's and General Sir Roger Hale Sheaffe's nearest living relations from the United Kingdom and New Zealand. The crowds were as diverse as the celebrants, including men and women in nineteenth-century costume, politicians, tourists, and contemporary Canadian soldiers in fatigues.

The battle re-occurred on a playing field at Queenston Heights, not far from Brock's Column, near the tennis courts and the General Brock Parkway, which runs toward the Niagara frontier, and across the Lewiston-Queenston Bridge to the American side of the river. The audience stood on bleachers separated from the "stage" by orange plastic ribbon, listening to a play-by-play on loudspeakers, read by a woman who told the "story" of the battle in four "acts," and who also recast the playing-field on different scales, its proportions changing to meet the demands of each narrative phase, as though the event was simultaneously an educational window on the past and a theatrical spectacle. The audience participated in the performance, not only by their presence, but also by their "boos," possibly encouraged by clagues, when the Americans took the heights and killed General Brock, and their cheers when John Brant's Mohawks arrived to save the day.

While the re-enactment of the battle was the afternoon's advertised entertainment, the centre of ceremonies was General Isaac Brock, whether as costume, image, or corpse. He appeared on commemorative coffee mugs, as toy soldiers labeled "Isaac Brock" on their pedestal, on banners hung from lamp-posts in the village of Queenston. He was the man with the gold sword striding between the American and Anglo-Canadian lines before the re-enactment, who fell to American fire in the battle's second act. He was the linen-wrapped corpse in the back of a wagon, piped off the Heights by a red-coated boy with a fife. He was one of the two pine-wood coffins deposited in front of the Old City Hall at Niagara-on-the-Lake, and carried to the door of—but not into—St. Mark's Church, accompanied by a chorus in bonnets and tailcoats. And his remains were beneath the column on the heights before which local dignitaries and politicians made their speeches.

The original Battle of Queenston Heights took place at and around the village of Queenston, Ontario, which overlooks the narrowing Niagara River a few kilometers below the falls. It began on the morning of 13 October 1812, during the War of 1812 (1812 – 1814), when American forces led by Major General Stephen Van Rensselaer attempted to cross the river and cut British supply lines from Kingston to Amherstberg, the home port of the British navy's upper lakes fleet. While the battle was won by British Regulars under the command of British Officers, the volunteer militia figure far more prominently in Canadian representations of the conflict, especially in the nineteenth century. Commemoration in Canada celebrates the battle as a model for engaged, masculine citizenship exercised in sacrifice.

Like the Plains of Abraham, this battlefield is often imagined as a site of distinction between Canadian, British, and American communities, when the United Empire Loyalists who had fled to southern Ontario in the wake of the American Revolution were confirmed as members of a particularly Canadian society—one both worth defending and capable of defending itself. In *White Civility: The Literary Project of English Canada* (2006) Daniel Coleman describes the familial language that dominates representations of the War of 1812, whether it is imagined as a fraternal conflict between Canada and the United States, or a maternal relationship between the colonies and Great Britain, with Canada the hybrid child of British and American influences. Coleman places fratricide at the centre of a story of differentiation, as the children of Great Britain distinguish themselves in opposition to one another. But while Cain and Abel dominate Coleman's account of 1812, this chapter will approach the conflict and its commemoration not in terms of sibling betrayal, but inheritance, where the stuff of that

inheritance is not only the Canadian territorial claim, but the idea of a “native” Canadian citizenship, distinct from both the American cousin and the British mother. The texts that shape the conflict for Canadian citizens—romances of the nineteenth century, the poetry and inscription of the Heights and the Niagara frontier, the re-enactments and ceremonies that punctuate two centuries of commemoration—are preoccupied with the creation of a new sort of person, a Canadian who can settle the land, defend its borders, and produce Canadian families. This new Canadian is the natural heir of the tragically—but conveniently—dead Tecumseh or Isaac Brock, but also Richard Pierpoint,⁴⁵ John Brant or Laura Secord.

And, significantly, the national community is born not only through war, but also through war’s re-iteration in official memory, and such repetition brings with it the possibility of renegotiation. By the same alchemy that makes a disparate group of volunteers into the biological front line of a “nation”—a militia newly awakened and re-made with each conflict—these re-enactments allow Canada’s citizens to imagine other ways their national community might be constituted. When crowds return to the battlefield on Queenston Heights, they also return to otherwise-elided African,

⁴⁵ It is beyond the scope of this chapter to include the whole story of Richard Pierpoint, or to address the Africanist presence in both the War of 1812 and the texts it produced; however, Pierpoint is a fascinating example of the battlefield’s potential as a site of transformation, where citizenship and identity are as volatile as gunpowder. Pierpoint was born in Bundu, survived the middle passage, lived as a slave in New York, and, during the Revolutionary War, joined Butler’s Rangers, a Loyalist regiment, in exchange for his freedom in Canada after the war. In 1812 he joined Captain Runchey’s Company of Coloured Men, and defended the Niagara Frontier. In each conflict, the demands of defence allowed Pierpoint to renegotiate his identity from slave to free man to landholder, and he even attempted to leverage his newly-acquired rights as a veteran into a return passage to Bundu. The Lieutenant-Governor rejected his request, granting him land instead, and Pierpoint became that iconic Upper Canadian figure: the yeoman farmer. Pierpoint’s fascinating journey counters the gross minstrelsy often found in white, settler representations of African Canadians in the era: the American dialect of the Secord house-servants in Curzon’s *Laura Secord, a Heroine of 1812*, Dinah and Black Caesar in Machar’s *For King and Country*, or Sambo in Richardson’s *The Canadian Brothers*.

Indigenous, and female figures of action. Two hundred years after his death, Canadians celebrate Brock's remains and re-enact his last moments in order to strengthen their claim to inherit the land for which he died, and to imagine the transfer of power from British to Canadian hands. When Brock died he left not a singular heir, but a Militia, and with it a new sort of citizenship accessible to anyone who took up arms in the defence of their homeland. In the decades between Confederation and the First World War, poetry, fiction, and drama presents 1812 as a moment of both death and procreation: General Brock galvanizes the local militia into a distinctly Canadian military force; American territorial claims are limited to the lands south of the Great Lakes and the forty-ninth parallel. It is the familial narratives of inheritance that make this *translatio imperii* possible.

On the afternoon of the bicentenary, the politicians and dignitaries on the dais asked the audience *who are the soldiers in your family? From 1812? From 1917? Now serving?* These questions make explicit the link between the national battlefield and the national body, suggesting that to be descended from the combatants of 1812 is to be Canadian in one's substance, and thus constructing belonging in biological terms, where one's national identity is inherited like a genetic mutation. This familial "Canadianness," binding past to present, and present to future recurs not only in ceremony, but also in text, and such assumptions are not particular to the 2012 celebrations: the book published for the battle's centenary, *Brock Centenary, 1812-1912; account of the celebration at Queenston Heights, Ontario, on the 12th October, 1912* (1913), begins with a dedication "TO / THE DESCENDENTS OF THE DEFENDERS" (n.p.). However, the reiterative nature of Canadian military commemoration—particularly the site-specific memorials and the

ceremonies that attend them—opens the possibility for revising this community, and extending citizenship beyond the masculine, Anglo-Canadian yeomanry on whom Brock called in his famous battle cry the “brave York volunteers.”⁴⁶

In its simplest definition, the Militia Myth describes the cultural weight given to the non-professional soldiers who defended Canada in the War of 1812 and in many other conflicts. The narrative reached its apotheosis after Confederation, particularly as Canada was establishing a military separate from, though dependent-upon, Great Britain. Its roots, however, are sunk in the very early months of the War of 1812. In his “Exhortation of 1812,” Bishop John Strachan voices one of the very earliest expressions of the Militia Myth, with its appealing conviction that yeomanly Canadian settlers won the war of 1812, with little or no help from the British professionals, represented by Isaac Brock.⁴⁷ According to the early version of the myth, the heroic portion of the defence force were white, male, primarily English and Scottish volunteers, who were unified in their love of country and united in spontaneous resistance to the Yankee threat. In keeping with the dual cultural work of the battlefield—as definitive event and as recursive subject—Strachan imagines the Canadian militia as heroes of future histories. In so doing, Strachan encourages his listeners to imagine themselves as the potential subjects and agents of commemoration, saying, “It will be told by the future Historian, that the

⁴⁶ There is much entertaining debate regarding Brock’s final words, whether they were meant as inspiration and addressed to the “brave York Volunteers” or rather addressed to Lieutenant-Colonel John MacDonnell regarding the York Volunteers. In *The Pictorial Field-book of the War of 1812: Or, Illustrations, by Pen and Pencil, of the History, Biography, Scenery, Relics, and Traditions of the Last War for American Independence* (1868) John Benson Lossing has his final words as “Push on the York Volunteers”—less a celebration of York’s citizen-soldiers than a command to get them moving.

⁴⁷ Though the Militia Myth does not hold at Queenston Heights, later events—primarily at the Battle of the Thames, where Henry Proctor abandoned Tecumseh to the American invaders, and the siege of Fort York, where Major-General Sheaffe abandoned Fort York to the same—do reveal a distinction between civilian and professional combatants, and a qualitative difference between defending one’s home and defending one’s colony.

Province of Upper Canada, without the assistance of men or arms, except a handful of regular troops, repelled its invaders, slew or took them all prisoners, and captured from its enemies the greater part of the army by which it was defended.” (365)

While the militia is Strachan’s primary concern, and the central location of a new Canadianess, he addresses the Exhortation to what will—a century later—be called the home-front. If the soldier is the ultimate figure of citizenship, those at home who feed and clothe him, and who support his widow, are the thing he : the every-day citizens of Canada, supporting their defence force, but separate from the field of action. Such action also confirms that the Loyalists, “the peculiar care of the British Empire” (365) are a part of Canada’s community, and “merit the farther protection of not being allowed to fall a prey to their former implacable enemies” (365). In return, Strachan tells his home-front listeners, they owe their “parent state” the “continuance of [their] exertions” (366).

Nearly two centuries later, Granatstein cites Strachan’s sermon as one origin for the Militia Myth. For Granatstein, the Militia Myth is a measure of the relationship between citizenship and military service, and confirms the belief that Canada doesn’t “need a professional military [because] every citizen is by definition a soldier: put a gun in his hand and put him under command of the bank manager” (“Canada’s Obsolete Army” n.p.). The professional army is unnecessary, according to the Militia Myth, “so long as the people, organized into a militia, received the minimal training required to protect the country” (*Canada’s Army*). A standing army, the argument suggests, reveals a taste for professional killers, while a spontaneous, volunteer response possesses an uncomplicated heroism because its violence is amateur and secondary to its sacrifice. Narratives of Queenston Heights emphasize the American attack and the militia’s

defence, echoing Bishop Strachan's later contention that it was the weak professional British officers who nearly lost Canada, with a yeomanly Canadian militia the real victor. With the Fenian raids that followed in the decades before Confederation, and the formalization of the Canadian militia after 1867, the narrative continued, even gathered variations with each new conflict, as though the Canadian community needed a regular threat—from Fenians, from Métis, from the distant Boers or the Hun—to reinvigorate its coherence.

Successful defence and successful settlement are constantly linked in representations of 1812, suggesting that the Militia Myth refers not only to specific military commemoration, but to the creation of community more generally. Duncan Campbell Scott's "The Battle of Lundy's Lane" (1908), for example, describes the continuity between labour on the battlefield and the homestead. The poem is a monologue dated 1852, a southern Ontario yeoman's memory of the Lincoln Militia at the Battle of Lundy's Lane (1814). Although the speaker forbids his son Abner to follow him into the militia, he finds his son dead during the battle, the boy having joined the company in secret. Despite grief—expressed not by the speaker, but by his wife who still resents the conflict, forty years later—he is satisfied with his military labour: "But those are the years I remember as the brightest years of all, / When we left the plow in the furrow to follow the bugle's call" (3-4). The conflict renders him "joy," "rapture," and a sense of immortality beyond the scope of the homestead, an experience "worth the whole of life" (83-84). Having entered the transformative space of combat, the poem's speaker understands Abner's death in a way his wife will never grasp, though she "mothered a

hero” (67). It is only in springtime, when the snow melts and the returning sun resurrects the crocuses (77), that Abner’s mother concedes his death meant *something*.

Scott reinforces the link between the two kinds of national labour by describing Lundy’s Lane in pastoral terms that suggest the homestead more than the battlefield: the militia rests in a maple wood (45); Abner goes to war with only his duck-gun, which the speaker associates with hunting expeditions for wood pigeons; the battlefield where Abner dies is filled with clover (42, 48). This underlines not only the literal context of the War of 1812—in Southern Ontario’s “back yard”—but also the Militia Myth itself, by imagining the *levée en masse* as the inevitable expression of an independent settler culture under threat, where each man practices war only so he might sit beneath his vine and his fig tree, on land he both defends and occupies.

Scott concludes the monologue by re-casting Abner’s grave as a warning to invaders and a rallying-point for future militia-men, who will, like him, rise and die in collective defence. Within the poem the sign of the fallen, as much as an attack, triggers the *levée en masse*, so that the soldier’s grave becomes both memorial and promise: “It [Abner’s grave] is set there for a sign that what one lad could do / Would be done by a hundred hundred lads whose hearts were stout and true” (91-92). Despite the apparent resolution at Lundy’s Lane, witnessed by the land’s productivity after Abner’s death, and the return of spring, the speaker ends with the possibility of future wars. If Canada’s British identity is ever threatened again, he says, “a hundred thousand men would spring from these sleepy farms, / To tie that flag in its ancient place with the sinews of their arms” (97-98). This repulsive image—of men’s bodies dismembered to bind the nation’s emblem in place—establishes Canadian citizenship of 1908 as masculine, spontaneous,

sacrificial, and violent. Six years after Scott published “The Battle of Lundy’s Lane” the same discourse of masculine citizenship and military service led far more than “a hundred hundred” Abners to defend France and Flanders with the “sinews of their arms,” and leave their dismembered bodies behind.

Though it will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter in relation to the creation of a Canadian family, Agnes Maule Machar’s *For King and Country* also links the two kinds of labour, again through the figure of the gun the militiaman carries into the battlefields of 1812:

...many a bronzed yeoman, as he shouldered his hunting rifle, or, perhaps, a rusty old firelock that had descended to him as an old heirloom from some long dead ancestor, and as, after the clinging farewells of wife and children, he turned his back on his rude but comfortable homestead, — of the familiar fields he had cleared and tilled, and the animals he had cared for, with their patient, well-known faces looking wistfully at him as he passed, felt a strange choking in his throat, and the unaccustomed tear dimming the eyes that again and again turned to take a farewell look at the home which, he knew, he might never see again. (170 - 171)

As in the case of Abner’s duck-gun, the yeoman’s hunting rifle goes from settler’s tool to soldier’s weapon, a return from plowshare to sword⁴⁸ that Machar also associates with inheritance, since these are familial weapons, suggesting that working, defending, and inheriting the land are part of the same endeavour, particularly for Upper Canadian

⁴⁸ The transformation of battlefield into homestead—figured through reworking of the warrior’s tools—recurs often as a way of eliding the military context of settlement and colonization by arguing that peace and productivity follow on conquest. Compare with Cary’s description of the newly “civilized” indigenous peoples in *Abram’s Plains*, discussed in the previous chapter, where “scalping-knives to pruning hooks give way” (61) suggesting that agriculture is the direct product of British victory at Quebec.

yeomanry. Of course, the national value of such labour must extend to the yeoman's wife, though she might save "from the sword" rather than "with the sword" (or duck-gun). Sarah Anne Curzon's "A Ballad of 1812," which describes Laura Secord's journey from Queenston to Beaver Dams, draws a subtler parallel between military and settler labour, describing the landscape through which Secord walks as another kind of battlefield, one that exists at the edge of cultivation, and which is threatened from one side by the wild, and from the other by the disruptions of war:

For she has left the tangled woods,
 And keeps the open plain
 Where once a fruitful farm-land bloomed,
 And yet shall bloom again. (340-44)

Secord's mission, like Abner's death, preserves the "fruitful farm-land" to "bloom again." This emphasis on the landscape's productivity underscores the way Curzon imagines military action broadly, far beyond the limits of combat, in much the way that Bishop Strachan's address to his congregation identifies them not as combatants, but as the support-system that allows combat to take place, and therefore as military subjects, if not soldiers. After all, Secord is unthreatening because of her femininity, which nevertheless allows her to carry out a military mission, and pass enemy lines in the way a soldier—or a civilian man—might not. Further, Secord's actions are predicated on her husband's wound, taken on Queenston Heights, and she only takes up her mission because he is unable to do so. There is, however, still a hierarchy of labour, one that parallels the structures of space that define military action. Combat remains at the centre of the military-national narrative, and at the pinnacle of commemoration, with combat's

gendered support systems necessary but marginal, and substantially less romantic. Scott makes this explicit in “Lundy’s Lane,” where Abner’s military service leads to “a glorious fate, / Better than years of grubbing to gather an estate” (66-67).⁴⁹

The tropes of settlement and war echo in many texts. In *For King and Country* (1874), Agnes Maule Machar uses historical romance to explore the links between settlement, war, and death. Machar introduces the novel’s central character, Lilius, as she contemplates her mother’s grave. Before the War of 1812 begins, before the deaths of Brock, Tecumseh, or the novel’s fictional soldiers, Machar links settlement with burial, as Major Meredith—Lilius’s father—establishes a church to serve both community and remembrance, the two reasons intertwined by “a desire thus to consecrate, in the way that seemed to him most appropriate, the ground which contained the precious dust whose memory was still so dear to him. The same unavowed motive had led him to plant the acacias and weeping willows” (25). The church, the trees, and the body combine to make the settlement into a literal motherland—as Lilius makes explicit when she observes that it would “hardly seem home without this [grave] spot” (26). Like the compulsive re-creation of Brock’s death and burial, and like Abner’s grave, this early moment in Machar’s novel links the living community with the past through the bodies of the lost, as though true settlement requires the accumulation of dead generations. When 1812 arrives to disrupt Lilius’s life, the forms of memory are already in place, and the graveyard

⁴⁹ While these examples describe the relationship between the War of 1812 and settlement in Southern Ontario, military metaphors inform homesteading outside a particular war’s direct influence. Compare with the extensive military metaphors of settlement in *Malcolm’s Katie* (1884) by Isabella Valancy Crawford, filled with “Poor soldiers of the axe” (24) and “bloodless fields” (25). The poem’s recurring metaphors also link the homestead-as-battlefield with the homestead-as-inheritance: Katie’s father is another of the “warriors of the Axe” (109) whose militarized labour earns him “Outspreading circles of increasing gold, / A name of weight; one little daughter heir” (111–112).

where she visits her mother will also have room for Percival, her failed English suitor, when he dies on Queenston Heights. In work such as Machar's and Scott's, the Militia Myth manifests itself not only in direct descriptions of the *levée en masse* or the celebrated figure of the yeoman volunteer, but in a shifting affective relationship with settlement, figured through the accumulation of sacrificed bodies that render the earth sacred—and Canadian—where they are buried. Family, belonging, and memory intersect at the grave with its “beloved dust,” creating a living community predicated on death.

Productive settlement and family—or heterosexual desire at least—also inform Charles Sangster's “From Queenston Heights,” published in *The St Lawrence and the Saguenay* (1856). Sangster describes a fruitful landscape, the settled town, and while he contemplates death and victory in the context of the War of 1812, his call is not to further sacrifice, but to settlement. At the heart of Sangster's poem is his view of a productive landscape,⁵⁰ his own relationship with a young woman. In keeping with the topographical poems of Quebec discussed in the previous chapter, Sangster's speaker describes his view, but also arranges the site's natural and historical resources in verse so as to render them picturesque. And, as Wolfe appears midway through Sangster's *The St Lawrence and the Saguenay*, and Cary's *Abram's Plains* so Brock—set apart typographically as BROCK—arrives mid-way through the poem, in line 42 of a 78 line poem. Brock's victory is foundational to the landscape the speaker describes, but belongs to the past, whether national memory, or the past in which current inheritances were consolidated. While the speaker may possess “a blood-sealed claim upon the soil” (49) and describe his

⁵⁰ Sangster renders this connection between settler and military labour quite literally, in his poem “Soldiers of the Plough” in *Hesperus, and Other Poems and Lyrics* (1860).

community as “the descendants of [Great Britain’s] Victor-sires” (53), the poem concludes with two technological marvels: the groove left by a canon in the rock on which the speaker sits, and a view of a bridge that crosses the Niagara river, linking the Canadian and American shores in peaceful exchange.

In Sangster’s “Brock,” military death and communal inheritance are even more explicitly linked, with Sangster describing present-day Canadians as “the rejoicing heirs, / The honoured sons of sires whose cares / We take upon us unawares / As freely as our own” (9-10). Suggesting the same speaking landscape that so dominates representations of Quebec, Sangster again denies the necessity of human memorials, because “No tongue can blazon forth their fame” (19). Peace is predicated on war, and a productive, commercial landscape is predicated on the technologies of violence as well as trade. Just as the Welland is a kind of practical memorial to the War of 1812’s geopolitical facts, if not its sacrificial heroes, so the bridge that crosses the Niagara River is the physical correlative of the refrain of the battle’s second centenary: 200 years of peace follow on discord, as do productive settlement, successful trade between sibling-nations, and large, happy families.

This chapter begins with Brock’s body, its centrality to 2012’s commemoration, and the relationship between national relics, national reliquaries, and the construction of present-day community. The Militia Myth becomes a way of describing the inter-relationship between settler labour and settler defence that informs Scott’s, Machar’s and Sangster’s works. That is, the *structure* of commemoration established through celebrated figures like Brock is nuanced to represent another polity: that of the spontaneous volunteer. The shift in representation also allows a shift in affective ownership, with

Brock representing the last of the professional British imperialists, and Abner, personification of the Militia of Upper Canada—imagined through Abner—the first of the new, “native” patriots. However, the actions of 1812 were domestic as well as international, with implications for women as well as men, though the Militia Myth is conspicuously limited in its membership. By appropriating the language of sacrifice—and locating women within war narratives—nineteenth-century feminists used the sacrificial and liminal conventions of battlefield literature to imagine a *female* national subject as well. Such works identify cultural and biological reproduction with militarism just as the Great War loomed on the horizon, bringing with it a limitless hunger for mass volunteer armies.

2. Sarah Curzon and the Heroines of 1812

*We are a band of brothers and native to the soil,
Fighting for the property we gained by honest toil;
And when our rights were threatened, the cry rose near and far,
Hurrah! for the Bonnie Blue Flag that bears a single star.*

Harry McCarthy. “The Bonnie Blue Flag.” 1861.

Sarah Curzon was a nineteenth-century Canadian historian, activist, playwright, maternal feminist, and poet whose work is preoccupied with the mechanisms of citizen creation in the new Dominion. She often describes the relationship between historical events—the singular moment in time, the carefully located battlefield—and their reiteration(s) long after the fact and far from the original location. Community is forged dually in Curzon’s oeuvre: in the moment of threat, which fuses the various immigrant groups of Upper

Canada into a distinct province of Greater Britain; and in the nearly-infinite moments that come after the first defensive unification, when shared memory forges a new community out of the old threat. Curzon's maternal feminism means that gender informs her interest in the relationship between history and community. In *Laura Secord, the heroine of 1812* (1887) Curzon imagines Secord claiming her right to take military action against the invading forces based on her relationship with a wounded veteran of 1812: her husband. Similarly, public mourning for Brock allows Curzon to access the space of combat, otherwise limited to masculine combatants. Like Secord's wounded body, Brock's death becomes a means of imagining a place for female action, whether it be mourning, service, or the preservation of history. Curzon's revisionism turns not on the recovery of a heroic female history, but rather reveals the always-present link between combat and civilian militarism, illuminating the connections between the soldier and the society who supports him, which is necessarily based on the labour and consent of its women. Curzon demonstrates how gendered, familial, racial, and domestic structures interlock with the larger structures of state militarism.

Curzon's work is part of a larger movement to organize Canadian history that belongs to the decades after confederation. The era saw an explosion of historical societies that sought to formalize Canada's military history on paper and memorial stone, and a massive archive of texts that describe, preserve, and celebrate that history. Taken together, the magazines, historical romances, commemorative poems and popular histories produced by local historical societies and interested writers consolidated a version of the Canadian past organized around sites like Queenston Heights. Papers from the Niagara Historical Society, The Ladies' Historical Society of Toronto and the

Queenston Heights Historical Society all serve to ratify 1812 as a point of origin for a distinctly Canadian community in what is now southern Ontario. Despite the disparate origins of its combatants—British soldiers and administrators, yeoman farmers, United Empire Loyalists, Habitants, and Fur traders—the story they tell is always one of unity.

In her 1890 lecture to the Lundy's Lane Historical Society, published as a pamphlet in 1891, Curzon calls Canada a “composite” nation. In her argument, “Greater Britain”⁵¹—with all its implied colonial marginality—is expansive, and less a racial category than a political one, an over-arching identity that solves the problem of Canada’s composite nature by providing a higher order of identification that transcends race, class, and—she argues—gender. If Canada cannot be unified by landscape, language or blood, she suggests, it can be unified by its colonial position:

We are French and English, German and Dutch, Scotch and Irish, Welsh and Bohemian—just like the old stock we now call English—and like England we are ONE when our country is assailed. It has always been so; it will always be so. There is no French or English when our country's rights are in question—we are all Canadians. (*Canada in Memoriam 1812-14*)

⁵¹ “Greater Britain” is a slippery, nineteenth-century category that can apply to the Empire, the Commonwealth, or to the English-speaking world more generally, from Britain, to America, to Australia (Bells 8). It gives its title to the travelogue by Charles Wentworth Dilke, *Greater Britain* (1868), which describes the politician’s travels through English-speaking North America. Duncan Bells’ *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860 – 1900* (2007) describes the development of the “Anglo Saxon community” a global community marked by its relationship to England as a linguistic, cultural, and political centre. The conceptual space was cultural as well as explicitly political: “Grandiose visions of colonial unity found emotive and symbolic expression in poetry, prayer, song, and major architectural projects, as well as through the more conventional media of political thought” (5). “Greater Britain” then is racial, linguistic, cultural, and political category, slippery enough to contain multitudes, spread across the globe, while still describing allegiance, debt, or subjugation to the mother-country.

In similar terms, though more explicitly Anglospheric and Imperialist, W.D. Lighthall dedicates his *Songs of the Great Dominion* (1888) “TO / THAT SUBLIME CAUSE. / The Union of Mankind, / WHICH / THE BRITISH PEOPLES... WILL TAKE TO BE / THE REASON OF EXISTENCE OF THEIR EMPIRE; / AND / TO THE GLORY OF THOSE PEOPLES IN THE SERVICE OF MAN” (v).

As in her poetry, Curzon’s historiography turns on a kind of doubling, so that her pamphlet reflects two significant moments in the narrative history of a community, one that is fixed in time and place and one that recurs in many times and places. Each recurrence reforges the “ONE” she celebrates. For Curzon, the initial moment of defence confirms Canada as a distinct national unit, but so also does the shared reiteration of that moment.

But a community forged in re-iteration is predicated on the present’s relationship with the past, figured in Curzon’s pamphlet and her poems on 1812 as a relationship with death, inheritance, and the battlefield. The title of Curzon’s published talk is “Canada in Memoriam.” While in strict translation “in memoriam” simply refers to memory, the phrase’s associations are funereal, suggesting obituaries, elegies, and all the ways death can be a culturally productive event. The phrase at once consigns Canada to the past as something dead, to be remembered, and foregrounds the fact that “Canada” exists in thought, whether in memory or in imagination. Such repetition requires an incapacitated man in the first iteration at least, as Laura Secord’s authority to carry secrets to Colonel Fitzgibbon is predicated on her husband’s wounds, and the speaker in “On Queenston Heights” takes lyrical action in response to Brock’s death. For Curzon, Canadian citizenship is an historical and negotiable, rather than an absolute, quality. While the

commemorative history of 1812 seems to render that community absolute and beyond reinterpretation—to consign the possibility of membership to an immutable past—Curzon re-imagines Canada, in the process expanding the possibilities for belonging, if not legal franchise. The memorial battlefield is not only a place where sovereignty and territory are defined, nor only a border-stone for national space-time; it is also a place that allows for the contemporary renegotiation of community in the reimagining of its relationship with history.

Curzon imagines an inherited belonging predicated on and imagined through Brock's corpse. This structure of belonging allows even disenfranchised nineteenth-century Canadian women to partake in both history and citizenship as equal heirs to Brock's symbolic fortune. This model for citizenship present in both the 1912 and the 2012 ceremonies on Queenston Heights, a model that entangles ownership with defence, and citizenship with military service, especially as represented by the *levée en masse*. The problem, for Curzon, is not the military construction of citizenship, nor the relationship between war and the nation-state. For her, the problem lies in present-day misinterpretation, which ignores the moral order at the heart of the *levée en masse*, which has included women and children from the moment of creation. Canada possesses a heroic military past, complete with heroines; it is only in the present that women have been eliminated from its stories. Curzon's conservatism allows her to leave intact the structures that organize national community, while re-interpreting them to include a female citizen who longs to serve despite the barriers to that service. Further, she brings to consciousness the truth of the Militia Myth, namely that military action is not only the

work of the battlefield; it is also the work of the society that surrounds the battlefield, and the individuals who support the work of militarism with their labour.

Curzon makes this relationship with history explicit in her dedication to *Laura Secord and Other Poems*, writing:

To all true Canadians,

OF WHATEVER DERIVATION,

THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

In her Introduction to the collection she remarks on a familiar dearth of history—not a lack of event, but a lack of knowledge—on the part of Canadians. Observing the continuity between language, literature, and history within the nation, she recalls her own early education as a writer *and* a British woman:

as soon as she had conquered the merest rudiments of reading and grammar at school, she was set to learn English History, and so become acquainted with the past of her country, it seemed to the writer that there was something lacking in a course of teaching that could leave Canadians to think that their country had no historical past. (n.p.)

Despite heroines like Secord, Curzon's contemporary audience suffers from a problem of perception, since Secord's story only requires "appreciative eyes" to resist the "inertness of Canadian interest" (n.p.) in Canada's past. For Curzon, in her quest for both a national literature, and a national community with room for women, the failure of imagination is political as well as literary.

Curzon resolves two representational problems—a dearth of interest in Canadian history and in its women—through the figure of female service, whether to the nation as an equal actor in its history, or as a kind of national revelator, channeling Canada’s past and making it available to present-day audiences in historical research or historical poetry. Much of Curzon’s work regarding the War of 1812 reframes the definition of service to include possibilities for female action still contained by the conventions of middle-class respectability—action that is domestic in both the personal and national senses, that does not stray too far beyond the conceptual space of either the household nor the borders of the nation, and that exercises itself in righteous defence rather than imperial invasion. In her Introduction, Curzon preempts the charge that Laura Secord saw no direct military action by writing “To save from the sword is surely as great a deed as to save with the sword; and this Laura Secord did, at an expense of nerve and muscle fully equal to any that are recorded of the warrior” (n.p.). In “A Ballad of 1812,” she begins by assuming that the “softer lyre” must be defended as an equal instrument of both war and poetry:

Now hush the martial trumpet’s blare,
 And tune the softer lyre;
 Nor shrink lest gentler tones should lack
 The high, heroic fire. (1-4)

The poem frames Secord’s journey to Beaver Dams as manifestation of a “softer” female courage devoted in equal-but-different terms to the same nation the soldier defends in combat. If Curzon’s Introduction identifies a distinctly Canadian failure of the

imagination, “A Ballad of 1812” attempts to rectify this by reminding her reader that Secord is a national hero(ine)—one both womanly and Canadian:

For many a valiant deed is done,
 And great achievement wrought,
 Whose inspiration knows no source
 Save pure and holy thought. (5-9)

“Womanly” patriotism takes a different form than manly patriotism, and even a different metre if one accepts the opposition between lyric and military modes. Its source, however, remains the same. In its ideal form at least, patriotism is “pure and holy,” indistinguishable for a mother, wife, and patriotic subject from her love for her home, children, and husband. Defending or administering the homestead are equally patriotic acts, and bearing soldiers is as heroic as soldiering.

Curzon explores these structures of gender, space, and military history most explicitly “On Queenston Heights,” which is dated October 12, 1881, and both invokes the simultaneity of national time and locates a female narrator in the middle of the battle’s reiteration. In much the same way that a female voice tells the “story” of the battle at the 2012 re-enactment, Curzon includes the possibility of female service and, therefore, female citizenship, based not in military action, but its representation.

The Militia Myth’s argument imagines citizenship as a function of military service and necessarily exiles women from that community, limiting those who can possess “true” military citizenship to active combatants. Despite the constant female presence in tales of 1812—in Strachan’s audience, in Abner’s mother, in Secord herself—it is difficult to untangle the role that gender plays in this cultural history,

particularly if the definition of “war” is limited to “combat.” If the nation-state and the Militia Myth are predicated on Cowen’s fraternity and service, then where and how do women find themselves within its narratives, and what do these narratives tell us about the relationship between gender and the nation? As Curzon argues in “A Ballad of 1812” and *Laura Secord, the Heroine of 1812*, women are already military subjects, and their separation from combat is not a separation from militarism, but a division of labour within the practice of war and the national project.

And the nation is structured by such divisions. Addressing the link between gender and the construction of national narrative, the post-colonial critic Anne McClintock explores a tension between commemoration and historical action that maps onto the white, heteronormative family. After all, familial language dominates the popular language of citizenship and belonging in the Commonwealth: “*parens patriae*,” “fatherland” or “mother-tongue.” For McClintock, men’s bodies and identities are “contiguous with each other and with the national whole” (62), suggesting a metonymic relationship with the nation. Women, however, are agents of neither history nor the nation; rather, they are its vessel, tasked with engendering the nation’s bodies and grieving them in death.⁵² The boundaries of nation and race are located, for McClintock,

⁵² Writing in Brantford, Ontario, in 1890, Mrs. Dr. Parker argues that “There are two features in nation-building which are peculiarly the work of woman, but which we are convinced have never yet received their just meed of recognition, viz., the physical and the social. What is to be the physical character of the nation? Shall our sons and daughters be weak and nervous and puny of constitution, or shall they have strength of bone and muscle and sinew, and vigor of brain? For answer we must look chiefly to the mothers” (226). A thread of eugenic improvement runs through many nineteenth-century representations of women’s patriotic role, as though in regulating reproduction they regulate the future of the “race.” Compare with the military dimension of Cecily Devereux’s argument in *Growing a Race: Nellie L. McClung and the Fiction of Eugenic Feminism* (2006), where the “New Woman” of the late nineteenth century is associated with racial decline, particularly during the Boer War, because of the “widely noted failure of many recruits

in female bodies as they are regulated by reproductive and marital law (45). Furthermore, gendered bodies are officially unequal because such distinctions are structural to the way citizens imagine national community: “despite nationalisms’ ideological investment in the idea of popular unity, nations have historically amounted to the sanctioned institutionalization of gender difference” (61). During time of war, the relationship between state and body is further complicated, as the somatic frontline of McClintock’s unified body-politic is relocated to the literal frontline of a national battlefield, where the metonymous relationship between uniformed soldier and nation finds its most violent expression. The Militia Myth, with its unexamined assumption that death and belonging are the same thing, emerges from just this metonymy, represented to its audience through stories of sacrifice and the hallowed bodies of dead yeoman.⁵³

Writing of a radically different context for the construction of national discourse, the critic Elleke Boehmer addresses the construction of a gendered national body in post-colonial struggles in Africa and India:

Literary texts...are central vehicles in the imaginative construction of new nations, and...gender plays a central, formative role in that construction.

Postcolonial nationalist identities, iconographies and traditions are refracted through gender-tagged concepts of power, leadership, lineage and filiation, including, for instance, maternal images of nurturing and service (14)

to meet military standards” (22), suggesting that the “womanly” contribution to the Nation is the in the production of useful, moral bodies.

⁵³ My MA Thesis—*We Gave Our Glorious Laddies: Canadian Women’s War Poetry, 1915 – 1920*—is a more detailed exploration of these ideas in the context of the First World War.

While it is awkward to apply a post-colonial critique to Queenston Heights in the immediate aftermath of the battle, Boehmer's observation raises questions regarding the reiteration of past events in Curzon's era, at least, and certainly in the present. In this formulation, writing women such as Curzon contribute to Canada as an imaginative project even when they limit their commentary to the "softer lyre" of a closet drama, rather than pursuing monumental forms. The limited, "feminine" spheres of reproduction and domesticity are, of course, part of the construction of a national fraternity, even when such service appears to be discontinuous with the sacrificial, liminal space of the battlefield. The entangled narratives of family, race, gender, and nation deployed in Curzon's version of war literature are both manifestation of and response to the role of women as national actors and as subjects. In turn, the private, domestic institution of the family and household become a means of imagining the nation, of structuring the Commonwealth's relationship with both its British "Mother" and American "Sister."

For McClintock, the nation, as an idea, transcends time through the domestic continuities of the family, whether that be in the private home or the larger household of the British Commonwealth. This suggests that the soldier's grave and the family home are twin supports to the discourse of military nationalism. The tension between national endurance and individual death also reflects the relationship between genders in a heteronormative culture. McClintock writes that,

What is less often noticed...is that the temporal anomaly within nationalism—veering between nostalgia for the past, and the impatient, progressive sloughing off of the past—is typically resolved by figuring the contradictions as a 'natural' division of gender. Women are represented as the atavistic and authentic 'body'

of national tradition (inert, backward-looking, and natural), embodying nationalism's conservative principle of continuity. Men, by contrast, represent the progressive agent of national modernity (forward-thrusting, potent, and historic) embodying nationalism's progressive, or revolutionary principle of discontinuity. Nationalism's anomalous relation to time is thus managed as a natural relation to gender. (66)

According to McClintock, gender is the modality that makes sense of the contradiction at the heart of national time, in which individual citizens die for the nation, but the nation persists in ahistorical timelessness, despite its historicity. The gendered discourse of the nation, then, thematizes national subjectivity through nineteenth-century domestic femininity, and divides the labour of community between two, artificially separated spheres of action. To be a Canadian woman is not to fight, but to produce bodies, feed them, and bury them; it is also, in Curzon's vision, to facilitate memory. Women produce historical poetry because they are mediums for the static, ahistorical time of the nation, while uniformed men take action and serve as metonymous cannon fodder. Gendering the division between representation and action, between timelessness and history, allows the individual to resolve the confusing relationship between the eternal promise of the nation and the individual, historical construction of citizenship.

As a poet and historian, Curzon uses this structural division to her advantage, casting her poetic persona as an historical figure who accesses the eternal space of the battlefield. Such a position negotiates with both the construction of an "eternal" femininity *and* allows a place for female action-in-history through the poem that she produces in response to that encounter. Similarly, in any feminist re-iteration of Canada's

military history, the author must carefully position femininity as both external to masculine citizenship—in that women were still disenfranchised—and as central to the narratives of a racialized national community. Like Scott’s Abner, or Sir Isaac Brock himself, the body that consecrates the earth in which it is buried is a figure of colonization as well as military commemoration, only confirming the link between settlement and defence.⁵⁴

In *Laura Secord: The Heroine of 1812* Curzon describes Secord’s 1813 journey to warn General Fitzgibbons of an impending American invasion at Beaver Dams. The critic Beverly Boutilier argues that Curzon uses the military context of the War of 1812 to re-imagine Canadian women’s citizenship in terms of late-nineteenth-century feminism. In Boutilier’s words, Curzon’s Secord “redefine[s] the parameters of female citizenship... by asserting a historic relationship between the sacrifices of Canadian wartime and the preservation of Canada as a British nation” (52). In Celeste Derksen’s words, Curzon “attempts to see women’s concerns and values (fictionally embodied in Laura Secord) written into the emerging conception of Canadian nationhood” (n.p.). Derksen further argues that Curzon leaves the gendered spheres of action—public and private, national and domestic—intact at the end of the play, where she is “very clear to show that neither man nor woman has lost their ‘essential’ gender qualities,” though “their understanding of each other’s capabilities [has] evolved” (n.p.). For Boyko-Head,

⁵⁴ In Curzon’s *Laura Secord, and Other Poems*, the poems “For the Veterans of 1812” and “On Queenston Heights” stand on either side of a poem entitled “Loyal.” It is a tribute to the United Empire Loyalists who “Took labour for [their] shield and crest” (10), becoming Canadian, in Curzon’s argument, by reason of their work on Canadian soil, “water[ing] the furrows of this land” (2) with their “blood and sweat” (1), through the military service they render to the Empire, and by rejecting the American republic. The three poems’ relative position further elaborates on the link between settlement and defence, framing each as a kind of national labour, especially in relation to 1812.

Laura Secord is a problematic text: didactic, unproduceable, racist, and politically uncomfortable in its imperialism, but nevertheless part of the early progressive discourses of Canadian feminism, disruptive in form but conservative in content.

While both Derksen and Boyko-Head make compelling arguments for the subversion of conservative national ideologies in the content and form of Curzon's work, the military context of Secord's act remains central and significant. The battlefield is, like the closet-drama Boyko-Head imagines, a place of transformation. Boyko-Head assumes that Curzon's Anglo-Canadian literary-historical project is secondary to her feminist program, while these are in fact dual productions of the nineteenth-century nation-state. The domestic limits of the nineteenth-century woman may seem removed from the work of military nation-building, but Curzon's *Secord* stresses the centrality of the domestic to the national, just as Strachan's argument reminds his audience that *someone* must feed and clothe those military defence forces so celebrated in memorials to 1812.

Boyko-Head and Derksen both recognize that Curzon illuminates Canada's past in order to revise the possibilities of citizenship. Despite the progressive aims they ascribe to her work, Curzon's feminism is perfectly compatible with the more anti-progressive precepts of a military nation: the primacy of racial identity, the insistence on a homogenous national culture, the military administration of territory, the imperial ONE of Greater Britain. For Curzon, such commemorative narratives are compelling because military action necessarily includes women. Curzon's innovation, then, is not in arguing for the right of women to serve, but in recognizing that women have *always* been part of national-military labour, whether they police the race through their reproductive regulation, bear and indoctrinate soldiers, or take direct action as Secord does. Rather

than re-framing military action to include a feminist presence, Curzon makes the same rhetorical move the speakers made at the Queenston Heights re-enactment, in 2012: “our first-nations allies,” and Richard Pierpoint were present from this early, retroactively significant moment of the Canadian military state, and it is in returning to their earlier service that Canadian community can extend beyond the white, male settler culture of southern Ontario. From this perspective, the Militia Myth is a convenient fiction for an immigrant society, one that imagines Curzon’s ONE not through *blud und boden*, nor *jus soli*, nor *jus sanguinus*, but through the—potentially, ideally—more inclusive possibilities of service and sacrifice.

Curzon wrote “Centennial Poem” (1897) for the centenary of Ontario’s first legislature in Newark (now Niagara-on-the-Lake), but she used that historical anniversary to imagine the enormous scale of Canadian history and geography. Despite the distance between Newark in 1797 and Victoria, BC a century later. The text’s narrative travels east-to-west, from Wolfe’s Quebec, to Niagara-on-the-Lake, to Canada’s Pacific possessions, imagining this “golden dower” (48) as part of a westward advance rendered inevitable and righteous by reason of Canada’s imperial context. This language of inheritance and marriage is part of the poem’s recurring reproductive motifs, figured through Canadian bodies, or space, or community: the day of commemoration is “pregnant...full of weal or woe / To millions yet unborn!” (60-61); the Empire “dowers her subject peoples with the dower / Of children, bidding them forget old feuds / And live and prosper in her mother-love” (15–17).

This enterprise has, at its roots, the word of both Britain and God, a spiritual-political *paterfamilias* who bestows upon Canada “her” political and ethical structures, as well as “her” space:

But there was that
 Beneath it all would guarantee its worth—
 The Word of God! His Law! The inspired command
 That Britain least of all can e’er gainsay (61-64)

In “On Queenston Heights,” which is dated “October 12, 1881,” she describes a landscape permanently transformed by its military past, and possessing a reservoir of national sentiment available to those who are sensitive to its presence. Curzon’s Queenston Heights is a sentient witness to history; to stand there, she argues, is to commune with Canadian space/time. Her narrator becomes a medium for history, experiencing—as the landscape does—a supernatural simultaneity, as though past and present co-exist at such a site of memory, at least when there is an observer sensitive to the space’s history. The poem that results from her encounter makes available to her readers a romantic, military version of Canadian history. In keeping with both *Laura Secord, the Heroine of 1812* and “Centennial Poem,” the results of this affective reservoir, this collision of history, sentiment and territory, are imperial.

The poem begins with the narrator locating herself in the landscape by means of the official manifestation of memory: she stands on the Heights, at the tomb of General Brock and Captain Macdonnell, the two visible, named casualties of the Battle of Queenston Heights. The date is also auspicious: 12 October 1881 was the evening before the battle’s fifty-fifth anniversary. The narrator looks from the tomb—where

Macdonnell's and Brock's bodies lie—to the cenotaph, the “empty tomb” that marks the site of Brock's death, and back again. The speaker makes little sense of the place in these opening lines; despite the monumental apparatus that marks its significance, and her own extensive knowledge of its history she is unable to grasp its meaning. Though the manmade apparatus of Brock's cairn dominate the speaker's first encounter with the site, however, it is the natural world that answers her confusion. Not the texts, but the trees—the cedar, juniper and oak—shudder when she commands them to reveal their history, saying, “tell me again the story of yon pile” (6). As they are called to witness, the trees all respond with sound rather than language. The speaker describes the awakening landscape in a repetitive falling rhythm: it is “shuddering” (8), “moaning” (10), “trembling” (10), and “shrieking” (11) with memory. In time she hears the battlefield: the “tide of sudden war” (13), the “booming guns” (14), and the “shouts, cries, groans” (15) of dying men.

Her invocation produces not a narrative, but a re-enactment. This is not through the re-creation of appearances—not present-day individuals in uniform—but of physical sensation, as though the history cannot be spoken, but must be experienced somatically, and sympathetically by the sensitive observer, who hears and shares the landscape's memory and joins the natural world in its grief. The speaker's emotional response models patriotic orthodoxy for her readers. Together, poet and landscape render memory, not as text, but as auditory hallucination and, finally, as emotional epiphany. While inscribed stones mark the site's significance, these are only signposts to the experience of historical meaning, which is produced in the encounter between poet and location. For the reader, the poem is only a trace of that encounter, another text that can induce patriotic sensation in the right medium.

The landscape demands that Curzon hear it, and Curzon turns to her readers with a similar imperative. By line 33 she commands us to “hark!” (23) to the “ringing cheer” (23) of the “battle’s tide” (24) that floods not so much the space in which the narrator stands as her body, which has been rendered a biological conduit for the visceral re-enactment of history—not as ceremony, but as affect. Curzon sets the Canadian response to invasion at the poem’s physical centre, while the York Volunteers press on against the occupying force by line 29 of the 55-line poem. Brock’s death provokes the landscape’s and the narrator’s grief. The response to this death is dual, however: in the present the narrator gnashes teeth and tears hair while the natural world laments; in the past the militia appears as a coherent, local force brought into being by Brock’s death.

In the opening stanzas, the poem is written in third person plural, as though Curzon has become the conduit for history *and* the collective voice of all those who remember Brock’s death. When the narrator encounters—or remembers—Brock’s death and the countersurge of the York volunteers the poem’s syntax disintegrates into aposeopoeisis. Where it had previously been ordered and grammatical, it now reproduces a kind of wordlessness: cries and fragments; the abrupt imperatives that demand the reader “Shout Victory” (34); the “Ah” (37) and “Aha” (30) that represent incoherent cries in ink; “O”s (32) that apostrophize the absent Brock; the disruptive capitalization of “DEATH’S” (36). The chaos is not only typographic and grammatical; it is also an intellectual incoherence, as the present-day narrator weeps for Brock (42) and declares against such weeping in the following line. Soon, Curzon’s speaker has traded grief for indignation and the consolation of hatred. As the speaker’s language fails in a mass of “m” dashes and ellipses, destroyed by the emphatic *truth* of that past, the poem turns

from clear narrative to impressionistic fragments. The initial, bodily, and sensational response to the site finds its most extreme expression in this textual chaos. In the face of simultaneity, Curzon seems to argue, language disintegrates, with aposiopoeisis as one manifestation of the rupture, whether the battlefield's trauma, or its productive atemporality. It is the speaker's gift as a listener that allows her to access this history, but her language fails before the truth of the place, a violence that disrupts both individual human lives and time itself.

From this chaos, however, the speaker finds both refuge and order in the abstraction of commemoration, returning from the heat of battle to the cooler perspectives outside combat. "Calm reflection" (46) personified, intervenes and grants the narrator a point of view outside time, one that organizes her chaotic experiences into a meaningful narrative of sacrifice. "Reflection" returns the narrator's gaze away from the past moment of Brock's death and back towards the memorial, saying:

And as ye peered the dusky vista through,
 To catch first glimpse of yonder glorious plinth,
 Yet saw it not till *I* your glance directed,—
 So high it towered above the common plane;—
 So, towering over Time, shall Brock e'er stand.—
 So, from those banks, shall white-robed Peace e'er smile. (51—6)

The poem ends, not with Brock's death on the battlefield, but with his commemoration. Personified Reflection teaches the contemporary citizen, represented by Curzon's speaker, how to read the site, to see Brock produce and guard Canadian time in death, as the Militia produced and guarded Canadian space.

In “On Queenston Heights” the commemorative landscape is synchronic, so that to remember is to re-enact, affectively, the violent re-inscription of Canadian territorial boundaries. In the same way that the Heights grant Canadians an advantage over the Niagara river and the opposite American shore, Brock’s memorial—reaching higher even than that—provides a viewing platform outside of time. From the perspective of eternity, the citizen can imagine the contemporary Canadian nation as coherent and productive: after all, the poem’s speaker links Brock’s continued presence on the Heights with “white-robed Peace” therefore predicating future harmony on continued military watchfulness at the American border. More than that, a perspective outside of time can be radically inclusive, taking in members past, present, and future—even those who might not, in the moment of composition, be full, enfranchised citizens. Curzon’s poem models the female citizen as a sympathetic medium, one who can occupy, as the dead soldier does, both the ahistorical space/time of commemoration and the historical time of the nation. Curzon uses this position—both within and without commemorative space, and the national community—to find a place for women adjacent to combat, and therefore within its national mysteries.

3. Engendering Canada

*Bride of a day, your eye is bright,
And the flower of your cheek is red—
He died with a smile on a field of France—
I smile for his sake, she said.*

*Mother of one, the babe you bore
Sleeps in a chilly bed.
He gave himself with a gallant pride
Shall I be less proud? she said.*

*Woman, you weep and sit apart,
Whence is your sorrow fed?
I have none of love or kin to go
I am shamed and sad, she said.*

L.M. Montgomery. "Our Women." 1918.

Agnes Maule Machar dedicated her romance, *For King and Country, a Story of 1812* "to all young Canadians" (n.p.), a paratext that identifies the work's intended audience while also framing it as cultural reproduction, dedicated to shaping Canada's future citizens by enhancing their sense of Canada's romantic past. In keeping with the dedication, Machar imagines the War of 1812 through the figure of a family, in terms familiar from both the theories of McClintock and Boehmer, and the Militia Myth. In Machar's text, historical adventures combine easily with marriage plots, and the dynamism of the military-historical novel—with its reversals, its obstacles, its transformations—parallels the private and national aspects, linking the invention of Canada with the reversals, obstacles, and transformations of courtship and marriage. The correspondence between domestic and national stages is a constant reminder of the interlocking spheres of domestic and public life. Moreover, the viability of the marriage that often concludes historical romances speaks—in a kind of retroactive prophecy—to the present day of the novel's composition and audience. The "young Canadians" of Machar's dedication are the product, after all, of the young characters she describes in *For King and Country*.

Machar's *For King and Country*, John Richardson's *The Canadian Brothers*, and William Wilfred Campbell's *A Beautiful Rebel: A Romance of Upper Canada in 1812* (1909) are similar in their subjects and preoccupations, tracing Upper Canada's heroic age and the production of new Canadian citizens, whether—as in Richardson's text—that

citizen first exercises his heroism in the course of the war, or in the case of both Campbell's and Machar's texts, emerges from the genetic comingling of British and American culture on the battlefield or the marriage bed. In each of these three historical romances, the narrative finds its turning point during or directly after the Battle of Queenston Heights, where historical and romantic tensions resolve in death or marriage.⁵⁵ In *The Canadian Brothers*, Richardson's surviving Grantham dies by the old-world blood feud that killed his mother's family, but not before his brother—whom he killed, mistaking him for an American—passes on the letters that contain his confession regarding the events of the previous months. In *The Beautiful Rebel*, the exiled British aristocrat Etherington receives—on the battlefield—the blood-stained letter that reveals the truth of his dissolute patrician inheritance. The letter is delivered by his future brother-in-law, a Loyalist, now American, who charges him with a last message to his Canadian family: “‘Yes, tell her,’ he gasped, ‘I die hating the British; tell her that’” (276). These personal revelations also parallel the book's version of the battle's larger social significance: a preacher tells the remaining young officers that “‘Brock's death has saved Canada, [because] it has stirred the Province as nothing else could” (278), suggesting that Brock's death was strangely fortunate for the Canadian colony.⁵⁶ In Machar's *For King and Country* her hero Ernest hears from his dying romantic rival, Percival, that his future

⁵⁵ The transformative possibilities of the battlefield were already established in *Wacousta*, where Frank Halloway and Charles de Haldimar establish their connection—and the context for *Wacousta*'s curse—during the chaos of Wolfe's invasion of Quebec in 1759, four years before the action of the novel.

⁵⁶ Brock's death recurs as a galvanizing moment in many texts. Compare Curzon's brief account of the Battle of Queenston Heights, published posthumously by the Women's Canadian Historical Society of Toronto in *Transaction No. 2* (1899): “‘There was great excitement as the news of the death of Brock spread over the peninsula; the Militia flocked in from every point; men long past service took up their weapons” (11). Curzon goes on to describe old men and revolutionary war-heroes offering their service in response to Brock's death.

wife, Liliás is still unattached (356), and so renews his pursuit of both marriage *and* Canadian freedom.

Machar's *For King and Country: A Story of 1812* was published serially in the *Canadian Monthly* in 1874 (Fiamengo "Abundantly Worthy of its Past"). It traces the romantic and military entanglements of Canada, Great Britain and America, resolving Canada's future not only through the victory at Queenston Heights, but also through the marriage of an Anglo-Canadian woman to a young American man raised in Canada. Though Liliás—one of four young, central characters whose romantic future is resolved in the course of the novel—seems separate from the story's military action, the romantic struggle begins where the Anglo-American conflict ends, and Liliás must choose between American and British suitors. In Janice Fiamengo's argument the two narratives witness the potential for trans-national *and* class mobility in times of conflict: "Ernest reconciles Major Meredith not only to Ernest himself but also to the class mobility of Canadian society" ("Abundantly Worthy of its Past"), which suggests that a colonial marriage, like a battlefield, is a mechanism of transformation. Despite the careful distinction between gendered spaces of militarism, casting romance in such a military context and linking the erotic choices of a young woman with the future of the nation, further confirms the interconnectedness of battlefield and home-front. The successful defence of Queenston confirms "the national virtues necessary to guarantee an independent and united future" (Fiamengo n.p.), but the moment *also* resolves Liliás' romantic and domestic future, suggesting that the "national virtues" are reproductive as well as military.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Liliás is not the only character transformed by war. Her best friend in the novel, Marjorie McLeod, becomes another means of interrogating the "Canadian Family." A mixed-race character of Caribbean and

Richardson's sequel to *Wacousta*, *The Canadian Brothers, or a Prophecy Fulfilled, being a history of the late American War*, was published in 1840, eight years after the first novel, and includes among its secondary characters General Brock and Tecumseh. It describes the consequences of his earlier work, *Wacousta: A Tale of the Pontiac Conspiracy* (1832), two generations after *Wacousta's* curse. This is Richardson's own generation of 1812, the first children of Upper Canada, born in the wake of the Constitutional Act of 1791. Through the Granthams, Richardson examines the biological and cultural construction of a Canadian subject, one distinct from British, American, and Indigenous models, though partaking of the genetic material and cultural forms from each. When Richardson's Tecumseh meets him for the first time, he recognizes Gerald Grantham as "native" in a new sense.

Gerald and Henry Grantham, conveniently placed members of the Army (Henry) and the Navy (Gerald), are vigorously and innocently Canadian, carefully, and repeatedly distinguished from both the aristocratic British regular officers with whom they spend their time, *and* from the Americans on both sides of the river, whether the unrepentant rebels of the Michigan Militia, or the conniving United Empire Loyalists, who may have

Scottish origins, her Jacobite sympathies and devotion to Ossian seem to argue for a "natural" link between creole, celtic, and indigenous characters, whose un-Christian passions are necessary and powerful, but must be tempered by a benevolent, imperial, and Anglo-Protestant administration. Marjorie's omnivorous romantic appetite is in part a product of her "lazy" mother—a "dark, languid-looking West Indian" (11) who is conspicuously unsuited to life in Canada, and dependent upon a hard-working slave—and her hybrid temperament. Stabilized by her Anglo-Canadian context, and by the implacably sensible Lilius, Marjorie's vigour, literary or erotic, benefits the colony; at least, it does once war-time grief has tempered her passion. In a brief coda to her story, Machar writes that Marjorie "remained faithful for some years in her romantic devotion to the memory of her departed hero; but eventually a new and more ordinary affection took its place, and she became the energetic and high-spirited wife of one who subsequently bore a prominent part in Canadian public life" (265). It is the War of 1812, and particularly the Battle of Queenston Heights, that articulates her development.

lived on Canadian soil for many years, but who have never shaken their Americanness, a characteristic often indicated by their dialect and the inelegance of their expression. The Granthams meet Matilda Montgomerie, an American woman coded as demonic, unnatural or unwomanly in her cold, expressionless beauty—qualities eventually explained by her descent from Wacousta and “Mad” Ellen Halloway. As in *For King and Country* and *The Beautiful Rebel*, an erotic question runs parallel with the military history of the colony: with whom should the heroic Granthams procreate? Which bloodline will populate the new nation?⁵⁸

As is the case in an atemporal battlefield memorial, the past, present, and future of the narrative are unified by location, specifically in the bridge that serves as witness to the de Haldimar inheritance and that retains the spectre of its violent history, still present for the Granthams generations after the fact. Wacousta’s story—preserved in part by the place itself—follows the family from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries, from the Pontiac uprising to the War of 1812, and from the de Haldimars to the Granthams. The mechanism of this inheritance might be familial and private, but its historical context has implications for the Canadian community in the very early hours of its independence: the years leading up to Confederation.

⁵⁸ According to Douglas Ivison, *The Canadian Brothers* is a work of national rather than imperial literature, an argument based as much on its history—published in Canada for a Canadian audience—as its narrative that is less a “tale of the colonies for the centre” than a story we tell ourselves about what Canada’s history might mean. He further argues that novel’s idyllic opening celebrates “native” knowledge of Canadian space, rather than the frontier narrative of *Wacousta* (*Is Canada Postcolonial?* 167). This argument only holds, however, if we see an opposition between national and imperial narratives. In the case of *The Canadian Brothers*, the narrative colonizes the Canadian past, in constructing a clear, originary border between American and Canadian interests. In Ivison’s words, “war...activates borders” (170). Ivison also points out that the novel displaces responsibility for the “war of extermination” against indigenous peoples to the Americans—Tecumseh is a Canadian/British ally (173). Ivison goes on to discuss the “extinguishment” of indigenous claims with the death of Tecumseh, which belies his argument that the text is *not* imperial.

While the name de Haldimar connects the Granthams with the events of *Wacousta*, it is the narrative more than the blood feud, or the magic, that constitutes the curse. It is also a narrative preserved through the story's women, as though the inheritance lies temporarily dormant in women's bodies before it passes into new generations, to be activated by history, and a male heir. "Mad" Ellen Halloway disappears in *Wacousta*, but her children and grandchildren drive the action in *The Canadian Brothers*, as they are driven by her curse, driven by a moment that entangles violence, gender, location, and inheritance. After the death of her first husband—who is also Wacousta's nephew—Ellen curses the de Haldimars. In *The Canadian Brothers* it is apparent that the Desborough family was conceived from the diabolical union that forms over Halloway's corpse, and becomes the agent of the curse.

"Here—here—here," and she pointed downwards, with singular energy of action, to the corpse of her husband, "here shall their blood flow till every vestige of his own is washed away; and oh, if there be spared one branch of thy detested family, may it only be that they may be reserved for some death too horrible to be conceived!" (164)

The context of Halloway's curse is both violent and erotic, linking blood—whether blood spilled or bloodlines inherited—and desire with military action in the sanguineous kiss that seals Wacousta's oath, and therefore Ellen's curse: "by this kiss," Wacousta says after the half-naked Ellen promises the de Haldimars a violent and fitting end, "I swear it" (165). The curse, the kiss, and the oath together herald the doom that destroys the de Haldimar line in the course of two novels.

For Richardson, as for Boehmer and McClintock, gender becomes a way of exploring the individual's relationship with their national story. As heiress to Wacousta's curse, Isabelle Grantham becomes the vessel of this doom, not only through the name "de Haldimar" but by secondhand memories of the violence described in *Wacousta*. She is a temporary repository for the clannish inheritance of the blood feud and the narrative inheritance of the novel, which together destroy her psychologically as well as physically, in the manner of inherited trauma. Forced to listen repeatedly to tales of familial destruction, but unable to speak of them to her mother, and forbidden to speak of them by her husband, Isabelle Grantham's decline is Wacousta's work by way of narrative rather than blade:

Had she been permitted to disclose to her kind mother all that she had heard and known on the subject, the reciprocation of their sympathies might have relieved her heart, and partially dissipated the phantasms that her knowledge of those events had conjured up; but this her brothers had positively prohibited... Thus was the melancholy of Isabella fed by the very silence in which she was compelled to indulge (36)

Isabelle Grantham does not, however, die through the kind of violence Ellen promised. Instead, the consequences of the curse emerge in one of the residual texts that appear during the Battle of Queenston Heights: the last letter that Gerald writes to explain his actions as a traitor and a cursed man.

Isabella's relationship with memory reminds readers that the battlefield is a site of transformation, exchange, and revelation, all qualities that recur as seen earlier in re-enactment long after the original event. It is in the Grantham's story that the link between

combat and family, war and inheritance finds its most productive exploration, each illuminating the other as they collide. After accidentally killing his brother, who was dressed as an American to sneak across the border during the Battle of Queenston Heights, Gerald, the surviving Grantham, comes face-to-face with the family curse in the person of the American/Canadian Desborough, another of Wacousta's children:

Ere it could descend Grantham had rushed in upon him, and his sword still reeking with the blood it had so recently spilt, was driven to the very hilt in the body of the settler. The latter uttered a terrific scream in which all the most infernal of human passions were wildly blended, and casting aside his rifle, seized the young officer in his powerful gripe. Then ensued a contest the most strange and awful; the settler using every endeavour to gain the edge of the precipice, the other struggling, but in vain, to free himself from his hold. As if by tacit consent, both parties discontinued the struggle, and became mere spectators of the scene.

The two men grapple hand-to-hand in a space of private grievance contained within the larger, political conflict. Grantham's friend, de Courcy, seems hypnotized by their struggle, and he tries unsuccessfully to stop Desborough "if [he] would have quarter" (226). "Quarter" implies that the battle has been fought by the laws of rational war. The novel's conflict, however, is far more intimate than the war that has given it expression, though it happens to coincide with the Battle of Queenston Heights. In turn, Desborough's uncivilized violence releases something equally inhuman in the English soldiers, and the novel ends with them driving their American captives off the cliff, where "the mangled bodies of the Americans rolled from rock to rock... falling into the bottom of a chasm into which the sunbeam had never yet penetrated. The picked and

whitened bones may be seen, shining through the deep gloom that envelopes every part of the abyss, even to this day” (227).

In Richardson’s novel, the Brock Monument is not the only cue to memory at Queenston because the biological remains of the Granthams and the Desboroughs—of Wacousta himself, as well as the dead de Haldimars, and “Mad” Ellen Halloway—are planted in the Niagara Gorge. Such bodies echo the civilized, churchyard dead who confirm that Canada is “home” for Lilius. The Brock memorial confirms that it is *not* American; the scattered bones are one possible terminus for the Militia Myth, and its vast, anonymous army of Abners: not the hallowed and individual tomb, but the entangled bodies of a mass grave overlooked by a relict who remembers, and tells their audience the story.⁵⁹

Having established the parallelism between Canadian military and familial history, figured through gender and combat during the War of 1812, Machar, Campbell, and Richardson use the conflict to explain cohesion in the face of a potentially unstable hybridity, to protect a Canada that is neither British nor American, neither settler nor indigenous. In killing the central British and indigenous figures—the English Percival in *For King and Country*, the Grantham brothers with their residue of an old-world blood feud, Brock and Tecumseh—such narratives introduce a new Canadian family: white, heteronormative, protestant, orthodox, prepared to raise sons for the next *levée en masse*,

⁵⁹ The conclusion also returns the reader to the opening chapters of *Wacousta* where the ill-fated Irishman Lieutenant Murphy is buried at the “precise spot on which [he] had stood when he received his death-wound” (50 – 51) because there is “no better grave for a soldier than beneath the sod that has been moistened with his blood” (47). The tendency to leave soldiers where they fall—whether in a literal mass grave, or in the mass graveyards of First World War—informs Brock’s and MacDonnell’s final resting places as well, and Montcalm’s eventual return to the Aux Braves cemetery in Quebec City, where the bodies of French soldiers were interred together.

and to bury them. It is a family deeply indebted to the dead. In each of these works reproduction becomes a means of interrogating the intersection of gender and militarism, in a space where the first contribution of women to warfare is in producing the bodies required for a *levée en masse*, as long as they are produced within the right partnership. This preoccupation with racially, socially, and culturally “correct” reproduction is the other half of the Militia Myth, a biological origin story for the citizen-soldier.

4. The Militia Myth at Fort York, Vimy, and Kandahar

*From Ulm to Metz, from Metz to Munich
 Courage will see the war gets fed.
 The war will show a well-filled tunic
 Given its daily shot of lead.
 But lead alone can hardly nourish
 It must have soldiers to subsist.
 It's you it needs to make it flourish.
 The war's still hungry. So enlist!*

Bertolt Brecht. *Mother Courage and Her Children*. 1939.

According to Deborah Cowen’s *Military Workfare*, the conceptions of labour and belonging that underpin the nation-state are inextricably linked to the social technologies of the modern military—primarily those mass volunteer armies raised to fight in the First and Second World Wars (5) that find their origins in Napoleon’s patriotic *Grande Armée*. Such technologies have forged disparate populations into national bodies since the French Revolution, when “the very figure of the national citizen [was] tied to the raising of a mass army. ‘Fraternity’ was the bond of citizens in struggle, defending the new nation” (16). James Wood argues that a standing army is a less effective social technology because it separates the military from its communal context. For this reason,

citizen soldier advocates in Canada and elsewhere argued vehemently against the creation of a professional military caste. For them, the key to military efficiency lay not in isolating the army from society but, rather, in linking its development to that of the nation, stressing the social utility of military discipline, order, and the encouragement of patriotism among the citizenry that would become its defenders. (8)⁶⁰

Officer Training Corps and weekend Militia camps are part of this project, invoking Cowen's fraternity for civic cohesion as well as defence. In Canada, the Militia Myth is part of this fraternal promise, and still powerful even a century after 1812, as witnessed by a *New York Times* article of 7 August 1914. The un-named author of the article describes the American Major M. J. Phillips of the Michigan National Guard on a visit to Canada in which he took particular notice of its military. Military Service, says Major Phillips, is necessary to the invention of citizenship in an immigrant society. In terms that parallel Curzon's ONE, he writes:

because of the immigration of young men Canada needs its militia as a training school for prospective citizens infinitely more than as a weapon of defense. There

⁶⁰ Wood's history describes the Militia Myth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While it is a fascinating history, it is carefully circumscribed, rejecting the culture of militarism that seems to inform so much of late-nineteenth-century culture in Canada. While this may reveal my own bias—or obsession—more than Wood's deficiency, he leaves unexamined assumptions regarding gender, imperialism and inheritance this chapter describes:

As the inheritors of a vast tract of the North American continent, the central task of these years remained the conversion of wilderness to civilization [sic]. Apart from two expeditions in the Northwest, the only significant Canadian conquests in these years were limited to the exploitation of the natural resources of the Canadian Shield and the breaking of virgin soil on the Prairies. When war did enter into the Canadian consciousness, it was usually understood as something that occurred at the far corners of the British Empire. (4)

are approximately 250 000 young men of age for army service in the Dominion.

Of this number, perhaps 25 000 are militiamen at the present time. (n.p.)

In the context of imminent war, “the Canadian militia is a powerful agency in making good citizens” (n.p.) as well as defending the nation. As a social structure, the militia inherits local significance through the narratives of 1812, particularly those established after Confederation, which celebrate Abner’s spontaneous sacrifice as well as Brock’s death as a professional soldier. By 1914 the non-professional volunteer or militia man is necessary not only for the transfiguration of immigrant into citizen, but also because of the number of bodies required by industrialized wars of attrition. Theodore Goodridge Roberts celebrates the same kind of non-military citizen-soldier during the First World War, writing, “The prize-fighter may make a good soldier, but the mild young man in the corner bookshop makes a better soldier ... The junior clerk who yesterday trembled before the displeasure of his paunchy employer today dies gloriously for England on the field of battle” (qtd in Cook 30). Like the earlier yeoman farmer, the junior clerk’s military labour is an extension of his responsible citizenship, rather than his violent or adventurous nature.⁶¹

⁶¹ The problem of maintaining in peacetime a properly civilized—yet potentially vicious—citizenry is ancient. Writing in the journal *Counterpunch*, the animal ethics theorist Jason Hribal identifies blood-sports as one method for maintaining a taste for violence, whether through fox hunts, dog fights, or bull baiting. He explores an explicit link between blood-sports and military culture in the words of bull-baiting enthusiast and eighteenth-century British War Minister, William Windham: “When the spirit of a proud people is aroused by a call upon their honor, or even by a favorite war-cry, it is not difficult to bring them *en masse* in action; but no such armies could have been raised in such a space of time, had not the arts of military life been much cultivated throughout the land” (qtd in Hribal n.p.), with these “arts” associated explicitly with various blood sports. Hribal offers other examples—Themistocles staged a cockfight on the eve of battle, and at the end of his basic training for Vietnam, an American soldier remembers his commander publically torturing an animal in a manner this author prefers not to recount—that suggest animals are a “safe” site for the rehearsal of collective and ritualistic violence when a legal human enemy is unavailable.

Canadian suffrage debates of the First World War further emphasize the intersection of citizenship, suffrage, and violence, as the Wartimes Elections Act of 1917 formalized the relationship between political representation and the space of the battlefield. The act, which followed closely after the Military Service Act of that spring, linked the right to vote with the voter's racial background, disenfranchising those of "enemy-alien" birth. By similar logic, the Wartime Elections Act enfranchised women linked by blood, or marriage to fighting men. The military contestation of the battlefield, consigned to the past, becomes a means of renegotiating Canadian citizenship as it was once a means of renegotiating Canadian space. The Military Service Act of 1917 only formalized the claim by enfranchising women who were legally and biologically linked with soldiers on active duty. At the same time, the Act also disenfranchised new immigrants, further ratifying the idea of a white, racially homogenous Canadian family born in bloodshed.

Battlefields organize national time as they organize national space, remaking past events into history, and land into territory. The persistence of the Militia Myth suggests that the national *body* also comes into being on the battlefield, a link made explicit by The Wartime Elections Act, and by our preoccupation with Brock's sacrifice as an origin point for Southern Ontario's yeomanly identity. Long before 1917, Sarah Curzon used the War of 1812 to expand her definition of Canadian citizenship, linking military service and political representation, and revealing the place that even the disenfranchised gender has within the discourses of violence, memory, and nation.

Six months after the 2012 re-enactment at Queenston, in April 2013, a ceremony took place at Toronto's Fort York to mark the bicentenary of York's temporary

capitulation to American invasion. The event combined celebration of contemporary Canadian military technology and personnel with the re-dedication of several plaques first installed when the Fort became a national historic site in 1934. The original plaques were the work of the United States Daughters of the War of 1812 and Canada's Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire. Contemporary representatives of those organizations returned there for ceremonies of 2013. At the close of the afternoon's entertainment a new plaque commemorating the contribution of Mississauga and Ojibway combatants was dedicated beside the earlier commemorations, another revision of Militia Myth. The texts at Fort York have accumulated, marking each layer of return to this originary site of disruption, invasion, and defence. As was the case the previous October at Queenston, the ceremonies at Fort York included both current military personnel and re-enactors: settlers, red-coats, militia-men, and Ojibway warriors; costumes beside uniforms; re-built historical buildings beside Bison armoured personnel carriers.

Emphasizing once again the ahistoricity of commemoration, the ceremonies at Fort York closed with a distinctly twentieth-century call to memory: Laurence Binyon's ode "For the Fallen" originally written for the dead of the British Expeditionary Force in the First World War. The familiar words of the Remembrance Day services suggests that time is irrelevant for the memorialists or the battlefield: whether a soldier dies in 1812, 1917 or 2013 he "shall not grow old as we who are left grow old" (13), and is contained within the same moment of silence. Commemorative space encompasses all battles, whether those that are long past, or those who are still to come. For all the afternoon's obsession with the passage of time, the lines from the Remembrance Day service are a

kind of rejection of history, a claim for timelessness that uses a structure similar to the gendered divide that both Boehmer and McClintock identify in order to separate the time-streams of the nation—both the supposed eternity of the nation-state as a structure and the limited, individual lives of those who dwell within it. Like Brock's many bodies, which co-exist in ceremony, and like Curzon's mediumship on the Heights, the events at Fort York formalized the simultaneity of the nation, unifying past, present, and future in the *now* of the battlefield park and its attendant rituals.

As it was on the Heights for Curzon's narrator-medium, national time is margined, not by the pre-national past or by the post-national future, but by the ceremonies of remembrance, as though commemorative space is not only a location, but a persistent moment to which one returns to refresh one's relationship with the past. The ceremonies on Queenston Heights and at Fort York formalize the simultaneity of national time, as the military heroes of the past return to us, in image, in the tomb, the empty coffin, the cavalcade of costumed re-enactors. If the audience finds anything in this re-enactment, however, it is not the bodies of the fallen, but their own subjectivity cast in military terms, a citizenship based on their proximity to battlefield violence.

CHAPTER THREE: THE SMALL WAR AT BATOUCHE, 1885

1. *A Mari Usque Ad Mare*

He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth

Psalm 72:8

On 1 November 1888, Governor General Lord Frederick Stanley unveiled a statue commemorating Privates Osgood and Rogers, two sharpshooters in the Governor General's Foot who died at the Battle of Cut Knife Hill during the North West Rebellion of 1885. Before Lord Stanley or General Middleton addressed the crowd, His Lordship, Bishop Lewis of Ontario made this prayer:

Grant, O Lord, that we and all those in days to come may behold this memorial, may be strengthened to follow their example in showing forth loyal attachment to our Queen and country, even unto death, so that no secret conspiracy nor open violence may disquiet this Dominion, but that peace and happiness, truth and justice, may be established amongst us throughout all generations... Knit together all hearts in love to Thee and in godly union and concord with one another. (10)

Bishop Lewis's prayer formalized the relationship between territory, memory and citizenship in terms similar to Curzon's work on Queenston Heights: the moment of violence at Cut Knife consolidated Canada's dominion over the west; once publicly commemorated, it provoked in future citizens a corresponding moment of contemplation that would express itself in continued loyalty to the peaceful state. The prayer taught its

hearers to imagine that both the physical space of the nation and the citizen's shared experience are products of a poorly considered attack on Poundmaker's camp at Cut Knife Hill⁶² in the week before the battle at Batoche. It also hinged the relationship between past violence and future peace on a public memorial in Ottawa, far distant from both the bodies of the dead, and the military action commemorated, which confirms the North West territories as incontestably Canadian. Finally, Bishop Lewis's prayer, like the other addresses collected in the commemorative booklet from which his words are taken, did not distinguish between Cree and Métis combatants, uniting these disparate parties into a single enemy with a singular aim: the disruption of central Canadian dominion.

Elsewhere in the same commemorative volume that records the Bishop's prayer, Adolphe Caron, Minister of the Militia, sets the North West Rebellion beside other articulations in Canada's history and territory at Queenston, Quebec, and Louisbourg (30), suggesting that Batoche is part of a spatial and historical trajectory that runs from the east coast to the western provinces and from the British past into the Canadian future. Minister Caron and Bishop Lewis celebrate violence that produces and reinforces the boundaries of the emergent Canadian nation, a state whose coherence is reproduced in the private citizen's encounter with violence and its commemorations. In Ottawa in 1888 that link was formalized in the ceremony that commemorated the dead of Cut Knife Hill, but

⁶² Lieutenant Colonel Otter's Battleford Column made the attack on Cut Knife Hill. It was a mixed force of regular soldiers, volunteers and North West Mounted Policemen. This heterogeneity is significant because it reflects the ambivalence of the whole North West Campaign, which was both a colonial war in the "unsettled" west and a police action against insurgents within the nation. Cut Knife was a failure for Otter, with eight casualties who might have been—without Poundmaker's intervention—only the beginning of a rout.

in later years Cut Knife faded as a site of memory for Anglo-Canada,⁶³ and the same debates regarding territory, race and violence are now more often associated with Batoche. The battlefield at Batoche has come to function in the way Bishop Lewis describes: it is an official object of contemplation framed by the apparatus of Parks Canada Historic Sites and by monumental inscriptions. It is, like Cut Knife, a site where internal violence was nullified and the prospective Canadian nation confirmed its imperial intentions *a mari usque ad mare*. In W.D. Lighthall's Introduction to the anthology *Songs of the Great Dominion* (1888)—re-printed in *Canadian Poems and Lays* (1892)—he calls Canada “Imperial in herself” (xxii), by reason of her vast natural resources and the corresponding greatness of her character. In Lighthall's version, Canada's geography, its military history, its resources, and its poetry are all dimensions of the same imperial project, associated explicitly—by the collection's dedication—with the “family of man” and the unity represented by the British Empire. Such unities suggest that the “old wound” of Anglo-French conflict is supposed to be resolved in the ONE of Sarah Curzon's dedication, discussed in the previous chapter, or the total assimilation of Francophone culture and language advised by Lord Durham's report of 1839. Such ONE-ness promises benevolent colonization, an internal action on the occupants of territories newly absorbed by Confederation.

It is difficult to imagine ethical military commemoration in light of this colonial history; however, like Curzon's re-imagined heroines of 1812, writers who address

⁶³ Today Cut Knife is significant for both its isolation and its remarkable beauty. Poundmaker's body was repatriated in 1967, his new grave marked by stones and a stylized teepee at the top of the hill. The site also includes a small interpretation centre related to the province-wide Trails of 1885 exhibit of 2010. Far from Poundmaker Trail (Highway 40) and almost in the heart of the Cut Knife Reserve, it has been vandalized and seems to be rarely visited, despite its loveliness.

Batoche find ways to unsettle these narratives. The book that records the afternoon's speeches also represents in text the link between shared presence and collective memory. These texts represent an act of listening, whether that of the crowd gathered together to observe the unveiling, or the divine audience for the Bishop's prayer, or readers long after the fact who encounter a trace of the day's words. The unified future that Bishop Lewis imagines is predicated on an encounter with memory thematized as an encounter with sound. The prayer's explicit content—resolution, concord, territorial continuity across the continent and into the far future—rhymes with the moment the text reproduces, which is one of unity created in the shared act of listening.

Writing shortly after the Battle of Batoche, Isabella Valancy Crawford ascribes the work of delineating that nation not only to the monument and the shared contemplation it provokes, as Bishop Lewis does, but also more gruesomely to the bodies of the dead. "Songs for the Soldiers" (published 17 July 1885 in *The Evening Telegram*) is a series of short poems about three women who wait at home during the conflict but who are intimately connected with absent soldiers. The introduction invokes "Joy" as a muse-like figure, and imagines the poem's present from the perspective of those who will—like Lewis's future citizens—one day remember what has happened in heroic terms because of the poet's "song." The poem avoids the more gruesome details of battle, instead describing a pedagogical moment between a future father and son as they look on the "hoary urns" (19) of dead soldiers, with the father explaining,

It was a joyous day for us,
The day they made that bold burst at Batoche,
And with their dead flesh built a wall about

Our riving land. (24 - 27)

The word “burst” takes on a grim double meaning here, describing both a collective action and the effect of bullets on human flesh; once “burst” these bodies become a physical barrier that contains the “riving” nation. The three sub-sections of the poem that follow on the introduction—“His Mother”; “His Wife and Baby,” and “His Sweetheart”—describe women who dwell in domestic bliss, waiting for their soldier(s). These women appear to be what soldiers build walls about with their dead flesh, or so the poem’s sentiment and structure suggests.

The rest of the poem’s opening is preoccupied with the discursivity of public memory; that is, not with the material commemoration of statues, but with the textual, portable monuments of “songs,” “notes” and, in this case, private, familial, and pedagogical speech. Crawford thematizes the memorial’s cultural work in a moment when the site’s intended audience understands the memorial’s meaning through an act of listening. Both Crawford and Bishop Lewis link commemoration and its texts with the nation’s unity in the aftermath of internal violence, as though speaking and listening are part of the reconstitution of community. The speaker concludes the first part with a claim for war’s meaning in a national context:

There’s glory on the sword
 That keeps its scabbard-sleep, unless the foe
 Beat at the wall, then freely leaps to light
 And thrusts to keep the sacred towers of Home
 And the dear lines that map the nation out upon the

World. (28 – 32)

The song, the sword, and the lines on the map are linked in much the same way that Lewis's prayer links the citizen, the memorial text, and the site of violence. These elements are further entangled within the community constituted—and represented—by the map's "dear lines" and the poem. As established by Bishop Lewis's prayer and Crawford's poem, the sacrificed, uniformed soldier remains central to battlefield commemoration, whether his image in the monument, or his substance in the urn. A man dying on a battlefield, but out of uniform, is a challenge to the structures of memory already established at sites like Queenston Heights.

In both texts violence rends and commemoration restores the nation's shape, though the trope of mending is countered by the factual history of such engagements in their imperial context, which do not necessarily restore the nation to its original lines, but, rather, establish new borders on the international map. The fifty-eight dead (central) Canadians of the North West Rebellion are useful to Central Canada because they renew patriotic sentiment in the same moment that they extend Ontario's authority in the North West, realizing the Dominion's "Pacific Dream" in the *debellatio*⁶⁴ of the Métis provisional government. Both Lewis and Crawford efface the more disturbing historical truth that violence is not only a response to internal or external threats, but is also the suture that binds territorial fragments into a coherent nation, with memorials to the dead, white, protestant, male Canadians as part of an affective colonization for the central Canadian imagination. To pursue the bodily metaphor, the battlefield possesses the nature of a wound, serving a dual purpose as a site of rending that eliminates the threat of an

⁶⁴ "Debellatio" is the total destruction of a belligerent nation through war.

internal enemy, and as the ceremony of remembrance constituting a scar that marks the healed rent of insurrection.

If commemoration on the Plains of Abraham offered a mechanism for integrating Canada into the British Empire's military and aesthetic traditions, and the War of 1812 consolidated both Canada's southern limits and the community defined by the Militia Myth, then Batoche tests the constitution of that community, *and* unsettles the narratives that describe it. The spatial and national legacy of 1812 lies in a series of conventions regarding the relationship between the Canadas and the United States of America, formalized in the Treaty of 1818, and the demilitarized border established by the Rush-Bagot Treaty of the same year, which was ratified by Ottawa in 1867. The communal legacy of 1812 is the Militia Myth, exercised in defence during the Fenian Raids, and again in the resistance of 1838. However, when "Canada" expanded beyond the spaces defined by 1759 and 1812, beyond the immediate range of the "brave York volunteers," the articles of belonging were also revised. Like the waves of immigration and settlement that mark the years after Confederation, such conflicts challenge the fantasy of a homogenous, Protestant, Anglophone Canada represented by a dead, white, male body like Sir Isaac Brock. The community so changed must either violently police the purity of its membership or accept heterogeneity, the non-white, the female, the Catholic, the Slavic, the indigenous, and the French.

The Quebec Act of 1774 formalized many of the cultural institutions protected in the articles of Capitulation of 1759, with particular reference to religious freedom, French civil law, and the seigneurial system with its unique land survey. The Act of Union of 1840 officially enforced the undeclared war that Durham identified, proscribing French

as a language of legislation or governmental debate, thus supporting Durham's contention that French Canadians should be eliminated not by open violence, but by assimilation into Anglo-Canadian society. It is here that the distinction between French Canadian and Métis politics is made most explicit: where the Durham report argues for cultural assimilation, the Canadian army at Batoche elected to use the Gatling gun.

While Crawford's poem may celebrate the threatened bodies of white men in Canadian uniform, theirs were not the only wounds, and contemporary Métis narratives of the resistance run parallel with central Canada's orthodox memorials. Describing the battle of Batoche in terse, concise terms, Gabriel Dumont was recorded as saying: "The balance sheet of these four days of desperate fighting was for us, three wounded and twelve dead; as well as a child killed, the only victim during the campaign of the famous Gatling Gun" (Dumont 171). If anything is riven in the history of the North West Rebellion, it is the child who faces the Gatling Gun. While the battles described in the previous chapters were fought within and across settlements and saw civilian casualties, the combatants were easily designated, distinguished as they were by national affiliation and uniform. The Northwest was a *mêlée* of para-military police, British professionals, ambiguously Canadian volunteers, American salesmen, civilian bystanders and militia. In 1763 and 1814 hostilities ended with legally negotiated peace. The North West Rebellion ended with a courtroom, a noose, and a village occupied by the North West Mounted Police. The problem of commemoration at Batoche is not difficult to see: nineteenth-century patriotic memorial conventions apply only awkwardly to colonial actions, and the dead Métis child finds no place on a military monument.

Crawford's speaking father and listening son and Bishop Lewis's prayer constitute space as a listener moves within the range of their words; they constitute community as their audience accepts, renegotiates or rejects the text's formulation of Canada's military past. The oral history in which Dumont describes the dead child is another moment of shared, pedagogical speech. In telling his story to a receptive audience—even one proxied by the pen and ear of the historian—Dumont brings an authoritative and insubordinate voice into popular understanding of the North West, as well as a counter-narrative of resistance that has come to dominate contemporary Canadian versions of these events.⁶⁵ Speaking and listening are literal in the case of Lewis's public prayer and Dumont's oral history, and are thematic elements in Crawford's father-son dialogue. Each of these texts demonstrates the way a battlefield collects new meanings with every iteration of its story. As is the case at Queenston Heights, the recursive nature of battlefield commemoration brings with it the possibility of new interpretation with each repetition.

While all war memorials bring with them ethical challenges, colonial actions like Batoche are particularly incompatible with the conventions of military commemoration, primarily because their violence is not limited by the physical space of the battlefield,

⁶⁵ Dumont told his story in a series of lectures and dictations that began in Quebec in 1887 (Barnholden 13), and have since been translated, published and re-published in articles and books about the Métis. His dictations established a recurring genre of Métis response to the events of 1885, one taken up by other, later histories. At the turn of the century, August-Henri de Tremaudan collected survivors' accounts; decades later he wrote *Histoire de la Nation Métisse dans l'Ouest Canada* (1935), and still later it was translated as *Hold High Your Heads: History of the Métis Nation in Western Canada* (1982), a fascinating if problematic early history of the Métis people. These oral histories have become touchstones in the re-vision of Batoche's place in Canadian history, primary sources to which writers, historians, academics and artists return. Dumont's words have been reproduced in *Gabriel Dumont Speaks* (1993) as well as in shorter articles in *The Other Natives: The Métis* (1978) and *War in the West: Voices of the 1885 Rebellion*. De Tremaudan's text was recovered during the Métis Renaissance of the last half of the twentieth century, and reprinted by *les éditions du blé* in 1979 and in translation by Pemmican Press in 1982.

unsettling the notion that combat is separate from civilian life. This chapter will explore the difficulties of remembering Batoche within the cultural conventions established for the Plains of Abraham or Queenston Heights. Such a reading requires extensive context for the military and political history of Batoche, which is a site of resistance, insurgency, criminal activity, or imperialism, depending on the perspective of the viewer. The tactical and political techniques of the “Small War” of nineteenth-century British imperialism becomes a way of understanding the destruction of Batoche, and pose a further problem for later memorialists: how do they represent violence that falls outside the “classical” military tradition? Poems and inscriptions from 1885 to the present day demonstrate the site’s shifting meanings, and as a kind of limit case for military commemoration in Canada, reveal many different strategies for making sense of war’s place in a civil society. In particular, the figure of sound becomes a way of memorializing the site, and of querying the site’s imperial and anti-imperial meanings in oral histories, in dialogue, in courtroom debate repurposed as poetry.

While aurality has recurred as a touchstone in Canadian war poetry, at Batoche it takes on a very specific ethical dimension. In *Listening* Jean-Luc Nancy describes this space as “the sonorous present” that is produced by a vibration that “spreads through space” and “opens a space that is its own, the very spreading out of its resonance, its expansion and its reverberation” (13). Within this spatial-temporal horizon, Nancy defines listening as an activity, a “straining toward...meaning” (6) that combines sensation and interpretation and that “opens (itself) up to the resonance” (25) of “a possible meaning, and consequently one that is not immediately accessible” (6). In contrast “‘to hear’ is to understand the sense” (6). While “hearing” implies a message

delivered, if not understood, “listening” is a communal process of meaning-making that takes place within a shared space.

Theorizing sound in a similarly collaborative, communal vein, Paul Carter uses legalistic language to define the social significance of listening, which is the “equivalent in the visual sphere is the experience of eyes meeting and the sense that this produces of being involved in a communicational contract” (43). That is, even if one cannot interpret the sounds one hears, listening is already a social act, where meaning is shared, exchanged and modified, and the somatic experience of sound complicates the inevitable failure of language to accurately represent the past. For this very reason listening can produce something *new*—not because it promotes literal understanding, but because meaning can arise “dialogically, in the back-and-forth of mutual (mis-)understanding” where the speaker and listener have “the capacity to ground communication differently... establishing a new tradition” (Carter 45).

The listener, Ihde argues, shares their horizon with the source of the sound they interpret; according to Nancy, their interpretation is not fixed, but a measure of their openness to the possibility of meaning. For Carter, even when language fails as representation, the aural connection between speaker and listener is still productive. Poetry and its study is equally concerned with the possibilities of communication outside of representation. Poetry is “a kind of text that deviates from conventionally utile language by self-reflexively foregrounding elements other than the referentially communicative. Poetry, in these accounts, calls attention to structures such as sound while damping the banausic, denotative impetus of language... the intuitive sense that

one can perceive aspects of language without comprehending its message” (Perloff and Dworkin 10).

The concerns and forms of poetry mean it is a genre particularly suited to the problem of colonial commemoration at Batoche. This is not only because events like the battle generate reams of occasional verse, nor because the conventions of historical inscription often behave—typographically, at least—like poems. Rather, poetry and its critical study are already sensitive to issues of sound and voice, whether the literary conventions that represent speech, or the collaborative work of interpretation that exists between poet and audience. The “horizon of audibility” is sometimes the literal space of ceremony, but it can also exist figuratively within the poem, with the paper-and-ink artifact creating an imaginary presence within that shared horizon. Like listening, national memory is also a collaboration, often between a speaker and a listener, suggesting that poetry does not simply lend its conventions to representations of the past, but gives contemporary citizens a way of renegotiating that past, or at least imagining possibilities for renegotiation.

The twinned figures of speaker and listener belong to a familiar commemorative tradition and the civic ceremonies formalized around Remembrance Day, though they were established at many earlier memorials. The questions of voice—of who speaks, and who hears—becomes a way to thematize the constant political problem of remembering colonial wars. Listening, understood as a negotiation between sensation, interpretation, and space, recurs as a way of figuring commemoration at Batoche, from the first triumphalist works of central Canada, to the later, resistant narratives of Métis survival, and more recent manifestations of western alienation and nationalism: the events of 1885

are not “immediately accessible,” and it is history that is more often listened to than heard. In approaching commemoration with these terms and definitions, the present chapter will link the social and spatial construction of Anglo-Canadian settler memory, as well as the dissemination, renegotiation and disputation of Canada’s military history. Bishop Lewis’s civic liturgy may seem to render Batoche beyond re-interpretation, but the very nature of such dialogic memory reminds its listeners that public history is never complete, but constantly being revised as it is performed in moments of national theatre. The two speech-acts described at the beginning of this chapter—Bishop Lewis’s prayer and Crawford’s poem—also establish an approach to commemoration that is both compatible with the classical military tradition to which the Canadian forces belonged, and—perhaps—flexible enough to at least gesture toward the still-present “other” in this internal conflict.

As Sarah Curzon visited Queenston Heights and described a relationship with history figured by the past’s ‘echo’ through the landscape of memory, and as the command to “hark!” to the past recurs in descriptions of Quebec, so the trope of listening appears at Batoche in a new context. Structures of listening thematize the relationship between celebrant and audience within the texts that reach far beyond the moment and space of memory, allowing much later visitors to present their ambiguous relationship with this bit of Canadian imperialism. Like Sarah Curzon’s revised Canadian community at Queenston, the possibility of speech and listening stresses the collaborative nature of communal memory, for the possibility of repetition, and therefore difference, in each iteration of the event, just as the Métis go “back to Batoche” every summer, returning to the geographical and cultural centre of western Canadian Métis nationalism.

Listening also appears in many ways around Batoche's commemoration: the prayer and the poem that open this chapter to the carefully-constructed polyphony of official commemoration today; the recorded oral histories; the re-creation of Riel's courtroom words as found-poems; in Kim Morrissey's *Batoche* (1989)—a "*Spoon River Anthology*, with politics" (80); in Al Purdy's "The Battlefield at Batoche" (1973), which dwells on the temporary, furtive, and open-ended act of listening to history, rather than resolving it. Purdy's poem is an exception to white representations of Batoche primarily because of the focus of his listening, which is not Riel—the attractive public face of the Resistance in much white, Anglophone Canadian culture. Rather than addressing, reshuffling, re-stating Riel's words, Purdy turns his attention to the space itself, and only two named combatants, Gunner Philips and Old Man Ouellette. While Purdy's poem ends with a kind of democracy-of-death, his easy conclusion does not unsettle the productive ambiguity of the rest of the poem. The speaker's repeated question: "do you hear it?" produces a sense of history resolved not in memory, but in the speaker struggles to hear and understand.

In his history of Parks Canada's commemoration(s) of the North West War, Allan McCullough calls the past as an "unstable federation" (190) of facts. In public history it is also a confederation of voices, and heteroglossia has become official policy for commemoration at Batoche. According to the Parks Canada historian Frieda Klippenstein, Batoche's museum work uses a "many voices" technique (qtd. in McCullough 187) to represent the past. In Klippenstein's argument, the mandate for official commemoration is not the synthesis of historical sources, but the representation of multiple perspectives, a mandate that finds its ur-form in the reproduction of voice in

either recording or text. She writes, “in a many-voices context, visitors understand a site and its messages through a collage of vivid stories and images rather than one authoritative description and explanation of an event” (qtd. in McCullough 187). In celebrating the primacy of multiple voices rather than the synoptic record, Klippenstein invokes contemporary conceptions—not to say fetishizations—of pre-contact indigenous culture to support her version of ethical commemoration, writing “It is reminiscent of some aspects of First Nations historical tradition [and]...the idea that a person or group can tell only that part of the story that they have authority to tell...The total picture of an event, then, requires a collage of these tellings” (qtd. in McCullough 187). Klippenstein’s faith in the possibility of a “total picture” of the past is intriguing in light of literary responses to the event, where such totality is always receding from the speaker, whether the collective voices of Morrissey’s *Batoche* or the perplexed speaker of Purdy’s “The Battlefield at Batoche.”

However, the “many voices” technique does suggest the possibility of response to monumental memorial culture, but not by providing an objective “total picture” of the past. The “many voices” technique creates not a narrative, but a location, and the citizen encounters history as a space that resounds with the words elected to represent its past. At Batoche the “many voices” belong to the guides, who develop their own scripts (Carey) to lead visitors through the space, as well as through the video installations that tell the stories of Batoche through the marionette figures of Middleton, Riel, and Dumont. The many voices also appear through citations, with the words of Riel dominating the boards and plaques that decorate the site’s new interpretation centre. While Klippenstein argues that such variety resists the appeals of the synoptic record, practically speaking the

experience of listening produces a biological synthesis, as the subject who encounters them unites disparate voices into a singular experience of sound—synoptic in the mind of the perceiver if not the intention of the historian. To Klippenstein, the “many voices technique” rejects academic synthesis in favour of synthetic presence within a horizon created by the historic site and its apparatus. In official commemoration the past’s unstable confederation is figured as polyphony.⁶⁶

Klippenstein hopes to produce an alternative to monologic history through the many-voiced technique. In *That Art of Difference: 'Documentary-Collage' and English-Canadian Writing* (1993) Manina Jones specifically addresses literary responses to the same historical challenge, positing the documentary-collage as both a significant Canadian literary form *and* a response to the problems of monumental national history outlined in this chapter. The found poems and oral histories produced in the wake of 1885 fit within the genre Jones identifies, one that attempts to open "a gap in authoritative speech for the circulation of alternative discourses" (19). In relation to military literature, such a genre is preoccupied not with an answer to the problem of representing alternatives to the national narratives, but with the process of challenging them through "fragmentation and radical recontextualization" (14). In war literature, such recontextualization is politically significant because it challenges the appealing and

⁶⁶ The idealized polyphony of the Parks Canada installation persists in literary histories as well, as though the real work of the artist is not to translate but to transcribe the facts of the past, to create not poems but assemblages. Found texts are a literal example of this approach to commemoration, and in the case of Batoche’s material, a recurring strategy among poets. Writing specifically of musical composition, Nancy argues that citation, re-iteration, collage and variation are all thematized listening, the trace of the author’s experience of other words, or other sounds, written into the text they produce (Nancy xi).

singular narratives of the nation-state not directly, but by unsettling the forms of patriotic poetry itself, and the impulse that informs many of the works that respond to Batoche.

While he addresses neither sound nor the tension between monologic history and the individual voice, in *Identity and Justice* the political philosopher Ian Angus argues that “location” is a process as well as a place, a verb that describes the production of subjects in conjunction with geographies and landscapes. As such, his argument relates to the texts that “locate” Batoche politically and ethically. In Angus’s words, “to be located” is to recognize “an implicit relation to other places”; and though “location retains the reference to a single place” it also “refers to situating this place in [these] relation[s]” (26). In the case of Batoche such “locative thinking” (26) turns the citizen’s critical attention to the continuous, discursive construction of place and away from more synoptic approaches to national history and exploration. Listening is one way that visitors might locate themselves, especially in the painful and confusing context of post-colonial military commemoration. The figure of the listener recurs in many texts representing Batoche, and readers often find themselves—figuratively—within the range of another voice, making sense of the horizon they share with that other speaker. As well as foregrounding the role of literature as a mechanism of locative thinking, such recurring encounters with voice and sound allow contemporary citizens to “find” themselves in the unstable, ambiguously sovereign North West. The context for this chapter is both tactical and legal, both literary and commemorative. It assumes that military action not only enforces the material conditions of a territory—policing its inhabitants, and fortifying its borders—but is also discursive, defining those inhabitants and borders as civilized, or savage.

The remainder of this chapter will examine first the military context of Canadian action at Batoche, particularly looking at various strategies for Anglophone commemoration as they appear in the texts through which Canadians encounter their Military: poems, inscriptions, parks plans, pamphlets, guided tours. To represent Batoche within the patriotic-heroic tradition of Quebec or Queenston Heights is to mis-represent it, and therefore to arrive at the limits of a form—the national war memorial—on which citizens depend to locate themselves in Canadian time and space.

2. Guerillas, Civilized and Savage

*Whatever happens we have got
The Maxim Gun, and they have not*

Hillaire Belloc. “The Modern Traveler.” 1898.

Why have such unstable forms arisen to commemorate the Northwest Resistance? Batoche lies at the margins of the discourses of nationalism that produced the Militia Myth on Queenston Heights or the national aetiologies of the Plains of Abraham, just as it lay at the margins of the physical Canadian nation of 1885. The problem of commemorating an internal conflict is in finding its limits, especially since the official forms of remembrance prefer battles that are fought between easily distinguished combatants and that end with clear conclusions. At Batoche the tensions that culminated in violence existed before and persisted beyond the surrender: despite the claims of central Canadian memorialists, the Métis are not neutralized, and the desire for Métis sovereignty did not cease with Riel’s arrest or Dumont’s exile, nor when Riel was executed, nor when the Canadian government made reparations to those Métis disturbed by the conflict, nor when Parks Canada declared Batoche a National Historic Site in

1923. While “Batoche 9—12 May 1885” describes a discrete time and place, only when it is represented in monument or poem do such co-ordinates refer to the beginning of white settler dominance in the North West, or the end of Métis sovereignty.

In other words, the constant revisions and reinventions of Batoche as an historical site suggest that, while military action ended, the negotiations of territory, sovereignty and citizenship have been relocated from the generals to the memorialists; the conflicts that produced Batoche as a battlefield, or a murder scene, are still at work. For these reasons it is tempting to modify von Clausewitz’s axiom and say that if war is politics by other means, then commemoration is war by other means, at least in regards to the unresolved, internal conflicts of the Canadian North West.⁶⁷

The formal documents that define and govern war in the nineteenth century were careful to differentiate civil and military spheres, a formal distinction codified in the First Geneva Convention of 1864, which established the Red Cross as a supra-national group, and the Oxford Manual of 1880, which set out more general principles for war between industrialized, western nations. Such international agreements not only formalize the practice of war, but also create a community bound by the text that codifies the practice.⁶⁸ They also define the “legal” combatant—the identifiable, uniformed

⁶⁷ This commemorative problem emerges in many postcolonial conflicts, and the forms of remembrance are often revised to represent violence that, though off the battlefield, is no less a part of forming the nation-state: arrests, imprisonments and executions become the subject of site-specific inscriptions and monuments. In Ireland, memorials to various early Independence Movements (1798, the Easter Rising of 1916) as well as the Anglo-Irish War (1919 – 1921) and the Irish Civil War (1922 – 1923) witness not only the more conventional battlefields, but very particular, named deaths before firing squads in prison, or in the skirmishes of urban, guerrilla warfare. Such a model for commemoration does not rely exclusively on the singular, central monument, instead represents a more diffuse violence within the borders and bodies of the new state.

⁶⁸ These texts include not only the manuals and international agreements, but the documents that declare and conclude wars also ensure continuity of property and commerce for noncombatants even in wartime, defending civilian rights and limiting potential targets to those with military meanings and associations.

representative of a professional army, acting on behalf of a recognized nation-state. Such laws limit not only the technologies of death, but also who may participate, and under what circumstances, ensuring that the legal belligerents of the nineteenth century were almost exclusively nation-states represented by professional soldiers. According to the *Oxford Manual*, “the state of war does not admit of acts of violence, save between the armed forces of belligerent States. Persons not forming part of a belligerent armed force should abstain from such acts” (Article 1), except in the case of invasion when “the inhabitants of non-occupied territory, who, on the approach of the enemy, take up arms spontaneously and openly to resist the invading troops, even if they have not had time to organize themselves” (Article 2.4).⁶⁹ In other words, the same conventions that legitimize the Brave York Volunteers and the Minutemen legitimize the defenders at Batoche.

While it rarely happened in practice, in principle the ideal, nineteenth-century war in Europe would leave civilian infrastructure undamaged, protect property rights and preserve the economy, intact, for its new administration; it would also end in a negotiated settlement and the repatriation of imprisoned soldiers. Quebec’s negotiated capitulation in 1759 is an example of these assumptions at work—the capitulation included assurances of religious freedom, and the opportunity to leave the colony in peace.

⁶⁹The *levée en masse* as a political statement first appears during the French Revolution. “From this moment,” the statement of 23 August 1793 reads, “until that in which the enemy shall have been driven from the soil of the Republic, all Frenchmen are in permanent requisition for the service of the armies. The young men shall go to battle; the married men shall forge arms and transport provisions; the women shall make tents and clothing and shall serve in the hospitals; the children shall turn old linen into lint; the aged shall betake themselves to the public places in order to arouse the courage of the warriors and preach the hatred of kings and the unity of the Republic” (Article 1). In a *levée en masse* there is no separation between soldiers and citizens, nor between military and civilian spaces, nor between munitions and waste products, as is in Article 2: “The national buildings shall be converted into barracks, the public places into workshops for arms, the soil of the cellars shall be washed in order to extract therefrom the saltpeter” (Article 2). While military and civil spaces blend in the document, historian Alan Forrest observes that the extraction of saltpeter from human and animal waste was “every patriot’s contribution to the cause of total war [as well as] a duty that might reasonably fall to women,” (18) thus both maintaining gender categories, and locating women’s labour within the matrix of military community.

The professional soldier's opposite number—a shadow-presence⁷⁰ in the Oxford Manual and the other documents of rationalized war—is the irregular guerrilla, out of uniform, killing and dying on behalf of a political movement or a para-national group; he is not easily represented by the conventions available to the late nineteenth-century memorialist, at least one who wished to be sympathetic to the insurgents. Despite this, Riel invokes the familiar rhetoric of the nation-state in many of his public declarations, from the desire for sovereignty and territorial integrity expressed in representative government to the right to defend one's home. In fact, in direct response to central Canadian threats, Riel positions Métis rebellion as a *levée en masse* as defined by Article 2.4, a spontaneous and legal civilian response to the threat of invasion, one which links belonging and defence within a sovereign Métis nation. Similarly, in the monument to Privates Osgood and Rogers mentioned in the opening pages of this chapter, the singular soldier is a subject for official commemoration insofar as he represents the state, and his death is aligned with all the other deaths that produced Anglo-Canada as a nation, from Louisbourg to Queenston. Those who died for Batoche rather than Ottawa are invisible except as criminals, rebels or insurgents, their treason having rendered them outside the discourses of national sacrifice and therefore beyond the scope of its memorial conventions.

⁷⁰ While it is beyond the scope of this chapter, the 1990 stand-off at Oka, between members of the Canadian and American Mohawk communities, the RCMP and—eventually—the “Van Doos” reproduces many of the same tensions and images, though the outcome was a little different. The iconic photograph of Patrick Cloutier and Brad Larocque shows a masked, irregularly-uniformed indigenous man facing a uniformed, un-masked Canadian soldier, reproducing the asymmetry of a thousand earlier colonial actions, and reminding contemporary Canadians that the “peace” of 1885 did not resolve the conflict.

While integrating Métis guerillas into a national military tradition is a significant problem for commemoration, Riel's Batoche poses an even more mundane puzzle: that of naming the events of Spring, 1885. In the intervening century it has been called imbroglio, incident, affair or unpleasantness, though the commonest terms are insurgency, rebellion and resistance; in turn, combatants on both sides have been called imperialists, criminals, patriots, traitors or rebels. The variety of terms employed demonstrates the complexity of conflicts like this one, and the failure of classical military terminology in the face of internal or asymmetrical engagements, and by extension the commemorative practices that represent such conflicts after the fact.⁷¹ Each designation—soldier or terrorist, patriot or rebel—is also an act of interpretation regarding the nature of the violence, and each interpretation brings with it assumptions regarding the kind of military response one can expect. The North West War was not a border-conflict like Queenston Heights, with its Militia Myth, where citizens defend the sovereignty and integrity of their homes—except from the point of view of the defeated Métis, who are absent from early official commemoration, except as an irrational threat called “breeds” or “rebels” or “traitors.” Neither was it a war fought between internationally recognized belligerents represented by professional armies, like the Plains of Abraham, though Riel followed some nineteenth-century military conventions in his encounters with central Canadian forces. Instead, it was a “Small War,” the nineteenth-century name for what we now call “counterinsurgency,” and an umbrella term for

⁷¹ The problem of remembering Batoche is not exclusive to Canada, and it is illuminated by other asymmetrical conflicts of the same era. “Small wars” in other colonial nations—notably, India, Ireland, South Africa, and Australia—persist in ambiguity, sites of confusion and tension long after the first, celebratory memorials are dedicated. In Dublin the “Traitor’s Gate” is the popular name for the Boer War memorial to the Royal Irish Fusiliers, who fought for the British flag in South Africa, during the First World War and—most tellingly—against the rebels during the Easter Rising of 1916.

military actions that do not fulfill the definitions set by documents like the Oxford Manual. It was fought between a hybrid force of professional soldiers, volunteers and paramilitary police, representing Canada against a force composed of what nineteenth-century military theorist C.E. Callwell called “guerilla[s], savages, or quasi-organised armies” (23) in his guide to colonial military tactics, *Small Wars* (1892). That is, the un-uniformed rebels, “criminals,” and illegal combatants of the Métis North West.

The word “rebellion” refers to an organized conflict between two parties within a state, as one party attempts to wrest power from the other; it is often associated with anti-colonial or liberationist movements like the Jacobite Uprisings in eighteenth-century Scotland or the American War of Independence. An insurgency is a conflict between the party that holds power in a territory and an illegal enemy who is both within and of that state. In other words, it is a conflict between the legally recognized government and a covert internal enemy who is not constituted as a belligerent in classical military terms, nor possesses a widely recognized national status. Neither “insurgency” nor “rebellion” are exclusively military, but the word “resistance”—increasingly, the official designation for the events of 1885—describes an even less discrete conflict. A resistance can be covert or overt, it can be violent and insurgent, make formal declarations of war, or travel underground through the domestic spaces of the oppressed population, articulated in personal acts of opposition, in private culture as well as public violence. In the case of the Métis North West, the resistance persists even when the provisional government falls, unsettling the implicit message of the conventional war memorial: that battlefields mark the origins and margins of epochs and territories.

These terms apply, primarily, to collective expressions of discontent with the officially constituted government of a nation, colony or territory. “Murder” and “treason,” the charges laid against some active participants in the North West War, apply to citizens who dwell within the territory and beneath the laws of that government. That is, one must be within or of the nation to be subject to its laws, while to be a rebel is to challenge the very discourses that constitute one as that subject. The initial response to the declaration from Riel’s provisional government came through the North West Mounted Police, a paramilitary, colonial occupation force in the tradition of the Irish Constabulary and the Texas Rangers of the early nineteenth century.⁷² Their duties were not those of a civilian police force, but extended from border-work, particularly dealing with American whiskey traders, to property crime and the assimilation of First Nations peoples into the reserve system (Graybill 12). While they are represented as a peaceful, civilian police force, they could also try, judge, and execute criminals in what, to a Canadian in Ontario, seemed the distant, un-settled lands of the North West. The slippage between civilian police and paramilitary occupation force informs any discussion of Batoche, both during and after the conflict. While General Middleton organized the siege of Batoche, it was the NWMP who occupied the village after the conflict, continuing their consolidation of the treaty and reserve system, and defending the growing

⁷² While the NWMP were at least nominally a civil force, their organization was based on the British military from the structure of their ranks—one battalion, six companies of fifty men each—to the choice of their red serge uniforms, which forged a link between the “red coats” once stationed at Fort Garry and the western territories’ new police force. To this end they were mounted and armed, as the other, rejected British model for policing, the London Metropolitan Police Service, were not (Graybill 13). The link with the British imperial military was further formalized after the First World War when the RCMP were granted status as a Dragoon Regiment with a “guidon,” a regimental flag on which to display battle honours. For the RCMP these include North West Canada (1885), the South Africa (1900 – 02), France and Flanders (1914 – 1918), Siberia (1918 – 1919) and Europe (1939 – 1945) (“Guidon of the RCMP”).

community of settlers. Returning to Foucault's *Society Must Be Defended*, western Canadian politics after 1885 was war by other means.

In calling the events of 1885 an Insurgency, and in responding—strategically—to this definition with both civil and military forces, Ottawa not only positions the Cree and Métis combatants as Canadian subjects-in-revolt, but acts upon them in very specific legal and military terms. From a military perspective the designation comes with tactical assumptions regarding how wars will be fought. When General Middleton followed Callwell's precepts for the elimination of insurgency, he declared the Métis criminals who had betrayed their Canadian allegiances, rather than military combatants. As Walter Hildebrandt argues in *The Battle of Batoche: British small warfare and the entrenched Métis* (1985) insurgencies are met with tactics otherwise unsuitable in “civilized” warfare. In contrast to a classical war, fought between respectful signatories to the Geneva Conventions, English tactics in a Small War assume that the only way to defeat a local insurgency is the total disruption of the community that supports it, from the irregulars who fire the weapons, to the civilians who feed them and the private homes in which they sleep; after all, “the proper way to deal with [insurgents] is to hunt them from their homes and then to destroy or carry off their belongings” (Callwell 146). In a colonial war, Callwell writes,

Mere victory is not enough. The enemy must not only be beaten. He must be beaten thoroughly. Let there be no mistake about this—the theory of attack when regular troops are pitted against irregulars, differs fundamentally from the theory of attack designed to meet the case of great operations between armies of the first class (151)

Callwell's text formalizes a discursive link also present in the Oxford Manual, between the western nation-state, "civilized" conflict, and the way tactical and strategic decisions constitute one's enemy as "savage." Even civilized groups that elect to use uncivilized tactics in anti-Imperial rebellions are suspect to Callwell, who writes, "the Turks in Montenegro, the Austrians in Bosnia, the Canadian forces when hunting down Riel, had to deal with well-armed and civilized opponents; but these preferred guerilla methods of warfare, and shirked engagements in the open. Organization they had little or none; but in their own fashion they resisted obstinately in spite of this" (31). In drawing on the North West War for illustrations, Callwell positions Middleton firmly within this military tradition, an argument Hildebrandt further elaborates by pointing out that Middleton previously saw action during the Indian Mutiny⁷³ and the New Zealand Wars. His tactics, as much as the fact of a hybrid military/police intervention in the North West, designate the Métis as insurgents, uncivilized shirkers who fight outside regular military practice, and therefore the community of nations.

According to Gabriel Dumont, Riel recognized the rhetorical significance of military tactics. Duck Lake was a clear Métis victory because of Dumont's guerilla attacks on Major Crozier's North West Mounted Police; despite the success, Riel explicitly rejected "Indian" military orthodoxies.⁷⁴ Instead of taking advantage of local

⁷³ There are as many problems with the name "Indian Mutiny" as there are with the "Riel Rebellion," but for the sake of brevity I use the most familiar short hand.

⁷⁴ Writing on America's nineteenth-century military presence on the Frontier in terms that could apply to Batoche, Richard Utley argues that "Army and Indian warred in different styles. The army maintained a system of forts at strategic locations and fielded heavy offensive columns burdened by slow-moving supply trains. The Indians fought with hit-and-run tactics that exploited environmental factors and avoided open engagement unless the risk was small. The individual warrior excelled over the typical regular in virtually every test of combat proficiency, but in open battle this was offset by military organization, discipline, command and fire-power. In general, the army prevailed when the Indians abandoned their orthodoxy and

knowledge and choosing the skirmish over the set-piece battle—the primary advantage Indigenous rebels possess in conflicts with imperial occupiers—Riel arranged a “last stand” at Batoche, the spiritual, political and geographical centre of the Métis nation. Speaking years after the fact, Dumont saw Riel’s tactical decisions as a product of his national project, saying,

I proposed we go ahead of the troops, harass them by night, and above all prevent them from sleeping, believing that this was a good way to demoralize them and make them lose heart. But Riel would not agree, saying that this was too much like the Indians, and that besides we might be in danger of firing on our Canadian friends.... we were obliged to give up on meeting our enemies on ground favourable to us, and, I am sure, we should have made them so edgy that at the end of three nights they would have been at each other’s throats. I yielded to Riel’s judgment. (157)

Like the Oxford Manual or Callwell’s text, Riel’s decision frames war as a discursive act. In defending their natal land in a manner familiar to the “community of nations” a para-national group not only secures their territory but proves themselves capable of “civilized” military action and therefore membership in the discourse community established by nineteenth-century European treaty-making. In rejecting indigenous military practice and a Métis military form—primarily the small, mobile units⁷⁵ so often

fought by white rules, or when commanders abandoned their orthodoxy and fought by Indian rules” (Utley 553).

⁷⁵ Ironically, this sort of mobile, flexible fighting unit is one of the places where classical, western military convention overlaps with the unprofessional guerilla. The NWMP were imagined as a very similar force, a

deployed in the Buffalo hunt and formalized in *The Laws of the Prairie*— Riel actively positions the Métis as not-“Indian,” but partaking of a western, “civilized” commitment to fixed fortifications and a clearly designated battlefield.⁷⁶

However, Riel also recognized that the Métis held only a tenuous connection to that community, and one that might exist textually in the many treaties that bound western and central Canada, but could easily be eliminated by the Gatling gun. Though he attempted to enact Métis nationhood on the battlefield in both the fact and the tactics of his defence, the opposing side did not see a sovereign polity with the privilege to wage civilized war or even defend their homes. On the second evening of the battle of Batoche Gabriel Dumont remembered searching the Canadian lines for ammunition and finding illegal ordnance. He said,

I was amazed when I was shown the exploding balls. We thought it was understood between nations that only mortars could be explosive, as their debris was very destructive. But for a man in combat to be exposed to exploding bullets was to cause a terrible wound and certain death, which was against the basic principles of war. You wanted to score a direct hit, and temporarily disable, but not necessarily kill, the enemy soldiers... The government troops committed a

company of mixed arms able to move quickly from place to place, called a “flying column,” the same name given to Middleton’s, Otter’s and Strange’s forces.

⁷⁶ Riel’s rejection of guerrilla tactics is particularly ironic given the role out-of-uniform heroism plays in earlier independence movements, particularly the American War of Independence. The “native” tactics of the Minutemen are the constant subject of celebration, a reminder that an army’s “uncivilized” violence is less important than white skin, especially when they are the victor.

huge crime against humanity and against the rights of the men of the Métis nation
(70–1)

Dumont’s statement distinguishes between wounding and killing, between civilized violence and annihilation. While Riel imagined that the Métis existed within the discourses of the western nation-state, Dumont recognized their separation from that community in the military tactics that defeated them. After all, Canada is a party to the “Declaration renouncing the use in time of war, of explosive projectiles under 400 grammes weight” (1868) also known as the St Petersburg Declaration.⁷⁷ If General Middleton had seen the Métis as national or even human subjects, his choice of ordnance would have rendered him uncivilized, engaged in “not war, but murder” in the words of General Sherman.⁷⁸

In Riel’s argument Canada had violated—and therefore rendered null—the treaties that bound the Métis to confederation, which in turn violated the Law of the Nations: “the Manitoba treaty⁷⁹ has not been fulfilled... there were two societies who treated together. One was small, but in its smallness it had its rights. The other was great, but in its greatness it had no greater rights than the rights of the small, because the right is the same for every one” (Queen v. Louis Riel 160). According to the transcript of his

⁷⁷ Canada does not appear as a signatory, but as a party to the United Kingdom’s signature; however, the Declaration is still “on the books” in Ottawa as a binding agreement.

⁷⁸ Advances in the technologies of death combine uncomfortably with the chivalric codes that are supposed to guide the citizen-soldier. Years before Batoche, during the American Civil War, “General Grant deplored the exploding musket balls used by the South as ‘barbarous’ and General Sherman became enraged at an early form of land mine (‘This was not war, but murder’), but the weapons were not exactly dropped from the growing armory” (Braudy 252). Further, if *General Sherman* suggests one’s actions are murderous rather than soldierly, one is probably far beyond the pale of “civilized” war.

⁷⁹ Riel’s argument regarded Section 31 of the Manitoba Act of 1870, which promised that the land grants made by the Hudson’s Bay Company would be honoured by the new administration.

trial, Riel used the courtroom in much the way he used the battlefield that preceded it, and the petitions and treaties that preceded the battle.

In these statements Riel draws his audience's attention to the discursive construction of community, while elsewhere he invokes the absolute and inalienable relationship between community and place, between "nation" as an idea, and "nation" as location. In Riel's argument, the Law of Nations—invoked elsewhere in his archive as the "God of Nations"—is the ultimate source of human authority, and a nation that does not respect such transcendent principles is without authority over its citizens. He claims the right of property by both divine and human law, and the inalienable rights to his homeland by way of his blood, his romantic nationalism and his divine mandate. At his trial he said,

Who starts the nations? The very one who creates them, God. God is the master of the universe, our planet is his land, and the nation and the tribes are members of His family, and as a good father, he gives a portion of the lands to that nation, to that tribe, to everyone, that is his heritage, that is his share of the inheritance
(Queen V. Riel 358)

According to Riel, a race occupies its lands by reason of divine will rather than labour or ownership. An alternative interpretation of the Abrahamic covenant that renders "Canadian" the land *a mari usque ad mare*, Riel's mandate is biblical as he writes in 1884 "*les sauvages de l'amerique du Nord sont Juifs et du plus pur sang d'Abraham, a l'exception des esquimaux qui viennent du Maroc*" (Riel 2:39). Further, the creation of races and the creation of places are continuous, two halves of a divine plan: "*Dieu est le Pere des nations et des tribus. Il ne peut les creer sans les localiser*" (Riel 3:274). A

community cannot exist without a landscape, and there is no ideology without—as Lefebvre wrote—“a space to which it refers” (44). As Southern Ontario is fortified by the volunteer deaths at Queenston and Lundy’s Lane, so might Métis deaths fortify Riel’s imagined Assiniboia.

In discussing Riel’s contribution to Canadian civil society, Ian Angus argues that the documents of Métis resistance illuminate the link between defending and inhabiting a territory. This is not only because—practically speaking—one holds dominion over the space one defends, but because such military defence constitutes “inhabitation” in a legal as well as a literal sense. Angus cites Riel’s “Proclamation to the Inhabitants of the North and the North-West” where Riel links the declaration of ownership with military defence and biological continuity: “We possess to-day, without partition, almost the half of a continent. The expulsion or annihilation of the invaders has rendered our land natal to its children” (Riel, “To the Inhabitants of the North and the North-West” 78). Angus argues that “Inhabitation of the land allows one to pass it on to one’s children, to whom it becomes a native land. These children, whatever the origins of their parents, become a people through such inhabitation over generations; it is this which grounds their right to self-government” (Angus “Louis Riel” 887 – 8). Article Three of the “Declaration” of 1869 similarly links inhabitation with active defence, as the provisional government at Fort Garry declares that “by sending an expedition... to drive back Mr. William McDougall and his companions coming in the name of Canada... we have but acted conformably to that sacred right which commands every citizen to offer energetic opposition to prevent his country being enslaved” (“Louis Riel” 43 - 44). According to Angus such an action produces two effects: the physical defence of territory by the Métis

and the rhetorical impact of that defence, because it constitutes “inhabitation” in military and civil terms, both the performance and the pragmatic enforcement of territorial integrity. Angus writes that the “capability for self-defence shows that they *have* successfully inhabited the land. It is this *inhabitation* that grounds their existence as a people and thus their *right* to choose their own government” (“Louis Riel” 888). Ironically, Riel’s rejection of guerrilla tactics undermines his claim to defend the North West against the invading Canadian forces, and therefore inhabit it. Though they constituted a legal *levée en masse* according to the Oxford Manual, their deaths did not bring nations into being as did the Anglo-Canadian volunteers at Queenston. The miserable reality is that Métis men could not be sacrificial citizen-soldiers in the same way that white, Canadian men were. After the fact, though, Riel’s hanged body remains as a signifier of all these discourses of nationalism, violence and colonization, his conflicting identities contested as he is prophet, traitor, nationalist and relict of Canadian multiculturalism all at once.

In his *Reminiscences of a Bungler, by One of the Bunglers* (1887) Lewis Redman Ord describes his experiences with the Dominion Surveyors’ Intelligence Corps, a temporary unit formed in Ottawa by those surveyors who could not find their regular work in the North West because of the insurrections. The text is a glib and critical account of the battles of Fish Creek, Batoche and Frenchman Butte; part travelogue, part memoir, it follows the Corps from Ottawa to Fort Pitt during the spring and summer of 1885. Ord frames his work as a corrective for the sentimental celebrations of central Canada after the war, and particularly the lionization of General Middleton, whom Ord describes as a cowardly, jam-eating Englishman who won more by accident than skill.

Ord's account describes a confusing and poorly-organized engagement, in which the interested parties—British, Canadian, Métis, American, Sioux and Cree—chase one another through a poorly-understood countryside, with the Anglo-Canadian officers lionized by the central Canadian public, and the practical work of war and occupation done by the dirty, but knowledgeable, surveyor's corps. Near the end of his account, Ord celebrates the charge on Batoche and imagines killing not the Canadian Métis, but the explicitly *American* Sioux:

We are not attacking our fellow-subjects, hardly our fellow-creatures; we are attacking a set of scoundrelly Sioux and their allies whose fierce war-whoops when a wounded or dead man was brought in still echo about us. Knowing as we do that whatever few contemptible grievances the halfbreeds may have had, the Sioux had none and that only their love of blood and plunder brought them to Riel's camp, for us every man is an Indian (91- 92)

Ord's account is marked by mis-recognition and slippages that are the causes and consequences of Callwell's small wars, ambiguities that are only resolved in violence and the *debellatio* of the Métis state. These are slippages between British and Central Canadian military practice, between American and Western Canadian preoccupations and character, between Sioux and Cree, between "Indian" and Métis. In the end of the above passage, however, the only real distinction is racial. In the moment of the attack on Batoche, Ord reframes his private acts of violence as vengeance for the violation of American civilians, eliminating all debate regarding Métis "grievance" in order to imagine his actions as an attack on non-Canadian criminals. In keeping with General Middleton's tactics, Ord casts the campaign as a battle between civilization and savagery,

paralleling a racial binary in which whiteness transcends the nation-state as the ultimate object of allegiance, and effacing the difference between criminal-American-Sioux and resistant-Canadian-Métis.

Ord's rage confirms that the real dialectic of the Small War is racial. The Métis were a problem for central Canada in part because their racial identity unsettled the categories of citizenship established by the treaty system. The rent at the heart of the Métis story in Canada is not only in the rebellion, or the child before the Gatling gun, or Riel's execution, but the failure in cultural and political representation for the non-white, non-"Indian" polity, a failure that finds its origins in the transfer of power between the Hudson's Bay Company and the new Dominion in 1869. Speaking in the House of Commons on 6 July 1885, Prime Minister John A. MacDonald described the problems of 1885 in administrative terms, with race as an uncomplicated signifier for the citizen's relationship with the state. MacDonald tells the commons that, "the half-breeds must be considered either as white men or as Indians" and goes on to say,

A great many of [the Métis] chose to be considered as Indians, to go to the bands of their brothers to enjoy all the advantages of the treaties, to get their annuities, their supplies, and the presents that were given to them. Others said: No; we are white men; we will be considered as white men; we will have the right of white men; and if so, they had the same rights as other white men living outside of the Province of Manitoba. (3114)

To John A Macdonald, "Métis" is an impossible category, and in order to be included within the Canadian community, the Métis must declare their racial allegiances, and

submit to the administrative distinctions established by the Indian Act of 1876 as they submit to the uncivilized tactics of the Small War.

3. Back to Batoche

*We brought away from battle
And much their land bemoaned them
Two thousand head of cattle
And the head of him who owned them.
Enyfed King of Dyfed,
His head is borne before us
His wine and beasts supply our feasts
And his overthrow, our chorus.*

Thomas Love Peacock. "The War-song of Dinas Vawr." 1829.

While the capitulation of Quebec was a negotiated surrender that left intact French civil law, property, some religious freedoms, and even the small arms carried by Montcalm's garrison as they left the fort, Batoche ended in *debellatio* and execution. The settlers of New France were granted a truncated place within the new Province of Quebec, and with a limited British army in the colony, Québécois compliance was necessary for the continued security of the new possession, as well as its strategic and economic value. In contrast, Métis compliance was largely irrelevant to the re-settlement of the North West, especially with the economic and administrative shift from fur trade to farming. The conflicts in Manitoba and the North West find their origins in the problem of extinguishing Métis claims to the territory. One administrative attempt to resolve their ambiguous relationship to Confederation was Métis scrip, which converted collective land rights into individual title, or ownership in terms recognized by the state. For these reasons, the Métis relationship with confederation was one of geographical disruption,

since the conventions of settlement and survey witnessed by seigneurial river-strips were literally incompatible with the Dominion Land Survey established in the Dominion Lands Act (1871).

How can such a defeat be remembered? What kind of memorials are required when victor and vanquished cohabit the same territory in parallel—if not equal—citizenship? The Battle of the Plains of Abraham, the capitulation of Montreal, and the re-drawn maps of the Treaty of Paris suggest that Canada has struggled with this question since early settler days; however, the aftermath at Batoche posed a new kind of problem to the discourses of belonging, despite more than a century of cohabitation. Para- or sub-national sovereignties, like the processes of colonization and de-colonization, are difficult to represent in the commemorative forms established for nineteenth-century conflicts, which are better suited to uniformed soldiers, traumatic articulations, discontinuities of territory and community resolved in the aesthetic and pastoral unities of park and graveyard. Different kinds of violence require different strategies for memorialization, strategies that complicate the aetiologies and teleologies of the national monument. As witnessed by Bishop Lewis's prayer and the memorial it accompanied, early Canadian commemoration at Batoche promised resolution, that the internal threat of insurrection was nullified, that fragmented peoples and territories were interfused on the anvil of war. In years since, however, Canadians have re-imagined the original traitor, Louis Riel, within the official discourses of national heroism, and re-cast the original victors as villains. The first triumphalist memorials to central Canadian dead have become something of an imperialist embarrassment, though the nation-state for which they died was further consolidated by the sacrifices of Vimy, Dieppe, and Kandahar. A century

after the battle, Batoche's meaning had been revised many times, and was again revisited in preparation for the conflict's centenary, and recast as a significant site of Métis and western-Canadian distinction, rather than central Canadian unity. In the face of re-emergent Métis nationalism and western separatism, a new question arises: how do present-day citizens commemorate not a moment, but a process?

In the first years of Anglo-Canadian literary commemoration after 1885, writers often made poetic and cultural sense of 1885 through narratives already established at Quebec and Queenston, whether the narratives of inheritance from Brock or Wolfe, or the Militia Myth. While Curzon was celebrating Canadian ONE-ness through the figure of Greater Britain, the insurrections of 1869 and 1885 disrupted not only the space of the new Dominion, but its conceptual unity. The tension between the North West and Ottawa is spatial as well as political, racial, sectarian or economic. Article XVII of the Revolutionary List of Rights, drafted in Fort Garry in 1869 calls for regional representation: "That the Land Department of the Dominion Government be administered as far as practicable from Winnipeg, so that the settlers may not be compelled as heretofore to go to Ottawa for the settlement of questions in dispute between them and the land commissioner."

Popular representations of the conflict confirm an Anglo-Protestant right to possess the northwestern half of the continent. At the same time organizations like the Orange Order policed, or attempted to police, Canada's public life, with their outspoken support for Protestantism, local militia, and active service. While the articles of Capitulation, the Quebec Act, and the British North America Act all confirm Catholicism's place in Canadian history, popular Protestant anxiety and anti-Catholicism

remains a powerful thread in Canada's imperial history, as it was in the Thirteen Colonies. The Métis—doubly suspect because of their race and their association with Québécois “popery”—became a convenient object of Protestant anxiety. The Durham Report addressed the same problem by suggesting total assimilation, emphasizing the link between representative government and racial/cultural homogeneity.

In response to this demand for cultural, religious, and racial homogeneity, many popular poems that respond to 1885 present the unified, Anglophone West as the natural conclusion of the quashed rebellion, rhyming the peaceful and productive landscape with the “Pacific Dream” of dominion, *a mari usque ad mare*, as it is represented in Curzon's “Centennial Poem” (1897) discussed in the previous chapter. Written in the aftermath of the North West Rebellion and the Nile Campaign, Lighthall's Introduction to *Songs of the Great Dominion* (1892) links the work of consolidating the Canadian nation and character with the critical aims of his anthology, which establishes an emergent canon for the emergent nation, one that celebrates the link between violence and territory. Lighthall frames the collection with Canada's recent military actions, as though the production of a successful national literature is inextricably linked to military vigor. According to him, the nation produced by the North West Rebellion is youthful, cheerful, and masculine, and its Anglo-Saxon virility aligns it biologically with the heroes of previous centuries, while its location in the “new world” produces an original, local literary sensibility. The physical work of settlement and the territorial work of war blend with the affective work of Canadian literature, and all these qualities resound in the poems he selects to represent the new Dominion. The Canadian air is, according to Lighthall, full of the “shrill war-whoops of Iroquois battle, proud traditions of contests with the French and the

Americans, stern and sorrowful cries of valour rising to curb rebellion. The tone of them is courage;— for to hunt, to fight, to hew out a farm, one must be a man!” (xvii).

“Canadians are,” Lighthall writes, “the descendants of armies, officers and men, and every generation of them has stood up to battle” (xvii), suggesting that masculinity, productive settlement, military virtue, and literature are concomitant qualities, expressed in occasional verse for Isaac Brock as well as the Militia Myth, or the defeat of the resistant Métis. In explicit contrast to the dynamism of Canada’s British, Anglophone present and future, Lighthall’s anthology celebrates decline. Much of the Introduction is devoted to the picturesque “vanishing races” who “sing, their death-song as they are swept on to the cataract of oblivion” (xvii)⁸⁰ before “the rural sounds of Arcadias just rescued from surrounding wildernesses by the axe” (xvii).⁸¹

⁸⁰ E. Pauline Johnson’s “A Cry from an Indian Wife” (1892) makes a similar appeal, but instead of speaking on behalf of a silent relict, she voices a living figure who consciously experiences her own “decline” as she is relegated to the romantic past. The poem is both a literal “cry,” in that it was one of Johnson’s first performances, and the representation of a “cry,” in that it imagines the words of a woman in peril who sends her husband into battle. As a form, the dramatic monologue allows Johnson to voice apparently contradictory sentiments in close succession, with the speaker careening from resistance to guilt to fatalism in the space of sixty lines: “By right, by birth we Indians own these lands, / Though starved, crushed, plundered, lies our nation low . . . / Perhaps the white man’s God has willed it so” (58—60). The narrator presents herself as a kind of terminal character in the Cree story, and the poem oscillates between rage at the injustice of history and resignation to her fate. This is a compelling rhetorical turn. In imagining a character who recognizes the discourses that racialize her, and who consciously represents herself as the “declining Indian” of Lighthall’s Introduction, Johnson imagines an Indigenous woman whose cry is audible and recognizable to the central Canadian audience she targeted. The battle Johnson chooses—Cut Knife Hill—is also one of a few significant Cree victories, as well as an ill-advised Canadian attack on a strong Cree position.

⁸¹ The language of violence and irresistible movement are, according to Lighthall, the markers of Canadian poetry as well as Canadian expansionism. The collection’s dedicatory poem unites—clumsily—these issues: the unity of blood within the British Race, which is “Man” (x); the unifying and separating ocean that parallels this blood; the lyric, pastoral conventions in the final stanza’s elm-trees and local moonlight. Finally, Lighthall orients both poetry and national space toward the west, which is also the future: “In the West’s brow bright Venus sweet / Holds Nature in a lovelorn swoon; / Go, songs, glint what these lands shall be in wondrous / Day complete” (v). Lighthall’s landscape resounds with Canadian poetry, or perhaps poetry renders audible the sound of “Canada.” On the page and the map Canada’s “dear lines” stretch *a mari usque ad mare*.

Machar's "Quebec to Ontario: A Plea for the Life of Riel, September, 1885" imagines the passage of time spatially, with the "past" of French rule behind the speaker in the east, and a western future before her. The landscape is unequivocally British "from east to west" (13) with the temporary government at Batoche only the contemporary upsurge of antique sentiment in a "conquered race" (42) whose best days of "the old voyageur" (19) are "of yore" (8) and who cannot conceive Canada's "cold modern laws" (30), in keeping with Machar's romantic sympathy with the Jacobites in *For King and Country*. Of course, the *living* relicts of the *ancien régime* are conspicuously silent, limited not only by their antique passions, but by their inability to speak the contemporary language of the Canadian state. Machar functions as an intercessor, hearing them and translating their incoherent frustration into poetry.

While Machar imagines Batoche in terms of the "old feud" outlined in the Durham Report, and Lighthall writes of a voracious and imperial military sentiment in post-Confederation Canadian culture, Charles G. D. Roberts' "Collect for Dominion Day" (1886) is a poem that uses ceremonial religious language to imagine a possible resolution to violence. In the poem, Canada is figured as a geographically continuous amalgam of bodies, both an idea held in its citizen's minds and a physical body politic, forged from warring populations into a singular, Anglophone flesh. In the aftermath of the 1885 Rebellion, he also represents the Dominion as a wounded body that sheds blood to "purge" the "common shame" (12) of insurrection, here termed the "old feud" a term that suggests that Roberts, in common with Machar, accepts the popular interpretation of the Métis resistance as a contemporary manifestation of Québécois nationalism. Despite this schism, which finds its origins at Quebec, the "fever of faction" in "our hearts" is

also an opportunity to “mould a mighty state” and “make this people one!” (9) with the aid of a violent—but productive—craftsman on whose anvil bodies are beaten into a unified citizenry.

A Collect is a liturgical action in both Catholic and Protestant rites, in which the celebrant voices the individual, silent prayers of the congregation in a communal plea. Roberts’ poem, then, is a collective speech act in the shared space of the mass, and while the celebrant’s voice is singular, the text he speaks is, ideally, collaborative in intention if not composition. Roberts’ title and diction frames his work as part of a national liturgy in which the poet takes on the role of the celebrant in formalizing the un-spoken desires of the citizenry. There are two unities within the poem, then. The first is in the peace and wholeness imagined as the positive outcome of violence, as the previously resistant body politic is physically “interfuse[d]” (10) in an indistinguishable mass that submits to the “Father of unity” (9) who seems to be both a spiritual and a political actor, both God and Good Government. The second unity is textual, in the poem’s collective speech act.

The century after Batoche seemed to fulfill the promise of Canadian unity, peace, and sovereignty in the North West. The village became a national historic site in 1923 (Batoche Management Plan) on the recommendation of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada⁸² (HSMC), with the first bronze plaque installed in 1925, its style consistent with similar plaques in central Canada commemorating the War of 1812 and the Seven Years War. In keeping with the plaques at Frenchman Butte and Cut

⁸² The HSMC was originally founded in 1919 as the Advisory Board for Historic Site Preservation, part of the effort to formalize commemoration following the First World War, but it also addressed Canada’s domestic remembrance, both electing appropriate sites for commemoration and erecting the bronze-and-stone tablets that mark them. Though the organization also recommended sites associated with exploration and trade, its origins in military commemoration remind us of the primacy of violence in national histories.

Knife Hill, early on-site commemorations focused solely on military history, celebrating victory unapologetically, and representing the Métis only as “rebels” in a monolingual text:

NORTH WEST REBELLION
 BATOCHÉ
 HEADQUARTERS OF THE
 REBELS
 ITS CAPTURE BY GENERAL
 MIDDLETON, AFTER FOUR DAYS
 FIGHTING, 9TH, 10TH, 11TH
 AND 12TH MAY, 1885, ENDED
 THE REBELLION.
 THE MIDLAND REGIMENT,
 10TH ROYAL GRENADIERS,
 90TH REGIMENT, WINNIPEG
 BATTERY. "A" BATTERY
 BOULTONS MOUNTED INFANTRY,
 AND FRENCH'S SCOUTS
 TOOK PART IN THE BATTLE. (qtd. in McCullough 167)

However, even words cast in bronze can be revised, though sometimes that revision comes by way of the chisel. By 1929 the plaque was defaced, “with ‘certain words’ chiseled off” (McCullough 167), and though it remained in place until 1939, the vandalism was a bit of historical criticism that reflects both the instability of official

commemoration at Batoche, and the survival of the community around the memorial, despite the anvil of Roberts' Collect. Though the community declined in the years after the Resistance, it remained a village until 1983, when the post office closed (Morrissey 80) and what had been a living community become a repository for memory.

A century after the battle, the problem of commemorating 1885's fractured communities produced a diversity of genres, locations and perspectives, as though postcolonial wars must overflow the bronze plaques and Edenic battlefield parks that seek to contain conventional warfare. Some contemporary responses to the North West Rebellion seek to re-dress official crime: Poundmaker's body was returned to Cut Knife Hill in 1967; Bill C-213 (1996) and the Louis Riel Act (2001) are both parliamentary attempts to "unhang" Riel, that is, to retroactively revoke the charge of treason. There are institutional memorials such as the Gabriel Dumont Institute in Saskatchewan and the Louis Riel Institute in Manitoba, whose mandate is the preservation and exercise of Métis culture. The literary journal *Prairie Fire* dedicated its Autumn 1985 issue to "the 1885 North-West Rebellion." The province of Saskatchewan named Highway 11 the Louis Riel Trail. In the *Dear Canada* series of historical fiction for pre-teens, Scholastic Canada published the educational children's novel *Blood Upon Our Land* (2009) describing the experiences of a Métis girl of 1885.

More significantly for this chapter, found texts and reported speech abound in public and literary memory, establishing the primary genre of response to the events of 1885, whether the unstable confederation of past voices, the oral history, the found poem, or the dialogue. *The Trial of Louis Riel* (1967), a play based on court records, has been performed in Regina since the Centennial. Drawing on the same source, Raymond

Souster's "Found Poem: Louis Riel Addresses the Jury" (1977) and John Robert Colombo's "The Last Words of Louis Riel" (1965) re-arrange Riel's statements as poems. Dorothy Livesay's "Prophet of the New World: A Poem for Voices" (1972) emphasizes even in its title the two significant speech acts that define Riel commemoration: his status as a prophet who voices the divine and recorded speech as the primary means of remembering him. Kim Morrissey's *Batoche* includes multiple found poems, though she does not attribute her sources. Works like Myrna Kostash's *The Frog Lake Reader* (2009) and Rudy Wiebe's *War in the West: Voices of the 1885 Rebellion* (1985) use fragments from many sources. In most, if not all of these works, contemporary commemoration is the recovery or reinvigoration of lost voices, a preoccupation that extends to academic projects; in another celebration of the centenary, George Stanley edited the five-volume *Collected Writings of Louis Riel* (1985) for the University of Alberta Press.

In keeping with this extensive literary tradition of thematized listening, Tim Lilburn begins the Masque in his collection *Assiniboia* (2012) with the instruction, "let this recital be applied to the wound" (27).⁸³ Lilburn's conviction that language spoken and heard is therapeutic for the moral wound of war locates the collection squarely within the history of settler commemoration at Batoche. While Lilburn may belong to a different century and a different aesthetic than Sarah Curzon, he draws on familiar traditions of military commemoration, of the sacrality and liminality of the battlefield. In fact, Lilburn's *Assiniboia* shares something with Curzon's *Queenston Heights* and Sangster's

⁸³ Lilburn also draws on Riel's own words in found texts, as in "The Revised Bill of Rights" (46-7), though technically a mis-representation, since it was a "Revolutionary List of Rights" in 1869, and a bill in 1885.

Plains of Abraham, where the natural world is an agent within the battle: in “FIFTH WATCH”, “Some men” of “Gabriel’s cavalry / Went forward under slabs of turf, / Small trees waving along their backs, / From Gabriel’s men they went, / Out of our bleeding side” (45-49).

According to a *Fiddlehead* interview with Shane Rhodes, Lilburn wanted to explore “the nature of colonial war,” a sentiment repeated in *Assiniboia*’s paratext. “All imperial wars,” Lilburn writes, “are really mythopoeic wars, one cosmology going into battle with and attempting to vanquish another” (5). Lilburn’s poetry is self-conscious location-work in Angus’s terms, using “Assiniboia”—Riel’s unrealized Métis homeland—as an imaginary space in which to work through the psychological and conceptual conflicts of colonization. According to Lilburn, Riel’s mythology is hybrid, a quality Lilburn attempts to reproduce as he draws on Indigenous and classical sources, bringing Dionysus to Bulls Forehead Hill in Saskatchewan as he brings the court masque to Gabriel Dumont.

At its most powerful and persuasive, Lilburn’s work unsettles the distinction between war and peace, at least in a colonial context. His “mythopoeic” war imagines that the negotiations of the North West are still ongoing, extend beyond combat and into memory. *Assiniboia* appropriates the political space of Riel’s planned homeland, building on his “madness”—or exploiting it—in order to create an imaginary space for revivifying a lost relationship with landscape, culture, language, and magic. Spatial metaphors abound in both Lilburn’s work and his analysis. “Any search for an alternative Western Canada,” he states, “has to pass through the political and social vision of Louis Riel and his supporters in the two Provisional Governments at Fort Garry and Batoche” (xx). Like

Lilburn's imagined state, Riel becomes a location one "passes through" just as the collection *Assiniboia* is a "route into Riel's political and linguistic vision, itself a fusion of the European and indigenous North American practices. It isn't about Riel's polis, but is a settler response to and a working toward this broad imaginary state" (*Prairie Fire* Interview n.p.). Elsewhere in the interview, Rhodes argues that time—historical or mythical—is deeply disordered within the collection, which suggests that the unstable confederation of official commemoration at Batoche is also an aesthetic approach to a complicated history. Like Klippenstein, Lilburn creates not a narrative, but a space filled by voices, whether the conceptual space of the stage or the literal text he has produced. According to Lilburn, "The action in the poem that follows takes place in the indeterminate world of the creative, theogonic imagination, an unlimited democracy, where everything has franchise" (27). While this "locale may be read as a version of the afterlife of Riel" (27), it is the last stand at Batoche that dominates the collection, aligning Lilburn's *Assiniboia*'s with the tradition of Canadian battlefield commemoration.

After all, the collection's disordered chronologies are familiar in battlefield commemoration, where the cenotaph signifies spatially the distinction between quotidian and battlefield-time, and the ceremonies of remembrance seem to take place outside of history. Lilburn's staged *Assiniboia* also confirms the productivity of the battlefield. At the centre of the book is the deep, violent disorder of colonialism, hung—in this case—on the physical disorder of organized violence. *Assiniboia*'s central Masque takes up the space of the battle, the space to which one returns in commemoration, and in keeping with Quebec or Queenston, another productive, liminal space, whether the literal site of

Batoche or the “mythopoeic” landscape of Assiniboia. In which case, *Assiniboia* is a book about war in Foucault’s sense, in that it addresses war not as an exceptional state, but as one manifestation of ongoing political and cultural conflict. The war remembered is only one conspicuous manifestation of the centuries-long conflicts at the margins of empire, and the imaginary space of Batoche is one of fragmenting possibilities.

In the years after his execution Louis Riel went from a criminal to a hero more easily integrated into national narrative than the unnamed Métis child who died before the Gatling gun.⁸⁴ By 1967 Riel had become a suitable figure for public statues, a way of retroactively re-imagining the Métis as Canadian patriots and locating them—or their metonym—within the official discourses and public spaces of the legislature and park. Recasting Riel as a father of confederation completes the transfiguration and assimilation of Métis history, and resolves the problem of commemorating loss within the discourses of victory. However, to represent the story of colonization in familiar monumental terms is to mis-represent it, and the election of Riel as the only suitable figure for commemoration rewrites Métis Resistance in terms defined by and recognizable to the western nation-state. After all, though the Riel Rebellion ended with Riel’s execution and his resurrection as a Canadian icon, the Métis survive as a para-national group. The tension between one kind of memorial and the other, between the metonymous individual and the multitudes that constitute a community persists in literary representations. *No*

⁸⁴ Critical and popular books about Louis Riel have multiplied in the last decade. A cursory survey includes *Louis Riel and the Creation of Modern Canada: Mythic Discourse and the Postcolonial State* (2012) by Jennifer Reid, *Louis Riel: Firebrand* (2007) by Sharon Stewart, *Louis Riel, a Comic-Strip Biography* (2003) by Chester Brown and *The False Traitor: Louis Riel and Canadian Culture* (2003) by Albert Braz. This list is short and incomplete, but does confirm Riel’s place as a cultural touchstone, an intellectual Father of Confederation, if not a political one.

Feather, No Ink (1985), a commemorative anthology published by Thistle-down Press for the centenary, is conspicuously subtitled “AFTER RIEL,” the dual meanings of the word “after” orient literary responses to the North West War around Riel, whether it means the poems are written in his manner or in his wake. In contrast, Kim Morrissey’s *Batoche*—published after, but begun for the centenary—rejects Riel as an origin or even a central touchstone in the narratives of Métis identity and resistance. However, in popular Canadian culture Riel’s executed body becomes a convenient short-hand for white, colonial violence; his dismemberment and abjection remains central in the public sculpture in Winnipeg that figures him naked, an uncomfortable reminder that Riel’s place in Canadian history is predicated on his execution at the hands of the Canadian government. Riel is a martyr who, in turn, promises ethical salvation to his victimizers in the form of official multiculturalism.⁸⁵

David Day’s collection *The Visions and Revelations of St Louis the Métis* (1997) uses similar strategies to represent what he calls Riel’s dual Christian-Visionary and

⁸⁵ Eighty years after the battle, Pierre Trudeau addressed the issues of minority rights and multiculturalism through the figure of Riel when he dedicated a statue of him in Regina. At the provincial parliament not far from where Riel was executed, Trudeau said,

We can agree that Riel’s dream of a vast, autonomous Métis nation-state in the middle of North America could never have been realized. The economic and political momentum of the two young countries which share this continent was too great to justify or to permit further fragmentation. That Riel could make his dream appear plausible to his followers is testimony to the force of his character, no doubt. More important, it indicates the bitterness of their frustration. (Trudeau 110)

Trudeau recognizes that Riel fought for an indigenous sovereignty that could be defended in terms recognizable to the nineteenth-century nation-state; however, the speech frames Riel as, “a fighter for the rights of his people” (110) *within* Canadian Confederation. In other words, he is still a Canadian subject, even if he is a contentious one, and his final re-integration into Canadian history comes when he is imagined as an early expression of Canadian multiculturalism. Imagining Riel in terms of white multiculturalism ignores the North West’s ongoing contestation, and the uneasy relationship the Métis have with Confederation.

“Indian-pagan” inheritance, where the white, academic poet seeks to reclaim something of the orator Riel might have been—and was—in his private journals. Day’s Riel is a prophet of two traditions: “the prophetic traditions of both the desert mystics and the ancient Hebrew tribes and the great plains shamans of the equally ancient Indian tribes” (11). Riel’s work, however, requires an active listener, one who will render his words into familiar forms for a present-day audience, rendering him audible in a kind of cultural translation. As such, Day positions himself as amanuensis in a long tradition of appropriation, writing that “many of Riels’ visions compare well with those of the rather metaphysical oral ‘poems’ or ‘songs’ of Indians as recorded by anthropologists and reworked by poets in such a way that—on the page—they convey something of their cultural context, and their force as a spoken form” (12). Day, then, simply reiterates the place that Riel has already been granted in Confederation: the politician-visionary who dwells “between” cultures, belonging to both the “rational” discourses of contemporary politics, and the “mystical” indigenous world.

Resisting exactly this kind of appropriation, as well as the adoption of Riel as a Canadian hero, Marilyn Dumont’s collection *The Pemmican Eaters* (2015) begins with “Our Gabriel,” a prose account of her own family’s changing understanding of their relationship to Gabriel Dumont as both a great uncle and as a cultural touchstone for Métis identity more generally. This brief personal essay inaugurates a collection that challenges exactly the discourses of the monument and of Lilburn’s *Assiniboia*, not only by recovering an alternative, familial history of the Resistance, but also by specifically addressing the relationship between Métis culture and the academy. In “What We Don’t Need” Dumont describes a familiar scene in which Métis culture is the jurisdiction not of

the Métis, but of a series of “experts” in government, religion, linguistics, and industry. When someone in the audience of a panel on Michif asks “why we didn’t invite a linguist / to our Michif and endangered languages panel” (1-2), the speaker responds with a series of statements that question why they need an external “expert” on their own culture, beginning with the resistance itself: “what we don’t need is another expert, / to inform us that our direct action on human rights was a rebellion” (3-4). In keeping with “Our Gabriel” and “What We Don’t Need” Dumont’s collection is a critique of the kind of military-national narratives that filled Anglo-Canadian literature after the Resistance, and which extend to the appropriation of Riel himself as an unambiguously Canadian hero-mystic, rather than the political representative of an alternative national polity with the Canadian North West.

The Métis Renaissance of the nineteen seventies is the explicit context of Dumont’s work. It recovered a public, institutional presence as well as a geographical centre for Métis nationals in the Prairie Provinces; Batoche became the space to which one could return, just as the community created an academic heart of the Gabriel Dumont and Louis Riel Institutes in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. To remember Riel rather than Batoche is to order the conflict and its representation in customary terms, as Queenston is ordered around Brock’s corpse and the Plains of Abraham are ordered around the bodies of Wolfe and Montcalm. This preoccupation with Riel’s execution, rather than the continuity of place represented by Batoche as a battlefield *and* a settlement, continues to dominate scholarship regarding the North West Rebellion, which is often tellingly called the Riel Rebellion.

The last poem in Gregory Scofield's *Louis: the Heretic Poems* (2011) is "The Request" and takes place before Riel's hanging, ending with a statement regarding Riel's own anxiety about the use that will be made of him, by both the noose and—by extension—Canadian culture after his death. "This is my fear," Riel says, "To be put in a box. A poorly chosen box. / One that is constant quarrel over size and shape" (13–15). It is easier, after all, to remember Riel than it is to remember the centuries-long processes of colonization and recovery. Riel is easily and attractively rendered as a revolutionary type, as a Simón Bolívar, a Ché Guevara. For Central Canada, at least, Batoche has suffered by contrast, containing only the detritus of a Small War: dead children, occupied buildings, starvation, a continuous, repressive police presence, and the death by tuberculosis of many who survived the Resistance.

4. A Place to Stand

*The words of a dead man
Are modified in the guts of the living.*

W.H. Auden. "In Memory of W.B. Yeats." 1939.

Small wars tend to overflow the forms of remembrance developed to represent international military actions, even if the "model war" of the Oxford Manual never existed to be commemorated. Canadian writers have often turned to the twinned figures of speaker and listener in order to represent these conflicts, which are not moments, but processes and their victims not soldiers, but civilians.

The listeners Bishop Lewis imagines in his prayer will be the students of an irresistible, divinely-sanctioned and violent patriotism; however, though his prayer is not

dialogic, the re-invention of Batoche proves that those future listeners possess the agency of (re)interpretation and the possibility of response. The listener can thematize his listening through the found poem, the historical survey, the ventriloquized voice. He can also represent the experience of striving toward meaning that Nancy describes, and the encounter between speaker and listener can be productive even if they do not achieve perfect understanding. Imagining the author as one who listens, rather than one who declares becomes a way of representing the postcolonial overflow, a means of complicating—through dialogue, through a diversity of voices—the rigid interpretation of history that seems to be the privilege of the inscription and the prayer. In so doing, the Métis dead might be repatriated on something like their own terms, whether they died part of the *levée en masse* or in the years of occupation that followed. Commemorative plaques and stone cairns, now revised, remain the textual baseline for shared memory, reminding us of a site's importance, unifying our attention, if not our interpretation of Canada's military history. The poet encounters the place and its texts; the poem—sharing some conventions with the inscription, possessing its long tradition as a genre of mourning—also functions like a chisel against the plaque. This is not to present a utopian vision of sensitive, poetic listeners who produce real democracy in the face of Canada's colonial abuses, but rather to look at poetry as a mechanism, a way of knowing, a way of listening that lends its conventions to Charles G. D. Roberts and E. Pauline Johnson as well as Kim Morrissey and Al Purdy.

In Morrissey's *Batoche* (1989) and Al Purdy's "The Battlefield at Batoche" (1973) listening returns as a way of representing memory in community, not in the orthodox and absolute form Lewis deploys in his prayer or Roberts imagines in his

Collect, but as a moment of re-interpretation, when the narrator shares their horizon with the source of a sound or a voice, and strives to interpret its meaning. The two works addressed here are separated by their form—one a collection, the other a single poem—and by two decades that saw a renaissance in Métis nationalism. While they use different strategies, they are both concerned with the space around the memorial and the time outside the battle. Such differences constitute a small, but powerful challenges to assumptions regarding what war means in a colonial context. Purdy's speaker describes the sensations afforded by place—not its past, but its present—and in so doing imagines Canadian subjectivity as a synthesis of conflicting polities, unified through a physical relationship with landscape. Morrissey's listening lies somewhere between advocacy and social history, and she frames her work with the language of recovery, writing in her Afterword, "This collection is for the people of Batoche who had no voice, people who just put their heads down and lived on, under the benevolence of a government they could never quite trust" (80). While the events of 1885 are an important part of the collection, she contrasts the military subject matter with moments in the everyday life of the community. In keeping with many contemporary responses to the events of 1885, she uses the found poem to represent Batoche beyond the figure of Riel and the confines of a national historic site. "Address to the Jury" uses Riel's trial for its source and "Summation" draws on General Middleton's report; other poems bear a more complex relationship with history, according to Morrissey, being "not-quite-found poems" (80) and "speculative realism" (80).

As mentioned above, Morrissey positions her work as "a sort of *Spoon River Anthology* with politics" (80); along with the recurring voices of the dead, her statement

encourages readers to approach the book as a collection of epitaphs. In other words, Morrissey's listening is less about the present-day sound of the landscape than it is prosopopeia, a poetic ventriloquism that ascribes voices to the dead and absent. As she fuses the found poem with the epitaph, she invokes both the permanence of stone and the volatility of speech heard, misunderstood, and remembered. Like the chisel on the plaque, Morrissey's poems unsettle the promised totalities of the memorial.

The portable, ink-and-paper words of her collection promise to circumvent the site's monumental history, at least in part by invoking the instability of the spoken word in concert with the poetic authority of her prosopopeia. While the Resistance of 1885 provides the physical centre of Morrissey's collection, the battle itself is a significant absence. The poem "Before Battle"⁸⁶ appears on page forty of the eighty-seven page book. It is narrated in third-person plural, a collective voice that also cites Dumont's call to dig the rifle pits in preparation for the Canadian attack, and describes the diggers' collective response to this call. "These will not always be rifle pits," (4) Dumont tells them, his words separated typographically by quotation marks, suggesting a distinction between his literal speech and the silent, collective thoughts of the Métis diggers. Their response is without quotation marks; instead, it is continuous with the rest of the poem: "if we win" (5) the diggers respond, "they [the rifle pits] are granaries / if we lose / they are graves" (6 – 8). The last words of the Métis provisional government belong to the diggers: "we have no grain" (9).

⁸⁶ The title is conventionally capitalized, and parallels a familiar sub-genre of war-poems, particularly of the First World War, that describe moments of contemplation before action, including Julian Grenfell's "Into Battle," W.N. Hodgson's "Into Action," Ivor Gurney's "To the Poet before Battle," or Nowell Oxland's "Outward Bound."

“these may be the facts of Batoche:” appears on page forty-three of the collection, conceptually on the “other side” of the battle. It re-iterates the battle’s casualties in the simple, uncapitalized terms of the balance sheet rather than the monument. It distinguishes the dead by their allegiance—whether “métis” (6) or “soldier” (1)—and the day of the battle on which they died. Beyond the starkness of these numbers, the distinction between “métis” and “soldier” is asymmetrical, with one sort of death accounted by race, the other by profession, reminding us that in 1885 to die as a Soldier is different than dying as a Métis, not only because of the distinction between professional army and guerilla force, but because of the way those deaths are redeployed in commemoration. The asymmetry of colonial wars persists in commemoration: everyone is a combatant if they are within the range of a Small War, fought not on a discrete battlefield, but among the homesteads and churches of those who resist. As far as central Canada is concerned, to die as a soldier is to die for Canada; to die as a Métis is to die for nothing.

Between these poems, on pages forty-two and forty-three, lies the battle, represented not by text, but by two found documents: the first a French map of Batoche that labels the community’s river-strips with the family names of those who settled them; the second an English sketch of Batoche-the-battlefield which indicates fortifications, buildings and troop positions, but gives no indication of Métis farms. The notable absence of a conventional combat poem and the ambiguities of the “may” in the second poem’s title both foreground the problem of commemorating colonial wars, one solved by turning the reader’s attention toward the community and away from the battle. The Small War must overflow the unities of the conventional war memorial; Morrissey

accomplishes this by refusing to represent combat beyond the “facts” of death, and the fundamental disconnect between these two ways of viewing the landscape. One map, after all, shows a named, occupied, and defended Métis heartland, and the other describes the same space as a temporary battlefield.

Purdy had already established himself as Canada’s nationalist poet of absence, decay, and failed settlement when he wrote “The Battlefield at Batoche,” which appeared in the collection *Sex & Death* (1973). It describes a visit to the site some years before the contemporary resurgence of interest in its commemoration. Like Lilburn, Klippenstein or Curzon, Purdy presents his readers with history as a location as well as—or rather than—a narrative, where the poet becomes a temporary nexus where historical, political, geographical, biopolitical forces coalesce and disintegrate, and his narrators consistently reject resolution in favour of a kind of open-ended meditation, and a sense of presence that is both historically conscious and quotidian. According to Sam Solecki, “the dominant organizing principle—and perhaps the only one—in each ‘work’ is the capacious and eclectic mind of the poet and his memory” (181). Solecki describes “A kind of ternary structure of time” in Purdy’s work, “with past and present unified by the poem, and “projected” into the future” (160 - 1). In this argument, the poem is “recuperation” and “expiation” (161) imagined through a relationship with the future and an expanded spatial consciousness as well.⁸⁷ In a 1964 letter to John Glassco he also rejects the “emotional appeal of ruins” (77), suggesting that his preoccupation with the triune structure that Solecki describes is intended to counter the emotional appeal of the

⁸⁷ In a letter to Milton Acorn in 1973, Purdy describes his literary project in nearly utopian terms, suggesting that he wishes to create a future relationship with this very old and disruptive history: “I write in my own way toward a society that will not come in my lifetime, perhaps never” (229).

graveyard poet. Tim Heath identifies Purdy's "reliquary poetics" (xx), which triangulates the living, the dead, and the objects that connect them across time. Artists, in this formulation of time and culture, are central because they serve as what Purdy calls "grappling hooks of the imagination" in *In Search of Owen Roblin* or the persistent thought—turned to ivory—in "Lament for the Dorsets."⁸⁸ This is a poetics that "commits chiefly to listening, so it forms the complement to poetic voice, or at least rhetoric, and comes the means of discerning the true nature of things" (193).

Purdy's poems often experiment with how a present-day listener might position themselves in relation to the past, especially when that past is filled with problematic imperial exploitation. His poems contain a number of meditations on the relationship between loss or failure, the past's material landscapes and the role of the individual poet. In many ways Batoche is the perfect subject for Purdy, a kind of pre-existing poem awaiting Purdy's sensitivity to Canadian landscape and history. When Purdy visited—in the early seventies, before the public renaissance of Métis culture of the 1980s, Batoche was a sight of attractive failure, with all the appeal of a last stand. Janice Fiamengo frames this affection for lost causes in Purdy's work as a rhetoric of failure. Like the

⁸⁸ In Purdy's history remains are more often material than cultural or spiritual, and his poems often address the physical substance of Canada, whether the earth that stopped the bullets at Batoche, or the bodies that underlie the battlefield. The materiality of remembrance recurs in Purdy's work. In "Remains of an Indian Village" (1962) Canadian earth is literally constituted in human remains, "here the charging cotyledons of spring / press green forefingers / on femurs, vertebrae" (6 – 8); in *In Search of Owen Roblin* the dead are a constant presence, physically continuous with and transformed by the earth that covers them, where "their laughter [is] muffled by earth" (135); in "Elegy for a Grandfather" (1986) a farmer's "wide whalebone hips will make a prehistoric barrow / men of the future may find and perhaps may not" (2 - 3). Purdy's landscapes are often literally, materially constituted in human remains, and long before his visit to Batoche he established a way to talk about the intersection of individual lives and national history. The landscapes of war are also composed of human bodies, witnessing a slippage between earth and flesh that finds its most extreme and repugnant expression in the trenches of 14-18, but which is present in the mass graves of Quebec, Queenston, and in the graveyard at Batoche.

shrinking homesteads of United Empire Loyalists, and the remains of the Indian Village, Batoche is valuable not because of central Canadian victory, but because of Métis defeat and the particular deaths of soldiers and citizens. The preoccupation with failure is, Bentley argues, a manifestation of Purdy's romanticism, his "affection for things that are disappearing or have disappeared, and a saddened and sometimes nostalgic sense that, though much abides, even more has been taken away" (n.p.). There is, however, the occasional, uncomfortable suspicion that Purdy's speakers prefer their buildings ruined and their ambitions disappointed, as though a subject's suitability for Canadian romanticism correlates with its failure.

In the case of Batoche, the pleasure of contemplating failure has very specific ethical problems, given its imperial context and the difficulty of commemorating small wars. There are, however, two areas in which Purdy's oeuvre suggests an approach that might hold the possibility of ethical commemoration at Batoche, even from the central Canadian settler perspective that Purdy embodies. Joel Baetz contends that Purdy is a war poet, based not only on his service during the Second World War, but his poetic accounts of those experiences and *The Hiroshima Poems* (1972). In Baetz's words "the Peace Park is always a war zone" (99), a reminder that the outcome of war, as Foucault argued, persists in whatever peace follows after. As such, Purdy's reliquary poetics are well suited to writing war not as combat, but as the detritus that remains, the echoes, the human and ecological cost, literalized in the case of fallout, which appears as both chaos and a kind of irresistible memory.

"Remembering Hiroshima" comes closest to theorizing the role of memory—both personal and cultural—in the aftermath of the battlefield or to setting out an ethics of war

poetry. It rejects heroic narratives, the “non-god of love” (29) or “justice” (30) and sets in their place a single man who struggles with his own ethical relationship to violence and memory as—once again—a member of the victorious side. In “Atomic Museum”, the Peace Park—like the battlefield at Batoche with its ever-present voices—is the “ghost place of memory” (2). The poem examines the speaker’s own state of ambiguity in relation to both history and its representation, especially when faced with the platitudes of the memorial, written by “men whose wisdom consisted of saying things / they knew might be admired but not practiced” (8 - 9). At the peace park, Purdy seems to suggest, “wisdom was silence” (10), and his ethical turn is not toward the memorial, but away from it, to the always-failed act of writing.

As the earth is constituted in the bodies of the dead, adapted by living labour, so time is a biological experience in Purdy’s world. “The flutter of time in your heartbeat” in “Inside the Mill.” If Purdy establishes an ethical relationship with Canada’s military past it is in his attempt to reject national abstraction in favour of particulars. As he writes in *In Search of Owen Roblin*, the “fevered elation at knowing / the privilege of finding a small opening / in the past, shouting questions and hearing echoes.” Whether this is a persuasive position is another question, one resolved in the final lines of “The Battlefield at Batoche,” where Purdy turns away from the call to public memorial in favour of a private relationship with place.

“The Battlefield at Batoche” begins with the physical traces of the old dialectic, in the form of fortifications now in decay, as they are “camped on the battlefield at Batoche / just slightly visible in August” (98 – 99). The careful distinctions between Métis Rifle pit and Canadian Zariba are effaced not only by erosion and neglect, but by the language

itself, which hardly distinguishes between the “earthworks” (1) of one line and the “wooded, dish-shaped hollow” (6) of the other, though the direction of the poem’s movement suggests that the earthworks are Métis and the hollow Canadian. The speaker moves freely between frontline and rear echelon, between Métis and Canadian positions. Like passing time, his perceptions unify the previously divided earth.

Listening becomes a way for the narrator to locate himself in these spatial and temporal landscapes, of linking a personal experience of place with his national and historical context. However, for all the speaker’s careful attention to the sounds and sensations of the battlefield, the poem contains repeated moments of miscommunication and misunderstanding, whether the just-out-of-reach sounds of the place itself or the historical misunderstandings that provoked the battle. Further, the poem’s speaker is not the poem’s only listener, and another layer of mediation stands between the speaker’s experience of the place and our experience of the poem. The speaker’s wife is a conspicuous presence and one half of the ongoing dialogue that punctuates the poem: *what do you hear?* he asks her repeatedly. Her final answer does not refer to the site itself, but to the thing it produces within the speaker: “I hear the poem you are writing” (77) she tells him, reminding the reader, as well, that they “hear” not the past, but its representation. For Eurithe, and for his readers, Purdy-the-author and Purdy-the-speaker are transducers, converting his experience of the site into something accessible to those who encounter his poem. Like Curzon on Queenston Heights or Cary on the Plains of Abraham, Purdy takes up the well-established role of the medium for national history.

Within Purdy’s poem ethical Canadian citizenship is expressed in two ways, first as a relationship with history, and second as a relationship with the physical space of the

battlefield. At the end of the poem, Purdy positions his speaker, and the contemporary Canadian subject, at the intersection of two firing lines, imagining a productive space between warring polities. In the final lines of his poem Purdy effaces racial and temporal difference. For a contemporary reader this is an uncomfortable ethical mis-step; Purdy is not, after all, an equal victim of both Métis and Canadian forces. Further, in consigning himself to the dead, the speaker has escaped the problem of commemorating Batoche, one that Morrissey faces by refusing to represent combat: the asymmetry of a war that memorialists attempt to represent with conventions that do not accommodate asymmetry. To locate oneself among the dead is to escape the burden of memory or victory. After all, “what they died for has faded away / and become something quite different” (89 - 90). While the care he takes in listening does not make up for his blind spot, it does imagine the possibility of a shared and ethical sense of history, even if it is one that constantly recedes from the poem’s speaker. Despite its easy platitudes, the poem’s ending does not unmake its earlier premise, that Batoche is a valuable site of ambivalence, with the visitor’s perspective in constant flux as they move between opposing sides, both of which are claimed as “Canadian.”

In keeping with Joel Baetz’s contention that Purdy is a war poet, the poem describes a shambolic conflict, echoing both *Memoir of a Bungle* and Purdy’s own accounts of his military service, which are—generally—preoccupied with his misalignment with the army as an institution. While Purdy seems to accept the contention that war is combat, the relationship he imagines with history and violence unsettles the simple distinction between war- and peace-time. Significantly, Purdy never mentions Riel, the most accessible name attached to the conflict. His approach is more in keeping

with his other history poems: the recitation of names, real or fictional, the specifics of physical experience rather than general cliché, the rejection of Gustafson's "hopeless giant alphabet." To export the language of "The Country North of Belleville," the Battle at Batoche "leave[s] a place to stand."

5. A Battle Lost

*Believe me, nothing except a battle lost can be half
so melancholy as a battle won.*

Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington. 1815.

For the one-hundred-and-twenty-fifth anniversary of the North West Resistance, the province of Saskatchewan designated 2010 the "Year of the Métis," with their province-wide "Trails of 1885" installations identifying official historical sites related to that spring. While there were some re-enactments and some ceremonies of victory or defeat, most of the "Trails" were site-specific texts that identified a place's role in the Resistance. The project produced an interpretable landscape that stretched beyond the particular sites of violence and into our everyday understanding of history, place, and community. This strategy rejected the unities of the stone monument, the decisive instant in which the landscape changed hands, but instead reflected the processes of colonization and recovery. In July 2010 the old graveyard at Batoche gained a new, trilingual inscription on its gate with texts in French, English and Michif.⁸⁹ The Michif inscription

⁸⁹ Michif is one of many creolized French, English, Cree and Ojibwa languages that emerged along with the Métis peoples in the vast trade-network and contact zone that was Rupert's Land under the HBC.

renders the Métis perspective as permanently as stone allows, while also using prosopopeia to voice the dead. The graveyard contains both the mass grave of Métis dead from 1885 and Gabriel Dumont's monument on the bank above the river, but also whole generations of local families, who lived before and after 1885. There are three inscriptions on the new gate to the graveyard, the same sentiment and facts stated in Michif, English and French. The English inscription reads,

IN SPIRIT WE RECONCILE
 ON THIS DAY OF JULY 18, 2010
 AS WE HONOUR THOSE WHO
 LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE
 1885 NORTH WEST RESISTANCE.

WE THE MÉTIS DIED FOR
 OUR HOME AND OUR LAND

WE THE SOLDIERS
 DIED FOR CANADA

WE THE FIRST NATIONS
 DIED FOR OUR MÉTIS
 BROTHERS AND SISTERS

WE ARE NOW FOREVER FREE

The dismemberment which produced a unified militarized landscape—the “dear lines” on the map in Crawford’s poem—is both central to the inscription and challenged by the first person plural pronoun that appears in each paragraph.

The inscription also implies a dialogue between the visiting reader/listener and the ventriloquized dead who dwell behind the graveyard’s gate. This implied dialogue, and the obligation for the living to lend the dead a voice *and* to respond, is a familiar convention for memorial inscription, from the very early days of military commemoration at Thermopylae⁹⁰ to the First World War.⁹¹ Significantly, though, for one standing at the gate to Batoche’s graveyard, with the original battlefield to one’s right, the church with its blood stains and bullet holes behind one, the inscription ends in the grammatical unity of the first person plural statement “WE ARE NOW FOREVER FREE.” That final line allows the reader to imagine that beyond the gates, behind the inscription, they are no longer divided by the inequalities and abuses that separated them in life, but instead find a unity in the nation that replaced them, in a kind of retroactive citizenship. In the act of reading that inscription, the reader finds herself, temporarily, in the freedoms of the graveyard, as Purdy did forty years before. It is a utopian promise, a unity only imaginable in death, though practically speaking, the only soldier buried at Batoche is

⁹⁰ In Steven Pressfield’s translation: “Go tell the Spartans, stranger passing by / That here obedient to their laws we lie.”

⁹¹ In one public example: “IS IT NOTHING TO YOU / ALL YE THAT PASS BY?” from Lamentations 1:12, on the First World War memorial in Vancouver’s Victory Park. In similarly accusatory terms, the 1930s-era Peace Memorial at Rollins College, Florida, which contains German artillery, reads “PAUSE, PASSER BY, AND HANG YOUR HEAD IN SHAME” (qtd in Schlosser 72). The form of address takes in religious and private epitaphs as well: a tablet in Edinburgh’s Greyfriar’s Kirkyard, dedicated to the martyred Covenanters of the seventeenth century, reads “Halt passenger, take heed what you do see, / This tomb doth shew for what some men did die.”

Gunner Philips, whose solitary grave is separated from the inscription by half a kilometre of bush.

And the problem of prosopopeia is always the words that might be put in the mouths of dead men. Another memorial ceremony was held on 25 July 2010, a week after the new dedication, at which the Reverend Guy Lavallée made the following prayer: “This is sacred ground. Out of the ashes come the new strong bones of nationhood... The Métis nation was built on the shed blood of people like this. All of us are brothers and sisters” (qtd. in Ledding). According to the *Prairie Messenger* journalist Andrea Ledding, Lavallée told the attendants that, “the fallen summoned everyone to come this year and every year that their spirit and vision remain, and that their values can be transmitted to the younger generations” (n.p.). Lavallée’s prayer invokes the familiar and irresistible narratives of nationalism, in which the absent, unspeaking dead are reconfigured as martyrs, as the rich earth from which new nations grow. Despite the many alternatives imagined for remembering Batoche, the battlefield persists at the centre of national time and space, the place to which citizens return in order to re-enact the original, productive deaths of their fore-fathers: one hundred and twenty-five years after the Resistance, the Métis have found a place in Canada’s monumental culture. The inflexible unities of the monument remain intact, and the easiest way to represent violence in wartime is still written in stone.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE VIEW FROM VIMY RIDGE

1. The Problem of Distance

INQUISITIVE PARTY: Exactly what difference do you find between fighting in the Ypres Salient and the Somme?

PEACE RIVER JIM: (after judicial consideration) Mud's browner.

In the years after the First World War small towns all over Canada named streets and public buildings after significant battles involving the Canadian Expeditionary Forces (CEF). To draw examples from places closest to the author in the moment of writing, the city of Duncan, BC has Ypres, Festubert and St Julian Streets,⁹² as well as the Vimy Memorial Hall on Vimy Road. This impulse to commemorate recent history in the public, suburban spaces of the nation foregrounds the most significant problem of memorializing the First World War. That is, such names imagine continuity between the home- and battle-front, in the same moment that they remind us of the distance between small towns in Western Canada and the remote field of history. With eleven thousand of Canada's dead lost in the mud and the remaining fifty-six thousand buried in European earth, there were few bodies to mourn at home and no domestic battlegrounds for public parks or pilgrimages like those established for earlier Canadian conflicts. These twin problems of distance and absence dominate not only the material commemoration of the First World

⁹² The name is spelled "St. Julian" on the sign and the map. I have assumed that it is a reference to St Julien in Belgium, because of its similarity and its proximity to "Festubert" and "Ypres" streets.

War, but the way that war is represented in Canadian literature during the conflict and after the fact.⁹³

These re-named streets fasten a civilian sense of place “at home” to distant military geographies as well as military history. Duncan’s Vimy Memorial Hall on Vimy Road is not named for a village near an escarpment in northern France, nor after its twelfth-century origins, nor the first Battle of Arras in 1914, nor the similarly named battle of the Franco-Spanish war, in 1654. Instead, the Memorial Hall is named for the escarpment as it existed between the 9 and 12 April 1917, as a site of Canadian military meaning. The home-front street sign reminds those who see it not only of the moment and site of Canadian military power, but of that site’s strategic value, confirming the necessity of both murder and death in an otherwise distant and unknown landscape. These names forge a textual link between one space and another, meaning that an engagement now vanished from living memory governs the way local people understand and define their shared spaces. Such naming conventions confirm Woodward’s claim that Militarism—in her broad definition—imposes its moral order on space through the control of landscapes *and* their representation, linking civilian spaces to the battlefield. The distant site of violence becomes a point of reference within a local landscape, the

⁹³ Though First World War battlefields mark our maps most conspicuously, these naming conventions were established before 1914. Turning again to examples close to the author: James Dunsmuir renamed the town of Ladysmith in BC after the Siege of Ladysmith (1899 – 1900) during the Boer War, also renaming its streets after significant British military figures, including Baden-Powell, Kitchener and Methuen. Such conventions forge a representational link between the Pacific coal town and the South African settlement at a particular moment in its history, turning the first into a memorial for the second. Further, military chronologies dominate the texts and monuments of Queenston and Quebec as well, though those chronologies are retroactive, carefully reproduced when the events had already passed from living memory.

name “Vimy” not only an act of memory, but a moment in which the peaceful present becomes a function of military history.

The preceding chapters have focused on the way particular places are integrated into Canadian memory, whether administratively, as in the case of national parks and historic sites or culturally, by way of the texts that represent those sites to the citizen. Any chapter devoted to the First World War negotiates not with local history and Canadian territory, but with distance and absence. This distance is not only spatial, as the meaningful Canadian actions of the Great War occurred overseas, but has become a matter of time, as the events of 1914-18 gain cultural significance while they fade from living memory. While Canada’s most significant war poem—“In Flanders Fields”—came directly out of Second Ypres, second- and third-hand memories of the war recur as sources of trauma and meaning in Canadian literature in the intervening century, just as the name “Vimy” continues to define our communal spaces. Further, later poems negotiate with their own historical separation from events just as home-front verse negotiates with its geographical distance.

Separation is a product of the First World War’s scale: it was the first global conflict of the industrial era. It was also the first global conflict in the era of mass culture Benedict Anderson calls print capitalism, the era of emergent nation states and imagined communities. Mass media produced both a sense of immediacy for those “at home” witnessing events through the lens of newspaper photographs and official communiqués, and an ironic sense of separation between those who experienced them first hand and those who did not, a rift represented by the “home-front divide” of early First World War literary criticism (Fussell, Bergonzi). At the same time, the war’s scale and complexity

demanded ideological solidarity in the face of that disconnection, a feat of organized industrial production that kept citizens enlisting, guns fed and soldiers clothed. The Canadian War Records Office or Britain's Ministry of Information emphasized unity across the Commonwealth, between soldiers, between home- and battle-front, between allies, between ancient and present-day heroes. The material function of the war demanded sentimental continuities in the face of separation and discontinuity: the battle-front depended upon the home-front, just as the mother-country depended upon her colonial "daughters" in the face of continental threats. The naming conventions in small Canadian towns are evidence that this preoccupation with unity over distance informed not only the material functioning of the war itself, but its commemoration in the years following Armistice.

Organizations like the Canadian War Records Office explicitly addressed the impossibility and importance of unity across continents and used popular media—picture papers, magazines, annuals—to both represent and interpret events in Europe to those at home. In an anonymous essay from an early yearbook, a Records Officer describes the intentions behind their compulsive record keeping and the dissemination of selected parts of those records to the home-front. Here, he explicitly links home-front witness with military citizenship:

It might be easy in one sense to brush aside all this work and to declare it the mere extras and advertisements of the serious business of war. But ... Under modern conditions, nations are fighting nations, and are sacrificing bone and sinew to an extent never known before, and realization alone can justify the sacrifice. We must see our men climbing out of the trenches to the assault before we can realise

the patience, the exhaustion, and the courage which are the assets and the trials of the modern fighting man. (121)

The article commands those on the home-front to an imagined unity with the soldier, thus identifying themselves as active participants in the work of war. By arguing that witness “alone can justify the sacrifice” the Records Officer extends militarism’s mandate from the Western Front to the CWRO’s reader and from the material action of war to its representation in text and image. In this case, the mediating distance is irrelevant to the work of war because the home-front reader participates not as a combatant, but as one who gives such action meaning. The CWRO’s texts locate the opportunity to make that meaning—through narratives of nation or sacrifice—in those who read and write about war, as well as those who wage it.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ This preoccupation with witness applies not only to war in the moment it is waged, but to its commemoration. On the wall of Parliament’s Memorial Chamber—before it was revised following the Second World War—the link between military action and meaningful witness is formalized as a function of commemoration. Invoking the passion with Hebrews 12:1, the wall reads:

WHEREFORE
 SEEING WE ALSO ARE
 COMPASSED ABOUT WITH
 SO GREAT A CLOUD OF
 WITNESSES LET US LAY
 ASIDE EVERY WEIGHT AND
 THE SIN WHICH DOTH SO
 EASILY BESET US AND
 LET US RUN WITH
 PATIENCE THE RACE
 THAT IS SET BEFORE US (Houses of Parliament 8)

The original design sets this passage beside the last lines of John McCrae’s “In Flanders Fields,” the lines most preoccupied with the home-front response to events in Ypres, 1915:

TO YOU FROM
 FAILING HANDS WE
 THROW THE TORCH BE
 YOURS TO HOLD IT HIGH
 IF YE BREAK FAITH
 WITH US WHO DIE WE

The chapter begins with this problem of distance because the Vimy Memorial in Nord-Pas-de-Calais, France must mediate the distance between the citizens at home and the subjects of their shared mourning overseas. The excerpt from the CWRO's report only emphasizes this distance and the imaginative continuities that cross it. Small-town street names are a local strategy for commemoration at a geographical remove, forging a textual link between British Columbia and Nord-Pas-de-Calais. Street names become another trace of militarism's moral order, first imagining Europe in terms of military objectives and writing the idea of the "Western front" on a landscape at the other end of the world.

This chapter explores the literary and commemorative strategies in poems written during and after the war with specific reference to both the Vimy Memorial. This chapter will also trace some of the poetic and paratextual conventions that allowed writers to "locate" themselves and their work in the larger strategic and commemorative narratives of the war. These conventions, like the passages quoted above from the CWRO, are preoccupied with situating the author and the reader in relation to their shared military history: as the Vimy Memorial marks the strategic meaning of the Ridge, so the poet

SHALL NOT SLEEP
THOUGH POPPIES GROW
IN FLANDERS FIELDS (Houses of Parliament 8)

The two passages are united by their place in the chamber and their font, which distinguished these words from the more prosaic historical narrative that decorated the other panels in the chamber. Taken together, the two texts locate two parties in the work of war, distinguishing them not by their position on either side of the front line but by their relationship to the site of combat, also suggesting that those who fight do so *because* they are witnessed, just as the "cloud of witnesses" inspires a Christ-like patience and acceptance in the "we" of Hebrews. The juxtaposition suggests that if we accept the chivalric language of the First World War-- Cavalry in Flanders, and Soldier-Christ--than those who remain behind and build the Memorial Chamber are His church, though the Peace tower was presented as a shrine to the nation.

orients their text and the reader in relation to the battlegrounds of the First World War. The page—an accessible and portable proxy for the marble of the Vimy memorial—becomes a means of representing the distant field of history to those who were not present or cannot make the pilgrimage. This is not to suggest that all war poems are inscriptions, but rather that the conventions which govern monumental texts, with their names, dates and epitaphs, are found in Canadian war poetry as well. The poem shares textual links with the more permanent memorials to Canada's war dead, measuring the reader's proximity to violence by contextualizing the poem with the site of its composition or subject matter. Meanwhile, in Europe the monument marks—as permanently as post-war engineering could achieve—the strategic meaning of Canadian deaths on a bit of high-ground in northern France.

In 1918 Vimy Ridge was only one battlefield of many chosen as a potential site for Canadian commemoration. The Canadian Battlefields Memorials Commission elected eight battlefields (*Vance Death So Noble* 66) for Canadian remembrance directly after the First World War; it was not automatically the primary site. While Arthur Currie argued against the singular Vimy Memorial, in the end it was selected because it saw the CEF's first action as a single military unit, with a single objective. Other sites, however, were also considered:

during the past year, eight sites have been selected in France and Flanders for the purpose of erecting memorials to commemorate the victories of Canadian soldiers during the Great War. These sites which have been selected are in respect of the battles which are now known which will be known to history under the following names: St. Julien... Passchendaele... Observatory Ridge, sometimes known as the

battle of St Eloi... Vimy Ridge... Arras... Brouillon Wood... Courcellette...
Amiens... (Guthrie 1460)

The emphasis on naming in Guthrie's speech is more than Parliamentary rhetoric—it highlights the indeterminate nature of these locations in the years directly following the First World War. As the sites were integrated into history and made accessible by standardized names—St. Eloi rather than Observatory Ridge—they were also re-integrated into legal map of France. Canada came into possession of an utterly disordered landscape, one that—over the 18 years between the Armistice and the unveiling of the Vimy Memorial—would be re-integrated into the narrative of history. The declaration that these sites “are now known” and “will be known to history” both names the un-nameable history of combat and reminds us that for six years “France and Flanders” was not only contested in military terms, but was without the texts and laws that had previously given it meaning.

It was not only that these sites were elected as sites of memory, but that they had to be entirely reconstructed, and this reconstruction extends from re-surveying the landscape to the legal language of treaties to the literary representation of Vimy Ridge, to the pedagogical work of the memorial. 1922's Vimy Ridge Agreement⁹⁵ between Canada and France formalizes the relationship between Vimy's imagined role in Canadian history and its geographical site in northern France. The declaration recasts the geography of Northern France as a site of Canadian history and organizes Canada's First

⁹⁵ For convenience I have abbreviated the Agreement's title. The full title is as follows: “AGREEMENT BETWEEN CANADA AND FRANCE FOR THE CESSION TO CANADA OF THE FREE USE OF A PARCEL OF LAND ON VIMY RIDGE FOR THE ERECTION OF A MONUMENT TO THE MEMORY OF THE CANADIAN SOLDIERS WHO DIED ON THE FIELD OF HONOUR IN FRANCE IN THE COURSE OF THE WAR 1914-1918.”

World War history around a singular site. Further, the H.C. Osborne, Secretary for Canada's Battlefield Memorial Commission, adds an Appendix describing the state of the earth at Vimy itself:

the use of the word "park" is perhaps misleading. Vimy Ridge is a barren tract of land, miles in extent, devastated and pitted with shell holes, etc. The object of the Commission is to reserve and develop in a suitable way sufficient land to form a background for the monument and prevent the erection of unsightly structures in its vicinity. Such further land as may be reserved for the proposed "park" will be left largely in its present state. The only development would probably be in the form of a moderate forestation scheme, that is the planting of some trees, and the construction of roads or paths leading to the monument. (Osborne n.p.)

Osborne's Appendix to the Vimy Ridge Agreement stresses the formlessness of the place itself, its original organizing features reduced to shell holes. Vimy's formlessness dovetails with Guthrie's claim to name—or rename—the site for "all of history." The history of the Vimy Memorial reconstitutes a bit of high ground in Northern France as a piece of Canada via the legal, military, commemorative and aesthetic discourses of Canadian literature.

In May 1922 King George V made a tour of the Western Front's significant battlegrounds and cemeteries, including Vimy Ridge. The Imperial War Graves Commission published a commemorative book in order to raise funds for the Commission; it included an account of the tour adapted from articles by Frank Fox, a journalist who traveled with the King, as well as Rudyard Kipling's poem "The King's

Pilgrimage” and photographs of the company at various memorials. Fox describes George V arriving at Vimy:

looking out on its ridge, the King bethought of the great battle in which his Canadian troops had won this key-position, and telegraphed to Lord Byng, the present Governor-General of Canada, and before in command of the Canadian Corps, the following message of thankfulness and congratulation:—“I have just spent the night at Vimy. My thoughts are with you.” (65)

Early in the history of battlefield tours Fox has presented George V as the model mourner-pilgrim, representing his colonial subjects as he approaches the battlefield. Fox’s narrative links vision with memory, the interpretation of strategic objectives in France with the unity of the commonwealth. Further, George V’s visit is an early incident in what will become the form for Canadian remembrance at Vimy: the citizen approaches the Ridge and contemplates its strategic meaning in Canadian terms. Before Allward’s pylons marked the point from which the pilgrim is to view the Canadian objectives of the battle of Arras—that is, tactical advantage over the Douai Plain and the slag-heaps that marked France’s northern coal fields—George V sees the Ridge and links it not with French sovereignty in the face of invasion, but with the CEF. Looking over the destroyed landscape of Vimy Ridge, George V does not see France, but Canada.

2. Time's Wrong Way Telescope

*Time's wrong way telescope will show
a minute man the years hence
and by distance simplified.*

Keith Douglas. "Simplify Me When I'm Dead." 1943.

From above the tactician recasts the earth below him as a battleground, organizing his human and topographical resources to gain the conflict's objectives. From this point of view, the intervening distance both simplifies and abstracts the object of the tactical gaze. However, the work of war was done by individual soldiers on the ground. That is, by those who do not possess the privileged perspective and specialized knowledge of the watch tower. In Dave Grossman's taxonomy of military violence, *On Killing* (revised ed, 2009), distance, perspective and the mediation of visual information are central preoccupations because, in his argument, one's distance from the killing produces a qualitatively different experience of the act. Grossman outlines his argument in a section titled "Killing and Physical Distance: From a Distance, You Don't Look Anything Like a Friend" (97), placing different perspectives on a continuum that runs from "maximum range" (107) to "sexual range" (137). Grossman describes the different experiences, traumas and problems associated with killing from different distances and perspectives, from the impersonal act of dropping a bomb or running field artillery, to the violent intimacy of hand-to-hand combat. Grossman argues that distance is a "qualitative distinction" (99) rather than a simple matter of the space between one combatant and another.

Grossman's argument regarding distance is part of a longer debate about the nature of war and its representation, one which sets the authority of first-hand combat experience above the mediated experience of the academic strategist or the Canadian War Records Office's (CWRO) home-front witness. Critic James Campbell uses the phrase "Combat Gnosticism" to explain the canonization of the trench lyric as the ur-form for literary response to the Great War. He argues that first-hand accounts of the Great War—even lyric accounts—belong to an order of literature valued for its proximity to violence and its authors' ethos as "warriors," those who possess the gnosis of the battlefield because they are first-hand victims and witnesses of that violence. In this critical model, the cultural work of First World War literature is advocacy and testimony, with the reader positioned as witness as well as audience, and with criticism elucidating and reinforcing the poets' original advocacy work rather than complicating it. Canonized trench poetry—represented primarily by Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen—also thematizes the home-front reader's distance from "real" action on the battlefield, rendering their witness incomplete and, by extension, limiting their rights to speak on the subject.⁹⁶ The critical history of war literature after Paul Fussell values "truth" or "the real" in its texts, with that "real" associated with a direct, primarily masculine experience of the front-line. Further, Campbell points out an un-challenged conflation of "war poetry" with "combat poetry" (204), rendering the work of non-combatants irrelevant to any discussion of war or war literature. This conflation presumes that Militarism's primary work is on the battlefield, not in the complex of production, circulation and representation that makes

⁹⁶ Obviously, access to the site of "gnosis" is also carefully gendered, which leads to a conspicuous misogyny in much work by the canonized Trench Poets.

combat possible. The canonized trench lyrics limit their definition of war to combat and in so doing create and perpetrate a conception of the battlefield as a liminal space (204), associating it and the text it produces with masculine initiation. This is tautological, with the physical space inaccessible to the uninitiated, but one's presence there—of a particular gender, on a particular date, near a particular town in Nord-Pas-de-Calais—functioning as initiation into the field's traumatic mysteries. The lyric describes not only the space of the battlefield, but the initiate's ontological transformation. The initiatory battlefield does not belong exclusively to the First World War's trench poets. The phrase "no man's land" reinforces the liminal model for combat experience celebrated in Trench Poetry, reminding us as that the space of violent initiation is also the frontline of the nation-state: the land belongs to no man because it is contested by Allied and Central powers, represented by citizen-soldiers.

With *Combat Gnosticism* Campbell uses the model of initiation and liminality to interpret the distance between home- and battle-front. Such a model organizes knowledge in terms of location, with the distance between author and event the measure of their authority to write on the subject of combat. Both Grossman and Campbell make arguments about the experience of war in spatial terms, suggesting that militarism not only informs the way we understand geography, collectively, but that one's relationship to the quantum of war—one individual killing another—is defined by one's distance from that death. Further, these arguments suggest a situated, conditional knowledge, despite the imagined objectivity produced by distance. Militarism's formal organizing principles are ordered by scale—from the strategic to the tactical—with each order of magnitude requiring a different set of principles and producing different exigencies. As a result,

representations of war oscillate between multiple scales, and in the same manner they oscillate between perspectives on that action. Even the least experimental and most conventional literature of war can contain self-contradictions and manifold perspectives, both representing the qualitative difference Grossman describes *and* approaching Campbell's liminal battlefield, organizing in art irreconcilable perspectives and incoherent memory.⁹⁷

These perspectives are not only a function of terrain on the Western Front, but part of changing military technology. Though Vimy Ridge becomes the prime high ground of the Canadian Great War, the airplane provided a similar experience of perspective. Describing the difference between the infantry and the air force as a function—at least in part—of perspective, Vance discusses what enlisted men saw in the trenches: “[t]o the infantryman looking over the parapet at no man’s land, the battlefield was an oppressive emptiness. The enemy positions might be visible as indistinct mounds in the distance, but more often there was, quite literally, nothing to see” (*High Flight* 50). In contrast, the “infantryman-turned-pilot” (50) sees an ordered world “of space and clarity” (50) with sky and earth in their rightful places and landmarks easily observed: “[n]o longer was the pilot constrained by the physical limitations of the battlefield that had hindered his sight and movement while he was in the trenches” (50). The advantages of high ground—whether in the air force or on a ridge—seem to have psychological as well as tactical. For the enlisted man, who will likely never go up in an airplane, the

⁹⁷ To borrow an image from Czeslaw Milosz, one that dovetails with the concerns of this chapter, poetry can contain multiple perspectives because the poet “is the one who flies above the Earth and looks at it from above but at the same time sees it in every detail. This double vision may be a metaphor of the poet’s vocation” (Nobelprize.org n.p.).

Ridge is as close as he will get to the ordered perspective Vance describes, to understanding the landscape through which he has passed. From an airplane, Vance argues, the world is comprehensible again, the undifferentiated mass of mud and flesh that is no man's land regains borders and context; from above "trench lines [a]re discernable, enemy strongpoints [can] be pinpointed" (50) and one can again see the pastoral beyond the chaos in "the green and productive fields away from No Man's Land" (50). From above even the regular combatant can see the possibility of progress in an otherwise static conflict or at least imagine movement from a broken landscape to one ordered and productive.

While representing the first-hand experience of combat raises problems of perspective and mediation, any discussion of the First World War must also contend with the problem of time, which adds its own distance to our representations of the battleground. As established above, perspective itself has multiple associations: aesthetic, epistemological, tactical. In commemorative texts of the First World War perspective also becomes a way of thematizing memory, with the high ground of the present allowing the author to look on and over the past. Philip Child begins his long poem *The Wood of the Nightingale* (1965) with the narrator—carefully linked to Child's service record in both the Preface and the author's biography—imagines memory in visual terms, invoking the high-ground of the present to approach and organize his private memories of combat. Writing the past out of abstraction and into the specifics of verse, he begins,

As if I looked from a great height,
I see a savage wilderness;
A road looms, white as a sabre scar

On twilight middle earth's taut skin,
 Pierces a valley crest to crest
 As thin and straight as a bullet's flight,
 Narrow and sharp as an inch of time
 From caul to shroud.

Stub pygmies caliper the road,
 Unwind its inches (1.44 - 53)

Time is space for Child as he remembers and comprehension comes with distance: the battlefield's geography of hill, crest and road are unified by the poet's imagined high ground in a way they could not be in the moment of combat. The poem finds its subjects—an earlier version of the poet, his two friends—as they descend into the disorienting low-lands of the valley and the past:

Three tiny points rise at the crest,
 Grow tall and mushroom into men,
 Desert the skyline and descend
 The valley slope (1.70 - 3)

The space in which the earlier Child finds himself is full of chaos and limited sight-lines: the opening lines of the poem trace his alter-ego's approach to no man's land. It is not only that work like Child's must represent the multiple perspectives through which the military organizes space and resources, but that these perspectives are qualitatively different in the way they know the space they represent and therefore in what they represent within that space. The constant oscillation between points of view that marks

war poetry appears in the tension between poem and paratext, between the perspective of a man in combat and the *coup d'oeil* of the general, between the enlisted man and the map-maker, the soldier and the historian, the living and the dead.

In Child's text space becomes a way of talking about private memory, as the elevated perspectives of the present allow the reader to imagine the battleground as a comprehensible whole, abstracted by distance and time, unified by the single viewer-poet who occupies the ridge and renders the raw material of memory as text. In more formal commemorative practices, the metaphor of distance returns as a way of talking about public memory as well. One of the original inscriptions on the walls of the Memorial Chamber—replaced in 1980 with the full text of McCrae's "In Flanders' Fields" (Colombo, Richardson 127)—reads

THEY ARE TOO NEAR

TO BE GREAT

BUT OUR CHILDREN

SHALL UNDERSTAND

WHEN AND HOW OUR

FATE WAS CHANGED

AND BY WHOSE HAND (Houses of Parliament 6)

Reversing Child's descent into memory, Rudyard Kipling's text imagines a retreat through time that parallels space, with the "nearness" of contemporary soldiers rendering them inconceivable, while passing years will make their actions distant and plain, just as the histories of the First World War will render the disordered battlefield in black and white. Kipling's lines describe the war as a problem of perspective and understanding

that is, in turn, solved within the space of the chamber itself. Before it was revised to commemorate other engagements, the Memorial Chamber contained a collapsed history of the First World War, both a narrative of its battles inscribed counter-clockwise on the stone walls and a list of Canadian casualties contained in the sarcophagus at its centre. The chamber solves the problem of distance by symbolically repatriating both the material of French and Belgian battlefields and the narrative of the CEF, orienting the citizen-mourner in both the civic space of the chamber and the history of the Great War. Those who cannot look on and over the site of Canadian victory at Vimy *can* share the ideological space of war when they stand on the Chamber's imported stone and read its walls. Despite the impossibility of first-hand witness or comprehension on the home-front the whole interior of the Memorial Chamber, in both its original and revised editions, calls citizens to locate themselves within that history as they do within the space of the chamber.

It is here that women return to military space as relicts, as fundraisers for the Memorial Chamber or as agents of national mourning abroad. However, distance again becomes a means of representing both the passage of time and the battlefield's liminality, with public rituals and spaces of commemoration measuring the citizen's distance from combat. During the 1936 Pilgrimage to the Vimy Memorial, organized by Alexander Ross, representative pilgrims took part in memorial services at Westminster, with the selection criteria witnessing both women's public military role and the hierarchy of distance re-written into mourning practice. The *Guidebook of the Pilgrimage to Vimy and the Battlefields July – August 1936* includes detailed instructions for those attending the unveiling of the Vimy Memorial and the tours of London, France and Belgium. Article

19 of the Guidebook instructs Party Leaders (who were each responsible for several hundred Pilgrims, both veterans and civilian mourners) to select those who have supplied the greatest numbers of bodies for the CEF for seats closest to the tomb of the Unknown Soldier:

Each Party Leader will name sixteen pilgrims, a number of whom will be ladies, to represent the Pilgrimage at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. This party will consist of those who lost near relatives in the War and will include the mother on the pilgrimage who lost the most sons. (23-24)

Such instructions orient the individual act of mourning in the space of explicitly military and imperial commemoration, just as the individual acts of reproduction are framed in national terms. Further, the idea of biological “nearness” plays out in space: a woman’s place in mourning, her right to approach the Unknown Soldier—the most sacred point in First World War commemoration—is a function of her biological proximity to the bodies on the battlefield. On the Vimy Pilgrimage, the degrees of grief are measured and written in space.

3. Mapping the Page

*Not only how far away, but the way that you say it
Is very important. Perhaps you may never get
The knack of judging a distance, but at least you know
How to report on a landscape*

Henry Reed. “Lessons of the War: II Judging Distances.” 1943.

Place names are the simplest way to represent strategic and geographical meaning across distance, especially if a reader at home can find those places in a schoolroom atlas or a

map in the weekend edition of the newspaper. In addition to rendering geography in short-hand, the very conception of the battlefield at work in these names—Festubert, St Julien, Vimy—presumes a coherent site for military action, one where violence begins and ends with clear objectives. This conception of the battlefield is in part a product of the United Kingdom’s War Office in the years following the First World War and the names later disseminated to mark particular sites and moments were carefully selected by the Battles Nomenclature Committee (Morgan 37). According to one historian of Battlefield naming conventions the War Office conceived of the committee as “a formalization of past practice” (38) identifying naming conventions already in use and applying the same rules to the First World War, selecting a combination of local toponyms and the conventions that emerged during the war years. They explicitly rejected dates as part of their practice, settling instead on words that already possessed associations for both the British Army and the public, whether those associations belonged to 1914-18 or to much earlier conflicts (37). The existence of such a committee testifies to the significance of standardized naming conventions for history and commemoration, especially in a global conflict. It also demonstrates the arbitrariness of such nomenclature, which divides four years of conflict into distinct units designated by recurring names like “Artois” or “Ardennes” or “Ypres,” associated with both local toponyms and military history that reaches further back than 1914.

For those far from the battlefield the name was a means of representing and accessing a reservoir of shared sentiment, one easily inscribed on stone or written into poetry. In his collection *To France* (1917) Ralph Lardy Sheldon-Williams writes a litany of French and Belgian places with “names like trumpets,” a phrase drawn from a few

lines of a 1917 edition of the *London Observer* which appears as the poem's epigraph. Like his collection's title—the “to” can be both dedicatory and directional—the place names serve a double purpose, calling Canadians to France, and invoking the strategic meaning contained in a name like “Festubert” or “Ypres” or “St Julien.” The poem's first and third stanzas call the names, while the second, fourth and final stanzas interpret them in chivalric terms, describing the productive and pastoral landscape that must be defended as it collides with industrial warfare. The first stanza reads:

Souchez River, Carency,
 Angres, the Bois d'Hirondelle,
 Lievin and Givenchy
 Vimy's height and Vimy's Hell (9 – 12)

The poem's fourth stanza makes explicit the reason for this constant recitation, as the poem's neo-medieval terminology collides with industrial warfare; names are important because they are the sites of resistance, even when the landscape itself is disordered: “Sweet to the ear... Shall our names be for all time, though, history-haunted / Our streets and our orchards lie outraged and dying” (14 – 16). The repeated catalogue of French towns invokes that other, sweeter history, though not one un-touched by contemporary violence: “Vimy” and “Souchez” and “Givenchy” come to refer to both the historic French countryside and its new strategic meaning, invoking both the persistent, chivalric past and the violent present.⁹⁸ For those on the home-front such names invoke both

⁹⁸ In many places on the Western Front violence completely disordered the relationship between place and name in both practical and cultural terms. While the practical work of re-surveying the countryside—and

Sheldon-Williams' local knowledge as a member of the CEF and accessible newspaper geographies.

It is useful to set this front-line verse⁹⁹ beside the response of its home-front audience, here represented by L.M. Montgomery's *Rilla of Ingleside*. There the war is understood by way of names like those in Sheldon-Williams' litany, described at third-hand in the newspapers that preoccupy Susan Baker as she follows events on the other side of the Atlantic. Susan spends much of the novel locating words that are, to her, strings of unpronounceable letters—"M-l-a-w-a," "B-z-u-r-a" or "P-r-z-e-m-y-s-l" (83)—in order to understand where her "laddies" have gone, though she might just as easily been reading of "Souchez River" or "Givenchy." These distant places come to be both familiar—by the end of the book Susan has a strong grasp of Allied strategy and objectives—and terrifyingly exotic, a measure in language of how far from home the CEF has gone. At the beginning of the war Susan sees a moral threat in their exoticism: "These foreign names are far from being decent, in [her] opinion" (83). By the end of the war, as she follows events in the Middle East, she finds comfort in newspaper reports that

re-attaching place-names-- fell to the civil engineers of post-war France and Belgium, cultural texts are also part of that re-constitution. In *Canadian Battlefield Memorials*, "prepared and issued by the Canadian Battlefields Memorials commission" in 1929, an un-named officer of the Commission writes,

The acquisition of these parcels of land presented formidable difficulties as property bournes, land-marks, etc., had been completely obliterated by shell-fire. Therefore, the task of relocating the boundaries and establishing the exact position of the sites and road locations, with reference to the cadastral plans which existed previous to 1914, necessitated prolonged and careful instrumental surveys. (10)

Re-surveying re-constitutes the landscape as "French" or "Belgian" as do words like "Vimy" which remake and rename place in the aftermath of destruction, witnessing both the war and its history before 1914.

⁹⁹ While Sheldon-Williams wrote on active duty—"Names like Trumpets" is footnoted with "Before Lens, August 13th, 1917" (4)—the earlier poems in the collection were written in Cowichan Station, BC, and he returned there after the war to write a history called *The Canadian Front in France and Flanders* (1920).

belong to a tradition she understands: "I am so thankful I can pronounce Jerusalem and Hebron,' she said. 'They give me a real comfortable feeling after Przemysl and Brest-Litovsk!'" (227).

While "Vimy" or "St. Julien" or "Festubert" have a shared Canadian meaning in our public texts, they also come to represent private grief, as a single word can come to mean both 1000 casualties and a single death. In "Vimy Ridge"—which reads "*April 9, 1917*" below the title—Mrs. A. Durie theorizes the link between the word and the event, describing the relationship between the poem's title, her own private act of memory, and the material on which the poem's most significant text—the word "Lens"—is written. The poem functions as a "close reading" of the object that contains, for the speaker, a collapsed history of both the Canadian war and her son's death. For us, those who eavesdrop on her speech as we read the text, she teases out the meaning of words like "Vimy" or "Lens" as they exist on memorials—wood or stone, personal or public, *memento mori* or *lieu de mémoire*. In so doing she "reads" Lens as a personal text in the same moment that she contributes to its public meaning.

The poem is a monologue that begins with an intimate, physical memorial the speaker wears—a cross—on which is inscribed a name: "The cross I wear?" the speaker begins, "That came from Vimy Ridge. / La Folie Farm, which always makes a bridge / Between my mind and the battle" (1 – 3). The poem is phrased as a response to an unstated question regarding this cross, removing us from the original utterance, represented by the text on the page. La Folie Farm was one of the early objectives of the battle and Durie's careful triangulation of memory, text and material continues from the invocation

of the battle—the name a “bridge” linking the place with particular events in that place’s human history and with her grief—to the invocation of her son’s death:

But do you catch
 The blaze of the word “Lens” across the arms?
 That’s where my soldier fell. La Folie Farm’s
 A name that burns and flames and stands to be
 Immortal (8 - 12)

The name “La Folie Farm” as it is understood in relation to the cross and the word “Vimy” and the date “April 9th, 1917” becomes a new thing in combination, triggering almost-unwilled acts of memory, for both her private war and shared Canadian history. The “blaze” takes on a dual meaning here, both a pale sign cut into wood and an internal, eternal flame. Like the flame, the name “Lens” marked on the material of “Vimy” is immortal, though Captain W. Durie is dead and persists only as a name:

The scarred wood
 Was picked up by my hero, when he stood
 After the fight on Vimy, and for me
 Sought out the shattered fragments of a tree (3 - 6)

The substance of her portable memorial is continuous with a battlefield but also evidence of a private act that attempts to bridge the distance between her and her son. The inscription belongs not to that battle, but to the terminal event in her private war: Captain Durie’s death. While Lens saw much action during the larger Battles of Passchendaele and Hill 70 in the summer of 1917—both names inscribed on the floor of the Memorial

Chamber in Ottawa—Captain Durie died in December of 1917. While the word “Lens” seems to coincide with other signifiers of the Canadian Front, it refers to another event entirely, to December 1917, rather than August. That is, the word “Lens” as it exists within the poem is not only a representation of the place where William Durie died, but a reference to the words carved on material continuous with Vimy Ridge. That is, the word on the page is a reference to the inscription, not the place, as though “Lens” has come to mean something more than “a commune in Northern France, in the Pas-de-Calais Department.” “Lens” refers to a memorial cross, to Captain A. Durie’s death in December, 1917, to his mother’s act of mourning.

Susan Baker is preoccupied with naming distant sites of action and integrating them into her home-front understanding of the war, while Mrs. Durie is preoccupied with the right interpretation of those names when they appear in text. These ways of understanding military violence are not particular to the author or the character, nor limited to texts like *Rilla of Ingleside*, “Names like Trumpets” or Mrs. A Durie’s wooden cross, but extend to much, if not all commemorative practice on the home-front, whether literary or monumental. Two large examples include RMC’s Triumphal Arch, which must be regularly revised to include new names and places, lists “Ypres” and “Festubert” and “Vimy” on the outer wall that faces the Cataraqui. As already mentioned, Parliament’s Memorial Chamber includes long lists of names and dates. Repatriated in the stone of the Chamber and the Arch, distant places come to be quite literally framed by a Canadian landscape in Ottawa or Kingston, as Vimy is associated with the unified CEF and St Julien with the first Gas Attack on Canadian forces. These meanings stretch beyond European history books or Baedeker, allowing those at home to imagine Western

Europe in relation to the CEF, as Susan imagines events at M-l-a-w-a while she sits at her kitchen table in Ingleside or Mrs. Durie carries her bit of Vimy Ridge, its inscription referring not to a battle, but to a single death.

In Montgomery's and Durie's example place-names are separated from the text by the page's topography, whether in Susan's spelled-out letters or Mrs. Durie's title and the quotation marks that set "Lens" apart from the text as the object of the poem's attention. While texts like Sheldon-Williams' recite "names like trumpets" within the lyric, the bulk of significant place names in Canadian poetry of the First World War have more in common Mrs. Durie's blazing "Lens." In these works, name and text are separated, with the poem functioning as commentary or an elaboration on what "Vimy" means or a means of locating the text in space and time. Further, the typographically distinguished name poetry shares conventions with monumental forms, appearing like portable inscriptions in titles and paratext. This paratext locates the poem in the geographical space of the war by framing it with the co-ordinates of battle: date and place, in either an epigraph or at the foot of the page. Paratext also frames the work typographically, orienting it on the page as it orients the poem within its historical context, and bridging the distance between the narrator's singular experience of a chalky escarpment in Nord-Pas-de-Calais and its shared, historic meaning at home under the name "Vimy." While dates and place-names are common, rank, service record and regiment also often appear on title pages, dedications and in introductions, whether describing the author or the dedicatee. These explicitly military paratexts formalize the whole collection's relationship to the CEF by making war the work's primary, if not most significant element, framing the whole work as a product of the war as dates and

locations frame particular poems as products of the battlefield. Such paratexts are not limited to frontline literature and often appear in early home-front works. These works are often contextualized with the date of the battle described or the dates of composition. “Early” literature here means the work written between the wars, while the events of 14 – 18 were still in living memory. These texts belong to the first generation of veterans—Peregrine Acland, Bernard Freeman Trotter or John McCrae—and the first generation of home-front writers like Montgomery or Durie.

I have divided these paratexts into two general categories. The first appears in the book’s front matter—frontispiece, title page, dedication and introduction—and formally associates either the author or the work’s composition with the CEF. It also includes biographical essays and statements of politics or poetics, though it is difficult to distinguish between those added by editors in posthumous versions and those that are part of the original manuscripts. The second category surrounds the poem itself, consisting in dates and locations, whether of the poem’s military subject matter or its composition. These appear not only in the original printed edition, but are regularly preserved in anthologized reprints and digital versions. While the first category orients the work with its military context and establishes the author’s ethos as a veteran or an interested citizen, the second category maps that ethos onto the page, reproducing typographically the commemorative conventions of the monument. These typographical frames turn the poem into a portable inscription, detached from the site it commemorates, but carefully linked to that space in text if not material. As McCrae’s “In Flanders Fields” recurs as a

memorial inscription, poets import the textual conventions of the monument into their works, associating the poem with public memory on both stone and paper.¹⁰⁰

Paratexts locate these works in the time and space of the CEF before the reader has even encountered the individual poem. Facts and contexts compose this frame: the author's self-presentation on the title page, often as a member of or associated with the CEF; the dedication page, which often includes references to comrades or to the fallen; the opening essay, biographical in the case of posthumous publication or a statement of poetics. Particular poems are more carefully embedded in the idea of a geographically and chronologically coherent battlefield, suggesting that readers understand the language of French and Belgian place-names and that this knowledge is part of the works' meaning. These frames are particularly common in work by Canadian trench poets, especially those collections that include critical apparatus in the form of introductory essays or those published posthumously, like Bernard Freeman Trotter's or John McCrae's, which seem to be oriented around the author's death as well as his service.

Examples of the first category include Stanley Harrison's *Songs of the Prairie and the CEF* (1919) similarly identifies the poetry's military context on the cover, but also includes "(Lt Canadian Exped. Force)" on the title page. Hartley Munro Thomas's *Songs*

¹⁰⁰ In some cases the paratext alone is enough to identify the work as "war literature." H. Smalley Sarson's "Love Song" includes the word "*Bailleul*" at its foot, without explicitly relating it to the poem's subject or the site of its composition. Bailleul is a town in northern France that hosted a casualty clearing station between March 1915 and Autumn 1918. The cryptic association of pastoral love poem and casualty clearing station provokes a particular kind of interpretation from the poem's reader, assuming they are aware of the associations of the name Bailleul. Such an assumption is reasonable considering Sarson's work appeared in several numbers of the CWRO yearbook *Canada in Khaki*, suggesting an interested audience aware of events on the Western Front. In other words, the single word "Bailleul" turns a generic pastoral love song into a work of war-poetry; the name, and Sarson's presence in the CEF seems to be the only reason for including it in *We Wasn't Pals*. However, it is tempting to suggest that Sarson uses the conventions of memorial paratext to both invoke and disappoint the reader's expectations of the battlefield lyric.

of an Airman and Other Poems (1918) identifies its author as a member of the “Royal Airforce” in both the title and the frontispiece. In one last, and representative, example Harold Peacock’s *Rough Rhymes of a Canadian Soldier* includes an extensive dedication which makes reference to the author’s service record, while reproducing in font and format a dedicatory inscription on stone:

TO
 THE OFFICERS AND MEN
 OF THE
 2ND INFANTRY DIVISION,
 LIVING HERE AND BEYOND THE VEIL,
 WHO BY THEIR
 NEVER-FAILING CHEERFULNESS
 AND
 THEIR INDOMITABLE PLUCK,
 HAVE IMMORTALIZED THE FAIR NAME OF CANADA,
 THESE RHYMES ARE DECATED BY
 ONE WHO IS PROUD TO HAVE BEEN
 THEIR COMRADE,
 HAROLD PEACOCK (iii)

Its small capitals, its symmetry, its sentiment all invoke a monumental inscription and—by extension—suggests some continuity between the text behind the dedication and whatever it is that lies behind the carved figures on cenotaphs, monuments or grave stones. The dedication’s objects are those veterans “living here and beyond the veil,”

which suggests that the category of “veteran” is more significant than “living” or “dead,” itself a recurring convention, particularly in war-art, where the living and the dead are unified—and rendered separate and inaccessible—by their common military identities. The difference between these two identities is spatial: “beyond the veil” is a liminal metaphor, associating death with the experience of combat not only because those in combat often die, but because both experiences are imagined in terms of transformation and measured in space. To die, or to be initiated into the brotherhood of the CEF, is to cross from one sort of space to another, to move from Canada to Europe, from home-front to front-line, from living to dead.

The conventions briefly outlined identify both the authors and their collections with the CEF before the reader has even encountered a particular poem. They frame the poet’s public utterance with the space of that utterance, suggesting that home-front readers ascribe greater value to “war poetry” that originates near or at the front-line—or, at least, is more closely associated with that space. The second kind of paratext appears in the architecture of the page that surrounds the particular poem and makes an even more explicit link between utterance and location, in this case in the place-name that identify either the literal site of composition or the poem’s affective origins in a specific battlefield. Since these works had a home-front audience, places names are also a way of measuring the distance between the civilian and the soldier, or between Canada and the Western Front.

Peregrine Acland’s *Reveille of Romance* is an un-dated, single-poem pamphlet. The title page includes an explanation of its composition, saying that it was “Written in early October, 1914 in the mid-ocean, on board H.M. Troopship ‘Megantic,’ of the Fleet

bearing the First Contingent of the Canadian Expeditionary Force to England” (i). The poem predates Brooke’s *1914* sonnets, but shares many of the same sentiments, describing the return of medieval valour—figured as a woman—to an otherwise fallen world. The poem’s aggressive anti-modernism and its carefully located composition combine to suggest that modernity is geographical, with newly enlisted men escaping “life’s dull and dreary maze” (3)—that is to say, contemporary Canada—in either death or initiation, both of which are associated with the transatlantic crossing. In this case, French and Belgian “names like trumpets” are both particular sites of potential glory *and* a reveille for the Canadian citizen, allowing colonials to cross the distance between the dreary “here” and the valorous “there” by returning to the mother continent. The poem’s final stanzas also associate the re-crossed Atlantic with death: the fallen “mark the course” for the soldier who comes after, mapping an approach to the exceptional, liminal space of the battlefield. The space is both literal—a field of violence in France or Belgium, a trans-Atlantic voyage—and figurative—the fallen “lie beside the way” to a metaphysical space of either destruction or transformation.

Also measuring the distance between Canada and the Western Front, Bernard Freeman Trotter’s “A Canadian Twilight” invokes sentiments much like Acland’s: the emptiness of unheroic modern life, the necessity of sacrifice to earn transcendence, the speaker’s desire to “perish... nobly in a noble cause” (32). The poem—one anthologized in Garvin’s *Canadian Poems of the Great War* (1918) and Baetz’s *Canadian Poetry from World War One: An Anthology* (2009)—is presented, by way of its paratext, as an explicit apology for his own absence from combat, signed with an implied apology: “*written while frail health prevented enlistment*” (n.p.). In the only collection of Trotter’s

work and in later anthologized versions it is dated “1915, Lake Cecebe,” at the foot of the verse. The poem’s subject is the speaker’s separation from Langemarck, a village in Belgian destroyed totally during Second Ypres in 1915. In 1917 Langemarck saw Canadian action as part of the battle called Passchendaele—another village leveled by bombardment—itself part of the Third Battle of Ypres. The paratext and the poem combine to describe Trotter’s sense of exile from “real” life, an exile measured by the distance between Lake Cecebe and Langemarck on a day in 1915 and that Belgian village where “honour” has returned to an otherwise dull and modern world. While the two spaces co-exist, they partake of a different order of experience. The distance between them is measured by the moon, whose vision alone can unify the two sites:

how few brief, fleeting moments since,
 That same still finger lay at Langemarck,
 And touched the silent dead, and wanly moved
 Across the murky fields and battle lines (8 – 11).

Trotter’s work is framed by multiple contexts: his rank as “Second Lieutenant, Eleventh Leicesters” (ii); an introduction by W.S.W. McLay (MA) of McMaster University; the dates, places and biographical contexts of the poems themselves. McLay—also the collection’s editor—arranges Trotter’s works by association, beginning with nine “War Poems,” including “A Canadian Twilight” and “Ici Repose,” the most anthologized of Trotter’s work. McLay also frames the poems with biographical paratexts reproduced in later anthologies, including Baetz’s and Garvin’s, which reiterate McLay’s sentiments. The remaining poems in the collection are arranged to form a lyric biography, assuming total continuity between poet and speaker, as though war literature is one place where

biographical fallacy is acceptable or even encouraged. “Dreams” is dated “Toronto, March 1916” and identified—by Professor McLay, presumably—with “written on the eve of his departure for England” (n.p.). These paratexts orient Trotter’s living work around and toward his death, mapping the movement from Canada to Western Europe through and onto his poems, and framing them, for their readers, in geographical terms.

While the moment and site of the poem’s subject matter is often written on the page, those two co-ordinates of violence are not limited to the author’s or even the editor’s paratext. Even poems otherwise bare of additional context may collect apocryphal stories that make the same link between experience and text, suggesting that if the author does not provide the name and date of composition, it will still collect around the important poems of the war. Though John McCrae did not frame his poem in place beyond the title, “In Flanders Fields” (1915) is linked in secondary criticism and popular history with the story of its own creation. Veterans Affairs Canada tells us that McCrae wrote “In Flanders Fields” in early May of 1915 near Ypres, a village in Belgium. These facts—“May 1915” and “Ypres”—locate the poem during or near a particular site of violence. The American Department of Veteran’s Affairs website tells us McCrae’s profession—he was a doctor—which places him behind the frontline, addressing the immediate consequences of war, but without necessarily partaking in combat. According to the Historica-Dominion Foundation’s Heritage Minutes, McCrae wrote the poem in the back of an ambulance. According to the *Canadian Great War Project* he wrote it in response to the death of his intimate friend, the young Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, on 2 May 1915. The collection of associated facts frames the poem as both witness and mourning; further, Second Ypres, the name given a series of battles in

northern France in the spring of 1915, saw the first gas attack of the war. More specifically, McCrae wrote the poem a week after the battle of St Julien, a particularly important battle for the CEF, who bore the brunt of German gas. It is, as well, one of the battles inscribed on the floor of the Memorial Chamber in Ottawa and on the residential street-signs in Duncan, BC.

A large part of the “In Flanders Fields” legacy is this historical and geographical context, suggesting that the poem’s primary cultural work is as a trace of a moment in southern Belgium, on a day in early May of 1915, with all the associated meaning that has for violence, for Canadian war experience and for mourning. The poem’s *prosopopeia*—a rhetorical position strengthened by McCrae’s ethos first as a front-line doctor and second as a casualty of war—models an orthodox response to death for the right-thinking soldier-poet, and locates the author among the dead, validating his right to call for witness from a home-front audience. The immediate circumstances of the poem’s composition only strengthen its last call to witness and to action by the living on the part of the dead. The two lines that address the poem’s reader and introduce the call to commemoration are also the lines often chosen for inscription: “[t]o you from failing hands we throw / the torch, be yours to hold it high” appears in the Canadiens’ dressing room in Montreal, on the Chaplain’s monument in Arlington, Virginia’s national cemetery, the American military cemetery in Cambridgeshire, England; the original version of Ottawa’s Memorial Chamber. Posthumously published works written about combat orient the text further around the point of death, a final co-ordinate on the cultural map of war: the crosses that “mark our place” in France. Ironically, if the poem has become a site of memory for the Canadian military, it is one of mediation and separation,

from a poet who—though living—has consigned himself to the dead, writing about an ineffable experience he has not yet had. The part of the poem that is *not* ineffable—neither the voice of the dead nor the experience of the front line—is the final call to action, the part of the poem that belongs to the living noncombatant, and that part of the poem most often reproduced as an inscription: “if ye break faith.”

Burnett A. Ward, also known as “Flare Pistol Pete,” lived in British Columbia between the wars and wrote for *The Commonwealth*, a magazine published by the provincial CCF. His collection *Verey Lights from The Listening Post* (ca. 1938) includes a number of war-poems, presumably printed in either *The Commonwealth* or the CEF magazine *The Listening Post*. Among them, “Dead Men on Parade” (28) begins with the un-attributed epigraph “The battlefields draw an ever-increasing throng of tourists who seek to reconstruct in the peaceful scenes of today the desolation of the four-year battlefield of which they have read or heard” (28) and sets the tourist knowledge of the Western Front beside the veteran’s. Ward splits each of his four quatrains between these two points of view, distinguishing the two perspectives typographically:

From Mericourt to Avion

‘Tis but a mile or so:

(Only the span ‘twixt life and death,

I found, so long ago!) (1 – 4)

The poem’s dissonance emerges in the tension between the open, guide-book platitudes of the first half of each quatrain and the bracketed—enclosed—posthumous statements of the second half, contrasting the soldier’s roadside Cavalry with the tourist’s guidebook idyll. The poem’s typography literalizes this tension: the two perspectives—posthumous

combatant, subject-less tourist excursion—are linked and separated by a semi colon. On one side of the semi-colon the landscape is pleasant and unthreatening. On the other side, the landscape is liminal in the most absolute sense: the line that stretches from Mericourt to Avion is the gap between life and death.

Finally, and carefully submerged in the poem, the site of this tourism is Vimy Ridge itself and given the presumed late-1930s publication date of the collection, which includes a poem explicitly addressing veteran alienation at Vimy, probably related to the unveiling of the Vimy Memorial in 1936. Mericourt and Avion, both villages in northern France, were not taken in the battle, but marked the German frontline on the morning of 13 April 1917 and are both within three kilometres of Vimy itself, to the east and north. Mericourt and Avion, holiday place-names to the poem's tour-guide, are the new site of battle after the Canadians take Vimy Ridge (Duguid 66). That is, Mericourt and Avion are where more men will die *after* 13 April 1917, reminding us that while the offensive at Vimy Ridge may be imagined in discrete terms by the Battles Nomenclature Committee, it is only one bit of time and space in a continuous war.

4. The View from Vimy Ridge

DURING THE WINTER 1916 – 1917 THE CORPS REORGANIZED WHILE HOLDING FROM ECURIE TO BULLY GRENAY AN OVERSEAS MINISTRY AND HEADQUARTERS WERE ESTABLISHED IN LONDON IN CANADA FACTORIES POURED OUT MUNITIONS OF WAR, BUT VOLUNTARY RECRUITING DECLINED.

EARLY IN JAN, ELABORATE PREPARATIONS FOR THE ALLIED OFFENSIVES N AND S OF ARRAS WERE BEGUN. NN 27TH MARCH THE ARTILLERY BOMBARDMENT OPENED IT INCREASED GRADUALLY UNTIL 9TH APRIL WHEN WITH THE FOUR DIVS IN CONCERT AND IN LINE ON 7500 YARDS OF FRONT. ECURIE-SOUCHEZ THE CDN CORPS 100, 000

STRONG CRASHED THROUGH THE GERMAN LINES, SWEEPED OVER VIMY RIDGE TOOK THE GUNS IN FARBUS AND GOULOT WOODS AND COVERED THE NORTHERN ATTACK BY MAKING THELLUS VILLAGE AND LA FOLIE FARM SECURE WILLVERVAL AND GIVENCHY WERE TAKEN ON 13TH APRIL. ARLEUX ON 28TH THE LINE THEN RAN ACROSS THE DOUAI PLAIN, FOR 5000 YARDS FROM NEAR OPPY TO BOIS DE L'HIRONDELLE CANADIAN CASUALTIES IN APRIL WERE 13,477

Inscription in the Peace Chamber. Houses of Parliament. 1922.

Early on the morning of 9 April 1917 the CEF joined a large Allied offensive, later named “The Arras Offensive” in 1921 by the Battles Nomenclature Committee. They were stationed around an operational centre at the village of Mont St Eloy, to the south and west of the Vimy Escarpment, one name for the sixty metre ridge that marks the Marqueffles Fault, which underlies the chalk of Nord-Pas-de-Calais (Rose, Nathanails 396). For the purposes of the CEF, the battlefield’s material is as important as the height of the ridge, which overlooks the Douai Plain to the north, toward the Belgian border. The chalk—both malleable and stable—lent itself to tunneling and underground warfare, common tactics throughout that region during the war; the Ridge’s height allowed a tactical advantage over the coal fields of Nord-Pas-de-Calais.

Except for the word “Vimy” poems that describe the opening moments of the battle are indistinguishable from descriptions of Ypres, St Julien or Festubert. Many of these works employ either the chivalric language of popular war-verse or the more graphic conventions associated with trench poetry. The first approach uses elevated diction to describe timeless and idealized heroes; the second is often recursive and repetitive, reproducing in its structure one experience of the disordered landscape. These

poems describe the barrage, the slow walk toward the Ridge, the incomprehensible and recursive work of combat from the perspective of the ground. In “Dawn—April 9th, 1917” Jack Turner, MC, CEF describes the moment before the barrage and the moment at the top of the Ridge. The moment before the attack the un-specified Canadian soldier faces only darkness, with the ridge obscured by cloud:

Not yet Dawn—and the gray mists lie

Thick on the Ridge ahead.

Here and there, like a lightning flash,

Blazons a burst of red (1 – 4)

The field of action, however, is obscured by darkness: “[t]here, in the black of the storm-swept dark, / Men... / Strain their eyes where a darker shape / Shows where the grim Ridge stands” (13 – 6).

Hartley Munro Thomas included two poems about the battle in his collection *Songs of an Airman and Other Poems* (1918). “The Song of Vimy Ridge” describes the battlefield to an un-named audience, though in this case the Ridge itself is not obscured or inaccessible; rather, it is entirely absent. Each stanza begins with the command “Sing me a song of Vimy Ridge” (1) and then performs a litany of trench-lyric conventions: “twisted lines” (2); “craters” that “yawn” (3); “broken trees” (3) and “crosses” (4); “tangled wire” (7) and “slime and gore” (19). In keeping with the Ridge’s absence as a physical or affective landmark, the poem measures no progression toward the battle’s goals, instead remaining in the chaotic space of combat. The final stanza constitutes progression within the narrative of the poem if not the battle, but only insofar as it answers the repeated commands to sing: the “song of Vimy Ridge / Was sung when

cannon were crashing through” (16 – 17), for the “gods of war” (18). The final line tells the reader that the song is not sung “to you” (20), carefully separating the poem’s audience from the action it describes. This final, accusatory “you” cuts short the doggerel of the preceding quatrain, echoing the second-person address in the last stanza of McCrae’s “In Flanders Fields.” That is, “The Song of Vimy Ridge” ends not with the battle’s objectives accomplished, but with a sudden consciousness of the text itself as a failed medium for representing combat.

More generally, repetition is a tactic for describing both the site and the experience of the battlefield, particularly no man’s land. Poems often describe a space where difference has been destroyed,¹⁰¹ whether that applies to national territory, private real estate or the distinction between animate and inanimate flesh: after three years the Western Front is composed of mud and human bodies, in which living men are half-buried by the tactics of attrition and underground warfare. The recurring words used to describe this space are rats, slime, mud and poison, stressing not vision, but scent, texture and sound. In a poem from *Buddy’s Blighty and Other Verses from the Front*, “No Man’s Land,” Jack Turner describes this place as a “narrow kingdom” (1) that runs “From the

¹⁰¹ Writing of the winter of 1916, Australian correspondent C.E.W. Bean describes the Western Front in terms of loss: lost meaning, lost time, a return not to the medieval, but to some originary era before life, as though the violence of the war un-did history as it destroyed place:

This battle is now being fought in a sort of dreamland of brown mudholes, which the blue northern mist turns to a dull purple grey. The shape of the land is there, the hills, valleys, lines of willow stumps, ends of broken telegraph poles. But the colour is all gone. It is as though the bed of the ocean had suddenly risen, as though the ocean depths had become valleys and the ocean mudbanks hills, and the whole earth were a creation of slime. It is as though you suddenly looked out upon the birth of the world, before the grass had yet begun to spring and when the germs of primitive life still lay in the slime which covered it; an old, old age before anything moved on the earth or sang in the air, and when the naked bones of the earth lay bare under the naked sky century after century, with no change or movement save when the cloud shadows chased across it, or the storms lashed it, or the evening sunlight glinted from the water trapped in its meaningless hollows. It is to that unremembered chaos that German ideas of life have reduced the world. (206 – 207)

At the same time, the destroyed world Bean describes is also new, with the most fundamental structures in place—the “shape of the land.”

Northern Sea to the South frontier” (19). This new place spills over national boundaries, populated not by citizens but by “heaps of clothing and mouldering clay / All that is left of the men who died” (20-21) and by “the grey rats [who] feast on the year-old dead” (35).

Using the same catalogue of bodily disintegration, Lt. Stanley Harrison’s “Vox Clamantis” describes “oozes” (13) and “fumes” (14), suggesting that space is not understood through vision, but by a tactile experience of decay. In maps and aerial photographs no man’s land could be measured and seen to stretch the length of the Western Front in France and Belgium, with a width of between six and four hundred metres. For the private soldier on the ground, however, the space cannot be quantified in those terms, and is more often described as a bodily encounter with the refuse of war. The landmarks are not hills or towers that can be seen at a distance, but fumes and oozes, and inanimate flesh that provokes an animal fear Turner calls “the wild impulse” (15), one that causes him “to flee from / The shape that [his] comrade assumes” (15 – 6). As in Thomas’s “The Song of Vimy Ridge” there is no forward physical movement in Harrison’s poem, only a will to reconcile the “warm harvest of man-flesh / [that] Lies quivering, bleeding, then still” (21 – 2) with a Christian narrative, rhyming the violence of the lowlands with the high redemptive ground of “Cavalry’s hill” (24).

The tension between physical stasis and spiritual progression also emerges in F.G. Scott’s “The Unbroken Line” (7), the dedicatory poem that opens his memoir *The Great War as I Saw It* (1922). Scott’s poem uses familiar imagery—fear, brotherhood, shell holes, blood sacrifice—to describe combat, locating it in a space that is both spiritually and physically liminal, at “the borderlands of death” (1), where those who “struggled

through the baffling night” (5) seem to circle in the half-light, so changed by their experience that they have more in common with the military dead than with those alive at home. In fact, those who have been on the borderlands return to “narrower years” (13) after the war, though even in limited civilian lives they have access to “eternal visions” (14) and remain unified by their experience of the threshold: “one great army still, living and dead” (14 – 16). In the years following the First World War this representation of no man’s land comes to dominate war literature. W.W.E. Ross’s work particular relies on fugue-like repetitions to describe both a space and a state of mind that is otherwise outside of language, the most explicit example being “Death” (1927). “Death” the poem, or death the state is circular and inescapable, consisting as it does in two questions repeated, one suspects, infinitely: “is it / dark / is it black / is it / black is it / dark / is it dark?” (1 - 7). Between “dark” and “black” there is no visual distinction—vision is either impossible in the dark or what one sees is black. In either case, the distinction one makes with one’s eyes is irrelevant.

In contrast to the incessant repetition in work by Thomas, Turner and Ross, formal memorial narratives of the battle describe progression and arrival rather than stasis and reiteration. A.E. Ross, a combatant who later organized the 1936 Pilgrimage for the monument’s dedication, contributed a preface to *Canada at Vimy* (1967) writes:

It was a cold grey morning but the visibility was good and I could see far over the waste of desolation which was our battlefield... at zero hour all this was changed. The barren earth erupted humanity. From dugouts, shell holes and trenches, men sprang into action, fell into military formations and advanced to the ridge – every division of the corps moved forward together. It was Canada from the Atlantic to

the Pacific on parade. I thought then, and I think today, that in those few minutes, I witnessed the birth of a nation. (vii - viii)

The familiar tropes are there, from the cold through the desolation, but in this case the narrator describes progression toward a goal and a moment of arrival. Zero Hour is recast as birth, as though the Canadian men are autochthonous, born from soil no longer French, but now Canadian. The birth is ideologically, as the moment of emergence marks the arrival of Canadian consciousness. In this case, particular men are metonymous with their geographically disparate origins in various Canadian provinces, but are unified by their actions and by Ross's glance.

While Ross remembers looking over Canadian soldiers and sees an emergent nation, representations of Vimy Ridge and its memorial are dominated by a moment of vision, not of the CEF, but of the Douai Plain. In *Canada at Vimy* (1967) D.E. MacIntyre describes a "clear light" (116) while "At [their] feet lay the village of Vimy, and beyond it lay the broad Douai plain" (115), a landscape otherwise inaccessible to enlisted men, that is "thrilling" (115) because it is "the promised land!" (115). F.G. Scott describes a similar experience, and though he does not invoke the explicitly biblical covenants, he describes both vision and landscape in terms that contrast the chaos and destruction of the days leading up to the battle. He writes, "I saw the villages of Willerval, Arleux and Bailleul-sur-Berthouit. They looked so peaceful in the green plain which had not been disturbed as yet by shells" (170). Even in current official histories, accounts of the battle end with an experience of vision and order as they set the events of 9 - 12 April into the larger context of the Western front.

Even for those long after the battle, the Ridge plays a similar role. Tim Cook's *Shock Troops* (2008) concludes the chapters on Vimy Ridge with "the poor bloody infantry" who

look out over the green acres of the Douai plain beyond, relatively untouched by war. Behind them lay the wastage of battle. Ahead was victory, but only after another twenty months of grinding, attritional warfare. To men who lacked the gift of seeing into the future, even from their victorious position atop Vimy Ridge, the war looked as if it might go on for twenty more years. (148)

This moment of vision, which looks into both the future and the promised land, is the experience represented by the Vimy Memorial itself. While descriptions by Lord Byng of Vimy or A.E. Ross describe the bodily unity of the soldiers who take the Ridge, it is the singular glance from above that dominates commemoration, from Scott's 1922 account, through the official texts associated with 1936's Vimy Pilgrimage, into the present with Jane Urquart's historical novel *The Stone Carvers* (2001), which describes the view from Vimy Ridge in almost identical terms.

The Vimy Pilgrimage Guidebook is pedagogical both practically and ideologically, describing what one sees from the ridge, and modeling a right appreciation for the solemnity of the experience of vision. At least two of these texts also fuse the moment in which the pilgrim sees the Douai Plain with the imagined military geography of France and Belgium, as though a working knowledge of the war's locations extends one's vision beyond the horizon. Brigadier-General Alexander Ross, C.M.G., D.S.O., A.D.C., was the Pilgrimage's chief organizer as well as a veteran. In an extensive essay

about the Ridge itself, Ross describes the intended experience and understanding of the place, carefully bridging—as Mrs. A. Durie does—the distance between the name and the battlefield:

As we turn to leave, we see towards the west the shattered towers of Mont St. Eloy, mute reminders of others wars. A little farther north we see the monument on the spur of Notre Dame de Lortette... Then we turn once more to gaze upon our own Memorial, and we realize, as perhaps never before, what a terrible tragedy war is to all peoples. And so we go slowly away, pondering upon these things. (Ross 16)

“We” look as “we” are commanded to do, on and over the plain of Douai to the north and east of the memorial. In so doing “we” face the same way that the soldiers of the CEF would have faced at the end of the battle. Elsewhere in the Guide, Colonel A. Fortescue Duguid, DSO, Bsc, RCA, Director of the historical section (GS) Department of National Defence, reads the landscape before and blow the pilgrim as a history of the great war:

far to the north and out of sight lies Ypres, where Canadians withstood the first poison gas attack; there also are the ridge of Passchendaele, the woods of Mount Sorrel and the swamps of St. Eloi. Nearer and to the north-east are Festubert and Givenchy, and nearer still Hill 70 and the town of Lens. Beyond the southern skyline lies Amiens were the final advance to Victory began in August 1918, and the low hills between mark the battlefields of the Somme in 1916. Eastwards from Arras the long straight road runs by Monchy-le-Preux, through the Dorcourt-Queant position of the Hindenburg Line, and on across the Canal du Nord by

Bourlon Wood to Cambrai. Farther still, beyond the eastern horizon, are Valenciennes and Mons, on the road to the Rhine. (Duguid 66 – 67)

Both Ross's and Duguid's texts record on paper the striking glance of the general who overlooks and understands the landscape before and below him. In each case, he uses the familiar place names to guide the reader's glance and imagine the landscape in time as well as space. In defending Vimy as the prime site of Canadian commemoration, Prime Minister McKenzie-King describes a single, telling glance in his celebration of Vimy's future role in commemoration. The site will be preserved, "conserving in future generations enough of this consecrated ground to disclose at a glance something of the nature of the activities, as well as of the sacrifices, of our Canadian soldiers" (qtd in Vance 1997 67). While Allward's memorial dominates Canada's contemporary understanding of the Vimy Memorial, it is not an end in itself so much as it marks the place from which one is to see the Douai Plain and make the same connection that George V did on his pilgrimage: to look on Vimy and think of Canada.

CODA: UNDER THE DEW LINE

Intrepid Park in Whitby, Ontario is a nondescript stretch of land between Boundary Road and Lake Ontario, dropping south and a little west from a low hill that rises between the street and the shore. From the beach and through the fixed binoculars on Waterfront Trail, visitors can see the CN Tower and a faint, blue shadow of the Toronto skyline. On the highest point in the park there is a little arrangement of plaques, benches, and flagpoles that orients visitors toward the lake and the invisible American shore, far to the south of their position. The memorial bears the flags of Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Bermuda.

The high ground with its picturesque advantage over the lakeshore is artificial, at least in part. Long before it became Intrepid Park, the lot was popularly known as Camp X, and officially as Special Training School 103. It was established by William Stephenson, known as *A Man Called Intrepid* in the popular biography by William Stevenson, titled with Stephenson's Second World War code-name: Intrepid. He was a Canadian RAF veteran of the First World War who represented British intelligence in North America during the Second World War. He purchased a homestead—as a private citizen, rather than a representative of the Crown—on the shores of Lake Ontario in the very early 1940s, that he intended as a communications centre and training site for Allied counterintelligence and Special Forces. Before it was decommissioned in 1969, “The Farm,” as it came to be known, saw nearly thirty years of service, first as the training school run by Stephenson's British Intelligence operatives, and then as the Oshawa Wireless station, run by the Royal Canadian Signal Corps. After decommissioning, the

concrete bunker that housed the wireless station was demolished and then buried to make a slight, man-made hill crested with the small memorial to Stephenson, which was dedicated in 1984. The outbuildings were bulldozed into Lake Ontario.

By virtue of its espionage and surveillance work, the site's public meaning is indeterminate, possessing both the appeal and the impenetrability of a classified document. Park guides will tell visitors that there is still shrapnel in the ground and overgrown craters on the firing range and point out that, forty years after they were buried, the slabs of concrete that remain of the post-war radiation-resistant communications bunker are now re-emerging through the grass. The site is full of possibilities for an intriguing kind of Cold War romance, increasingly appealing to the public, as witnessed by new plans for commemoration on site and the CBC television series *X Company* (2015) which takes place on the site during the Second World War.

George Orwell first used the term "Cold War" in an essay titled "You and the Atomic Bomb," published in October, 1945 in *The Tribute*. In it he predicted a new sort of non-war, contextualizing it with the unpredictable effects travel and communication technologies, whose utopian promises to "abolish frontiers" and "promote international understanding and co-operation" have paradoxically "insulated one nation from another" (n.p.). For Orwell, a stagnant, oppositional culture is the ultimate product of the nuclear threat, because the atomic bomb robs "the exploited classes and peoples of all power to revolt," while placing "the possessors of the bomb on a basis of military equality. Unable to conquer one another, they are likely to continue ruling the world between them" (n.p.). Orwell calls this new sort of violent non-conflict a "Cold War" that produces, not

battlefields, but constant anxiety and a culture of control rather than open warfare.¹⁰²

Intrepid Park remains a useful and curious way to approach the articulation between the “conventional” battlefield and the contemporary practice of war as Orwell describes it.

Classical battlefields have dominated this dissertation, especially those that exist between nations and empires and that witness the resolution of open conflict in victory or defeat.

This conclusion, however, concerns a new kind of battlefield—diffuse, secret, uncertain—that resists the forms we have inherited for military commemoration, even when it is imperative that its lessons be remembered. In Canada, the potential battlefields of the Cold War are suburban populated by non-combatants or non-uniformed combatants. They are a product of obscene and totalizing technologies, of Mutually

¹⁰² Writing thirty years later, Michel Foucault also explores the cultural effect of such absolute technologies. In *The History of Sexuality, Part 1*, he identifies a qualitative change in the nature of violence before and after the atomic bomb:

the power to expose a whole population to death is the underside of the power to guarantee an individual’s continued existence. The principle underlying the tactics of battle—that one has to be capable of killing in order to go on living—has become the principle that defines the strategy of states. But the existence in question is no longer the juridical existence of sovereignty; at stake is the biological existence of a population. (137)

Where Orwell sees the political consequences of the Bomb in cultural stagnation, Foucault sees the nuclear as the terminal consequence of biopower as an operative concept: to live in the shadow of the bomb is to be a subject produced in life and death by the nuclear threat. Both critics argue that military technologies do not simply reinforce the nation-state as a cultural form—they contribute to new kinds of subjectivity, and new sorts of culture.

For Virilio it is the physical *scale* of nuclear war that constitutes a departure from “classical” military consciousness, informing both contemporary war and the culture it produces. The Cold Warrior, and his civilian analogue “moves at once in the infinitely small space of nuclear physics and in the infinitely huge outer space” (*Bunker Archaeology* 18), the new technologies having added new magnitudes to the original triad of Strategic, Operational, and Tactical scales, weaponizing not only the atom, but—potentially—the solar system.

Assured Destruction, the Strategic Defense Initiative, with their promise of violence unlimited in its scope.¹⁰³

In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson writes that “All profound changes in consciousness, by their very nature, bring with them characteristic amnesias. Out of such oblivions, in specific historical circumstances, spring narratives” (208). With its secrets locked up by parliamentary act, or shredded after 1945, and its buildings demolished, Intrepid Park is more absence than presence despite the rising concrete and seems to confirm Anderson’s observation. For classical warfare and its commemoration, such amnesia marks the site of violence and the absence is one of loss and dislocation. The narratives constructed in the parks at Queenston or Vimy celebrate sacrifice and the possibility of consolation as grass and gardens overtake the battlefield. These sites are the kernel around which a nation establishes its story, allowing citizens to grasp the community to which they belong. Such narratives often assume that war literature is combat literature, and that an objective line separates home- and battle-front or the soldier and the citizen. Intrepid Park is a military site in a corner of corner of suburban Toronto, different from other military memorials because it is concerned less with violence than with the collection and control of information.

¹⁰³ The nuclear bomb is not the only defining military technology of the Cold War. In *The Gun* (2011), a history of the AK-47, C.J. Chivers suggests that while the nuclear threat fixed Cold War binaries in place, the AK-47 was the local instrument of those binaries. In Chivers’ words, it is the mass-produced, durable weapon of “strongmen, criminals, terrorists and messianic guerrilla leaders” (12), a tool of resistance *and* repression, following the same transnational routes as global terrorism and the drug trade. The number of functional AK-47s in the world is unknown, but some estimates put it at 100 million (13). The excesses of its production mean that even eighty years after its invention in the Stalinist USSR, the AK-47 remains the tool of “the small-statured, the mechanically disinclined, the dimwitted,” creating an army of “ordinary men [who can] kill other men without extensive training or complications.” While the nuclear threat is global and existential, the AK-47—like the machete, the land mine, or the car bomb—delivers local, particular violence.

If, as Anderson suggests, elision is necessary for the construction of community, then the narratives that arise at Intrepid Park are revealing. Camp X is marked by a determined silence that visitors fill, not with southern Ontario yeomanry, English generals or Unknown Soldiers, but with urban myths about its temporary, foreign residents: Ian Fleming, Roald Dahl, and Paul Dehn visited, or might have visited, in secret or in public. Hydra, a radio transmitter, collected coded messages from North America before bouncing them across the Atlantic to Bletchley Park, the location of the UK's Government Code and Cypher School and codebreaker Alan Turing. In the earliest hours of the Cold War, the RCMP, supervised by MI6, brought Igor Gouzenko to Camp X to debrief and to hide him and his family after his defection opened the official hostilities between East and West.

The site's uneasy relationship with Canadian sovereignty makes it particularly relevant to Canadian culture of the last sixty years. Camp X was on Canadian soil, but administered by British operatives in order to train American spies and Hungarian freedom fighters. It could not be officially "known" by McKenzie-King because to "know" the site and its work officially would have damaged its strategic significance, because its administrators would have been accountable to the Canadian government, rather than Churchill or Roosevelt. Stephenson and his spies could not have operated with the freedom of secrecy beholden only to the exigencies of intelligence work. For this reason, it constituted a violation of Canadian sovereignty—one facilitated by the Canadians who managed its existence, whether Stephenson or the heads of the RCMP and the CBC, who knew and concealed its nature from the public.

At Camp X, Canada was less a location than a medium—a space through which people and information passed on their way to some other, more important control centre, whether British or American. Canada was a place where world powers could meet, exchange information and leave no evidence. The Farm was necessarily temporary, designed to blend into rural Ontario, and then to be demolished. In the wake of secrecy, the site retains only fragments of its earlier role: shell-holes, shrapnel, and a memorial to a spymaster whose popular biography is of doubtful veracity. It remains as a gap in Canadian sovereignty and memory, gesturing toward events that occurred on Canadian soil, but not within Canadian control.

For these reasons, Intrepid Park shares something with the Battlefield at Batoche in that it is a military site incompatible with Canada's public commemorative tradition, but which is nevertheless central to the nation's true military history. The problem of commemorating the Cold War is the same problem as commemorating the Merchant Navy or those who die, not in combat, but of its complications, whether disability or suicide. In an era when uniformed combat deaths are only a fraction of militarism's cost, it is a significant quandary: how can one can represent—and bear witness to—such deaths with conventions that belong to a different sort of war? The battlefield park and the cenotaph remain the familiar forms of military commemoration, established in the nineteenth century and perfected after the First World. It is an aesthetic of stone, of permanent inscriptions and mass graveyards designed to endure millennia. Canada's Cold War requires a more temporary or fluid form and the slippery "truths" of Camp X are better served by uncertainty: the rumours of literary spymasters like Dehn, and Fleming, and Stephenson; the popular suspicion that under the mound at Camp X there is, intact, a

bunker filled with state secrets. This dissertation began with Dollard des Ormeaux's unnecessary, mis-remembered skirmish with the Iroquois at the Long Sault in 1660, the tatters and rags that were patched into the whole cloth of national culture. It ends with an ambiguously military figure at Intrepid Park, one that witnesses not the base/hinterland distinctions celebrated in Lampman's poem, nor heroic young men who brandish rapiers, but a constant, impersonal threat to the sleeping citizens in the "frail-walled town" of Ville Marie.

In his article on state surveillance and organized religion in *Love, Hate, and Fear in Canada's Cold War* (2004), Steve Hewitt argues that Gouzenko's revelation in 1945 of an internal enemy to Canada within its intellectual "elite," allegiant to the Cold War's other side constitute a kind of wound, a moment in which Canada's security was undermined from within, as its sovereignty had been transgressed by military allies. Perhaps, then, amnesia follows on this anxiety regarding Canada's vulnerability to both enemy and ally, in addition to the fear of total obliteration. If this is so, then the physical form of Intrepid Park's commemoration suits its ambivalent history. The concrete mound, now covered in grass, is an unintentional monument that serves to conceal rather than reveal the surveillance station. The conventional, public memorial on top is dedicated to a man associated as much with spy fiction as with Canadian history. Intrepid Park betrays a relationship between "the past" and public memory that is, perhaps, the objective correlative for the relationship between Canada and its Cold War history. It makes explicit the link between amnesia and commemoration by foregrounding the uneasy relationship between what happened and what is remembered, between the mound and the monument.

In nineteenth-century military geographies, Canada appeared as a link between Europe and Asia, its natural and human resources submerged in either Empire or Commonwealth. In T. Miller Maguire's *Outlines of Military Geography* (1899), for example, Canada appears as a link in the global chain, with the Esquimalt-to-Halifax over-land route from India to London compared in travel-time to the Suez route. In his discussion of these imperial geographies, the Department of Defence historian Jean Martin sees Canada's military context similarly submerged and points out that, "until World War II, Canadian military geography remained part of a wider British imperial geography.... Canada's chapter (which also included Newfoundland, the last province to join the Canadian confederation in 1949) dealt with natural resources, industrial capacity, and transportation infrastructures, with a particular emphasis on railways and inland navigation" (56).

It was not until the end of the Second World War that Canada was represented in a dedicated military geography, rather than within global or continental contexts. In 1949 the Geographer George H. T. Kimble published *Canadian Military Geography*, a textbook for the Canadian Officer Training Corps and one of a few dedicated works on the subject. It is primarily concerned with Canada's natural resources and its relationship to the Cold War's superpowers, with particular reference to Uranium on Great Bear Lake. Pursuing location-as-metaphor, Kimble imagines Canada's future combining geographical and cultural mediumship, quoting an un-identified explorer—who is most likely Vilhjalmur Stefansson—writing in the late nineteen forties,

if we build copper centres northeast of Great Bear lake and oil cities on the Mackenzie and Yukon... if, in short, we do things similar to those being done in

the Soviet Union there will not merely result a symmetrical development on both sides of the Arctic, there will also result an understanding of each by the other....

[Canada] can profit as a middleman between them in times of peace: her loss would be devastating as a battleground between them in time of war. (qtd. in Miller 10)

The metaphorical battleground—or rather, Canada as an anti-battleground, a place of peaceful economic exchange—is both geographical and conceptual, with the north a location of cultural and economic exchange. In the arctic, the passage suggests, Canada presents an alternative to the cultural stagnation Orwell describes in “You and the Atomic Bomb.” It is a version of the arctic valuable in its emptiness, as a blank not yet written upon by either Soviet or American authority and therefore containing the possibility of new forms, of relationships and hybrids that upset the terrifying, absolute binaries of Mutually Assured Destruction.

This conception of the arctic is repeated by Edgar McInnis, the Canadian trench poet and political scientist whose work spans the First and Cold Wars, in his Second World War celebration of “Fortress North America” titled, *The Unguarded Frontier* (1942). He concludes his history of Canadian-American relations by imagining a future whose possibilities parallel Stefanson’s, though with Western rather than Eastern allegiances:

[Canada’s] success is likely to be greater if she is willing and is permitted to act not as a satellite of either, or even as an intermediary between them, but as a partner... That is the ideal which Mackenzie King voiced in his speech describing the Ogdensburg agreement as an element in a new world order based on

friendship and good will. “In the furtherance of this new world order,” he said, “Canada, in liaison between the British Commonwealth and the United States, is fulfilling a manifest destiny.” (370)

While McInnis imagines a future beyond mediumship, the metaphor of the conduit persists in his language, as it does in McKenzie-King’s “new world order” speech at Ogdensburg in 1940—where he announced an agreement that formalized Canadian-American military co-operation and mutual defence, through the Permanent Joint Board on Defence. After the Second World War, Canada’s military context was primarily continental, rather than Commonwealth, associated in McLuhan’s words with “dialogue and liaison” (75), and in Northrup Frye’s terminology, with the obstacles and passageways of the Northwest Passage.¹⁰⁴

“Fortress North America” was a new space defined by continental defence organizations like those established by the Ogdensburg agreement and later by the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Most significantly, the radar surveillance systems of the Arctic—the Pinetree, Mid Canada, and Distant Early Warning (DEW) lines—efface the international border. For McLuhan, new communications and surveillance technologies have consequences that reach far beyond the Arctic. The DEWline keeps “this continent in touch with Russia, points up a major Canadian role in the twentieth century, the role of hidden ground for big powers. Since the United States has become a world environment, Canada has become the anti-environment that renders the United States more acceptable

¹⁰⁴ See Frye’s “Conclusion to a Literary History of Canada” (1975), and a brief discussion of the Garrison Mentality in Chapter One.

and intelligible to many small countries of the world; anti-environments are indispensable for making an environment understandable” (73 - 74). While the DEWline is a defensive frontier it is also a point of contact and communication, even if potential communication is both unidirectional and terminal: the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile and the radar that identifies it both disseminate a singular message of destruction.

How do Canadians represent these unfought wars and militarism without combat? Camp X relies on popular fantasies of espionage for its commemoration. Neither poem describes a new state of affairs: the nation has always been a product of war, its community predicated on a militarism that enforces its borders, its territorial integrity, and the loyalty of its citizens. In which case, the threat of nuclear war is not a change in the relationship between violence and the state, but rather makes explicit what was always the case. Like the traditional battlefield, with its potential for transformation, the nuclear detonation is also a figure of total transformation, where total destruction brings about the resolution of conflict.

This dissertation grew from a set of premises regarding the relationship between war, memory, community, and landscape. I have assumed that the battlefield is an articulation in national space-time, a ceremonial and imaginative place to which citizens return in order to renew and revise their community, and to recognize that militarism is foundational to their sense of place and history. Through these mechanisms Canadian battlefield commemoration reveals how deeply the very idea a national landscape is embedded in the epistemologies and geographies of militarism. In order to understand the military structures hidden in the idea of the nation, we must extend our definitions of militarism beyond the space of combat. While combat remains literally central to the four

battlefield parks described in the previous chapters, with the bodies of dead soldiers the explicit subject of their memorials, the work of war spreads far wider and militarism defines the civilian as well as the soldier, the space of settlement as well as the landscape of defence. Canada's Militia Myth, the scenography of Quebec, the consolidation of Canadian territory through military action in the North West, the vision of a nation *a mari usque ad mare* united on Vimy Ridge, these all share the link that Canada's battlefield parks have long forged between war and community.

The problem of memory and amnesia at Intrepid Park witness the impossibility of a hard division between combatant and civilian, between the act of war and the society that supports it. This has always been the case, of course, but the Cold War, the nuclear threat, and the surveillance state only reveal what has always been the case. Commemoration, here, demands that we consider militarism beyond the limits of the battlefield, into the households of the nation—defined not by defence, but by surveillance, by the possibility of conflict rather than its memory. Intrepid Park remains a rich problem for commemoration exactly because it represents not the well-worn narratives of violence, mourning, and peace, but the uneasy secrets of the Cold War re-emerging as public memory, in much the same way that concrete slabs of the radiation-resistant communications bunker are rising up through the earth where they are buried.

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