ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE:

GEORGE HERIOT'S TRAVELS THROUGH THE CANADAS

by

CAROL ELIZABETH DENNY

B.A., The University of Victoria, 1978
L.L.B., The University of British Columbia, 1983

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Department of Fine Arts)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

July 1996

© Carol Elizabeth Denny, 1996
In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of **Fine Arts**
The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date **Aug 1 / 1996**
ABSTRACT

George Heriot's, *Travels Through The Canadas, Containing a Description of the Picturesque Scenery on some of the Rivers and Lakes; with an account of the Productions, Commerce, and Inhabitants of those Provinces to which is Subjoined a Comparative View of the Manners and Customs of Several of the Indian Nations of North and South America*, was first published in London in 1805. Presenting the Canadas in a documentary and picturesque mode, Heriot's *Travels* since its publication has been valued as an important source of data and information. It has thus participated in and formed part of the received notions concerning Canada and its peoples in the 19th century. My thesis explores how Heriot's *Travels* constructs and represents Upper and Lower Canada and the diverse inhabitants of these regions. I argue that the text and its illustrations far from providing an objective description, in fact give form to contemporaneous perceptions and values and to aesthetic criteria that had colonialist implications.

In particular the thesis examines how the visual material within the publication functions to reinforce or contradict the text's agenda. My contention is that Heriot's aims are much broader than those to which he admitted. For his readers the representation of Canada was tied to prospects of vast expansionist possibilities for British capital, technology, commodities and systems of knowledge. The unacknowledged aims of the book, as elaborated in my thesis were: to confirm the superiority of British rule in comparison to the earlier French administration in Canada; to define the British by a comparison to others, thus marking out existing inhabitants, specifically the French Canadians and First Nations peoples, as simple, indolent and inferior; to tame and commodify Canada through the use of the picturesque, thus ordering and civilizing the landscape for a British audience and would-be immigrants; and, finally, to reinforce Britain's economic claims in British North America.

As in other travel writing of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Heriot employs in his representation of Canada the discursive languages of science, taxonomy, technology and ethnology. The picturesque descriptions in text and image work in conjunction with these and
serve to demonstrate the role of art and aesthetics in maintaining an established order, and in asserting its classificatory regimes and exclusions.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1: List of Figures</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One The Conventions of the Travel Narrative and the Picturesque Tour</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two Representation of French Canadians</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three The Natives: Hunting, Fishing &amp; Indolence</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four Conclusion</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1: Figures</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX 1: LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>George Heriot, <em>Title Page</em> of 1805 Edition of <em>Travels Through the Canadas</em></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: Canadian Index of Historical Microdocuments 61998</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>George Heriot, <em>The Whirlpool of the St. Lawrence</em></td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: George Heriot, <em>Travels Through the Canadas</em> (Edmonton: M.G. Hurtig, 1971) page 158</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Heriot, <em>Fall of the Grande Chaudiere on the Outaouais River</em></td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: Heriot, <em>Travels</em>, (Hurtig) page 237</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Heriot, <em>Fall of La Puce (taken from the Eastern Bank)</em></td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: Heriot, <em>Travels</em>, (Hurtig) page 94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Heriot, <em>View on the Upper Lake St. Charles, near Quebec</em></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: Heriot, <em>Travels</em>, (Hurtig) page 96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Heriot, <em>Quebec from Cape Diamond</em></td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: Heriot, <em>Travels</em>, (Hurtig) page 62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Heriot, <em>Ruins of Chateau Richer with Cape Tourment</em></td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: Heriot, <em>Travels</em>, (Hurtig) page 95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Heriot, <em>View of the River Etchemin, near Quebec</em></td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: Heriot, <em>Travels</em>, (Hurtig) page 100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: Heriot, <em>Travels</em>, (Hurtig) page 101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Heriot, <em>View of Jeune Lorette, Village of the Huron's, nine Miles North of Quebec</em></td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: Heriot, <em>Travels</em>, (Hurtig) page 80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Heriot, <em>View of Quebec (taken from Point Levi)</em></td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: Heriot, <em>Travels</em>, (Hurtig) Frontipiece</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Heriot, <em>Fall of Montmorenci</em></td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: Heriot, <em>Travels</em>, (Hurtig) page 76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Heriot, <em>View of the Falls from beneath the bank on the Fort Slausser side</em></td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: Heriot, <em>Travels</em>, (Hurtig) page 171</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Heriot, <em>City of Montreal (taken from the Mountain)</em></td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source: Heriot, <em>Travels</em>, (Hurtig) page 114</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15. Heriot, *View at St. Paul's Bay, on the River St. Lawrence*  
Source: Heriot, *Travels*, (Hurtig) page 56

16. Heriot, *British Fort at Niagara*  
Source: Heriot, *Travels*, (Hurtig) page 150

17. Heriot, *La Danse Ronde, Circular Dance of the Canadians*  
Source: Heriot, *Travels*, (Hurtig) page 258

18. Heriot, *Minuets of the Canadians*  
Source: Heriot, *Travels*, (Hurtig) page 260

19. Heriot, *Chart of the Saint Lawrence*  
Source: Heriot, *Travels*, (Hurtig) after Preface

20. Heriot, *Encampment of Domiciliated Indians*  
Source: Heriot, *Travels*, (Hurtig) page 272

21. Heriot, *Costume of Domiciliated Indians*  
Source: Heriot, *Travels*, (Hurtig) page 292

22. Thomas Davies, *A View near Point Levy Quebec with an Indian Encampment*  
Source: R.H. Hubbard (ed.) *Thomas Davies in Early Canada*  
(Canada: Oberon Press, 1972) page 47

23. Heriot, *Dance on the reception of Strangers previous to their introduction into the Village, c, 1805*  
Watercolour, 175 x 298 & Unidentified engraver and unknown artist,  
design depicting an Indian dance from *p. lafitau's Moeurs des Sauvages Ameriquains*, 1724  
Source: Gerald E. Finley *George Heriot: Postmaster-Painter of the Canadas*.  
(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) pages 108-109

24. William Hogarth, *plate III from The Rake's Progress*  
Source: *500 years of Art in Illustration from Albrecht Dürer to Rockwell Kent*.  
Meyers & Williams eds.  
(Garden City: Howard Simon Garden City Publishing Co., 1945) page 64

25. Unidentified engraver and unknown artist, 1724, *Hoes with blades were used in the cornfields.*  
(Toronto: Maclean-Hunter, 1969) page 82

26. Unidentified engraver and unknown artist. *Maple sap was the universal sweetener*  
Source: Fraser Symington. *The Canadian Indian*, page 82

(Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1966) pages 106-107
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank Dr. Maureen Ryan and Dr. John O'Brian for their help in clarifying my ideas, their valuable criticism and not least of all their patience.

For endless moral support, patience and a sense of humour throughout this project I thank my husband David Jiles.

I would also like to thank my neighbors Craig and Nona Navin, and Eric Koelink for their help in getting this work printed and May at Copy Services for her help with the illustrations.

This paper is dedicated to Heather Beverly Gamble (May 3, 1992 - February 5, 1994) whose too short life reminded me in the midst of this project not to sweat the small stuff.
Introduction

George Heriot's, two volume text, Travels Through The Canadas, Containing a Description of the Picturesque Scenery on some of the Rivers and Lakes; with an account of the Productions, Commerce, and Inhabitants of those Provinces to which is Subjoined a Comparative View of the Manners and Customs of Several of the Indian Nations of North and South America, was one of the first extensive British representations of Canada after the 1759 conquest and one of the first to present the country in a documentary and picturesque mode. It was published, in London, in 1805 and was Heriot's second published book. The first was his History of Canada, from its First Discovery, Comprehending an Account of The Original Establishment of The Colony of Louisiana, published in 1804.

Since its publication Heriot's Travels has been valued as an important source of documentary material on colonial Canada. It has participated in and formed part of the received academic discussion on the region. It has been cited by historians and scholars as a valuable source of information on the early years of British occupation and settlement in Canada. The text provides a rich description of the geography, economy, and society of the region, offering readers a detailed and nuanced understanding of the early history of Canada.

Heriot also published A Descriptive Poem Written in the West Indies, 1781 (London: J. Dodsley, 1781), and A Picturesque Tour Made in 1817 and 1820 through the Pyrenean Mountains, Auvergne, the Departments of the High and Low Alps, and Part of Spain, Nos 1 and 2 (London: R. Ackermann, 1824).
notions concerning Canada and its peoples in the 19th century. Heriot's illustrations stereotyping the French inhabitants of Lower Canada as simple merry-makers, and First Nations peoples as indolent are still accepted and included unproblematically in Canadian history text books today.\(^5\)

Even the major work published on George Heriot's life, Gerald Finley's 1983 monograph *George Heriot: Postmaster-Painter of the Canadas*, still treats Heriot's 1807 book as documentary and factual. Of Heriot's *Travels* Finley writes: "Heriot's written descriptions (like his watercolors) are important to us as social documents aiding us in our reconstruction of Canada's past."\(^6\)

My thesis explores how Heriot's *Travels* constructs and represents Upper and Lower Canada and the diverse inhabitants of the regions. I argue that the text and its illustrations far from providing an objective description, in fact give form to contemporaneous perceptions and values and to aesthetic criteria that had colonialist implications. In particular the thesis examines how the visual material within the publication functions to reinforce or contradict the text's agenda. My contention is that Heriot's aims are much broader than those to which he admitted.

For his readers the representation of Canada was tied to prospects of vast expansionist possibilities for British capital, technology, commodities and systems of knowledge. The unacknowledged aims of the book, as elaborated in my thesis, were: to confirm the superiority of British rule by comparison to the earlier French administration in Canada; to define the British by a comparison to others, thus marking out the existing inhabitants specifically the French Canadians and First Nations peoples as simple, indolent and inferior; to tame and commodify

relating to conditions and habits of the various Indian tribes of North America, which makes the work one of value as a book of reference to those interested in the history of the original inhabitants of this continent." Indeed, M. Brook Taylor, a 19th century Canadian historiographer, noted that it was Heriot's book, along with William Smith Junior's account of the downfall of New France, which fixed the image of New France that survived among English-speaking colonists in Canada until well past the middle of the 19th century. See his *Promoters, Patriots, and Partisans: Historiography in Nineteenth-Century English Canada* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1989).


Canada through the use of the picturesque, thus ordering and civilizing the landscape for a British audience and would-be immigrants and, finally, to reinforce Britain's economic claims in British North America.

Travel narratives were extremely popular in the 18th and 19th centuries, often forming the staple of a gentleman's library. As Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* discusses, travel accounts, as historical documents, operated as a major component in the way in which authoritative knowledge was presented. Heriot's work reflects European encyclopedic interest in its inclusion of wildlife, information on aboriginals and its claim to scientific empiricism, but it also embodies artistic and literary conventions of the mid-eighteenth century including, the aesthetic categories of the sublime and the picturesque. Literary historian, Janet Giltrow has asserted that by the end of the eighteenth century the conventions of the travel narrative stood for and functioned as reality itself. The period's literature including guide books and picturesque tours, as Terry Eagleton has argued, goes beyond merely reflecting certain social values, it "was a vital instrument for their deeper entrenchment and wider dissemination." It is thus important at this time of post-colonial reevaluation, and particularly at this point in Canada's history, when the country is being redefined by Quebec's desire for sovereignty association and First Nations' demands for self-government and fair settlement of land claims, to look at this legacy of inherited representations and to review and reject those representations that are persistent and damaging to fuller and more complex historical account.

Who George Heriot was and how he came to write his *Travels* assists in our understanding the context in which the book was produced and gives us some clues about its program. His work cannot be divorced from his training, profession, patriotism and allegiances. He was one of a number of British artists working as administrators, clerks, or military officers in

---

the service of the Empire after the conquest of Canada by the British in 1759-1760. Of the artists who were working in Canada the three who produced the most lasting records of colonial life were Thomas Davies (c 1739-1812, in Canada 1786-1790), James Pattison Cockburn (1779-1847, in Canada 1826-1836) and George Heriot (1759-1839, in Canada 1792-1814). All three received their training in topographical drawing at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, England. The training in topographical drawing which the gentleman cadet received was an essential and practical part of his preparation as an army officer. It equipped him to document terrain, structures, and troop deployment, to facilitate the planning of maneuvers, and to provide historical records.¹⁰

Heriot was a member of the Scottish minor gentry (the son of the Sheriff of East Lothian) and received a classical education at the Royal High School¹¹ in Edinburgh before attending the Royal Military Academy. In 1792 he was posted to Quebec and promoted to clerk of the cheque in the ordinance department. Heriot remained in Lower Canada until 1816, except for two periods of absence, in 1796-97 and in 1806. When he returned to Britain in 1796 he met Prime Minister William Pitt through his brother a prominent Tory newspaper editor. Subsequently in 1799 Pitt recommended Heriot for the position of Deputy Postmaster General of British North America. As sole representative of His Majesty's General Post Office, accountable directly to London, Heriot occupied a position of considerable privilege and independent power in the colony. Amongst his duties he was required to periodically inspect the post offices of Upper and Lower Canada, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. On his frequent travels, Heriot took with him his sketchbook and collected materials for his book *Travels Through the Canadas*. He was known in England as an accomplished amateur watercolourist and he had exhibited Canadian views at the Royal Academy in 1797.¹²

Concerning Heriot's time in Canada Finley stresses how elite British social codes and cultural views were maintained:

---

¹⁰Finley, George Heriot: Postmaster-Painter of the Canadas 3-4.
¹¹Coincidently, the same high school my father attended approximately 175 years later. As far as I know, my father had no minor gentry to claim among his ancestors.
¹²Mary Allodi, Canadian Watercolours and Drawings in the Royal, Ontario Museum Volume 1 (Toronto: The Royal Ontario Museum, 1974) 802.
Quebec city during Heriot's administration of the post office (1799-1816) was very much a French city. Only a small proportion of its inhabitants were from Britain. However, this minority tended to draw together to reinforce its own cultural identity. For the colonial Englishman of wealth and rank, the social habits and institutions of the "old country" were vigorously maintained, with the result that the routine and relaxation of daily life differed little from that at home. Heriot, as a person of position and culture, mixed socially with the British elite—well-to-do merchants and bankers, highly placed administrators and officers. He would sup, drink, play cards, and exchange confidences at their clubs and austerely handsome dwellings, and probably on occasion he joined them and their ladies at the frequent and glittering Citadel balls. Though Heriot's social and cultural life depended primarily on his association with the British community, he did not allow himself to be completely absorbed by it. His knowledge of the French language permitted him to cultivate associations with the elite of the French Canadians and gave him entrance to their society, an access that would have been closed to the majority of the British at Quebec City whose knowledge of the language was either poor or entirely lacking.\(^\text{13}\)

Heriot's book represented Canada for a British audience. The book portrays Canada shortly after the American Revolution (1775) when British claims in North America had been greatly reduced (pushed back to the Great Lakes) and Canada's economic role within the British Empire had therefore increased in importance. For example with the renewal of war between Britain and France, wood shipments from British North America increased substantially in the five years following 1804. Heriot makes reference to this development himself: "Since the year 1793, ship-building has been carried on with considerable success, and vessels of every description and dimension, from fifty to a thousand tons burthen, have been constructed."\(^\text{14}\) In describing the River Chambly, a tributary of the St. Lawrence river near Montreal, he notes that: "In the months of June and July, great quantities of timber and boards formed into rafts, frequently of two or three hundred feet in length, are floated down this river, from the borders of Lake Champlain. These materials are used in ship-building, and are also exported to England."\(^\text{15}\)

What Heriot chose to include, exclude or emphasize in his *Travels* is significant to the agenda of his publication. The first volume includes a description of various towns, rivers and lakes from Newfoundland to Lake Superior, the various forms of commerce, and notes on the domiciliated or non-nomadic Indians, the constitution of Canada, and the "Canadians" as the

\(^{13}\text{Gerald E. Finley, }\text*{George Heriot, 1759-1839} (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1979) 16.}

\(^{14}\text{Heriot, *Travels* 73.}

\(^{15}\text{Heriot, *Travels* 106.}
French Canadians were known. In the second volume Heriot presents a comparative look at a number of Indian nations in both North and South America.

Throughout the two volumes are twenty-seven engravings taken from Heriot's watercolours. Twenty-two are picturesque scenes, primarily documentary views of major towns such as Montreal and Quebec, as well as rivers, waterfalls and lakes. The other five illustrations are: two of domiciliated Indians, two of French Canadians dancing, and one of a "moose-deer" (Heriot's term for a moose). At the end of the book is a chart of the Saint Lawrence River and a dictionary of the Alqonquin language. Several illustrations are on foldout pages.

By considering the literary and pictorial conventions to which Heriot adhered we can have a better appreciation of how his particular representation of Canada took form. In Chapter One, I will discuss the broader genre of travel literature and its conventions, and the more specific conventions of picturesque tour guide writing. Heriot's aims and purposes become apparent here in an analysis of his description of the country and its peoples. Chapter Two looks at his construction of the French Canadians and Chapter Three, his construction of the Indians of North and South America.

---

16The 1807 was the most handsome edition. Volume I and II were bound together. Stipple engraving was used with some drypoint. The engravings were coloured with aquatint and hand watercolouring, although the work is not very fine. The scenes are quite blurred and in the words of a contemporary reviewer are: "confused, indistinct, and unsatisfactory scrapings" Anonymous, Edinburgh Review, April 1808, 216.

17View of Quebec (four page size), Azores (two page size), two of the Canadiens dancing (three page size) Custume(sic) of domiciliated Indians (two page size) Encampment of domiciliated Indians (three page size) and the map (two page size).
Chapter 1

The Conventions of the Travel Narrative

and the Picturesque Tour

The two popular literary forms which had the greatest influence on Heriot's work were the travel narrative and the picturesque tour guide. Ann Bermingham, in describing what she calls the cult of the picturesque, notes that it reached its apogee in the 1790's. Heriot wrote his book in 1807, in Canada, encumbered with the formulaic codes of the previous decade for perceiving and representing nature. The forms were so familiar that they served the purpose of being a comforting, narrative style (what Ian Maclaren calls a cultural shelter). Examining these two conventions of travel writing and picturesque tour guides brings a greater comprehension of how Heriot's book of Travels functioned.

I. The Travel Narrative

In Janet Giltrow's study, North American Travel Writing, she looks at the generic attributes of travel writing and describes the development of rhetorical structures characteristic of this literary form. Giltrow notes that: "Travel narrative has a pre-eminent place in North American literature. Before 1600, all English language North American literature was travel literature, a genre transmitting information about the continent to distant audiences in Europe. Early voyagers albeit imbued with different goals and ideologies, shared a common documentary purpose and their European readers were eager for news from the exotic New World. Pratt describes this hunger for first hand information concerning the continent as "widespread and intense." By addressing a European audience such travel writing maintained the writer's sense of allegiance to a cultural community far from the North American milieu.

19 See note 2 of the Introduction re: writing and publication date.
21 Giltrow, Travel Writing iii.
22 Pratt, Imperial Eyes 117.
23 Giltrow, Travel Writing iv.
As Giltrow explains, the travel narrative was structured in terms of a protagonist (the traveller) and a plot (his itinerary). Travel accounts were usually lengthy expositions. The travellers' accounts became "a principal vehicle for knowledge of the universe," providing a mental traffic between the sedentary reader in Britain and foreign places he or she might never see. "The describer of distant regions," as the authoritative Samuel Johnson put it in 1760, is always welcomed as a man who has laboured for the pleasure of others, and who is able to enlarge our knowledge, and rectify our opinions: that is travelling comes under the sign of information; it is rather like reading works of history or agronomy or aesthetics with the added advantage that one is seeing the antiquities, fields, paintings for oneself.

Giltrow describes the telling and writing of tales of travel as "so ancient and continuous a human practice as to override eras and epochs." She notes however that during certain periods of modern history cultural and economic conditions have coincided to bring the travel genre into literary prominence. In Britain, the late seventeenth century was such a period, when the outgoing traffic of English voyages was at its height and in the eighteenth century British mercantilism and imperialist policies made travel a commercially and politically profitable enterprise. Information regarding new markets and materials was just as important to the economic as to the literary and intellectual life of the nation. During this same period, tourism had become a popular activity among the educated classes of Europe.

British travellers performing the continental Grand Tour, often produced copious tracts on their ventures in the form of "letters, memoirs and exhaustive published observations." Narrative practices evident in work as early as Mandeville's Travels in the fourteenth century and in Elizabethan accounts of the New World persisted, and the ideals of literary Grand Tourism had

24 Giltrow, Travel Writing iv.
25 Giltrow, Travel Writing 1.
26 Giltrow, Travel Writing 1.
28 Giltrow, Travel Writing 3.
29 Giltrow, Travel Writing 3.
30 Giltrow, Travel Writing 3.
31 Giltrow, Travel Writing 4.
a determining influence on travel writing produced in North America. Heriot in fact went on to write his own travel account of the Grand tour after returning to Britain, an illustrated tour covering parts of France, the Pyrenees and northern Spain.32

As Giltrow has noted, North America's immense regions of undocumented curiosities and undenoted topography appealed to the general taste for scientific investigation in the late seventeenth century and the eighteenth century.33 The mid-eighteenth century saw the emergence of natural history, a structure of knowledge which effected travel writing immensely. Foucault's observation that natural history was "a nomination of the visible",34 where words and the gaze are paired, is also apt for both travel writing and picturesque tours.

Giltrow points out that comparison is axiomatic to travel writing, clarifying the position of the traveller and his audience in relation to the rest of the world. Pratt goes further and describes: "an obsessive need of the metropolis to present and represent its peripheries and others to itself."35 These aspects are features of Travels in the Canadas. In Heriot's account the French Canadians are compared to the British, directly and by implication. First Nations people are compared to the "civilized" people of Europe and to each other. England is the standard by which judgments are made. The survey of differences and disparities among nations and climates has its natural literary form in the utterance of one perceiver, the traveller-narrator.36 By 1758, the Linnaen classification system first created by natural historian Carl Linnaeus in 1735 included people, divided into wildman, American, European, Asiatic, and African. Besides physical attributes, the Linnaen system noted that Americans were regulated by customs, Europeans by laws, Asiatics by opinion and Africans by caprice.37 Here, as Pratt notes, was an explicit comparative attempt to naturalize the myth of European superiority. Subsequent classifying systems, like Buffon's, were also characterized in terms of such differences. Heriot's work

---

32 Heriot, A Picturesque Tour...through the Pyrenean Mountains.
33 Giltrow, Travel Writing 4.
35 Pratt, Imperial Eyes 6.
36 Giltrow, Travel Writing 27.
37 Pratt, Imperial Eyes 32.
continues this project. In *Travels* he provides descriptions of the manners and customs of the inhabitants of the Canadas. In these he uses paradigms of essential difference that make it "natural" for the British to deal with both the French Canadians and First Nations as "others" who stood apart from British immigrants.

Giltrow argues that there are four attributes common to travel narratives: a distinct social occasion, generalization, a claim of authenticity, and a justification for writing. The distinct social occasion is that the narrator of travels has been separated from his cultural habitat and transposed to a foreign site. The traveller's sensibility thus becomes, for the duration of the journey, a model or epitome of national sensibility and the traveller becomes a delegate, as it were, from the home community, representing its interests in a variety of exotic situations. The travel document produced is the linguistic signal of his or her reincorporation into the native milieu, for the narrator withholding his commentary until his or her return: the discourse is never addressed directly to its subject. As well the European observer has no place in the description as the object of scrutiny. In Heriot's *Travels*, the British are not pictured, although they are understood as the standard. Enumerating endless detail and particulars is common; dates, hours, distances, weather, diet, expenditures and numerous other details are included. Often, a conspicuous patriotism reinforces the writer's feelings of membership in the society to which he or she returns and assures the writer of a sympathetic reception by the home audience. In reassuring themselves of their continued membership in a distant society, travellers were very pronounced in their expression of their own cultural attitudes and habits. Heriot, specifically addressing his British readers at home, begins his narrative with: "In compliance with a promise which the author made to some friends, previous to his departure from England, he has been induced to write an account of his travels." As Giltrow notes the narrative usually begins and ends with the journey; the itinerary determines the duration and sequence of the narrative. In Heriot's case, it is the journey up the St.

---

38 Giltrow, *Travel Writing* 50.  
Lawrence. By the time he wrote his book this route was almost a "Grand Tour" of Canada. 43

An audience's attention was held by writing of the exotic and the foreign, almost necessitating Heriot's writing about Native peoples.

The second attribute of travel writing, described by Giltrow, is that it thrives on generalization. "The travel writer (and his [sic] audience) must be willing to allow one case to stand for many: national preconceptions and even bias and prejudice are often useful to the traveller in orienting himself abroad." 44 Thus Heriot could say of the French Canadians: "The whole of the Canadian inhabitants are remarkably fond of dancing" 45 and "Accustomed to concern themselves only in their own affairs they are not remarkable for constancy in friendship." 46

The third attribute Giltrow gives to the travel narrative is that the travel writer must claim authenticity and veracity for the documentary aspects of the project. "Travel writing depends for its rhetorical success on the interest of literal truth and the credulity of its audience." 47 Heriot covers this task in his Preface; there he attributes some of his information as being "derived from

43 Isaac Weld covered the same ground and published Travels Through the states of North America, and the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada during the years 1795, 1796, & 1797; John Long wrote Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter and Trader, describing the manners and Customs of the North-American Indians London, 1791. The same area is described in Francis's Brooke's 1769 novel, The History of Emily Montague (4 Vols.; J Bodsley, in Pall Mall, London: 1769); Elizabeth posthuma Simcoe, The Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe, Wife of the First Lieutenant, Governor of the Province of Upper Canada, 1792-6 J. Rose Robertson, ed. (William Briggs: Toronto, 1911). The greater part of the illustrations in the Heriot's Travels are landscapes, and views of beauty-spots already recorded by Thomas Davies and others. In the Oxford Review, May 1807, it is noted that the material in Heriot's work was not new: "The rude but sublime scenes and the savage but manly race described by a Weld, a Hearne and a Liaucourt......"; James Peachey (active 1774-1797) draughtsman in Samuel Holland's survey office in Boston, 1774, and in Samuel Holland's office in Quebec, covered some of the same ground. He was appointed Deputy-Surveyor General of the Province of Canada, in 1784, and commissioned in the Regiment (Royal Americans) in 1787. His works were exhibited in the Royal Academy, 1787. In his official capacity Peachey prepared maps, plans, and views of Upper and Lower Canada. Four of his Canadian views were engraved in aquatint and published in London, 1784-6, and many more of his views were executed in watercolour on an etched outline.

44 Giltrow, Travel Writing 9.
45 Heriot, Travels 257.
46 Heriot, Travels 256.
47 Giltrow, Travel Writing 10.
living observation, communicated by men on whose veracity a reliance could be placed." He notes that he was a resident in Canada for a number of years, which provided him with an opportunity for witnessing first hand the modes of life of several of the Indian nations. Writing in the first person gives the impression of having been an eye-witness to what is described. Heriot, however, only employs this device two or three times in 600 pages. Ostensibly some of this task is accomplished by the inclusion of the twenty-seven plates which are engravings made "from drawings made at the several places by the author." 

According to Giltrow, the fourth condition, demanded of the genre in the last half of eighteenth century was an obligation to form some evocative, personal relation to the foreign place. The travel writer had to justify his or her document on the grounds of originality. Typically this was based on the uncommon nature of the author's experience. However, the development of the genre coincided with the burgeoning tourism of the upper and middle classes, and by the nineteenth century, few routes were so unfrequented as to allow the traveller to hold an audience solely on this criteria. This was certainly true of the route up the St. Lawrence River. As the route taken by Heriot had been written about by both English and French writers, the uniqueness of his project was his mode of description: the writer had to point "to the uniqueness of his personal journey-- the novelty and freshness of his responses, the justness of his speculation and the subtlety of his perceptions--to claim originality." 

Common to many travel narratives were practices developed in 16th century accounts which in turn were encouraged by from what has been called the Doctrine of Global Entirety. As Giltrow explains:

This theory proceeds from a vision of the symmetry and proportion discoverable in the globe: trade is the practical application of the abstract notion of a overall planetary sufficiency and a just balance of commodity......Travel reveals this entire and universal balance of natural supply, whereas sedentary or localized experience can divulge only inequalities and fragments of the whole. It appeared that once the globe was entirely

---

48 Heriot, Travels preface iv-v.
49 Heriot, Travels title page.
50 Giltrow, Travel Writing 10-11.
51 Giltrow, Travel Writing 11.
known and encompassed, scarcity and surplus would be understood as merely partial phenomena and the mercantile alchemy of trade would convert iron into gold. 52

As a result of this theory, the practice of cataloguing and enumerating natural products was incorporated into travel accounts, which became testaments to the potential networks of trade connecting the Old World with the New. 53 Heriot's writing certainly functions in this way. As he describes the various towns along the St. Lawrence, he also enumerates the products that were available at the different sites. Heriot also addresses the interests of natural history. He discusses at great length the admirable qualities of the beaver, which while acknowledging its economic import, also presaged its role as a national icon before it found its place on top of the Canadian nickel. In fact, he has a more favorable view of the beaver than either the French or First Nations peoples, describing the beaver as both neat and industrious: "the neatness and convenience of their habitations seem to evince a greater portion of skill and ingenuity than even the dykes, both strength and address being necessary to enable them to plant six stakes in the bed of the water." 54 Descriptions of the "moose-deer" and the buffalo both specific to North America are also included.

Early on, as Giltrow explains, the practice of interpolating lists of local products and creatures into the narrative of travel was formalized in appendices to the voyage report. 55 The narrative sequence was kept intact by attaching extensive appendices documenting the aboriginal societies and describing the animals of the regions visited. As the genre developed, intertextual references became more common; narrators consulted antecedent documents and abandoned the apparent naïveté of the seemingly innocent prima vista. The document itself serves the primary purpose of making a verbal connection between unheard-of phenomena in an unknown world and accepted, familiar schemes of thought and knowledge. Writers commonly delineated ideas and discoveries of compelling importance, namely riches, minerals and metals. As Giltrow points out, these documentary narratives of travel simulated a scholarly concern for accuracy, recovering facts, considering causes and speculating on possibility. Sequential narratives of travel are

52 Giltrow, Travel Writing 31.
53 Giltrow, Travel Writing 31, 33.
54 Heriot, Travels 500.
55 Giltrow, Travel Writing 33.
carefully fleshed out with occasional generalization, an expatiation which rarely develops into digression, followed by exhaustive appendices. This procedure was necessary to produce a weighty volume. In his *Travels*, Heriot uses vast amounts of picturesque description as well as the odd expatiation as, for example, the cold winter in the region or the causes of its long domination. I would argue the entire second volume, *A Comparative view of the Manners and Customs of several of the Indian Nations of North and South America*, and the inclusion of the dictionary of the Alquonquin language is equivalent to this appendicular material, as described by Giltrow.

In the preface to *Travels*, Heriot states that he consulted documents found in the library of the Jesuits of Quebec and a number of published memoirs, travels and other works. He explains: "As some of these are written in the English language, it was conceived unnecessary to make any material alteration in the stile of the passages which have been borrowed from them." As a result it is often reasonably easy to determine the source of a particular passage. An anonymous reviewer of Heriot's book writing in the 1807 *Edinburgh Review* makes this point and notes, for example, that the second volume contains:

chapter after chapter of scraps of description, and remarks collected from all the most common writers on the savage state. Raynal, Robertson ....and a variety of other authors, whose works are in the most constant state of perusal by everyone who reads any books at all, are made to contribute, frequently in their own words, a sufficient stock of sentences, which being tacked together by our author, and confused together until all arrangement is utterly lost.....

Using these other sources reduces what Heriot has to say to familiar stereotype and cliché. Heriot thus writes of the "habitants", that is, rural French Canadians, that they are: "indolent" and "attached to ancient prejudices." He reasserts this image of laziness and stasis noting that by: "limiting their exertions to the acquisition of the necessaries of life, they [the French "habitants"] neglect the conveniences. Their propensity to a state of inaction retains many of them in poverty;

56Giltrow, *Travel Writing* 37-38.
57Heriot, *Travels* iv.
58Anon, *Edinburgh Review* 222-223
59Heriot, *Travels* 255.
but as their wants are circumscribed, they are happy." The same stereotype is used in John Lambert's 1810, *Travels Through Lower Canada and the United States of America*. His comments on the French "habitants" could have been taken from Heriot's writing; so closely do they express the same sentiments.

The Habitants content themselves with following the footsteps of their forefathers. They are satisfied with a little, because a little satisfies their wants. They are quiet and obedient subjects, because they feel the value and benefit of the government under which they live.  

II. The Picturesque Tour

In the previous section I have discussed the generic attributes of travel writing and how Heriot's *Travels* conforms to these conventions. Equally influential on the form and content of his book is the aesthetic of the picturesque and the tour guides and practices developed in Britain in the 17th and 18th century around this way of perceiving and representing the land. Art historian Ann Bermingham has pointed out, that the ability to distinguish a good picture or a good landscape was a sign of refinement. The exercise of aesthetic judgment was thus valued for the status and authority it conferred. Heriot uses this status of the picturesque to give his work authority and distinction. The point here is not that other writers did not employ some of the same literary and visual conventions, rather, it is that Heriot's *Travels* can almost be seen as a study in the conventions of travel literature and picturesque tours, so faithful is he to both these genres. It is in fulfilling the fourth condition, in Giltrow's analysis, the necessity for originality, or the requirement to distinguish one's publication, that the picturesque functions in Heriot's work. His way of perceiving the landscape, using the picturesque idiom and conventions, is what differentiates his work from other travel narratives, voyage accounts, and histories or novels of the day.

---

60 Heriot, *Travels* 255.
To attempt to define the category of the picturesque, a task which Peter Garside and Stephen Copley have described as "notoriously difficult," is less useful for my purposes than discussing the practices that developed as a result of this aesthetic. Suffice it to say that, William Gilpin, credited with promoting, if not inaugurating, the fashion for picturesque touring, explained that: "Picturesque beauty" was "that peculiar kind of beauty, which is agreeable in a picture." Accepted as fulfilling this criteria were vistas which showed "irregularity, variation, decay and wildness in natural appearance." Heriot also uses the aesthetic category of the sublime to describe what he saw; he is not committed to a finely tuned definition of either of these aesthetic categories. Although Heriot does not cite any of the picturesque guidebooks or writings that were produced in Britain in the late eighteenth century, he so closely follows their conventions that it is impossible to believe he had not seen a great deal of what was published. As John Barrell notes: "...in the later eighteenth century it became impossible for anyone with an aesthetic interest in landscape to look at the countryside without applying principles of composition whether he knew he was doing it or not."66

Picturesque nature, as defined by contemporary theorists of the garden, Uvedale Price and Richard Payne Knight, embodied the values and world view of the wealthy landowning classes. However by the middle decades of the eighteenth century a taste for the picturesque had been popularized and was de rigueur for middle-class tourists. A man of taste was expected to know the Roman pastoral poetry of Virgil and Horace, which provided idealized models for the tourist's assessment of rural life and scenery in Britain. The increased travel of the middle-class coincided with a challenge to the cultural authority of classical antiquity and the Grand Tour. Britain was in the process of self-definition and the veneration of foreign cultures was being

63Copley and Garside, introduction, The Politics of the Picturesque 1.
65Copley and Garside, The Politics of the Picturesque 3.
67Ann Bermingham, Landscape and Ideology 83.
reformulated. European wars began in 1740 with the War of Austrian Succession. English and French hostilities, the Seven Years War running, from 1756-1763, the French Revolution in 1789 and the Napoleonic Wars in 1796-1815 all but ended the tradition of the Grand Tour, in which an educated gentleman would round off his schooling with a tour of Europe. Cut-off from the grand tour, British travellers looked for a new kind of aesthetic stimulation in England's Cambrian Mountains and the Lake District rather than the Alps and Italy. This had the effect of raising the status of British scenery and encouraging domestic tourism. As Malcolm Andrews has argued, in many respects, picturesque tourism functioned self-consciously as the continuation of a process of cultural self-definition. It is this aspect of the picturesque, in its role of British self-definition, which is taken up in Heriot's book. In effect, his project was to aesthetically conquer Canada and bring it into Britain's imagination. Having secured Canada territorially in 1759-60 it was left for imaginative appropriation. All that was seen referred to the values of the viewer. As a result, Canada's wilderness gave form to the political and social values Heriot brought to the country and his task of representing it for a British audience. In this way the picturesque-initially and specifically a domestic landscape aesthetic-can be seen to shape British accounts of colonial landscapes and cultures.

The ubiquity of the picturesque tour and related travel guides, describing and recording what was seen, in words and images, of almost every corner of Britain, provided the framework and conventions for Heriot to follow. Throughout his Travels, these conventions can easily be identified. The first indication of Heriot's use of the picturesque tour as his model is at the beginning of his book. Chapter One provides a description of the Azores Islands, a necessary and welcome stopover point on the long ocean voyage to Canada. It was a practice used by picturesque writers to note the hardships involved in their endeavors. To show that great

---

71 As noted by Copley and Garside in introduction to The Politics of the Picturesque 6.
distances were travelled and pain and discomfort were involved added a sense of achievement to the process of viewing and describing scenes in places where perhaps few had been and the evocation of the Azores functioned in this way.

Another common trope was to underline the author's sensibility by despairing of ever doing justice to a scene. When in Canada and viewing Niagara Falls for example, Heriot does just that:

The Falls of Niagara surpass in sublimity every description which the powers of language can afford of that celebrated scene, the most wonderful and awful which the habitable world presents. Nor can any drawing convey an adequate idea of the magnitude and depth of the precipitating waters. (my emphasis)\(^{72}\)

and later, he again indicates that words are not adequate to describe nature's wonders.

To those who are admirers of the picturesque beauties of Nature, it will be almost unnecessary to apologize for the prolixity of description with which the last communication was filled. The subject of the latter part of it, upon which we have already so long dwelt, is at once noble and unique. (Heriot's emphasis) Let us therefore attempt to pursue it still further, although without the hope of being able to do it justice. (my emphasis)\(^{73}\)

Heriot also followed the artistic conventions used to construct a picturesque scene, which were to divide the landscape into three distances that were carefully balanced to provide both pictorial contrasts and variation: a faint or vague background, a strongly lit middle or second distance and a darkened foreground. The foreground would often have framing trees, or a ruin or mountain side to prevent one's eye from straying outside the canvas and push it into the middle distance. In the plates that illustrate two major natural phenomena associated with the rivers and waterways of Lower Canada, \textit{The Whirlpool of the St. Lawrence} (fig. 2) and \textit{Fall of the Grande Chaudiere [sic], on the Outaouais River} (fig. 3), we can see these conventions used. Heriot directs the reader's attention to the side views and distances emphasizing the way the vista is framed.

The further extremity of the valley affords a scene of wild and picturesque beauty. A small river hastens, over a stony channel, its broken and interrupted waves. Acclivities on each

\(^{72}\)Heriot, Travels 159.  
\(^{73}\)Heriot, Travels 169.
side rear aloft their pointed summits, and the sight is abruptly bounded by a chain of elevated hills. 74

Heriot then emphasizes the visual contrasts provided by the scene: "The churches, and settlements which are placed thickly together, produce an agreeable contrast, with the forests and distant mountains." 75  The vista of the agricultural land of the island of Orleans in the St. Lawrence River equally provides these requisites:

On approaching the island of Orleans, a rich and interesting view displays itself; it is composed by the eastern extremity of that island, clothed with trees, the Isle de Madame, the Cape, and the mountains which recede from it towards the west and north, with the cultivated meadows which spread themselves under its rocky basis. When the atmosphere is varied by clouds, and which, by suddenly bursting open, present them partially to the eye, the spectator becomes impressed with the sublimity and grandeur of the scene. 76

Another device used in picturesque tour writing was to direct the tourist where to stand, and indicate where the best prospect was in order for the tourist to obtain the most favorable view. Heriot does this in his Travels; he also titles the accompanying plates with the name of the river or falls with an indication on the plate of where the scene was sketched from. For example, in a chapter describing the Chaudière River, just south of Quebec City, he suggests just when and how the Falls of Chaudière are best seen:

The month of May appears to be the most advantageous period, at which to contemplate this interesting scene, the approach to which ought first to be made from the top of the banks, as in emerging from the woods, it conducts at once to the summit of the cataract, where the objects which instantaneously become developed to the eye, strike the mind with surprise, and produce a wonderful and powerful impression. 77

The illustration of this scene is titled "View of the Falls of Chaudièrefic], nine Miles West of Quebec."  The reader is thus told not only what to look at and where to look at it from, but what the proper aesthetic response is in the presence of such natural wonders.  As Andrews has observed, the picturesque tourist is typically a gentleman or gentlewoman engaged in an experiment in controlled aesthetic response to a range of new and often intimidating visual experiences.

74Heriot, Travels 56.
75Heriot, Travels 58.
76Heriot, Travels 59.
77Heriot, Travels 84.
The new vocabulary, the methodical classification of different kinds of scenery, the development of technical skills in drawing and painting to enable the viewer to 'fix' a landscape, the establishment of Stations affording composed prospects—these all formed a subtle psychological protection to the tourist freshly exposed to daunting and often disorienting landscapes. Those terms 'fix', 'Station', and 'compose' indicate precisely the nature of this protection, the stability given to these new experiences, by the selection and isolation of landscape component. Untamed landscapes can thus be controlled.78

If there was a need for such "psychological protection" in Britain, one can imagine an even greater need for protection against the unfathomable wilderness of Canada. Heriot's representation of the country is fully encased in the mediating safeguards of the aesthetic categories and practices of the picturesque and sublime, and he offers his readers a Canada that is effectively "controlled"—either to enjoy as a "secondary pleasure" of the imagination or as a guide for those contemplating making the voyage themselves. In fact, the scenes included in Heriot's book present a Canada that is very much like a carefully composed landscape painting of the period, particularly the, View of the Lower Fall of La Puce (fig. 4) and View on the Upper Lake St. Charles (fig. 5). Even in descriptions of wildness, such as the cataracts of Falls of Niagara or those of Montmorenci outside of Quebec City, the sublime; an aesthetic that inspires fear tempered by awe, and a sense of the vastness of nature, offers its readers the structure to comprehend it. As Ian Maclaren has noted:

"English literature and art, in which the Beautiful, the Sublime, and the Picturesque had built their pervasive dominion over landscape perception, offered the cultural shelter required to fend off and latterly, to order the flux of new experience that threatened to overwhelm the foreigner to the new land. 79"

The extent to which Heriot encases Canada in a picturesque frame is apparent when we compare his description of Niagara Falls which "surpass in sublimity every description which the powers of language can afford..." 80 with that of another travel account published in 1797 written by Isaac Weld, a traveller from Dublin looking to see if the United States or Canada would

80 See note 72, page 16 of this paper.
provide refuge from war torn Europe. Weld emphasized the more gruesome aspects of the Falls noting the birds of prey that hovered in wait for the animals washed over the falls.

Here, great numbers of the bodies of fishes, squirrels, foxes, and various other animals that have been carried over the falls are washed up... a dreadful stench arises from the quality of putrid matter, lying on the shore, and numberless birds of prey, attracted to it, are always hovering about the place.81

As well, along with the devices and conventions of describing and drawing the landscape, Heriot incorporated familiar picturesque subject matter into his views. For example, ruins—a common feature in picturesque accounts—provide a screening device in View of Quebec from Cape Diamond (fig. 6), and are made the subject in Ruins of Chateau Richer, with Cape Tourment (fig. 7). Ruins, as a literary and artistic device dating at least from Claude and Salvator, could lend to a scene a romantic effect by juxtaposing a present visual chaos with the suggestion of a past beauty of secular, religious or mythical import. For the picturesque tourist, ruins raised questions about the relationship between man and nature; aesthetically they presented broken lines and varied tints. Gilpin asked: "Is there a greater ornament of landscape, than the ruins of a castle?"82

In the eighteenth century, according to Andrews,83 the ruined castle was a potent emblem of liberation from Gothic feudalism and the religious counterpart to the castle, the ruined abbey, represented the triumphant banishment from England of Popish 'superstition'. In the 1790's, Uvedale Price wrote that "The ruins of these magnificent edifices are the pride and boast of this island; we may glory that the abodes of tyranny and superstition are in ruin."84 However ruins as a sign in Canada would function in a different way often calling up special qualities of British Rule. Although Heriot, in a section describing the north coast of the Saint Lawrence, points out

81 Isaac Weld, Travels Through the States of North America and the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada During the Years 1795, 1796 & 1797, three volumes (London: Stockdale, 1799) 317.
83 Andrews, In Search of the Picturesque 46.
84 Uvedale Price, "Essay on the Picturesque II" (1798) 301, quoted in Andrews, In Search of the Picturesque 46.

21
that the Chateau Richer was a Franciscan monastery, destroyed by the English army, he also notes further on in the book that, following the Quebec Act of 1775 free exercise of the Roman Catholic religion was allowed and feudal obligations (seigniorial dues) resumed their validity. Heriot, in any event, seems to be more interested in the aesthetic opportunity of ruins. He notes, when discussing the surroundings of the monastery, that:

Toward the east, a yet happier combination of objects represents itself. On the left, are the ruins of the monastery, the church, banks clothed with foliage, and the lower grounds studded with white cottages; over which Cape Tourment, and the chain of mountains whose termination it forms, tower with exalted majesty.

One of the major criteria outlined for the appreciation of landscape by theorist of the picturesque, William Gilpin, was variety and ruggedness, which were viewed as providing maximum pleasure to the eye. Gilpin thus wrote of the landscape artist that:

Picturesque composition consists in uniting in one whole a variety of parts. ..... Variety too is equally necessary in his composition: So is contrast. Both these he finds in rough objects; and neither of them in smooth.

Significantly, variety and ruggedness are adjectives Heriot uses liberally. In describing the lakes and rivers of Canada he notes that these "produce falls and cataracts of singular sublimity, and of commanding beauty; these, although in some degree similar in effect, are, notwithstanding, inexhaustible in variety." In turn mountains are described as having "varied and elevated summits", and "are heaped upon each other, and their rugged and pointed summits, boldly terminate the view." Such descriptions are found throughout the text: an "interesting variety of objects is exhibited" from Point Levi, a river displays "a grateful variety throughout its course", the cavities worn in the rock, "produce a pleasing variety", the scenery in

85 Heriot, Travels 94.
86 Heriot, Travels 247-248.
87 Heriot, Travels 96.
88 Gilpin, "Essay on Picturesque Beauty" (1792) 56.
89 Heriot, Travels 35.
90 Heriot, Travels 53.
91 Heriot, Travels 53.
92 Heriot, Travels 73.
93 Heriot, Travels 76.
94 Heriot, Travels 85.
proceeding down the river "is rugged and wild." 95, and Heriot notes, "on turning his eyes towards the country he has already passed, the traveller is gratified by a Luxuriant and diversified assemblage of objects." (my emphasis) 96

Gilpin's Observations on the River Wye, and Several Parts of South Wales & c. relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty (1782), and his Observations relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty...on several parts of England; particularly the Mountains and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, both contain extended discussions of the picturesque attributes of water. Many tour guides and journals emulated this emphasis on the beauties of lake and river scenery. River views, in particular, caught the imagination of tourists and they became the location of much of what was written about the picturesque. In fact, according to Gilpin, rivers were almost quintessentially picturesque: "Indeed very little more is necessary than to transfer them upon canvas, and they are pictures." 97 In describing the Wye Valley tour he wrote: "the whole is such a display of picturesque scenery that it is beyond any commendation." 98 River scenery also offered the picturesque traveller amenities of a very specific kind. The smooth passage of the boat relaxed the tourist and encouraged concentration on the steady unfolding of views. The narrative structure of Heriot's Travels often corresponds to the course of a river. In his illustrations the side screens are the opposite banks, and mark the perspective; and the front screen points to the winding of the river. And Heriot emphasizes similar features in his text:

ascending the St. Lawrence, the country on either side affords pleasure and amusement to the traveller, by the exhibition of a profusion of grand objects. Amid the combination of islands, promontories, and hill cloathed with forests, some scenes, more striking than others, attract the attention. 99

Frequently the picturesque and the productive are conflated in Heriot's account. Not only are a number of passages hyperbolic, in his Travels, endowing the rivers and lakes of Canada with superlatives but included in the description of the waterways is information about the navigability

95Heriot, Travels 85.
96Heriot, Travels 91.
99Heriot, Travels 53.
of the rivers, the location of commodious harbors sheltered from storms, whether there is good fishing, how and what types of boats can travel the rivers and when portaging is necessary. Thus when we see the View on the River Etchemin (fig. 8) we are told that salmon are caught in abundance on the river, which is both "wild and picturesque" and a channel of trade and irrigation. The New Bridge, on the River Jacques Cartier (fig. 9) also indicates the construction of new transport routes (and British "improvements") on land. By the late eighteenth century the importance of water for communication and commerce was well understood by the British public. Heriot's tour up the St. Lawrence, with its accompanying views, thus presents a country that can be consumed both visually and economically. Heriot's choice of subject matter... the Picturesque Scenery on some of the Rivers and Lakes... was also determined by the accessibility provided by the water. At the time a traveller's experience was to a considerable extent limited and influenced by this factor. Much of Canada could only be reached by water, as there were very few roads. So for both aesthetic and practical reasons, Heriot represented Canada as the domain of lakes and rivers. He traced the transport network for Canada, which linked the remote spots of wilderness with London's metropolitan orbit. His views acted as proof of the profound influence that Britain had on Canada at the time, and this may have been understood as one of the underlying messages. Canada was economically dependent on the British market for its furs, lumber and grain. Heriot's illustrations and written descriptions of the waterways also indicated that food, lodging and safe travel routes were available from Halifax to York. They marked a transportation network that organized not just the flow of people and goods but information as well, in most cases via the postal routes that Heriot was responsible for.

There are no less than nine pictures of waterfalls included in Heriot's Travels: including the Falls of Montmorenci (fig. 12), La Puce (fig. 4), Niagara (fig. 13), Grand Chaudière (fig. 3) and Etchemin (fig. 8). The concept of the waterfall is subtly transformed by this picturing. In these representations the waterpower potential of the sites is unmistakable. Although that resource is mostly unexploited, no contemporary observer could have missed the significance of the falls for future industry. Thus Heriot's delineation of these sites transforms them in the minds of his readers as they would be transformed in reality later in the century. In fact, one of the falls was
already the location of a mill driven by waterpower. Heriot describes and pictures the site of the mill, near the village of Jeune Lorette (fig. 10) noting, that "The waterfall, with the smaller cascades above it, the mill, the bridge, the village, and the distant hills, present an agreeable landscape."\(^{100}\) Through the picturesque idiom, Canada's future potential for industrial development is both spelled out and pictured for Heriot's audience.

To present a harmonious scene was a further imperative of the picturesque. The late eighteenth century tourist perceived landscape with a determination to regulate all scenes, and to eliminate their individual features if they did not conform to rigid formula guaranteed to produce the illusion of the picturesque. Scenes were staged to produce "the correct effect." Heriot conforms to this imperative. His work is not generalized beyond recognition; \(^{101}\) representations of Quebec (fig. 11) and the Falls of Montmorenci (fig. 12) and Niagara (fig. 13) are certainly distinguishable for instance, but some views are quite formulaic. The City of Montreal, as seen from the mountain (fig. 14), is a town amongst trees that may be anywhere on the St. Lawrence. *The River Etchemin* (fig. 8), and *View on the Upper Lake of St. Charles, near Quebec* (fig. 5) could certainly be any river, any lake, almost anywhere. Even when the scenes are more distinguishable, Heriot's selection and organization of landscape features, the softening effects of distance, and the highly generalizing style produce compositions which present Canada's natural scenery as an image of profound harmony. Picturesque practice always involved some "improvement". It marked a pleasurable way of perceiving nature which empowered the viewer to believe that he could control the external world. The artist appropriates natural scenery and processes it into a commodity; nature's unmanageable bounty becomes a frameable possession and/or descriptive text.

What was to be included in the harmonious landscapes was not as consistent as other conventions of the picturesque. There were a variety of responses to industrial sites and the commerce and economics of the various regions that were the subject of tourguide writing. As

---

\(^{100}\) Heriot, *Travels* 83.

\(^{101}\) As Gilpin was accused of over generalization by his friend and supporter William Mason, who wrote to Gilpin in 1784: "If a voyager down the river Wye takes out your Book, his very Boatman crys out, 'nay Sir you may look in vain there no body can find one Picture in it the least like.'" quoted in Barbier, *Gilpin* 71.
Stephen Copley has noted of the picturesque industrial sites and economic activity could be and were "accommodated" in such representations:

Eighteenth-century Picturesque tours do not generally or necessarily exclude accounts of agricultural, manufacturing or industrial activity in the regions through which the tourist passes, or visits to the sites where it occurs. However, they accommodate those sites in particular and peculiar ways, as they negotiate a place for the Picturesque as a specialized category of perception in contestation first with competing aesthetics of landscape, and second with the claims of political economy and morality. Various sites of economic activity are thus regularly described in tour texts, even if they are not regarded as Picturesque themselves; equally, various forms of such activity are acknowledged as Picturesque-or potentially Picturesque- in particular perspectives, while the 'natural' landscapes sought by the tourists are themselves inevitably inscribed with evidence of the workings of the local economy.102

Heriot's Travels is explicitly concerned with the commerce and productions of the country, as spelled out in the title of the book. However, Heriot still seems to abide by a picturesque penchant to efface the overt signs of economic activity from the landscape in his illustrations. Signs of production, such as the cultivated land in the View at St. Paul's Bay, on the River St. Lawrence (fig. 15), are translated into picturesque effects. The four page foldout of the active city of Quebec (fig. 11) is also arranged to produce a picturesque assemblage. In the plate of the The City of Montreal (fig. 14) activities there are muted and softened by the distance of the view. In contrast, the author's text contains detailed descriptions of fishing off the great banks, shipbuilding, fur trade, transportation, clearing of the land, timber, the import business of the Montreal merchants, mine sites, an iron foundry, and the fertility of the soil at various locations, but these are not illustrated. Thus we have an inconsistency between the text, which delineates various forms of production and local economies in Canada, and the illustrations, which contain only limited traces of the economies of the various regions. This incongruity may be attributed to the aesthetic of the picturesque, which by the end of the eighteenth century had abandoned a key convention of earlier British writing and painting of landscape where economic provision and aesthetic pleasure were united.

Chapter 2

Representation of French Canadians

In *Travels Through the Canadas* Heriot's pro-British agenda is apparent when he describes the growing prosperity of the English towns of Kingston and York, and how the forks of the Rideau River "seem calculated to facilitate, at some future period, an interior commerce."\(^{103}\) Taste is used by Heriot as a category of difference: put simply the British have it and the French Canadians do not. Concerning York he thus stresses the good taste of the houses:

The town, according to the plan, is projected to extend to a mile and a half in length, from the bottom of the harbour, along its banks. Many houses are already completed, some of which display a considerable degree of taste. The advancement of this place to its present condition, has been effected within the lapse of six or seven years, and persons who have formerly travelled in this part of the country, are impressed with sentiments of wonder, on beholding a town which may be termed handsome, reared as if by enchantment, in the midst of the wilderness.\(^{104}\)

Nowhere in his description of the towns of predominately French Lower Canada does Heriot mention good taste. In contrast, the streets of Quebec are described as devoid of taste:

in consequence of its situation, irregular and uneven, many of them are narrow, and but very few are paved. The houses are built of stone, are of unequal heights, and covered, in general, with roofs of boards; the roughness of the materials of which they are constructed, gives them a rugged aspect, and the accommodations are fitted up in a stile (sic) equally plain and void of taste.\(^{105}\)

When describing the "habitant" holdings he notes that: "the fields are generally laid out with little taste."\(^{106}\)

Heriot's description of York seems characteristically prejudiced when compared to other contemporary assessments of the town. For instance, in 1803 Lord Selkirk had declared that York contained only 60 or 70 houses, that its roads, called streets, were "infamous and almost impassable," that "the whole appears very ragged from the Stumps," and that "the government

---

\(^{103}\)Heriot, *Travels* 129.
\(^{104}\)Heriot, *Travels* 138.
\(^{105}\)Heriot, *Travels* 72.
\(^{106}\)Heriot, *Travels* 258.
building was erected in the unhealthy neighbourhood of an 1000-acre marsh formed by the mouth of the Don."107

Heriot makes this comparison between Upper and Lower Canada more explicit when describing the Anglo towns beyond Niagara.

The houses with few exceptions, are here constructed of wood, but with a degree of neatness and taste, for which we in vain might look among the more ancient settlements of the lower provinces.

The improvements of every description, in which for a few years past the province has been rapidly advancing, have, in some situations, already divested it of the appearance of a new-settled colony, and made it assume the garb of wealth of long-established culture. 108

There are no accompanying plates of these towns with which to make a comparison with Heriot's views of Quebec or Montreal. The British Fort at Niagara (fig. 16) is presented within the usual formulaic picturesque conventions, so that its most distinguishing feature is its small town site.

This British bias becomes even more obvious when Heriot explicates the reasons for the downfall of New France. He abbreviates the version found in his 1804 History of Canada, which in turn was a patently poor digest of Pierre-Francois-Xavier de Charlevoix's 1774 Histoire et Description Generale de la Nouvelle France. Heriot's History ended in 1731, as did Charlevoix's, and he added very little to the narrative in his Travels. Charlevoix's main purpose in writing his Histoire was to chronicle the efforts of the Jesuit missionaries, but apparent throughout his text were the Jesuits' criticisms of monarchical authority. Heriot emphasized these criticisms and cleansed the text of Charlevoix's Gallic bias and long martyrrology. He also deleted Charlevoix's judgment that New France was flourishing much more than "our English neighbors."

In Heriot's account, in contrast, a French desire for quick profits from gold, furs and fish is blamed for impeding the slower but more stable progress of agricultural settlement. The discovery of precious metals had not been forthcoming as in Peru and Mexico, and France therefore did not give the assistance to the colony which it needed for its advancement and prosperity. The French court took no further interest in Canada's affairs, which were left to

---

108 Heriot, Travels 156.
various monopolies whose attentions were solely directed to the fur trade. According to Heriot the history of New France was therefore dominated by a series of appalling wars.109

When the English took possession of New France, they found that little progress had been made in commerce or agriculture. Heriot notes that the inhabitants were little acquainted with the science of agriculture until the farmers of Great Britain came over. Ginseng, for instance, was a product which Heriot states could have been profitable if managed properly. In 1752 exports of this material to Canton amounted to twenty thousand pounds sterling.110 The French Canadians, however, had one year dried the ginseng in their ovens instead of letting it dry slowly, and as a consequence lost their market. In Heriot's opinion, under proper (i.e. British) regulations this trade would have been productive for the colony. This attenuated history served British interests well. Ideologically, Britain's position was that effective use of the land was the test of a claim to possession, and therefore France's loss was merited and inevitable.

109The historiography of New France has spawned many debates and controversies. Often the question is asked: why did New France not develop like the other colonies in North America? Heriot's explanation of greedy merchants, reactionary peasants, corrupt administrators, negligent Kings, heroic nuns, the English deserving and the French undeserving is not far from histories written throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. Roberta Hamilton's analysis in Feudal Society and Colonization: The Historiography of New France (Gananoque: Langdale P, 1988) considers the relationship between the colony and its metropolis and the underlying differences in modes of production in Britain and France, for an explanation to the question often asked: why did the military defeat of the French in America result in their economic and political subordination? She argues that two different societies were clashing. England was the world's first capitalist state and the process of capitalization meant the "freeing" of the peasants from the land, allowing for the transformation of human labor power into a commodity to be bought and sold in the marketplace. The possibility of infinitely expanding and mobile capital, surplus people and capital for export and the creation of new and ever-expanding internal and external markets were the birth pangs of the "first of the world's consumer societies." According to Hamilton the potential of America as an extension of that consumer society was evident as early as the first decades of the seventeenth century." (Hamilton, 19.) Britain's final military victory in Quebec was followed up in the next decades by a new sort of invasion, of men with capital backed by an increasingly supportive state. The colonization of New France pre-dated what now appear as two interlocked and interdependent processes, capitalization and colonization. In New France there was a different social order: guarantees for private property had not superseded those of feudal tenure, questions of religious freedom were not more important than the security of the faith itself, and the traditional rights and obligations of different classes were thought to be properly protected by kings, not parliaments. Heriot's writing is linked to these processes of capitalization that Britain brought to Canada in that the landscape was being aestheticized at the same time it was being territorially claimed and exploited.

110Heriot, Travels 226.
Chapter 10 compares New France before and after the British conquest, again setting up the superiority of England and depicting the backwardness of the French Canadians. For example, in comparing French criminal law with the British criminal code, the imposition of the British code in French Lower Canada is represented as a major benefit to the residents of the region.

Heriot observes that "The whole of the Canadian inhabitants are remarkably fond of dancing." This statement is the last sentence of a paragraph dealing with the storage of food for the winter and is given no further context, other than the inclusion of the two plates (figs. 17 & 18) that depict French Canadians dancing rondes and minuets. These and the two plates of Indians are the only plates where figures are the principal subject of the illustration; Heriot's figures otherwise provide a nominal function as compliments to the views of an empty landscape. The French Canadians are represented conspicuously at leisure, dancing and not working. The illustrations categorize and subjectify the Canadians. Literary and visual historian Elizabeth Helsinger has argued that the genre of landscape illustration is structured and directed towards a viewer outside the picture. As she argues there is a difference "between those addressed as viewers of the landscape and those who can only be imagined as subjects in it."

Helsinger's argument provides a useful frame for Heriot's representation of the French Canadians. In Travels in the Canadas they are fixed in place as subjects of illustrations, imaged like the Indians whose customs and manners, once known, can be controlled. Neither the British nor the Loyalists are defined by difference, as the French Canadians and Natives are, nor are they illustrated in Heriot's work as subjects for the viewer's consideration.

Dancing fits into a category of difference. It is presented in the style of Manners and Customs of people seen on a tour. This is confirmed by John Lambert, who travelled to Canada in 111

---

1806 and published a book that also included a description of the French Canadians dancing: "minuets, and a sort of reels or jigs, rudely performed to the discordant scrapings of a couple of vile fiddlers...."112

La Dance Ronde takes place outside. The people are shown as happy and harmonious. The image serves to illustrate the customs of the French rather than to represent individual people within the group. Although there is an effort to show them as French Canadians with characteristic toques, the women dancing in a circle look decidedly neoclassical with the drapery of their dresses very much like that found in 18th century illustrations of antiquity. In the text Heriot describes French Canadian society as hierarchical, feudal and inactive. The interior dance scene, Minuets of the Canadians, reinforces the idea of a hierarchical society. It shows the fashion worn by the seigniorial class, but also we see the odd "toque" of the "habitant", as well as two blacks. In 1805 the two blacks would have been slaves; slavery remained legal until 1834.113 To Heriot's audience this rustic interior with music made from a primitive instrument, a tambourine, could have been compared to the Minuet as known by the British, a formal dance held in elegant surroundings with very precise dress codes, rules of deportment and refined musical accompaniment. Rustic happiness and aristocratic elegance are implicitly compared.

Heriot portrays the "habitants" in stereotypical terms. They are presented as "honest, hospitable, religious, inoffensive, uninformed, possessing simplicity, modesty and civility."114 But they are also, as has been noted earlier, represented as passive and non-productive:

Indolent, attached to ancient prejudices and limiting their exertions to an acquisition of the necessities of life, they neglect the conveniences. Their propensity to a state of inaction, retains many of them in poverty; but as their wants are circumscribed, they are happy. Contentment of mind, and mildness of disposition, seem to be the leading features in their character. Their address to strangers is more polite and unembarassed than that of any other peasantry in the world.115

---

113 Craig Brown, ed. The Illustrated History of Canada (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1987) 249.
114 Heriot, Travels 255.
115 Heriot, Travels 255.
Constructed as backward and simple, the French Canadians are presented as obviously incapable of looking after themselves and therefore in need of the British to run the country for them. This patriarchal model applied to Britain's colonial subjects validated the superiority of British rule. It also presented a people that were not a threat to security. A contemporary reviewer of Heriot's book was more explicit regarding the need for a compliant population in Canada in light of the comparatively recent fight for liberty that resulted in the formation of the United States of America.

The inhabitants of Canada appear to have enjoyed but little of the advantages of equitable laws or wise regulations for promoting their internal prosperity. They are now beginning however to taste the sweets of independence, to see something like political liberty, and to emerge from the half-barbarous condition to which they had previously been restricted. From this alteration, the mother-country has possibly to apprehend a diminution of their attachment to its government, and a rising desire to shake off the yoke if subjection; for such were the circumstances that engendered the seeds of discontent in the North American colonies, and excited them at last to erect the standard of separate sovereignty. But the temper and habits of the native Canadians are not at present calculated to awaken much apprehension of this kind.\textsuperscript{116}

Thus within this context Heriot's text and illustrations address a persistent fear of uprisings and revolutions held by Britain's upper classes following the American Revolution of 1775, French Revolution of 1789 and the Irish Up-Rising of 1798.

Chapter 3

The Natives: Hunting, Fishing & Indolence

*The Oxford Companion to Canadian History and Literature* describes the second volume of Heriot's *Travels* as "a badly organized work in which description is mixed with facts culled from other books on North America." As noted in my discussion on the literary conventions of travel literature, most contemporary reviewers, had come to the same conclusion. In one review however, the writer was more forgiving, saying:

His volume certainly contains much less than we desired, or perhaps expected, of original matter; but it presents us with at least a tolerable summary of the present state of knowledge, enriched with some additional facts, respecting the British possessions in Canada, and the various Indian tribes that are scattered through the vast American continent.

and further:

Mr. Heriot's volume is not invariably entertaining, or abundant in original information; but we freely allow that it deserves the attention of the public, and may be occasionally resorted to with much advantage, as a compilation of important facts. It would have been greatly improved, if the authorities, upon which the various particulars respecting Indian manners are founded, had been more frequently and accurately quoted.

Both accusations, bad organization and poorly quoted sources, are accurate. It is often hard to know which native tribe Heriot is describing or where it is located because he so often changes the subject and generalizes. His method of borrowing information from a number of sources produces numerous inconsistencies. For instance, he includes a map of the St. Lawrence River (fig. 19) which indicates the area where different tribes are located, including the Wandering Chipawas, Nation of Bear, Mascoutens, Winebagas, Wyadots and Pouteautomis. However, these tribes are not mentioned in the text. The different tribes that he does mention are not on the map, nor does he include a map of the various tribes mentioned in the rest of North or South America.

---

He dedicates an entire volume to his discussion of various tribes but only includes two plates illustrating the peoples or anything about them. It is hard to discern what real interest Heriot had in this volume, so poorly is it put together. It seems only to meet the requirement of what Heriot thought was an obligatory and still exotic subject when discussing Canada and the rest of North and South America. It fulfills the role of appendicular material described by Giltrow.

Although it is this volume of Heriot’s *Travels* that compares North and South American tribes, we already have a fair idea about his views of the natives from Volume I. In the Preface we are given the first indication of what to expect. In describing the natives, which Heriot alternately calls "savages", he notes that they are men who are "but little removed from the rude simplicity of a state of nature."120 This trope is repeated throughout the second volume: "the natives have the instinctive principle of animals,"121 "some of the inhabitants seems but little removed from that of the animals which range the gloomy and boundless woods"122 and the natives are "living like animals of the forests."123

The two works that illustrate natives are: *Encampment of Domiciliated Indians* (fig. 20) and *Custume (sic) of Domiciliated Indians* (fig. 21). The word domiciliated, meaning domiciled in one place, calls up the effects of missionaries, civilization, and finally British colonization on Native tribes. The first illustration is out of place, as the textual description of the domiciliated Indian is in Volume I. The other incongruity is that in the text; Heriot speaks of a village, but he illustrates an encampment, which is cruder architecturally, more nomadic, and in 18th century terms closer to a state of nature, and certainly lower on the scale in a hierarchy of structures. This particular composition of foreground figures, beached canoe and wigwams or tents was employed as a formula from the late eighteenth century onwards124 (for example, see Thomas Davies’ 1788, *A View near Point Levy Quebec with an Indian Encampment*, fig. 22), which suggests that Heriot was drawing more from what he had read or seen in books than what he actually saw in Canada.

---

120Heriot, *Travels* v.
121Heriot, *Travels* 447.
This contradicts his assertion in the preface that his knowledge of Indians, based on the writings of others, had been corrected by information derived "from living observation, communicated by men on whose veracity a reliance could be placed." He also noted that:

as a resident in Canada for a series of years, has afforded to the author opportunities of witnessing the modes of life pursued by several of the Indian nations, and enabled him to adduce what he has himself observed, as well as to reject what he deemed improbable in the writings he consulted.

This, too, seems mere publishing puffery, given the material and illustrations in this volume. It should be also be noted how well the Indian encampment, as a subject matter, fits into the British picturesque prototype of the idling peasant or small gypsy encampment. Shirley Foster explains how visits to Indian settlements and encampments were considered an essential feature of the North American Tour. So, again, Heriot in presenting an encampment image, abides by the imperatives of picturesque tour guide writing.

Further evidence that Heriot was simply using earlier engravings or plates for his illustrations of natives has been garnered by Finley. He refers to a watercolour which was not included in Travels. In Dance on the Reception of Strangers the source of the design is an engraved plate from Lafitau's Moeurs des sauvages ameriquians... (1724) (fig. 23). Finley also points out that these watercolours were executed around 1805, when nowhere in eastern North America could Heriot have seen near-nude Indians with roached hair and body painting. Although these native dance watercolours were not included in his book, this information certainly strengthens the case against Heriot's statements about being able to correct what was improbable in what he read.

In Plate III of Hogarth's Rake's Progress (fig. 24) there is a figure of a seated woman, one breast falling out of her dress, in the process of putting on a stocking. In Heriot's Encampment

---

125 Heriot, Travels iv-v.
126 Heriot, Travels v.
128 T.J. Brasser of the Canadian Ethnology Service provided the information on which Finley concluded that Heriot's watercolours of the natives were historically inaccurate. Finley, George Heriot: Postmaster-Painter of the Canadas, Chapter 5, note 18, page 214.
there is a similar figure with noticeable cleavage, involved in the same action, putting on a stocking. Whether Heriot was looking at Hogarth's work is impossible to say, but certainly he must have been looking at something similar, and it is very unlikely he was looking at an native women posed, just so, putting on a stocking. Here there seems to be no attempt on Heriot's part to make his natives look native. Except for the wigwams and canoes and the beaver hats and tunic style clothing, there is little in the work to distinguish these people from Europeans. Most are standing with their arms crossed in poses and gestures that suggest passivity rather than action. They are sedentary or at rest. The illustration does not appear to corroborate the leitmotif of both volumes of *Travels*, which describes the natives as indolent. Of the Caraibs, Heriot notes that they may "pass whole days in their hammocks, and their indolence and apathy are unequaled." He describes a missionary trying to persuade natives around Lake Saint John to plant Indian corn or potatoes but notes that "they have not, however, been able to overcome their propensity to indolence, or their utter aversion and abhorrence to that species of labor." Heriot later claims that, "In the savage state, where indolence and sloth are considered as enjoyments, a disposition to activity is rarely discovered." An earlier engraving dated 1724 shows natives actively cultivating cornfields (fig. 25). Another print pictures the harvesting of maple sugar (fig. 26). These two prints as well as Heriot's own illustration raise questions regarding Heriot's assertions of native indolence.

On the left hand side of the encampment picture there are three buildings of European construction. These serve to provide both a comparison with the wigwams and to convey Heriot's message that the domiciliated Indians are in such a diminished state that as neighbors to white settlements they do not impose a threat. At a time when the British in Quebec were outnumbered by French Canadians and still hoping for a wave of Protestant settlers, it certainly makes sense to represent the natives, who in earlier accounts had been portrayed as treacherous and bloodthirsty, as now non-threatening, docile and tamed. If we are to understand the illustration as corresponding to the text's description of domiciliated Indians, then Heriot chose a group of

---

129 Heriot, *Travels* 463.
130 Heriot, *Travels* 51.
131 Heriot, *Travels* 279.
natives, the Huron, in a most degenerated state after the defeat of Huronia by the Iroquois in 1649. The descendants of what was left of the tribe had settled outside of Quebec in the village of Jeune Lorette. In Heriot's text (volume one) the village is described as consisting of about fifty houses constructed of wood and stone, with both French and natives living in them. Heriot does not mention wigwams in the text's description of this village. He also notes that the natives have about two hundred acres under cultivation, which are not pictured in the Encampment illustration. He notes that, notwithstanding their partial civilization, the men maintain that independence which arises from "the paucity and limitation of their wants and which constitutes a principal feature in the savage character."132

Heriot later describes the Iroquois, whose name, he notes, means, *constructors of cabins*, as the most commodiously lodged. He describes their lodges in some detail, indicating that they are certainly not hovels. Whether or not Heriot intended the Encampment illustration to correspond with the village of Jeune Lorette his description of the Iroquois lodgings as well as those of the Caraibs or the Peruvians indicate that he chose to illustrate a most simple habitation. Indeed, Heriot highlights both the nomadic feature and the absence of cultivation. As with the French Canadians, Britain's ideological position was that effective use of land was the test of a claim to possession. Therefore, because the natives are indolent, do not cultivate the land and are nomadic, they could take the land without feeling any moral constraints.

The second illustration in volume two is *Custume (sic) of the Domiciliated Indian*. Here the illustration is closer to the discussion in the text, on the page following Heriot's discussion of the dress of the Iroquois. However, it is not altogether clear that the textual discussion and the illustration correspond, as the title is *Custume of the domiciliated Indian*, not of the Iroquois. Further ambiguity arises from the fact that both the illustrations are titled "Domicilated" but they seem to refer to different tribes as their dress does not correspond. Domiciliated is a generic term that could be applied to a number of tribes. However when Heriot uses this term in the text he seems to be referring specifically to the tribe domiciled at Jeune Lorette. *Custume of the Domiciliated Indian* is presented to show the costume of the peoples and in a classificatory way,

132Heriot, *Travels* 16.
much as John Lambert showed the *Winter Costumes of Canadians* in his 1806-1808 *Travels* (fig. 27). They are shown, as Indians emblematically were, with painted faces and feathered head
dresses, displaying trophies of the hunt and articles of daily life. Also shown are European trade
goods: guns, clothing, fabric and a kettle. The roles of natives are gendered, with one women with
a burden strap carrying her infant in a cradleboard on her back and the other woman cooking over
a metal (trades good) kettle. The men are presented with the accessories for hunting: rifles,
hatchets and knives. Two of them have whole animal skin pouches hanging from their belts, and
one has a duck in his hand. Fish and other ducks are hanging from the lean-to seen on the right
hand side of the work. All of this underlines that their sustenance comes from hunting and fishing
and not agriculture. The vestiges of missionary life are seen in the cross around one native's neck.
Also shown is a tattoo or face painting. Heriot notes that the natives ornamented their faces and
uncovered parts of their bodies with red paint, taking much pain in application without bestowing
any beauty. The illustration tames the natives while leaving a sense of the primitive and exotic in
the unconvincing headdresses and in the tattoo. The picture replicates and reinforces the book's
task. It orders and classifies knowledge for its readers. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries,
the great goal of so-called disinterested science was to construct a comprehensive taxonomy of
creation, a taxonomy embodied most completely in the Linnean binomial classification system.
These natives were not meant to be specific individuals, but rather archetypes, stripped of details
that might make them individual or unique. In fact Heriot leaves it so ambiguous we are not even
sure to which tribe they are supposed to belong.

This plate can be compared to a portrait done of Joseph Brant, Leader of the Mohawks on
the English side during the American Revolution, painted in 1797 by William Berczy (fig. 29). The
portrait shows Brant depicted in terms of yet another British convention, the patrician pose of a
country squire surveying his lands, but in this case as an individual and not a generalized type as
shown by Heriot. The portrait also gives recognition to the natives, specifically the Mohawk, as
allies of the British in both 1759 against the French, and in 1775 during the American Revolution.
(Great Britain again sought alliances with the Natives during the War of 1812). Nowhere does
Heriot indicate any debt to the natives either as allies or as partners in the fur trade, or as the
people who taught both the English and French how to survive the Canadian wilderness. Least of all does Heriot acknowledge that what was most needed from the natives was their land. The assumption, in any event, was that land can be taken from a people if they or their use of land was deemed to be deficient. Volume Two explicitly makes this judgement without being explicit about the motive.

Heriot uses Joseph-Francois Lafitau's 1724 *Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times*, and William D.D. Robertson's *The History of America* as his two primary sources for Volume Two. Robertson's *History* was first published in 1777, and held its place as the standard history of the discovery and conquest of the New World until the 1840's. Lafiteau's work was one of the first attempts to be scientific in a comparative ethnographic mode. He had worked among the Iroquois as a Jesuit missionary and used his knowledge of antiquity to illuminate their customs, such as initiation rites, funeral ceremonies and marriages. Whenever Heriot mentions the Carthaginians, Greeks, Tartars or Egyptians, we are probably reading something borrowed from Lafiteau. Heriot uses both Lafiteau's and Robertson's chapter headings for his categories. These were categories already acceptable to European readers of the day, such as: "Character of Primitive Peoples in General," "Religion," "Political Government," "Marriage and Education," "Warfare," "Hunting and Fishing." Both Robertson and Lafiteau attempt to provide explanations and reasons for the customs they write about; Heriot, on the other hand, is for the most part satisfied with negative generalizations. Heriot's general explanation for what he describes as the natives' state of wretchedness and rudeness is due to their natural slothfulness, indolence, inability to plan for the future, and their way of life—the pursuit of the chase and consequent lack of agriculture.

Heriot's borrowings and deletions are apparent. In writing about the Spanish in Mexico, Heriot, following Robertson, mentions that the inhabitants of the province of Chiapa, who were indebted to the humane and generous interposition of La Casas, for an exemption from the

---

general oppression of the Spanish yoke,"\textsuperscript{135} but deletes any details that would give this information context. Robertson explains how the Spanish believed the American Indians to be beings of an inferior nature who were not entitled to the rights and privileges of men, and consequently subjected them to servitude. He notes that the Indians had decreased in number by 50% in the fifteen years after Columbus's arrival. He describes the Spaniards as working them so hard some of them committed suicide, and describes famine and widespread disease as a result of laboring in the mines instead of cultivating the land.

Most of Heriot's sources go into some detail about the devastation caused by the Europeans' introduction of smallpox and the resulting decimation of the native population. Although Heriot states that "they probably never would have known small pox and some other epidemical disorders, but for their commerce with Europeans,"\textsuperscript{136} he never elaborates or gives any reason for sympathy or compassion towards the natives.

As to the general state of the natives, Heriot seems to have taken directly from Robertson the idea that "In America, man appears under the rudest form in which we can conceive him to subsist "\textsuperscript{137} and "the qualities belonging to the people of all the different tribes have such a near resemblance that they maybe painted with the same features."\textsuperscript{138}

Robertson's statements concerning the maladies of the savages are echoed by Heriot. Robertson explains that: "They seem, however, to be everywhere exempt from many of the distempers which afflict polished nations. None of the maladies, which are the immediate offspring of luxury, or sloth, ever visited them;"\textsuperscript{139} Heriot states: "...the simple food with which he is nourished, exempt the Indian of America from many maladies which are the necessary offspring of a refined and artificial mode of existence."\textsuperscript{140} This lack of the afflictions which accompany luxury or sloth and are associated with "polished nations" does not get translated by either Robertson or Heriot into anything approximating Rosseau's mid-eighteenth century notion

\textsuperscript{135}Heriot, Travels 563.
\textsuperscript{136}Heriot, Travels 532.
\textsuperscript{137}Heriot, Travels 282.
\textsuperscript{138}Heriot, Travels 283.
\textsuperscript{139}Robertson, History of America 306.
\textsuperscript{140}Heriot, Travels 521.
of the "noble savage." Indeed, Robertson states that: "wherever be the situation in which man is placed, he is born to suffer; and his diseases, in the savage state, though fewer in number, are, like those of the animals whom he nearly resembles in his mode of life, more violent, and more fatal."141

As to the intellectual ability of natives, both writers state that speculative reasoning or research is unknown in the rude state of society. Natives are not capable of arrangement for futurity and have no abstract ideas, only those that enter their heads through their senses. Their art of war, Robertson writes142 and Heriot reiterates,143 is inferior to that of polished nations. Their motives are revenge which accounts for the ferocity of their wars and their perpetuity.

Robertson is generally unfavorable, with Heriot following suit, in his opinion regarding the natives. He lists carefully qualified virtues on only two pages of his two-volume tome. Even virtues such as independence are turned around to become negative attributes, perhaps reflecting British distress over the American Revolution. Heriot's natives are distinguished by lacks, absences, and wants. We are left with a picture of people that are irreducibly different from Europeans; different in manners, religion, warefare, language and dress, and who are innately incapable of being civilized.

---

141Robertson, History of America 306.
142Robertson, The History of America 350.
143Heriot, Travels 366.
Heriot wrote at a time when he could still believe that the British way of doing and thinking was natural, inevitable and universal. Heriot's *Travels Through the Canadas* exaggerates the scope of his knowledge by the inclusion of a map, a dictionary of the Algonquin language, engravings that chart his journey up the St. Lawrence, and an entire volume which claims to cover all the Native tribes of North and South America, including descriptions of indigenous animals and the compilation of factual information. As in other travel writing of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Heriot employs in his representation of Canada the discursive languages of science, taxonomy, technology and ethnology. His *Travels* implies a comprehensive if not omniscient intelligence. Yet Heriot's taxonomic principle of ordering, whether of the rivers and lakes, natives or civil institutions is deceptive. His documentary language promises to bring Canada into the realm of the knowable, to make it appear as ordered and as civilized as his picturesque tour and his descriptions of it. As Carole Fabricant has pointed out, aesthetic treatments of the landscape and its occupants through the picturesque functioned to naturalize and legitimate man-made, hence provisional, structures and systems.144

The picturesque descriptions in text and image serve to demonstrate the role of art and aesthetics in maintaining an established order, and in asserting its classificatory regimes and exclusions. Such treatment of Canadian landscapes in effect articulates a British national identity, while the picturesque portrayal of French Canadians and natives as backward, unmotivated and unthreatening, articulates and justifies the moral authority of the colonizers.

By picturing Britain's "imagined other" as both the French Canadian and the native were, Heriot fulfills a number of aims at one time: a picturesque fondness for anachronisms, the need to define the British by a comparison to others and the need to assert Britain's moral claim to govern and dominate the peoples of Canada. At the same time Heriot also indicates who he envisions will

included in the country's prosperous future. His travel account establishes a discursive order within which the French Canadians and Natives take their place.

Through Heriot's narrative devices and his visual forms with their social implications what formerly had been dispersed and unlimited was now codified and limited. By these processes Heriot turns several thousand square miles of wilderness into another civilized British colony. The information is organized to fit colonial Canada within the representational boundaries of a British world.
Bibliography


-----. "George Heriot's Travels through the Canadas"(1807), Edinburgh Review (April 1808).


Heriot, George. Travels through the Canadas, containing a description of the picturesque scenery on some of the rivers and lakes; with an account of the productions commerce and inhabitants of those provinces. To which is subjoined a comparative view of the manners and customs of several of the Indian nations of North and South America. London: J.G. Barnard, 1805.

-----. Travels through the Canadas...Printed for Richard Phillips by T. Gillet, 1807. Volume one and two bound together. (8 1/4" x 10") Illustrated with a folding map and twenty-seven plates after watercolours by Heriot.

-----. Travels through the Canadas.... Analyses of new voyages and travels, lately published in London. London: Phillips, 1808 (abridged, small type on 232 relatively small pages, with only four plates: Quebec from Cape Diamond, Fall of Montmorenci in Winter, Fall of the Grande Chaudiere [sic], Canadian Minuets.) (5 1/8" x 8 1/2").

-----. Travels through the Canadas....Philadelphia: M. Carey, 1813, (Vol 1 of 1807 version, without illustrations)-miniature 4 1/2" x 7", Part of the Series: Elegant Miniature Editions of The Following Works...Being a Collection of Curious and Interesting Anecdotes.


Hontan Voyages de la Hontan. 1703. CIHM (Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproduction) A37429.


Lescarbot, Marc. (Barrister-at-Law, Eye-Witness of Part of the Matters Herein Recounted) History of New France. Containing the Voyages, Discoveries, and Settlements made by the French in the west Indies and New France, by commission from our Most Christian Kings; and their diverse fortunes in the execution of these matters, from one hundred years ago until now. Wherein is contained the Moral, Natural, and Geographical History of the Provinces described; with the requisite Tables and Maps Volume I A New York: Greenwood Reprint of the Champlain Society, 1907 translation of the third edition of Paris: Adrian Perier, 1618.


Perouse. Voyages de la Perouse CIHM 37563.


Spendlove, Francis S. *The Face of Early Canada: Pictures of Canada which have helped to make history*. Toronto: Ryerson P, 1958.


Vancouver, George. *A Voyage of discovery to the north Pacific ocean and around the world in which the coast of North West America has been carefully examined and accurately surveyed*. London, 1798. CIHM 41861553.


Appendix 1: Figures

Figure 1: George Heriot, *Title Page* of 1805 Edition of *Travels Through the Canadas*
TRAVELS
THROUGH
THE CANADAS.

TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED A
COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS
OF SEVERAL OF THE INDIAN NATIONS OF
NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA.

BY
GEORGE HERIOT.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR RICHARD PHILLIPS, 6, NEW BRIDGE STREET,
BLACKFRIARS,
By J. G. Barnard, 57, Snow Hill.
1805.
Figure 2: George Heriot, *The Whirlpool of the St. Lawrence*
Figure 2
Figure 3: Heriot, *Fall of the Grande Chaudiere on the Outaouais River*
Figure 4: Heriot, Fall of La Puce (taken from the Eastern Bank)
Figure 5: Heriot, View on the Upper Lake St. Charles, near Quebec
Figure 6: Heriot, Quebec from Cape Diamond
Figure 7: Heriot, Ruins of Chateau Richer with Cape Tourment
Figure 7
Figure 8: Heriot, *View of the River Etchemin, near Quebec*
Figure 9: Heriot, New Bridge on the River Jacques Cartier
Figure 10: Heriot, View of Jeune Lorette, Village of the Huron's, nine Miles North of Quebec
Figure 11: Heriot, *View of Quebec* (taken from Point Levi)
Figure 12: Heriot, Fall of Montmorenci
Figure 12
Figure 13: Heriot, View of the Falls from beneath the bank on the Fort Slausser side
Figure 13
Figure 14: Heriot, City of Montreal (taken from the Mountain)
Figure 15: Heriot, View at St. Paul's Bay, on the River St. Lawrence
Figure 16: Heriot, British Fort at Niagara
Figure 17: Heriot, *La Danse Ronde, Circular Dance of the Canadians*
Figure 18: Heriot, Minuets of the Canadians
Figure 19: Heriot, Chart of the Saint Lawrence
Figure 20: Heriot, Encampment of Domiciliated Indians
Figure 21: Heriot, *Costume of Domiciliated Indians*
Figure 22: Thomas Davies, *A View near Point Levy Quebec with an Indian Encampment*
Figure 23: Heriot, Dance on the reception of Strangers previous to their introduction into the Village, c. 1805 Watercolour, 175 x 298 & Unidentified engraver and unknown artist, design depicting an Indian dance from P. lafitau's Moeurs des Sauvages Ameriquains, 1724
Figure 24: William Hogarth, plate III from The Rake's Progress
Figure 25: Unidentified engraver and unknown artist, 1724; *Hoes with blades were used in the cornfields.*

Figure 26: Unidentified engraver and unknown artist. *Maple sap was the universal sweetener.*
Figure 27: John Lambert, *Winter Costumes*, & George Heriot, *Indian Costumes*. 
WINTER COSTUMES From John Lambert's "Travels" 1806-1808

INDIAN COSTUMES about 1807

From G. Heriot's "Travels"

Figure 27

101
Figure 28: Wilhelm von M. Berczy. *Joseph Brant, 1797.*