"TRANSCOLONIAL CIRCUITS":
HISTORICAL FICTION AND NATIONAL IDENTITIES
IN IRELAND, SCOTLAND, AND CANADA

by

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Abstract

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"Transcolonial Circuits': Historical Fiction and National Identities in Ireland, Scotland, and Canada" explores the intersections between gender, canon-formation, and literary genre in order to argue that English- and French-Canadian historical fiction was influenced, both in form and content, by the precedent-setting fictions of Scotland and Ireland in the early nineteenth century. Conceived in the spirit of Katie Trumpener’s *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (1997), this dissertation extends Trumpener’s examination of nineteenth-century British and Canadian romantic fiction by exploring in greater detail the flow of ideas and literary techniques between Ireland, Scotland, and English and French Canada. It does so in order to revise critical understandings of the formal and thematic origins and development of Canadian historical fiction from the nineteenth century to the present.

Chapter One functions as a series of literary snapshots that examine historically the critical and popular reception of novels by Maria Edgeworth and Sydney Owenson in Ireland, Sir Walter Scott in Scotland, John Richardson, William Kirby, and Jean McIlwraith in English Canada, and Philippe Aubert de Gaspé and Napoléon Bourassa in French Canada. I pay particular attention to the issues of gender and political ideology as
In Chapter Two, by focusing on the travel trope, I examine in detail how Irish, Scottish, and Canadian writers transformed the investigative journeys of Samuel Johnson and Arthur Young into journeys of resistance to the dictates of the metropolis. Chapter Three focuses on the complications of marriage as a metaphor of intercultural union. It pays particular attention to the intersections between gender, sexuality, and colonial identity. The Conclusion extends the concerns raised in the thesis about the relationship between historical writing and national identity to the late-twentieth-century Canadian context, by examining the adaptation of literary and historiographical conventions to the medium of television in the CBC/SRC television series *Canada: A People's History*, which aired in 2001-02.
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The roots of this project on transcultural migrations and cultural translation may be said to lie with my grandfather. Shortly after my parents left Czechoslovakia (as the story goes, with nothing but their Slovak-English dictionaries in their back pockets), my grandfather tried to learn English by reading, of all things, Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe*. I have his copy of *Ivanhoe* on my bookshelf. His notes in the margins, so diligent at the beginning, suddenly disappear around page 20.

I’d like to thank my parents, who have been my backbone for all these years, for counting down the days with me, for commiserating with me, and for celebrating, from three thousand kilometres away.

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Introduction

Literary Genre, Canon Formation, and National Identity

At the conclusion of her magisterial study *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (1997), Katie Trumpener speaks of the “flows [of population, knowledge, tastes, and goods]” as “travers[ing] the British Empire . . . not only in straight lines back and forth between periphery and center but also through a large number of thoroughly transcolonial circuits or conduits, many as old as the fact of colonial settlement” (281). Beginning with a look at the Irish national tale and the Scottish historical novel, Trumpener’s investigation of such “flows” builds on the recovery work accomplished by other critics, among them Ina Ferris, James Buzard, Ian Duncan, and Anne Mellor, but it also branches into the investigation of other genres and other national contexts. Neither the national tale nor the historical novel, she stipulates, is “conceivable without the investigative journeys of the Enlightenment” (101) and the travel narratives to go with them, and she expands the geographical parameters of her study with a reading of Canadian historical fiction in the context she has established.

An American of German extraction and “a child immigrant to Canada from the United States in the late 1960s” (xvii), a Germanist and comparatist, Trumpener brings a background of personally experienced cultural migration to her work, but she also—by admission—applies to it an American’s reservations about Canada’s “deeply colonial . . . mentality” and “mysterious . . . cultural practices” (xvii). My own upbringing as the daughter of immigrant parents from Slovakia, with strong family ties to their place of origin, draws on a complicated national and linguistic background, and my education in
Canada has incorporated some of this country's diversity as well, by including studies in both English and French. In the following, I would like to put my own transcultural experience, both scholarly and personal, to use in order to complement certain aspects of the work that Trumpener and others have so impressively begun. As a result, I dwell on the trans-Atlantic origins of the Canadian historical novel in Irish and Scottish national and historical fiction, and on the overseas links that characters in the Canadian texts maintain with their countries of origin. In an effort to emphasize national distinctiveness and independence, nationalist projects such as the re-publication of Canadian “classics” during the 1920s and 1960s/70s used editorial interventions, abridgements foremost among them, to reduce the European links, both literary and historical, of such books (see Trumpener 278f; Lecker 656-71). Here, I wish to recover these connections, not in order to initiate a neo-colonial project of asserting Canada’s cultural dependence, but to underline that it is more appropriate to speak of interdependencies in which the recipient modifies cultural imports as well as being modified by them. This “flow” of ideas and literary techniques also occurs within Canada itself (and, as we shall see particularly with reference to Wacousta, within North America), and my selection of texts speaks to the bilingual nature of Canadian historical fiction and the very different agenda that novels in English and French have pursued about the same event, such as the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. Various narratives have been developed to suggest a reconciliation and harmonious co-existence despite these differences, but sometimes the narratives—abridgements notwithstanding—convey a completely different story from the ones suggested in their nationalist (or would it be more accurate to say, federalist?) packaging. One particularly startling example can be found in the Introduction to the 1969 NCL
edition of William Kirby’s *The Golden Dog* (1877), where the editor, Derek Crawley, suggests that “[a]t a time when the two cultures of Canada are making an important adjustment one to the other it is fitting that a romance by an English-born Canadian who was warmly sympathetic to French Canada should be republished,” while admitting that the romance “lends itself to cutting” because it contains “whole chapters” that have “almost no relevance to the main story lines” (vii). The “main story lines,” one is led to assume from Crawley’s reading, are those that support the “adjustment” of the two cultures to each other. While the first half of this quotation even appears on the cover of the book, anyone who reads Kirby’s novel even in its most abridged version will be able to confirm that any adjustments are made on Britain’s terms, and that the implied parallel with 1960s Canada is therefore disquieting, to say the least.

This insistence on the interlocking of European, Canadian, and inter-Canadian influences seems all the more appropriate since it not only applies to the nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century texts I will be studying, but also anticipates, and often contrasts with, the ways in which the contemporary arts have incorporated opposing historical views and their expression.2 Laurie Ricou, for example, has illustrated the very different ways in which Margaret Laurence’s *The Diviners* (1974) and Hubert Aquin’s *Prochain Episode* (1965) read Benjamin West’s famous painting *The Death of General Wolfe* and confront a crucial episode in Canadian history as they do so. Léandre Bergeron, a member of the *Parti-pris* collective and author of the irreverent *Petit manuel d’histoire du Québec* (1970) and the *Dictionnaire de la langue québécoise* (1980), offers a comic-book reading of the same painting in which the solemnity of the occasion is debunked by peasant observers stammering out their response to “La Con–La con–La Conquête,
morbleu!!,” making it into an obscenity in the process, and by speech-bubbles suggesting that Wolfe is supine in the arms of his entourage because he has slipped on a banana-peel and accidentally shot himself. In all fairness, it should be added that the corresponding painting of the death of Montcalm receives a similar treatment, with bystanders conjugating the verb “mourir” (as in “je meurs, tu meurs, il meurt,” and so on), and pointing meaningfully at each other while doing so (Bergeron 12). More recently, viewers in Québec did not always share the enthusiasm of English-Canadian viewers for the CBC/SRC series Canada: A People’s History. For example, Christian Dufour’s review describes the series as a one-sided representation of “le côté bienveillant du pouvoir anglais-canadien à l’égard des Canadiens français et de leurs descendants québécois.”¹

Recognizing the literary manipulation of cultural icons like West’s painting requires close attention to the texts in which they appear. While my topic by definition requires a broad historical sweep and acknowledgement of the large ideological and literary developments that emerge from a study of texts that, between them, span more than a hundred years, I am interested in developing further what Marilyn Butler has called a “particularized historical method” (25) or what Ina Ferris has named “a kind of concrete microanalysis” (6). It is only through the detailed work that both of these critics have in mind that the complex interplay of genre and ideology that characterizes historical novel and national tale (and the many genres subsumed in them) can be understood. Because of the ways in which the majority of the texts I have chosen periodically re-enter the academic canon together with updated ideological agendas, much of my analysis in the following is by necessity influenced by post-colonial theories
and cultural studies. However, I emphatically agree with Janet Sorensen that post-colonial theories in particular are not sufficiently attuned to “a more nuanced reading of the internal differences within . . . amorphous entities of Gael, Scot, and Briton” and her assessment holds equally true for Canada (8). Sorensen’s approach is based on historical linguistics; my own is a close study of selected literary tropes found in the texts I have chosen for discussion. If, in the following, readers find my readings sometimes excessively detailed, I ask them to bear with me, because it is this approach that has allowed me to disentangle some of the complex narrative layering that characterizes these books, and the ideological “adjustments” that go with them. In adapting Sorensen’s program for her own investigation of “the Grammar of Empire,” I too wish to “highlight . . . the contradictions in the cultural productions of the British nation and empire and the identities of the men and women who lived in and under them, [and thus] move analysis beyond a structuralist binary of self/other” (9).

I have chosen to focus on the travel and marriage tropes because they are particularly apt for an analysis of writing which is preoccupied with unions both personal and political, and with the “footwork” that goes into bringing them about. The investigative journeys of Arthur Young and Samuel Johnson not only provide structural models from which national tales and historical novels in Ireland and Scotland were able to derive itineraries attuned to suit their own program best, but also present research and hint at each author’s attitudes towards the cultures he investigated in a printed form that fictional characters can be made to discuss. Because of the size of the country, no travel report on Canada exists that would have assumed quite the same encompassing function as Young’s and Johnson’s, but Haliburton’s work comes close, especially as, ironically
and symptomatically, he provided the research that allowed both English- and French-Canadian novelists to reconstruct events in Maritime history, such as the Deportation of the Acadians, when other important records had been lost because of such events.

While travel permits an inventory of the geographical, historical, and cultural territory to be drawn up, the marriage trope alludes to the instance when the conflicting proprietary claims over the territory are being laid to rest, as well as implying that the amalgamation of disparate ethnic groups in political unions is a legitimate, equable, and affectionate arrangement between consenting adults. At the same time, however, both journey and marriage also come with a rich repertoire of potential catastrophes, including abortive, failed or sterile marriages, murders by jealous mistresses or jilted suitors, travelers lost in bogs or breaking through ice, and families torn apart by forced migrations. Indeed, at one point in the writing of my thesis, I described my weekend reading as preoccupied with “three failed marriages, one fallen woman, and a dead baby named Canada.” Such elements bring the subconscious horrors of the gothic novel into the famously educational narratives of historical novel and national tale, and the excesses of gothicism expose the areas where the conciliatory plot is unable to contain the strains pulling against it. The understanding of what constitutes a “conciliatory” plot or a “strain” is apt to change with different national configurations as well, but the travel and marriage tropes are capable of accommodating a wide range of such changes precisely because the concepts they represent and the participants in them are not particularly stable either. Both tropes have insistently provided textual and ideological sites in which models of imperial cohesiveness can be pieced together and taken apart, and in which, to push the metaphor a little further, ruin and monument can
exist together, and often do. It is not surprising that one of the persistent motifs linked to 
both traveler and marriage in the novels under discussion is a structure in the literal sense 
of the word, namely the “big house,” its decline or willful destruction, its restoration to 
often dubious splendour, the paths leading to, around, and away from it, and its 
restoration (see Kreilkamp).

It would, as a matter of fact, be very surprising if, in the books I have chosen for 
discussion, stability were achieved with anything like ease or confidence. They are 
inhabited by characters whose ethnic, political, and linguistic identities are often difficult 
to make out. Repeatedly, individuals initiating a conversation with others have to clear 
up several misunderstandings first. In Jean McIlwraith’s A Diana of Quebec (1912), for 
example, Captain Mathews, the narrator of the story, corrects Admiral Nelson by stating 
that he is not an Englishman but a Scot with little personal animosity against the French, 
and Mathews also informs Nelson that General Haldimand is “not French—[but] Swiss, 
from one of the French cantons, and a Protestant, therefore detested by all good Catholic 
Canadians” (29). Printed topographical guides prove to be as unreliable as the characters 
who produce them: maps are of limited use in places where trails are often a rumour 
rather than a certainty, where bogs, ice, and monstrous tides make for treacherous 
journeys, and where map-makers cannot keep up with the changes in the ownership of a 
territory and its place-names. Although surprisingly few of the books I am looking at 
feature maps (presumably because of the cost involved in reproducing them), some 
describe maps and most track in almost obsessive detail the lay-out of territory, especially 
the few cities involved, together with a recital of the names of streets and buildings: The 
Golden Dog and A Diana of Quebec in particular come to mind. In the latter, for
example, Captain Mathews offers a rather more voluble response than required by the situation to the question which direction Miss Simpson might have taken: "[s]everal ways. She may have gone round by the Sault au Matelot, and may be coming up by the Canoterie Hill. She may be going on further towards Palace Gate; or she may have turned to the right at the foot of Mountain Hill with the intention of climbing the footpath that leads from Champlain Street to the Cove Fields" (14). One function of this precision is surely to provide a kind of animated guidebook promoting cities, like Québec City, that have retained much of their original design and therefore serve as a kind of concrete history lesson, but another is to trace, for at least one moment in history, a mnemonic of a place that has repeatedly been rendered unstable by competing proprietary claims.

One of the challenges in working on the historical novel is to remain alert to the ways in which the interplay of historical fiction and historiography regularly creates uncertainties of its own, especially if a work is marketed primarily for entertainment or if it can be safely assumed that certain historical allusions will be understood by a contemporary educated reader without explanatory notes to accompany them. A 1912 reader of historical fiction published the same year (not to mention one reading in 1800), however, will be attuned to different information from a reader in 2002. In conducting my research I learnt quickly enough not to ascribe what I perceived as certain excesses, too quickly to literary tropes, as the historical truth frequently turned out to be stranger than the literary conventions developed to contain it. For example, in *A Diana of Quebec*, the two youngest daughters of the Riedesel family are called "America" and "Canada." "Canada" dies in infancy while "America," as we are told through flash-forward, thrives into adulthood. Already busy developing an entire theory based on this
plot-line and finding the implied allegory a little gauche, I located the following information: Baron Friedrich Adolphus von Riedesel (1738-1800) was a Lieutenant-General under the Duke of Brunswick, who provided George III with more than 7000 soldiers to help subdue the American Revolution. His wife Frederica, a highly accomplished and spirited woman, accompanied him into military action with three young daughters, of whom the oldest was four. A fourth daughter, “America,” was born while the family was in the American colonies, and a fifth, “Canada,” when the Riedesels were stationed in Sorel, Québec. “Canada” survived only a short while, while “America” returned with her parents and siblings to the family’s German estates. The confusion continues into contemporary historiography. Currently, American, Canadian, and German history all claim the Riedesels for themselves, and American scholarship even includes the Baron among “famous Americans,” a particular stretch of the imagination considering that his regiment fought the American rebels (see “Baron Friedrich Adolph Riedesel,” Famous Americans Home Page).

Partly in response to the layered identities that historical circumstances have brought about, the authors of the novels under discussion have frequently chosen narrative points-of-view that highlight the idiosyncrasies of the material and that proclaim just how difficult it may be to arrive at any reliable “truth”: among these perspectives are Thady Quirk’s and Captain Mathews’s first-person narratives, both—for different reasons—seriously compromised by their lack of understanding, Horatio M—’s letters to an unresponsive friend, and Bourassa’s and Aubert de Gaspé’s causeries that jarringly exist side-by-side with recitals of devastating historical events. These highly specific and unreliable voices draw attention to texts that are every bit as amorphous as
the matters they describe. Propped up by prefaces, postfaces, notes, and glossaries, several proclaim even in the subtitle that the main title cannot be relied upon to convey the whole truth. *Castle Rackrent* (1800), for example, is subtitled “An Hibernian Tale taken from facts and from the manners of the Irish squires before the year 1782,” that is, with a clarification that the text to be expected is a sociological and geographical study of sorts, and not merely the gothic tale that the main title may suggest. However, although a glossary has been added presumably to strengthen the “scientific” nature of the study, the tone of some of the entries is too casual to confirm the impression. Describing a “willaluh” or “lamentation over the dead,” the “Editor” indicates that “[a] full account of the . . . Irish funeral song . . . may be found in the fourth volume of the transactions of the Royal Irish Academy. For the advantage of lazy readers, who would rather read a page than walk a yard, and from compassion, not to say sympathy, with their infirmity, the Editor transcribes the following passages etc.” (Edgeworth 102).

Nor does this generic hybridity stop with the way the text is constituted. As mentioned earlier, several of these books have been published in abridged versions, to suit specific ideological and/or educational purposes. The resulting textual absences in, for example, *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806), *Wacousta* (1832), or *The Golden Dog* have, in turn, generated new texts, some in the area of literary and cultural criticism, some in other genres, such as drama, all of which are meant to fill the gap or “destruction” that the omissions have wrought. As a result, reading these novels with care, one sometimes wonders what exactly is new in “histrionicographic metafiction,” a genre that has been posited as an invention of the recent past (see Hutcheon), with the claim that “[the mimetic connection between art and life] has changed. It no longer operates entirely at
the level of product alone, that is, at the level of the representation of a seemingly unmediated world, but instead functions on the level of process too” (61). It is not clear from this quotation when this change is supposed to have occurred, but there is ample evidence that the novels included in my study are not finished “products” even now, and that “the discursive context of the writing and reading of the text” determines nineteenth and early-twentieth-century historical novels as strongly as it affects contemporary metafictions. Miranda Burgess has pointed out that the romance is “a hybrid or conglomerate genre [which] sustained internal dynamics and changing angles of confrontation with political economic intertexts,” and she concludes that “the resulting dialectic of recognition and transformation in its relation to its readers . . . make it uniquely capable of conveying more than one conception of nationhood” (British Fiction 6). An equally strong case can be made for the historical novel, which subsumes the romance with numerous other genres in its capacious textual body. My intention here is by no means to prove that the nineteenth-century historical novel was post-modernist avant la lettre and a forerunner of historiographic metafiction, but to insist that the innovations that the latter claims for itself in both technique and philosophy are based on an unacceptably simplistic understanding of the older texts.

Reading these books with some care also reminds us that globalism, including the social inequalities that permit it to function, has its origins in imperialism and that the systems of communication enabling the operation of the latter predate the systems of electronic communication that make globalism possible. The trajectories traversed by some of these characters (as well as by some of their authors) are enormous even by contemporary standards, and communication was developed to a sufficiently
sophisticated level even in mid-eighteenth century to necessitate drastic measures when they needed to be disrupted, as in the case of the deportation and dispersal of the Acadians. In *A Diana of Quebec*, Captain Mathews spends much of his time copying out letters that must be taken to the far corners of the Empire before the mail dispatched by agents of a rival nation gets there first:

July the 2nd, 1782, was one of the warmest days of a warm season, and never had my daily duties seemed more arduous. Since early morning I had sat in the Château library, interpreting and replying to documents in cypher, writing duplicates or triplicates of letters to commanders at different posts, or to Indian agents throughout the country. Every dispatch, whether to England or to His Majesty's representative in New York, had to be copied more than once so that different routes might be tried for its delivery, and the danger of capture lessened, by land or sea. Our difficulties in getting letters were even greater than those we encountered in the sending of them, and we were thankful at times for news of the outside world obtained by some such windfall as a package of rebel newspapers hidden in a tree, intended for other hands than ours, you may be sure. (34)

The exclusiveness and human cost of such communication networks are also readily apparent, not only in the story of Baroness Riedesel, who has to follow her husband across the battle-fields of North America, three little girls in tow and a fourth on the way, but also in the work of the "Indian runners," whose knowledge of the terrain makes
delivery of the letters possible and who are treated with consistent condescension in return for their troubles.⁸

It goes without saying the “Indian runners” would have been able to tell a very different tale of nationhood. Although First Nations people are routinely described as either noble or ignoble savages, these books also convey to the contemporary reader an impressive record of the communications networks that predate the arrival of the Europeans and which continue to exist alongside them. Trying to rid himself of Caroline St. Castin, who is part Abenaquis, Bigot ruminates: “[b] ut to send her away into the wilderness was not easy. A matter which in France would excite the gossip and curiosity of a league or two of neighbourhood would be carried on the tongues of Indians and voyageurs in the wilds of North America for thousands of miles” (369). All of these books, however, are remarkable both for the ways in which they resolutely restrict their thinking about nationhood to a very limited set of contenders and equally resolutely exclude any groups whose own claims might distract from these configurations. The presence, in Castle Rackrent, of the Jewess Jessica Rackrent, and, in Les Anciens Canadiens, of the mulatto girl Lisette, bought by Captain d’Haberville at the age of four, underlines the fact that the authors were only too aware of the presence of such groups. Nevertheless, the difference constituted by this presence is determinedly absorbed into the narrative of two or, at the most, three groups whose claims are perceived as dominant. If, in the following, I have chosen not to include a detailed discussion of such figures, I have done so in order to keep my research manageable, but I remain aware throughout that the study of “complex and supple responses to cultural domination” (Sorensen 8) that
I have begun will in future need to be greatly expanded in order to be complex and supple.

Like all recent work in this area, my own corrects the literary genealogy established by Georg Lukács in his influential study *The Historical Novel* (1937), in which he ascribes to Scott a singular place in literary history: singular, because he was the sole inventor of the historical novel, a genre without literary precedent; and symptomatic, for—in Lukács’s account—Scott single-handedly invented a genre that had a profound influence on the realist tradition of the European novel. Lukács dismisses “second and third-rate writers,” namely Ann Radcliffe and others, “who were supposed to be important forerunners of [Scott].” A comparison between Scott and his contemporaries, he avers, “brings us not a jot nearer to understanding what was new in Scott’s art, that is in his historical novel” (30).

In opposition to Lukács, I proceed with the assumption that allegedly “second and third-rate authors” like Maria Edgeworth and Sydney Owenson have been restored to their rightful places. I discuss *Castle Rackrent* by Edgeworth and *The Wild Irish Girl* by Owenson because they set fictional standards in describing the recovery of national identities. Both are novels that have already received extensive critical attention but about which also much remains to be said within the approach I have chosen, especially if they are discussed in conjunction with English- and French-Canadian texts. Edgeworth and Owenson are followed by Walter Scott’s *Waverley* (1814) because it focuses on the ’45 and its consequences, events that were to have repercussions throughout the British possessions. Scott’s phenomenal success at home, throughout Europe and in the new world was, towards the end of the nineteenth century, followed by almost complete
popular and critical neglect. He is now undergoing a re-assessment, ironically, it seems, in response to the assertive presence of the women-writers Lukács so summarily dismissed. Next, I discuss John Richardson’s *Wacousta*, a novel that takes the consequences of the Jacobite uprisings to Canada and which has repeatedly re-entered the literary canon, each time under a different ideological flag. The British Conquest of New France is at the centre of Aubert de Gaspé’s *Les Anciens Canadiens* (1863) which, together with Napoléon Bourassa’s *Jacques et Marie* (1865), broadens the discussion into francophone writing and the very different perspectives it offers on events that are also discussed in English-Canadian historical novels, such as William Kirby’s *The Golden Dog* and Jean McIlwraith’s *A Diana of Quebec*. My list contains books that at one time or another were or still are successful, often phenomenally so, but with Bourassa and McIlwraith it also features works that have received virtually no attention but that I believe are worth another look. The historical events covered by these books extend from the 1715 Rebellion in Scotland to the American War of Independence, and the Canadian response to it. The publication history of these books spans the years 1800-1912, but because of the ways in which some of these books have come and gone alongside developments in nationalist sentiment and academic institutionalization, their textual and reception history extends into the present.

In paying attention to historical fiction written in both English and French, my discussion not only modifies some of the assumptions that have been made in the discussion of so-called “historiographic metafiction,” but it also continues the work begun in comparative Canadian literature in the 1970s. At the time, studies like Ronald Sutherland’s *Second Image* (1976) and Clément Moisan’s *L’Age de la littérature*
canadienne (1969) perceived themselves, openly or not, as providing a literary argument in favour of federalism, but their studies tended to dwell on the similarities between individual works and authors without paying sufficient attention to the historical and cultural specificities that produced them. Research involving literature from both anglophone and francophone Canadian writing remains surprisingly rare. My study will help to address this imbalance by using a perspective which opens the comparison beyond the bi-cultural model into larger cultural contexts. This approach will also help to fill a lacuna in Trumpener’s discussion, which addresses the problems produced by some of the English translations of francophone works, but which does not, with any thoroughness, consider the French side of the equation.

Organizing my discussion has proven to be something of a challenge. Proceeding book by book was not effective, as it produced too many redundancies. A thematic discussion tended to blur the literary and historical chronologies that needed to be kept clear in order to disentangle the sequence of events on both sides of the Atlantic and within Canada itself. Finally, a chronological approach raised the question of exactly what chronology I wanted to highlight as some of these books came and went with every major nationalist phase in Canadian history. I finally decided to produce an outline which accommodated all of these forms of organization, by taking the books through a version of each in turn. I therefore begin with a description of my corpus, arranged in chronological order of publication, with special emphasis on the often colourful reception history of these books. I follow up with a chapter each on the travel and marriage tropes, in which I highlight individual novels rather than striving to canvas them all. Because one of the purposes of this study is to illustrate how one group’s organic concept of
nationhood may be based on another group's "dérangement," I have also attempted to interweave a narrative that abides by the traditional connectives of argumentative prose (transitions, introductions, and conclusions) with one that, as one of my advisors pointed out to me, worked with "vignettes" or "snapshots," in order to underline the disjointed nature of history and the stories told about it.

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1 Although Lecker has begun an analysis of the New Canadian Library series, much remains to be done in assessing the extraordinary role it has played in the development of Canadian literature as an academic discipline. See Lecker, "The Canonization of Canadian Literature," 656-71.

2 Walter Scott's suggestion, in the "Postscript" to *Waverley,* that a span of "sixty years" is necessary to separate a reading audience from the historical events portrayed is important in this context. When Scott gave his subtitle as *'Tis Sixty Years Since* to *Waverley,* he was drawing attention to the remarkable transformations of Scottish culture and society since 1745, which rendered Scotland almost unrecognizable from its earlier history:

> [t]here is no European nation which, in the course of half a century or little more, has undergone so complete a change as this kingdom of Scotland. The effects of the insurrection of 1745 ... commenced this innovation. The gradual influx of wealth and extension of commerce have since united to render the present people of Scotland a class of beings as different from theirgrandfathers as the existing English are from those of Queen Elizabeth's time. (492)

Along with the rapid transformation of eighteenth-century Scotland, Scott also draws attention to an important dimension of historical perception, namely the temporal distance required to make possible the recuperation (in literature as in society) of transformative events in history. (For a theorization of "historical distance" in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Britain, namely in works by Scott and the philosopher and historian David Hume, see Mark Phillips, *Society and Sentiment,* esp. 33-59). Recently, Canadian author Wayne Johnston (author of *The Colony of Unrequited Dreams* [1998]) encountered difficulties in fictionalizing people from recent Canadian history, such as Joe Smallwood, premier of Newfoundland. Revealingly, Johnston encountered no such difficulties in the United States, where Smallwood was simply read as another eccentric character from the exotic land of Newfoundland. See Gessell; Murphy; and Johnston.

3 See Dufour, "La manipulation de notre histoire: suite et fin." *Le Devoir.* 31 août 2001. For the response to Dufour, and for more reaction, positive and negative, to the series, see
the SRC (Station Radio-Canada) website: Revue de presse <http://radio-canada.ca/histoire/index.html.>

4 Sorensen challenges Trumpener’s insistence on the “identification of origins, influences, and traditions” as “reproduce[ing] rather than abnegat[ing] the imperatives of national rhetoric formalized in a national canon, a cultural formation which . . . is closely tied to linguistic and literary pedagogy” (26).

5 There has been no recent, comparative book-length study of English- and French-Canadian historical fiction. The most recent work by an English-Canadian that deals with both literatures is Dennis Duffy’s Sounding the Iceberg: An Essay on Canadian Historical Fiction (1986) which, as its title implies, represents a brief overview of some of the major themes that have preoccupied English- and French-Canadian historical novelists from 1832 (the publication-date of Wacousta) to 1983. The strength of Duffy’s book lies in the fact that it avoids the strong ideological biases that characterize much English-Canadian scholarship of historical fiction from the 1960s and into the 1990s. In particular, I have in mind here Michael Hurley’s essay “Wacousta as Trickster” (1991), a comparison of Wacousta with the Trickster figure from aboriginal mythology through the lens of Jungian psychoanalysis. Hurley’s reading includes citations from Carlos Castaneda, and John Lennon and Yoko Ono. Wacousta here figures as a synecdoche of Canadian literature and of the Canadian psyche, both of which stand for “a fundamental engagement with the totality of life. The darkness must be affirmed as well as the light, energy as well as order” (77). Instead, Duffy argues for the necessity of examining English- and French-Canadian historical fiction because “[r]emote as the cultures may appear to one another, they share preoccupations common to national literatures . . . [that is,] the imaginative representation of nationalist ideologies” (v). Duffy’s study is limited, however, by its failure to treat the two literatures comparatively, a limitation to which Duffy himself draws attention when he admits that he “do[es] not discuss the unexpected parallels between literatures seemingly so diverse” (v). Carole Gerson’s impressive study of nineteenth-century reading in Canada (1989), including the historical novel, deals only with English-Canadian fiction, as does Herb Wyile’s recent Speculative Fictions: Contemporary Canadian Novelist and the Writing of History (2002). In French Canada, critics tend to focus on French-Canadian fiction, although, when they do look at nineteenth-century English-Canadian historical novels, they tend to focus on Kirby’s The Golden Dog (Lemire, Le Moine, Hayne). The most impressive study of the nineteenth-century French-Canadian historical novel remains Maurice Lemire’s Les Grands Thèmes nationalistes du roman historique canadien-français (1970), a detailed examination of the roots of contemporary Québec nationalism in the nineteenth-century historical novel. There is an infinitely greater range of reference works available in French that examine in detail the intersections between the emergence of historical fiction and the development of national consciousness, and which demonstrate French Canadians’ more staunchly preservationist and historicist approach to literary production. (Much of this work has been overseen by Lemire. See, for example, Lemire, Dictionnaire des œuvres littéraires du Québec, vol. 1. Des origines à 1900 [1980] and La Vie littéraire au Québec [1996]).

6 The pessimistic views of educators about the public’s interest in Canadian history notwithstanding, there has recently been a renewed interest in Canadian historical fiction, apparent in the publication over the last decade of, for example, novels by Jack Hodgins,
Guy Vanderhaeghe, George Steffler, Michael Crummey, and Michael Ondaatje. The assessment of their place in Canadian literature requires, however, that the emergence and evolution of nineteenth-century historical fiction be assessed first.

The extent of the letter-writing necessary to keep an empire functioning seems to have provided something of a set-piece. For example, in The Golden Dog, Governor de la Galissonnière is seen at his desk:

> the table was loaded with letters, memoranda and bundles of papers tied up in official style. Despatches of royal ministers, bearing the broad seal of France. Reports from officers of posts far and near in New France lay mingled together with silvery strips of the inner bark of the birch, painted with hieroglyphics, giving accounts of war parties on the eastern frontier and in the far west, signed by the totems of Indian chiefs in alliance with France. There was a newly-arrived parcel of letters from the bold, enterprising Sieur de Vérendrye, who was exploring the distant waters of the Saskatchewan, and the land of the Blackfeet, and many a missive from missionaries, giving account of wild regions which remain yet almost a terra incognita to the government which rules over them. (361).

On the depiction of Native people in the literature of this period, see, for example, Nancy M. Goslee.
Chapter One:
The Authors, Their Books, and Their Reception

This chapter pays particular attention to the intersections between gender, history, and the critical reception of historical fiction in Britain and Canada. In aiming to introduce a lesser-known culture to a metropolitan reading audience, all of the writers that I examine take as their subject matter major historical events that not only allegorize cultural encounter, but also represent history from the perspective of the colonized. Thus, *The Wild Irish Girl* asserts the ancient origins and nobility of Irish culture in order to challenge dominant misconceptions about Ireland as primitive, ridiculous or even dangerous (see Ferris, “Cultural Encounter,” 293). And *Jacques et Marie* enacts a kind of literary revenge on the British by portraying them as the Acadians’ moral and social inferiors, thereby attributing the deportation of the Acadians to British expansionism and, beyond that, to Britain’s corrupt national character (see Lemire, *Les Grands Thèmes*, 101-06; Duffy 7). Of the novels studied here, most envision the identity of colonized cultures in terms that we would now identify as cultural nationalist. As Burgess explains in her account of Anglo-Irish novelists Edgeworth, Owenson, and Regina Roche, these writers assert that “the nation ‘is’ an organic, prepolitical body, bound together by customs and sentiments and by oral and written traditions that constitute a national culture recognizable by them and preserved by preserving them” (“Violent Translations” 35). Cultural nationalism was put to various ideological purposes (for example, it was evoked to portray intercultural union or to posit its impossibility) and, often within the
bounds of a single novel, like *Les Anciens Canadiens* and *Waverley*, arguments for political quietism are challenged by subtexts of cultural difference.

The instability of the cultural-nationalist plot extends from the content of the novels themselves to their reception, where cultural encounter between colonizer and colonized plays itself out in the complex network of gender and social biases inextricably bound up in the generic history of the novel itself. As Ferris explains, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Britain, the "contemporary . . . novel [was] consistently situated in a context of generic decline from the great (and male) tradition of the eighteenth century" (see "Waverley" 297; and *Achievement*, esp. 79-104). Thus, because the novel was seen by contemporary critics as largely the domain of the female authors of popular romances and novels of manners, Scott—when *Waverley* was published—was applauded for having restored "to contemporary fiction something of the full, broad power of novelistic representation that the dominance of female writing and female reading had threatened" (Ferris, "Waverley," 298). While Owenson was vilified by her male (and female) contemporaries for transgressing the bounds of acceptable womanly behaviour in writing a cultural nationalist text like *The Wild Irish Girl*, Scott, in turn, was more ideologically acceptable to metropolitan readers, largely because his novel combined romantic nationalism with historical development to posit a pan-British vision of intercultural harmony. The gendered reception of the novel carries over into French Canada, where, as Maurice Lemire explains, the novel was considered "par ses détracteurs comme un genre sans règle aucune, donc sans valeur réelle, qui ne vise qu'à distraire le lecteur" (*La Vie* 498). As a result, in the opinion of poet Octave Crémazie, the novel is a secondary genre to poetry, and has little social or moral value: "le roman,
quelque religieux qu’il soit, est toujours un genre secondaire. On s’en sert, comme du sucre pour couvrir les pilules, lorsqu’on veut faire accepter certaines idées, bonnes ou mauvaises” (Condemine 90). In the post-Durham era, and especially following the publication of François-Xavier Garneau’s precedent-setting *Histoire du Canada depuis la découverte jusqu’à nos jours* (1845-48), the French-Canadian novel became preoccupied with historiographical revision, to the degree that, in 1866, poet and literary critic Henri-Raymond Casgrain declared that the new nationalist “mouvement littéraire en Canada,” which derives from this spirit of revisionism, confirms the existence of a recognizable French-Canadian nationhood (see Lemire, *La Vie, 526*).¹ The masculine authority that historical discourse lent to a novel like *Waverley* has formed English Canada’s literary tradition, where *Wacousta*, with its focus on Canadian history from the perspective of the British military, has been recuperated as an important Canadian novel in almost every nationalist period in Canada’s literary and political history, while *A Diana of Quebec*, in turn, with its more domestic concerns about child-rearing, has fallen almost entirely from critical discussion.² This chapter is organized chronologically and geographically. It begins, in order of publication, with the Irish novels of Edgeworth and Owenson and moves, through Scott and Scotland, to English and French Canada. The chronological organization of the chapter coincides with its larger purpose, to trace the formal and thematic influences on Canadian novelists to the novels of Scott, Owenson, and Edgeworth.
Maria Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent: An Hibernian Tale taken from facts and from the manners of the Irish squires before the year 1782* (1800)

Edgeworth’s first and most successful novel, *Castle Rackrent*, was published in the year of Ireland’s legislative Union with Britain. In her memoirs, the author points out that Thady Quirk, the narrator of the story, is drawn from life; however, in her Preface, she insists that all of her characters (namely Thady, an “illiterate old steward,” and “the drunken Sir Patrick, the litigious Sir Murtagh, the fighting Sir Kit, and the slovenly Sir Condy” whose stories he tells) are stereotypes (4). She reminds readers that whatever might have been realist in 1782, the year when the novel is set, may bear no relation to anything still existing in 1800. Nevertheless, the book was widely acclaimed as a faithful and groundbreaking portrayal of a region and its inhabitants.

Edgeworth’s fictional memoir of Thady Quirk, the steward to three generations of the Rackrent family, attracted the favourable attention of prominent members of political and literary society. In a letter to his father-in-law, Richard Lovell Edgeworth proudly declared that “[w]e hear it from good authority that the king was much pleased with Castle Rack Rent – he rubbed his hands and said what, what – I know something now of my Irish subjects.” Walter Scott, in his “Postscript” to *Waverley*, acknowledges Edgeworth’s influence on his own portrayal of the Highlanders: “[i]t has been my object to describe these persons, not by caricatured and exaggerated use of the national dialect, but by their habits, manners, and feelings; so as in some degree to emulate the admirable Irish portraits drawn by Miss Edgeworth” (493). Edgeworth visited Scott at Abbotsford in 1823, and he came to see her in Ireland two years later. She was lionized by the
literary world of her day, and on an 1803 visit to London was introduced to Byron, Sydney Smith (who had founded the *Edinburgh Review* with Henry Brougham and Francis Jeffrey the year before), the Scottish dramatist and poet Joanna Baillie, and Henry Crabb Robinson, famous diarist, letter-writer, correspondent for the *Times*, and founder of both University College London and the Athenaeum Club. Tourists traveled through Ireland, *Castle Rackrent* in hand, and a visit to Edgeworthstown became something of a literary pilgrimage.\(^4\)

While Edgeworth received enthusiastic praise from contemporary metropolitan critics for her "realist" representations of the Irish, she was negatively reviewed by nationalist critics who found her understanding of Irish national character defective. Members of the Irish Revival had little use for her. Padraic Colum (1915), for example, compares her to Turgenev (who was an admirer of Edgeworth's writing) and finds her wanting: "she belongs to the settlers in Ireland, and she has no notion what Irish culture could mean" (Colum 113). Stephen Gwynn echoes Colum's views in 1936 when he accuses her of not being in "full national sympathy with Ireland or even with Ireland's rights to be considered a nation" (54). While Edgeworth's work was being expelled from the canon of Irish literature for its "lukewarm" (Colum) response to nationalist issues, it appears, however, to have remained something of a tourist commodity without much interruption. A recent article in the *Irish Times*, in its coverage of a conference at the Royal Irish Academy entitled "Ireland after the Union – A Cultural Desert?" (2001), professes surprise—as newspaper coverage of academic events tends to do—at the revelation that Ireland, after the Union, was *not* a cultural desert. Edgeworth and other members of her famous family are mentioned on the homepage of Edgeworthstown,
where references to *Castle Rackrent* exist cheek-by-jowl with information on pubs and leisure activities in the area, and which advertises the “Maria Edgeworth Literary Weekend” with short-story and poetry workshops. Her name alone is sometimes sufficient to signify an “authentic” and traditional Irish character, as in the Irish Tourist Board’s website, which credits her with being the first to deal specifically with “Irish themes.” Like the Canadian government, which considers Canadian culture an important export article (and includes International Canadian Studies in the portfolio of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade), the website of Ireland’s Department of Foreign Affairs features a comprehensive essay on Edgeworth along with Yeats, Joyce, and Beckett. The marketing of Edgeworth’s name even appears on commercial websites, where her writing has been removed from its novelistic context and repackaged as witty anagrams and “creative quotations.”

Despite her instant success, however, Edgeworth was, from the beginning, beset by the typical difficulties of women writers of the time, and the condescension extended to her because of her gender becomes frequently linked to her alleged inability to give Irish nationalism a sufficiently assertive voice. *Castle Rackrent* was published anonymously, as was often the case with women’s writing, and later works are careful to acknowledge her father’s influence on her work. Throughout her writing career Richard Lovell Edgeworth, who encouraged her enthusiastically in her endeavours, also maintained extensive editorial control over her work. On his death in 1817, he left a letter requesting her to complete his memoirs. Edgeworth was “morbidly aware of [his daughter’s] ugliness” (Teets 8) and strenuously attempted to find her a suitor. In a tacit arrangement of mutual dependency, Edgeworth continually provided Maria with the
necessary confidence to write (although he may have had something to do with her lack of confidence to begin with), and she overcame her insecurities and blinding headaches to act as his intellectual companion and devoted executor. The same split between approval for her accomplishments as a writer and shortcomings as a woman soon enough affected assessment of her work (see esp. Ferris 65-69). While early critics like John Wilson Croker applauded Edgeworth for purging the novel of its romantic content, praising her for her "accurate discrimination of the various classes of Irish society," later commentators faulted her for her detachment. John Ward, writing in the Edinburgh Review found, for example, that she assigned too much "to the head and too little to the heart" (307), an assessment echoed in the London Magazine, which criticized her intellect for being "unaccompanied with any redeeming qualities of the heart." Now that Edgeworth’s close collaboration with her father was a known fact, he—rather than "our ingenious and lively authoress"—was criticized for "giv[ing] his paternal imprimatur ... to such palpable and dangerous misrepresentations of public character and public principle."

Castle Rackrent went into five English editions in Edgeworth’s lifetime before being included in the Collected Works, the first appearing in 1832-33, the second in 1893. But the work received little sustained critical attention until the 1970s, when it was rediscovered by feminist scholars. Gilbert and Gubar included it in their ground-breaking study The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination (1979). Dale Spender, who published her survey Mothers of the Novel: 100 Good Women Writers Before Jane Austen (1986), complained that "I deeply regret the omission of Maria Edgeworth in my own literary education. . . . I would
dearly love to have a course on Maria Edgeworth's novels, but predictably most of her work is not in print" (290-91). She declared that "to omit [Edgeworth] from consideration of the rise of the novel is to distort the literary records beyond measure" (287). Spender made Edgeworth's books more readily available by overseeing the "Mothers of the Novel" reprint series which included Edgeworth's Belinda, Patronage, and Helen. Both Belinda and Patronage were introduced by Eva Figes, novelist and author of the feminist classic Patriarchal Attitudes (1970) and of Sex and Subterfuge: Women Novelists to 1850 (1982) which, like Spender's study, were efforts to recover "lost" women authors.

When Spender was looking for editions of Edgeworth's books to teach in her classes, all she could find was the 1976 compound volume of Castle Rackrent and The Absentee (290-91). By contrast, twenty-five years later, one finds Edgeworth's work mentioned in dozens of university syllabi from Britain to Ireland, and from North America to Spender's country of birth, Australia. There are scholarly editions available, including online versions of Castle Rackrent and Belinda in the Celebration of Women Writers project. If there is any question about Edgeworth's canonical status, the forthcoming Pickering and Chatto edition of Castle Rackrent, part of a larger series edited by Marilyn Butler, as well as the reissue in 1997 of the Collected Works, also by Pickering and Chatto, puts them to rest. The Pickering and Chatto edition of Castle Rackrent put, on its jacket cover, Edgeworth's importance in initiating "the national or regional novel," and describes the extent of her influence on the formation of the nineteenth-century historical novel and of contemporary post-colonial fiction. The influential criticism of Ferris and Trumpener on the historical novel and the national tale
has had much to do with removing Edgeworth and others from the place of obscurity to which George Lukács had assigned them, and with linking the feminist and nationalist arguments as inseparable from each other.

**Sydney Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl: A National Tale* (1806)**

While *Castle Rackrent* was acclaimed, when it first appeared, for the realism with which it brought a specific Irish region to life, Sydney Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl* concentrated on the ancient nobility of Irish culture by allegorizing the legislative Union of Ireland and Britain through the marriage of a harp-playing Celtic princess, Glorvina of Inismore, and Horatio M—, the English son of her absentee landlord. Response to the book exceeded that to *Castle Rackrent*. Going through seven editions in two years, *The Wild Irish Girl* was a sensation, and instantly spawned a fashion craze. Dublin jewelers and drapers were kept busy meeting the demand for bodkins and mantles “of native correctness” as worn by Glorvina. At performances of Owenson’s opera *The First Attempt*, “the Duchess of Bedford and her friends . . . appeared with their hair held in place by golden bodkins” (Stevenson 97, 96). Owenson herself became identified with her heroine, and proceeded to play the harp so frequently at gatherings of polite society that she ended up with a deformed spine. At the same time, *The Wild Irish Girl* was found to display the nationalist fervour that Edgeworth, in the eyes of her critics, lacked, and for years after the publication of the novel, “the issues of Irish politics would be argued out in terms of Sydney Owenson’s rhetoric” (Flanagan 124).
Despite its popular success, *The Wild Irish Girl* attracted negative critical response from the start, which was mingled with misogyny as in Edgeworth’s case, but also had a classist undercurrent by alluding to Owenson’s bohemian origins and upstart social progress. Owenson was the daughter of an itinerant actor and one of the many unconfirmed stories in her biography suggests that she was born on a boat as her father was taking her English mother to live in his native Ireland. (The place and date of her birth remain elusive, possibly as a result of Owenson’s efforts to construct a life-story for herself that suited the image she wanted to project to the public. Current criticism prefers to use her maiden name, rather than “Lady Morgan,” to underscore her lowly origins as a positive factor, and to avoid the misunderstanding that her outlook was that of an aristocrat.) After governessing for a number of years, Owenson was adopted by the Marquis and Marquioness of Abercorn as a companion, and she finally “made good” by marrying Sir Charles Morgan, the Abercorns’ physician. The contemporary criticism of her work found it as difficult to separate the literary works from the author as the fashion-makers found it impossible to keep Glorvina and Owenson apart. A reviewer in the *Monthly Review* describes her as “gifted with an ardent mind,” but finds that her “active imagination” interferes both in *The Wild Irish Girl*, which abounds in “high-coloured terms,” and in her poem *The Lay of an Irish Harp*, which illustrates “the language of feeling carried to excess.” This lack of proportion was also regularly perceived to mar her personal appearance: “her eyes would be very pretty if they did not squint à faire dresser les cheveux. Her figure is not the better of being obtrusively crooked, and her head is ornamented with a frightfully ill-cut crop” (Charlotte Clavering to Susan Ferrier, qtd. in Stevenson 137). Her conduct, according to the arbiters of polite society, also left
something to be desired: "her manners are not the most refined, and effect the *aisance*
and levity of the fashionable world, which, however, do not sit calmly or naturally upon
her" (Prince Pückler-Muskau, qtd. in Stevenson 262). Edgeworth, a member of a well-
established land-holding family, responded favourably to *The Wild Irish Girl*, but was
appalled by *Florence Macarthy* (1819) for a number of reasons, including its author’s
unbecoming ambition. Edgeworth insists that she herself preferred to “repose on the soft
green of Miss Austen’s sweet and unambitious creations” rather than aligning herself
with Owenson’s “dazzling brilliancy.”

The hostility in these comments against a woman who had reached beyond her
sphere becomes positively shrill when Owenson tried to defend herself against her
attackers. Her most vocal critic, John Wilson Croker, fulminated,

> [w]hen a woman of violent irrepressible passions, and inordinate conceit
> and vanity, has the mortification to receive a severe but just castigation
> for her broadly-blazoned offences against good taste, correct feeling, and
> sound morals, it is no more than natural that she should rave and
> vociferate a little, and that, in the orgasm of her rabid but impotent fury,
> she should even rake into the stercoraceous and putrescent puddles of
> Billingsgate for filthy missiles to hurl at the head of her antagonists.

*Blackwood’s* conducted a veritable vendetta against Owenson, calling her “a spindle-
shanked old body, aping the airs of youth; and in mind a haggard demoniac, who
mistakes contortions for activity, rage for force, and the exhibition of the toothless gums
for the very act of biting” (qtd. in Stevenson 240). She was in her mid-forties at the time.
Despite its popularity (which may well have increased partly in response to such hysterical criticism of Owenson’s oeuvre), *The Wild Irish Girl* nearly fell out of print. Like Edgeworth’s novels, it attracted the attention of feminist scholars in the 1980s and was re-issued as part of Pandora’s “Mothers of the Novel” edition. The series, however, reprinted a version that had the opening exchange of letters between father and son missing, and Brigid Brophy, in her Introduction, appears unaware that another version of the novel exists. Ferris, who knows about its shortcomings, feels that she has to apologize for her use of the Pandora edition, but points out that (in 1991) it was the one “most easily available to the modern reader” (123 n. 26).\(^{17}\) The swift disappearance of series like this may be linked to the fact that, in the mid-1980s, books like Edgeworth’s and Owenson’s had not yet been (re-) discovered for the field of literary nationalism, a subject which, especially when linked with postcolonialism, has become very canonical indeed. Moreover, authors introducing such editions sometimes applied a flippancy to the books that prevented these from being broadly endorsed. Brigid Brophy avers: “[m]any novels are deplorably bad. *The Wild Irish Girl* is one of the few to be delightfully so” (“Introduction” vii). Since then, however, *The Wild Irish Girl* has been afforded the same academic recognition as *Castle Rackrent*, with a Pickering and Chatto edition in 2000, edited by Claire Connolly and Stephen Copley, and retailing at US $ 40-60.
The correlation between cultural nationalism and the literary market, apparent in the metropolitan reception of *The Wild Irish Girl*, becomes even more pronounced with the publication of *Waverley*. Like *Castle Rackrent*, *Waverley* was published anonymously. Unlike the anonymity of *Castle Rackrent*, however, its title page’s being signed only by the “the Author of Waverley” helped to turn the disguised author into a popular and critical sensation. Thus, Edgeworth’s achievement in writing about the Irish from the unconventional point of view of the periphery rather than the metropole (a point of view adopted by Owenson, as well as by Scott and such other contemporary writers of historical fiction in Ireland and Scotland as Charles Maturin and Susan Ferrier), was transformed by the “anonymous” author of *Waverley* into what has become a cultural phenomenon with far-reaching effects on Scotland’s touristic identity.18

When *Waverley* was published in 1814, Scott was already the famous poet of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805), *Marmion* (1808), *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), and *Rokeby* (1813). Although the book was published anonymously, many readers, including Jane Austen, guessed that its author was indeed Scott. In a letter to her niece, Austen complained: “Walter Scott has no business to write novels, especially good ones.—It is not fair.—He has Fame and Profit enough as a Poet, and should not be taking the bread out of other people’s mouths.—I do not like him, & do not mean to like Waverley if I can help it—but I fear I must” (Le Faye 404). *Waverley* was a phenomenal success. Scott’s biographer John Gibson Lockhart writes that, within a year of its publication, “a fifth edition of 1000 copies appeared in January 1815; a sixth of 1500 in June 1816; a seventh
of 2000 in October 1817; an eighth of 2000 in April 1821” (237). Editions appeared in the United States almost every year from 1814 to 1831. Within Scott’s lifetime, *Waverley* was translated into French (1818), German (1821-22), Italian (1823), Hungarian (1823), Swedish (1824-26), Danish (1826), and Russian (1827).¹⁹

*Waverley* portrays the 1745 Jacobite uprisings and their resolution from the perspective of Edward Waverley, an English traveler to Scotland who becomes enamoured of Highland culture and, through the influence of a charismatic Highland clan chief and his beautiful sister, is seduced into fighting against the Hanoverians in the ’45 before becoming disillusioned with the Young Pretender’s cause. From the earliest reviews of *Waverley* to Lukács’s study of the historical novel (1937), critics saw Scott as the man who, with his handling of history and romance, restored respectability to the novel which, after its heydey under Richardson, Fielding and Sterne, was believed to have fallen into decline in the hands of lady novelists.²⁰ Shortly before Scott’s death in 1832, T. H. Lister declared that, prior to the publication of *Waverley*, the novel was the form “least respected in the whole circle of literature”; by contrast, by 1832, the novel had taken “a place among the highest productions of human intellect” (64).

Many of his critics were most impressed with the accuracy of Scott’s descriptions of the past and the educational and patriotic inspiration arising from them. John Merivale, writing in the *Monthly Review*, marveled that “almost every variety of station and interest, such as it existed at the period under review, is successively brought before the mind of the reader in colours vivid as the original” (288), and a reviewer for *The British Critic* suggested that “[t]he time which the author has chosen for the historical part of his tale, is a period to which no Briton can look back without the strongest
emotions, and the most anxious interest.” The identification, in his readers’ minds, of
Scott and Scottish history was such that in 1822, Scott was called upon to “handle”
history in the pageantry, held in honour of George IV’s visit to Edinburgh. By virtue of
his reputation as an amateur antiquarian and authority on Scotland’s history, Scott, a
prime organizer of the event, assisted in the design of the clan tartans that would be a part
of the pageantry. He was welcomed on board the royal yacht with enthusiasm: “Sir
Walter Scott!” the King cried, “The Man in Scotland I most wish to see!” and he pledged
him a bumper of whisky” (Buchan 241). Even today, a traveler to Scotland will find it
difficult to ignore Scott’s influence on the country’s self-representation. For those who
approach the city by train, their introduction to Edinburgh will take place when they
dismembark at Waverley station. Many of the stops in Edinburgh are designed to attract
North American tourists, specifically the descendants of Scottish emigrants eager to trace
their family trees, to purchase their “traditional” tartans, and to participate in tours, such
as the “Rob Roy Way,” a railway journey whose stops include the town of Aberfoyle, the
meeting-place of the fictional Rob Roy and Baillie Nichol Jarvie in Scott’s *Rob Roy*
(1817).

In addition to authenticating Scotland’s romantic national identity, *Waverley* had
a profound effect on similar aspirations in emerging nations both in Europe and in the
New World. As the list of languages into which the book was translated indicates, Scott
was read in France, Germany, Italy, Russia, and Hungary, and he provided models for
authors ranging from Hugo and Dumas to Manzoni and Tolstoy. The advent of the
historical novel, together with the gothic romance, provided a foundational moment in the
creation of both Canadian and American literatures, and Scott’s achievements were such
that they applied across party-lines. English and French Canadians both looked to him for guidance and, although he was enthusiastically read all over the United States, Mark Twain blamed him for having had a particularly pernicious effect on the chivalric South.²³

In his introduction to the 1971 Penguin edition of Waverley, published on the occasion of the bicentenary of Scott’s birth, Andrew Hook asks why, after his unparalleled success throughout the nineteenth century, Scott’s reputation suffered a “catastrophic decline” with the end of the Victorian age, and he comes to the conclusion that “Scott almost disappeared from sight when [the period that had idolized him] came under hostile scrutiny” (12) for its antiquarian passions, conservatism, and romantic patriotism. In restoring such women authors as Edgeworth and Owenson to their rightful place in the creative dialogue that helped to shape the historical novel, however, recent scholars have also initiated a major assessment of Scott’s place in literary history. In their Introduction to the January 2001 issue of Studies in Romanticism, edited by Ian Duncan, Ann Rowland, and Charles Snodgrass and entitled “Scott, Scotland, and Romantic Nationalism,” the editors acknowledge Trumpener’s achievement in recovering to prominence such other literary genres as the national tale, the Gothic novel, and the travel narrative, that influenced the generic form and development of Waverley. They also stipulate, however, that Scott has become a kind of critical aporia in current scholarship on the early nineteenth-century novel: “[t]he present collection of essays is conceived in the spirit of Trumpener’s work, and seeks to extend its critical project—the recovery and reinterpretation of a lost archive of national fictions—to Scott himself: whose works still constitute a sublime instance of the neglected archive” (5).²⁴
John Richardson, *Wacousta Or, The Prophecy; A Tale of the Canadas* (1832)

Contemporary metropolitan reviewers tended to evaluate *Wacousta* against the implied standard of *Waverley*. In much the same spirit, nationalist literary critics of the 1970s canonized *Wacousta* as Canada’s first novel, for it shares *Waverley*’s “plot of conquest, historical transformation, and national reconciliation” (Trumpener 270). At the same time, however, given its representation of Canada as a site of cultural dislocation, where metropolitan standards of cultural evaluation are challenged and transformed, *Wacousta* is also the descendant of the Anglo-Irish national tale (see Trumpener 270-73). *Wacousta* is a Gothic romance about a disaffected British officer, Reginald Morton, whose descent into madness shapes the hostile cultural encounter between the British and the Iroquois in Canada. Published five years before the Patriot Uprisings in Lower and Upper Canada (1837-38), and seven years before the legislative Union of Upper and Lower Canada (1840), *Wacousta*’s generically and thematically complex approach to cultural encounter and reconciliation has proved amenable to a wide range of nationalist agendas in Britain, the United States, and Canada.

British reviews of *Wacousta* were largely favourable about its historical content, praising it for providing an account of “the many exertions, both of valour and prudence, by which the Canadas were secured to England,” a first not only in historical fiction, but in the writing of history which has “pass[ed these] over in silence.”25 The format of the historical novel also permits a justification of the imperial project responsible for the extinction of the conquered people, in this case, the Iroquois, as it alternates between
romanticizing and vilifying them. A reviewer in the London *United Service Gazette* recommends *Wacousta* to those “who would learn something of the wiliness of nature, and subtlety of argument which distinguish the American Indian,” and “the blended cunning and magnanimity of spirit of this extraordinary and rapidly disappearing people.”

Richardson himself seemed concerned that he be appreciated as an authority on Canada and a model British imperialist. For example, in his autobiographical novel, *Eight Years in Canada* (1848), Richardson advertises himself as Canada’s “first and only author,” while celebrating his achievement as the author of “the only two tales connected with [its] early history” (his sequel to *Wacousta, The Canadian Brothers* [1840], being the second of the two tales to which he refers) (107). Richardson also explains that he returned to Canada in 1838 on “a particular and confidential mission . . . that of furnishing political information to the ‘Times’ newspaper” in order to make his “services . . . available in [Canada’s] defence” (3, 5-6). Indeed, Richardson was hired by the *Times* to be its correspondent on the Uprisings in Canada, but he fails to mention that he was fired shortly thereafter because his sympathy towards Lord Durham did not correspond to the newspaper’s editorial policies. Richardson was unsuccessful in garnering further interest in the novel in Canada, despite the efforts of such prominent Canadian journals as the *Literary Garland* to come to his aid. A reviewer in the *Garland* speculates that Richardson’s failure is “only owing to the state of danger and excitement into which the Provinces have been thrown by the events of the last three months. . . . [A]s peace renders the public mind more easy, the plan of republishing Wacousta may be revived.” This reviewer suggests that social conditions are less than ideal for the publication of a
historical novel about Canada, for there is too much resemblance between events in the present and unrest in the past to render the Iroquois uprisings suitable subject matter for a work of fiction. Thus, the geographical and cultural distance that enables the metropolitan reviewer in the *Athenaeum* to posit the imminent extinction of the Natives exists in sharp contrast to this reviewer’s perception of the ongoing threat of renewed violence.

*Wacousta* went through six editions during its first eight years of existence, and was reprinted five further times up to 1967, when the abridged paperback edition appeared. It was first published by Scott’s publishers, T. Cadell, London, and W. Blackwood, Edinburgh, in 1832. In 1902, it was serialized in the Toronto *Evening News* as “Wacousta. A CANADIAN tale of the time of PONTIAC.” In 1906, a deluxe edition appeared, with illustrations and chapter headings by C.W. Jeffreys, Canada’s foremost historical and popular illustrator. This edition attests to a publisher’s confidence in the quality of the product. Given the novel’s action-oriented story and the illustrations by Jeffreys, *Wacousta* was able to survive as a “boy’s book” (Duffy 114) until the 1920s, with the efforts of Riddell and the Makers of Canada series to assert its scholarly value.

Repeatedly, *Wacousta* has made its appearance during nationalist periods in Canada’s history. During the 1920s, a period with “almost uncanny similarities” to the nationalist centenary period (Pacey 18), William Renwick Riddell maintained that Major John Richardson showed . . . where the strength of Canadian poetry, drama, and fiction must lie, namely, not in mere imitation and variation of Old World themes, but in fresh and vigorous interpretation of our own life and thought. Only in this way can Canada develop an artistic soul and
consciousness, and eventually arrive at that stage of national
independence, co-ordinated and entire, which makes possible a great
spiritual contribution in the form of a national literature. (207-08).

In order to establish Richardson as a “maker of Canada,” Riddell focuses on the formal
and thematic innovativeness of Richardson’s novel, and locates this innovation at the
origins of an independent Canadian literature. That he does so belies his interest in
posing that Canada has a (young) written tradition that constitutes a growing national
culture, distinct in its expression from the imperial metropole.

Dennis Duffy has rightly argued that Wacousta has become an ideological
“battleground for the question of whether the sweep of Canadian literature lies towards
the renewal of community or the avoidance of it” (“John Richardson” 117). Under the
influence of Carl Klinck (who wrote about Wacousta in the Literary History of Canada
and in the preface to the NCL edition of the book) and James Reaney, who workshopped
plays based on Wacousta and The Canadian Brothers, the book became a conduit for
nationalist enthusiasm:29

[p]ut together, Wacousta and The Canadian Brothers tell the story of our
country from Wolfe at Quebec to Tecumseh at Moraviantown and Brock
at Queenston Heights. “Eventually,” says James Reaney, “what I’d like to
do is find a dramatization of Aubert de Gaspe’s Les Anciens Canadiens
which concerns the crucial 1750-70 period in Quebeçois [sic] history, then
put all three plays together under some such title as The River since all
three deal with a series of civilizations and times along the St. Lawrence
and Great Lakes system from Michillimackinac to Cape Breton to Cape
Breton. But there's a great deal of work to be done first, work in which scholars, students, actors and friends can take part by clearing up, for example, the history of our heroic period.” (see Reaney; qtd. in Ross 13)

If Riddell, in the post World War I emergence of Canadian cultural independence, had suggested that it was time to move beyond “imitation and variation,” then the nationalist critics of the 1970s pitched Canada against the United States, and *Wacousta* became a one of the means through which this confrontation could be filtered.  

The 1967 New Canadian Library edition of *Wacousta*, edited by Carl F. Klinck, has an interesting reception history of its own. At Klinck’s request, the novel was abridged to “three-quarters of the original size” (xi) and marketed as an adventure tale. This edition was shortly followed by the canonization of *Wacousta* as Canada’s first novel. Given the serious scholarly efforts to “nationalize” the novel, the jacket cover’s description of *Wacousta* is worth quoting from at length: “Wacousta is a rousing tale of treachery, adventure, romance, and revenge on Canada’s turbulent frontier in the 1760s. It is dominated by the mysterious Wacousta, a white man ‘turned Indian,’ who gave invaluable advice to the great Ottawa chief, Pontiac, in his brilliant campaign to capture Fort Detroit and Fort Michilimackinac [sic] from the British.” Ironically, despite efforts to market the novel as quintessentially Canadian, this summary makes *Wacousta* sound more like a novel by James Fenimore Cooper than by John Richardson. Thus, *Wacousta* becomes an adventure romance about Wacousta, a hero of Canadian history, against the villains, the British. In their efforts to establish indigenous criteria for the evaluation of Canada’s national literature, critics from this period resort to an American literary model (which is ironic given the strong anti-American sentiment underpinning much of the
nationalist criticism of this period). It is no coincidence, then, that the version used for
the 1967 NCL edition derives from the American Waldie edition (see Cronk xxxi).

Robin Mathews, in *Canadian Literature: Surrender or Revolution* (1978),
subjected the novel to a Marxist reading and declared the main character a “romantic
anarchist” (17) and an individualist, and therefore a prototype of Americanism. And
Literature: A Textual Study of Major John Richardson’s *Wacousta; Or, The Prophecy,*”
presented his findings on the severely edited 1833 American Waldie edition as part of an
anti-American agenda as well. By the time Cronk’s CEECT (Centre for Editing Early
Canadian Texts) edition of *Wacousta* appeared in 1987 and Gaile McGregor published
*The Wacousta Syndrome: Explorations in the Canadian Landscape* in 1985, however, the
nationalist fervour of the 1970s and with it the “*Wacousta* syndrome” was more or less
passe.

In the midst of these critical debates, Richardson himself has emerged as a kind of
commodity. *Wacousta* has, in recent decades, proven to be a scholarly phenomenon, not
least because critics have proven to be fascinated with Richardson’s personality and
background. Richardson’s Jacobite heritage (his grandparents migrated from Scotland to
Ireland after the ’45), and his Native and francophone heritage from his maternal side,
figure in almost every critical essay and book on *Wacousta* as furnishing Richardson with
the credentials to write a novel that captures the psychological effects of living in
Canada. They thus break away from the tendency of early British critics to see the novel
as emblematic of Empire, and choose instead to see it as emblematic of Canada’s
geographically and psychologically fractured identity. As Duffy has stated, the “century
and a half of critical and public attention paid to Wacousta . . . has made of Richardson's imagination a powerful force to be dealt with when outlining the shape of our literary experience” (117). In this respect, Richardson himself has become a synecdoche of Canada's cultural identity.

Philippe Aubert de Gaspé père, Les Anciens Canadiens (1863)

If Wacousta was, as Richardson himself declared, the first Canadian novel to take Canadian history for its subject, then Les Anciens Canadiens appears to have been the first French-Canadian novel to describe the Battle on the Plains of Abraham and its consequences. Like Wacousta, as well, Les Anciens Canadiens exhibits features from both the historical novel and the national tale, in its conciliatory theme (Jules d'Haberville's marriage to an Englishwoman) and its focus on intercultural union from the perspective of the colonized (namely, in the failed romance between Blanche d'Haberville and the Scottish traveller, Archibald Cameron of Locheill). Indeed, Trumpener has described Les Anciens Canadiens as a “thematic and formal” derivation of Waverley which “opens as a French Canadian national tale” (260). As I hope to demonstrate, however, the formal and thematic resemblances between Aubert de Gaspé's novel and the national tale extend beyond the opening of Les Anciens Canadiens and inform its complicated representation of cultural encounter. Translated into English and adapted to the theatre almost immediately, the novel was avidly received by the French- and English-Canadian public alike. Within a year of
its first appearance in 1863, a second edition, revised and corrected by the author, became necessary, with further editions in 1877, 1886, and 1899. In fact, the book never seems to have been out of print since it first appeared, and is currently available in the 1993 French-language edition, published in Montréal by Les Éditions Fides, and edited by Maurice Lemire, and in the 1996 English-language translation by Jane Brierley, published in Montréal by Véhicule Press. Early reviews were immensely favourable.

Alluding to the stagnancy of French-Canadian culture following the Conquest, the poet and critic Abbé Henri-Raymond Casgrain compared the book to the spring break-up of a river and praised Aubert de Gaspé for his prodigious research which had resulted in “cette conception, si savante et à la fois si simple, qui en est sortie tout-à-coup complète et toute vêtue, comme la Minerve antique” (117). The book, in other words, was immediately recognized as the imaginative counterpart of François-Xavier Garneau’s *Histoire du Canada depuis la découverte jusqu’à nos jours* (1845-48), which rewrote the Conquest into a story of French-Canadian perseverance and, with its vivid, impassioned writing, inspired generations of writers, historians, and politicians. Like the *Histoire*, *Les Anciens Canadiens* brought the past so successfully back to life that both the average reader and the specialist were enchanted with it. The *Bulletin du parler français au Canada* thought that “les lèvres et le verbe des aîeux . . . se raniment dans ces pages,” complemented by “toutes les choses du passé . . . les fêtes populaires . . . les fêtes intimes de la famille, pleines de gaieté franche et de chansons” (Charron 374).

Like several of the other books under discussion, the reception of *Les Anciens Canadiens* has changed in tandem with larger nationalist issues. During Quebec’s Quiet Revolution, for example, Aubert de Gaspé was attacked for his elitism, most scathingly
by Nicole Deschamps (1968), who dismissed *Les Anciens Canadiens* as a limited and biased portrayal of French Canada’s landed gentry during the Ancien Régime: “[l’]image que Philippe Aubert de Gaspé donne de la société du temps dans son roman lui est donc personnelle et ne correspond pas nécessairement aux faits” (15). Deschamps is echoed by Rainier Grutman (1997), who suggests that the author catered to the perspective of the English-Canadian ruling class rather than reflecting a French-Canadian point of view, and offers Aubert de Gaspé’s wide-ranging reading in British authors and his open debt to Walter Scott as particularly damning evidence. Finally, Roger Le Moine (1994) suspects that the book’s initial success derived from its complicity with the values of the religious elite, and that it unduly eclipsed other novels of the period, Pierre J. O. Chauveau’s novel of manners, *Charles Guérin* (1853), among them.

Grutman also has a great deal to say about the English translations of *Les Anciens Canadiens*. Georgiana M. Pennée’s *The Canadians of Old* appeared as early as 1864, followed by Confederation poet Charles G. D. Roberts’s 1890 translation which was re-issued in 1905 under the title *Cameron of Lochiel*. In his Translator’s Introduction, Roberts states: “[i]n Canada, there is settling into shape a nation of two races; there is springing into existence, at the same time, a literature in two languages.” Grutman accuses Roberts of upholding what will come to be known as a “two solitudes” concept of Canadian nationhood and concludes that Roberts’s decision and that of his publishers to omit the Notes (later restored in the NCL edition), “bien que ceux-ci constituent une mine d’informations sur la population qu’il se propose à étudier,” reveals his unwillingness to delve into the special character of French-Canadians (see Grutman 111). Like *The Golden Dog*, *Les Anciens Canadiens* has been called upon to help proclaim the
principle of bi-culturalism, once again, one on English-Canadian terms, as titles such as Norman Penner’s *Keeping Canada Together* (1978) or Robert McDougall’s *Our Living Tradition* (1959), with its ambivalent use of the possessive pronoun, indicate.

Like the names of Edgeworth and Scott, the name of Aubert de Gaspé has become synonymous with a region. Several websites for the town of Saint-Jean-Port-Joli proudly proclaim that “[t]he village earned its reputation through Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, last lord of the territory and author of the first French-Canadian novel” (see “A Summer of Festivities”). The town has a museum called the Musée des Anciens Canadiens, “the most prestigious wood carving museum in North America” (See Musée des Anciens Canadiens Home Page). In Québec City, Aubert de Gaspé’s former home is now the site of an expensive restaurant, “Aux Anciens Canadiens,” whose home page features a server clothed in the traditional dress of an “habitante,” with the cap, apron, and skirt, holding what look to be home-made baked goods in a basket, in arms that she extends to the viewer (see “Au coeur du Vieux Québec”).

**Napoléon Bourassa, Jacques et Marie: Souvenir d’un peuple dispersé (1865-66)**

By the time Bourassa published *Jacques et Marie*, he was already a well-established painter. During his travels in France and Italy, he had become acquainted with the work of Hippolyte Flandrin and the German Nazarenes whose simple religious mysticism he found deeply appealing. Flandrin’s and the Nazarenes’s work had a strong public and educational component, and Bourassa drew from them important inspiration for the
frescoes he was to paint in several Québec churches. His mural *L’Apothéose de Christophe Colomb* gained international exposure when it was exhibited at the 1863 Exposition universelle in Paris. Conceived in the spirit of the Nazarenes, a school of German romantic painters who attempted to recover the style and spirit of medieval religious art (and who were to influence the Pre-Raphaelites in England), the mural celebrates the religious and scientific progress of Western culture and features such famous scientists and explorers as Galileo and Columbus, as well as the figure of French-Canadian federalist and Canadian founder, Georges-Étienne Cartier, to conclude the lineup. Within this progression, then, the foundation of Canada features as the culmination of scientific progress, and the achievement of a divinely-sanctioned (imperially-realized) destiny. Bourassa’s daughter and biographer, Adine Bourassa, explains the ideological and political significance of the mural:

> Son *Apothéose de Christophe Colomb* ne représente pas autre chose que la progression indéfinie, à travers les siècles de l’idée scientifique et religieuse du découverte de l’Amérique. . . . Ce magnifique ensemble se termine à la figure de Sir Georges-Étienne Cartier, indiquant dans l’espace, le projet d’une ligne de communication entre les provinces de la Confédération naissante, réalisant ainsi le rêve de Christophe Colomb et de beaucoup d’autres explorateurs: un passage vers la Chine, un trait d’union entre les deux oceans. (304)

There is an apparent ideological contrast between the celebration of pan-Canadian and imperial union depicted in *L’Apothéose* and the near-violent anti-expansionism of *Jacques et Marie*. This contrast is reconciled, however, by the ideological anti-
industrialism and anti-materialism of the Nazarenes, whose values are clear in Bourassa's representation of the Acadians' rural, agrarian way of life and Catholic values.

Bourassa's paintings of large religious and historical panoramas also influenced the organization of his novel on the deportation of the Acadians, which conceives of each of the four sections as a carefully composed panel in a historical narrative. Framed by a broad historical sketch of the various stages of the deportation, each section focuses on the lives of the collective and of representative individuals. Frequently, Bourassa uses painterly language to bring a scene to life ("la mer avait pris une teinte profonde d'indigo, sur laquelle la barque laissait un long sillon d'argent comme un trait de burin sur un metal bruni" [146]) or he draws on a specific painter to set a scene, as on the occasion when Gordon dreams of painting Marie in one of the "poses de ces pastourelles poudrées" favoured by rococo painter François Boucher (89). The palette that Bourassa permits himself in his word-paintings is rather more vivid than that which characterizes his murals, which, in an effort to emphasize the spirituality of the subject matter, tend to be pale and ethereal. However, there is no doubt whatsoever about the ideology underlying both his painting and his writing, namely his strong ultramontanist convictions, according to which his Acadians sing "saintes harmonies de l'Église militante" as they are being deported (261).

*Jacques et Marie* was serialized in *La Revue Canadienne* between 1865-66 in order to keep the publication, of which Bourassa was the editor, afloat (see Le Moine 99). Although Bourassa's motivations were apparently more financial than creative, the novel attracted enough favourable attention to be serialized again in *Le Canadien* (1880-81) and *L'Opinion Publique* (1895), followed by further serialized versions in Québec in 1912-13.
and 1915. As serializations were often used to lock in subscribers, the fact that the novel continued to appear in this form even when bound versions were available (published in 1866 and 1886) indicates that it must have had considerable popular and educational appeal. The 1912-13 serialization coincided with plans by La librairie Beauchemin to publish an edition of the novel for use in schools, but the project did not come to fruition.

One of five novels, (Les Exploits d'Iberville, François de Bienville, La Sève immortelle, Jacques et Marie, and Les Anciens Canadiens) which address the trauma of Conquest by providing “[des] exemple[s] de revanche psychologique” (Lemire 169), Jacques et Marie itself appears to have generated a series of novels with the Deportation as a theme—among them Charles Guisé’s Le Cap au Diable (1859), Mme Alexandre Taschereau-Fortier’s Les Orphelins de Grand-Pré (1931), L’Abbé Groulx’s Au Cap Blomidon (1932), Antoine-J. Léger’s Elle et lui, idylle tragique du peuple acadien (1940) and Une Fleure d’Acadie, un épisode du Grand Dérangement (1946), and Albert Laurent’s Épopée tragique (1956) (see Lemire, Les Grands Thèmes, 169). Albert Laurent’s novel, according to Lemire, directly responds to Bourassa’s book and criticizes its depiction of the deportees as passively accepting their fate. In one of the few sustained readings of Jacques et Marie (the criticism on which seems to have largely been the somewhat repetitive domain of one scholar, Roger Le Moine), Rainier Grutman analyses the role of Latin in the book as guaranteeing not “la redemption dans l’ici-bas, mais la vengeance dans l’au-delà” (159). Otherworldly retribution no longer seemed enough when Laurent was writing his version of the Deportation. If 1960s critics took issue with the perceived elitism of Aubert de Gaspé’s world and bitterly distanced themselves from its ideology, recent fictionalizations of the Deportation pay homage to
nineteenth-century authors by imitating them while, at the same time, challenging their world view. In this spirit, Laurent modifies Bourassa’s novel for, in the intervening century between the publication of the two novels, attitudes toward Acadian history had changed, with a very determined turning away, from the mid-1950s onwards, from the patriotic conservationism that had long dominated the cultural production of the region. Maurice Lemire suggests that “[à] force d’insister sur la soumission, la loyauté et la résignation des Acadiens, des romanciers comme Bourassa et Antoine Léger ont accrué l’idée d’une race veule que les Anglais ont maltraitée à loisir sans aucune résistance. Albert Laurent reprend le thème mais en glorifiant, cette fois-ci, la révolte et en condamnant la soumission” (114). Laurent’s version of the Deportation anticipates even more radical rewritings in the work of Antonine Maillet. Her first book, Pointe-Aux-Coques, appeared in 1958, and, like most of her oeuvre, draws on the rollicking story-telling of Rabelais to bestow energy and imagination on her characters. The anticlerical force of Rabelais sustains the movement away from the conservative, ultramontanist understanding of Acadian nationhood that we find in Bourassa.

Unlike Les Anciens Canadiens, Jacques et Marie has not maintained its hold on the popular imagination. Neither Bourassa himself nor the novel is well-known enough to serve as a tourist draw. The website of L’Acadie where he was born lists the chanteuse Angèle Arsenault (who also sings about the Deportation) as a famous citizen, but not Bourassa; likewise, tourist information on Grand-Pré has much to say about the Deportation, but nothing about Jacques et Marie.

Bourassa may have fallen out of critical discussion because of the very political and religious ideologies that made him popular in the nineteenth century, namely those
implied by his ultramontanism. From the post-Duplessis era, onwards, the backlash against traditional associations of an authentic French-Canadian identity with an agrarian and Catholic society resulted, in the realm of literary criticism, in a shift in focus onto issues of class and social transformation.


The publication history of *The Golden Dog* and its readings reflect the changing preoccupations of Canadian literary culture and education. In the late nineteenth century, Kirby was hailed by George Moore Fairchild, a wealthy businessman and man of letters, as the Canadian Scott. Commenting on Kirby’s place in Canadian literature, Fairchild asserted that “William Kirby will be remembered as the Walter Scott of Canada” because *The Golden Dog* “is the greatest of all our Canadian romances.” Fairchild concluded his comments on Kirby with a lament that Kirby had not produced more historical novels apart from the one: “I could wish that Kirby had done more on the lines he so auspiciously commenced. The material was, and is, profuse for the writer of Canadian romance” (Fairchild to Le Moine, 1 Jan. 1903, Lorne Pierce Collection, Queen’s University, Box 41. Quoted in Gerson 68). Fairchild’s commentary, as we will see, stands out among English-Canadian criticism of Kirby’s novel, for later critics will come to dismiss Kirby’s historical romance as either ideologically motivated (Kirby was a staunch Loyalist) or escapist.
Kirby’s work has remained, from its publication to the present, the subject of critical approval in French Canada. It is the only English-Canadian novel to have received sustained (if somewhat sparse) attention by French-Canadian critics. In the French press, Kirby’s friend Benjamin Suite reviewed the novel in *L’Opinion Publique*: “[s]aluons un Anglais qui a étudié l’histoire de la Nouvelle-France. Saluons l’un des meilleurs romans canadiens qui aient été écrits en langue anglaise” (Suite 208). Suite also compares Kirby favourably with the historian Parkman: “La partie [des] récits qui ressort de l’imagination pure et simple contribuera à populariser le *Chien d’or*, —— ceci n’arrivera pas pour Mr Parkman, car du moment que l’on traite l’histoire pour l’histoire, on ne se fait connaître que d’une classe de la société” (208). Suite praises Kirby’s novel precisely because it does what history proper cannot do: make history available to a wide reading audience. Kirby’s achievement as a historian and novelist, although widely acknowledged in English and French Canada in the late nineteenth century, became somewhat controversial in the twentieth. The differences in the reception of *The Golden Dog* by English- and French-Canadian critics demonstrate indeed that the cultural encounter envisioned in Kirby’s novel goes beyond its content to its reception history, as is the case as well with *Les Anciens Canadiens*.

The title page of the MacMillan edition of *The Golden Dog* (1944) stipulates that the novel has been “shortened, with introduction and glossary by E.C. Woodley, M.A.,” and that the novel has been “Authorized by the Ministers of Education for British Columbia, Quebec and Nova Scotia,” presumably for use in the classroom. The glossary includes the biographies of the real-historical figures on whom the characters are modelled, as well as a list of place-names. Like that of other historical novelists, then,
Kirby's work has been used for educational purposes and any lasciviousness or violence not suitable for young readers was easily removed by abridging the book.

The MacMillan version was one in a series of editions before the 1940s and after, which, through their abridgements and marketing, responded to various educational and nationalist agendas. The post World War I era, preoccupied with consolidating the identity of Canadian culture, saw the publication of Canadian “classics” like Wacousta, Roughing It In the Bush (1854), and The Golden Dog, as well as of such series as Lorne Pierce’s “Makers of Canadian Literature” and the “Master Works of Canadian Authors,” a project initiated by the Radisson Society in 1925, and of monographs on notable writers such as Haliburton, Lampman, Carman, and Kirby (see Pacey 19). Three notable writers and critics are involved in renewing scholarly interest in Kirby during this period: William Renwick Riddell, a judge and legal historian, wrote a biography on him in the “Makers of Canada” series, (1923), T.G. Marquis produced the Introduction to The Golden Dog (1925 edition), and Lorne Pierce published a biography on Kirby in 1929.

As is typical for Canadian literary critics of the time, these three authors are most interested in establishing indigenous criteria for evaluating Canadian literature, and in demonstrating what makes Kirby’s The Golden Dog uniquely Canadian, both in form and content. For Marquis, this entails eliminating excessive traces of Scott’s influence on Kirby by providing a heavily abridged edition of the novel. His Introduction to the book comprises one short paragraph, and is worth quoting from at length:

[i]n issuing a new edition of The Golden Dog it has been thought necessary to give the book thorough revision. Many errors, especially in the spelling of proper names, were found, and these have been corrected:
The author gathered together a vast amount of information bearing on the period of his story and of his characters. He saw fit, after the manner of Sir Walter Scott, to incorporate this into his novel. As a result, *The Golden Dog*, as originally published, contains patches of general and scientific information that mar the flow of the story and weary the reader. Much of this has been judiciously cut out, but nothing has been omitted that is essential to the narrative. (vii)

Thus, this introduction implies that it is more important to focus on the “story” of the novel than on its literary antecedents.

Riddell’s biography contains, on its title page, the following description of the aims of the “Makers of Canada” series: the series is “dedicated to the writers of Canada—past and present—the real Master-builders and Interpreters of our great Dominion.” In the first line of the book, Riddell stipulates that he does not “propose to say anything of the political writings of Kirby” but wants to focus instead on *The Golden Dog* which, he says, is “a romance and not a historical novel.” A historical novel, “in the ultimate analysis, is history and psychology moulded into the form of fiction.” Romance, and in particular *The Golden Dog*, “makes use of historical names and personages, but does not use the facts of history. . . . [I]n ‘The Golden Dog,’ nothing turns upon historical fact and the denouement and catastrophe are wholly imaginary” (129-30). Riddell then proceeds to “tell the story” of what inspired Kirby to write the novel. Like Marquis, Riddell does not emphasize Kirby’s literary influences, but rather foregrounds the legend of the Golden Dog in Québec, and in James Le Moine’s *The Maple Leaves* (1863).
In the 1960s, the period that Pacey compares to the 1920s, the NCL edition of the novel was also abridged. The jacket cover stipulates that “Derek Crawley has cut The Golden Dog to half its original (and somewhat alarming) length of 678 pages, without losing any of its essential tempo and colour.” Thus, the novel persists as an adventure romance, “an enthralling tale of love and murder, woven into an authentic historical background,” but—as mentioned in my Introduction—it is also marketed as a bi-cultural allegory. However, Kirby’s rediscovery as forerunner of bi-cultural policy was short-lived, and in a parallel to the criticism, in the 1960s and beyond, of Aubert de Gaspé as elitist and conservative, Margot Northey blamed him for being “a Tory Loyalist—at a time when liberal ideas were increasingly popular” (89). Thus, in his politics, he does not reflect what was going on in Canada in his own time, and he certainly isn’t a model for contemporary Canada. Nor does he have an accurate idea of what was going on in Britain at the time: “[l]ike so many other colonials, he sought to maintain the ideals and way of life he associated with the motherland at a time when the motherland was herself changing” (Northey 91). However, he is still a forerunner of sorts, namely for the cultural pessimism of George Grant, Dennis Lee, and Scott Symons, all writers who “feel the need to warn of [the] loss” of Canada’s national identity and who thus “lament for a nation” (101).

One of the few critical pieces to pursue Kirby’s alleged bi-culturalism, John Robert Sorfleet’s essay on Kirby (1989) is remarkable for defending Kirby’s historical vision and deep understanding of French Canada’s complicated history: “Kirby emphasized a strong Pan-Canadian–English and French–element in imperial relations. He understood the needs and aspirations of Quebec and he valued the contribution she
could make to Canadian self-realization. It is no platitude when the Quebec nationalist
Maurice Lemire states, “[d]e tous les romanciers canadiens-anglais, il est seul à pénétrer
aussi profondément la mentalité canadienne-française” (Lemire 142). Sorfleet is the only
critic who seems aware of the French-Canadian criticism on Kirby.

While English-Canadian critics were busy reading Kirby as a prototype of various
contemporary nationalist ideologies, francophone criticism evaluated the book as a
historical novel, bringing to the debate a sophisticated knowledge of the genre. David M.
Hayne’s entry on Kirby in the *Dictionnaire des oeuvres littéraires du Québec* is also very
positive. He praises Kirby’s adaptability as a writer: “[l’]œuvre littéraire de Kirby est
abondante et variée: elle embrasse tous les genres” (115). Bilingual and an expert on the
Canadian historical novel, Hayne is the only critic, apart from Lemire, to call *The Golden
Dog* a historical novel, and he stipulates that it is “le meilleur exemple du genre dans la
literature anglo-canadienne du XIXe siècle” (115). While English-Canadian writers like
Rosanna Leprohon used French Canada as a historical background for their novels, Kirby
was the first English-Canadian writer to understand French Canada’s history, capturing
“l'atmosphère du Régime Français” (116).

**Jean McLlwraith, *A Diana of Quebec* (1912)**

If Kirby successfully captures the spirit and “atmosphere” of New France, then he does
so because his cultural nationalism is expressed in the romantic terms standardized, in the
discipline of history, by Garneau, and in the genre of the historical novel, by Scott. *A
Diana of Quebec, however, is remarkable in this context for its refusal to allegorize historical process. More than any other novel studied here, it presents two competing, even contradictory, aims: to portray the long-term effects on both colonizer and colonized of imperial encounter, so that cultural rapprochement appears almost impossible; and to posit Canada as a colony capable, in the long run, of neutralizing political discontent. Thus, it is only with the passage of time that historical wounds can be healed and social order be tentatively restored. Significantly, this temporal distance is mirrored in the novel's narrative mode, the fictional memoir of Mathews, who recalls his tenure in French Canada from a distance of thirty years, and from the geographical distance of Britain.

Information on Jean McIlwraith is sparse, and the biographical sketch in The Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature (1997) is brief enough to bear quoting in full:

Born in Hamilton, Canada West (Ontario) [in 1859], she was educated at the Ladies’ College, Hamilton, and through the correspondence program in modern literature offered by Queen Margaret College, Glasgow University, Scotland. From 1902 to 1919 she worked as a publisher’s reader in New York while establishing herself as a writer of literary criticism, biography, and fiction. She returned to Canada in 1922 and died in Burlington, Ontario [in 1938]. (Benson 701)

McIlwraith was writing historical romances during the first decades of the twentieth century, at a time when the interest in such work was dropping off sharply, although the history of New France remained an attractive subject to such prolific writers as Charles G. D. Roberts, Theodore Goodridge Roberts, and Gilbert Parker. Numerous authors of
historical fiction also wrote for the lucrative market of educational books, and, in addition to writing books specifically for this purpose (see Huyck), McIlwraith’s novels are often written for an audience that includes children. As an author of textbooks like *The Children’s Study* (1899), McIlwraith unequivocally depicted the kind of Canada educational authorities wanted to be taught in school. In this book, for example, she describes Canada as a desirable place for Loyalists to go to because, in addition to being a welcoming place, it offers the refugees a “greater part of the Mohawk nation” (qtd. in Coates 168).

In her historical novels, however, McIlwraith abandons this straightforward didacticism for a complexity of voice that appears to be unique in Canadian historical fiction. *A Diana of Quebec* (1912) is set in the years immediately following the American Revolution, and deals with the political antagonism between the British and the French Canadians from the perspective of the imperial administrators, for whom Canada’s value as a member of the British Empire is threatened by the French Canadians’ refusal to honour their oath of allegiance to the British crown. *A Diana of Quebec* thus implicitly speaks back to such novels as *Jacques et Marie*, where French Canadians’ virtue and loyalty are inextricably linked to the religious ideals which organize their daily lives, and to *Les Anciens Canadiens*, which insists that loyalty to legitimist monarchy (whether French or British) is an integral trait of French-Canadian national character.

McIlwraith is the author of four historical novels for adults, as well as short stories and books for children, including two biographies, *A Book About Shakespeare* (1898) and *A Book About Longfellow* (1900), as well as her book on Canadian history for children, simply titled *Canada* (1899). Apart from being an author of political and
literary histories for children, she is also the author of three works for theatre, and a biography for the “Makers of Canada” series, *Sir Frederick Haldimand* (1904), the same series that will, two decades later, publish biographies on Kirby and Richardson. Thus, by the turn of the twentieth century, three years after the publication of her first book, McIlwraith had established enough of a literary reputation to have contributed to a prominent series devoted to enshrining Canada’s literary and political figures.

In the year of its publication, *A Diana of Quebec* was deemed a valuable work of British historical fiction, and warranted mention in the *Guide to British Historical Fiction* (1912), published in London as a guide to school teachers of history. The book opens with a Foreword which stipulates that the *Guide* was conceived in response to the needs of “teachers of History” who rarely have “sufficient time to read or to search for suitable novels to recommend to their pupils” (v). Thus, its authors, two British county school administrators, published the *Guide*, which comprises a representative list of historical novels “illustrating every phase of British History” (v) from the Norman Conquest to the late Victorian era. The school curriculum firmly in mind, the Foreword begins with a class- and gender-based metaphor of subservience to posit historical fiction as secondary in seriousness to history proper, but useful in drawing students into a study of the real thing: “[n]o attempt need be made to demonstrate the value of historical fiction as a handmaiden to history proper” (v). The ancillary purpose of these novels is reflected in the emphasis on qualities that may be considered an educational draw, for example their “picturesque” landscapes and their “graphic” and “thrilling” plots.34

Included in this *Guide to British Historical Fiction* are historical novels published by Canadians, South Africans, and Australians, thus indicating that British fiction is
broadly defined here as fictions of the English-speaking British Empire. A Diana of Quebec appears in the section devoted to fictions about the “American War of Independence” and is admired as an “accurate and suggestive” account of Quebec at the end of the American Revolution. Not surprisingly, given the British bias of the Guide, the highlight of McIlwraith’s novel is identified as the “authentic character portrait” of Lord Nelson “in the earlier days of his career” (137).

Ironically, while McIlwraith participated in educating school children of the early twentieth century in the officially sanctioned image of Canada, her own work became a victim of a similar process. Her virtual disappearance from Canadian literary history must be seen as a reflection of contemporary literary historians’ conceptions of what a Canadian literature should look like. A Diana of Quebec, which combines historical fact with conventions borrowed from romance and children’s literature, is not preoccupied with bloody warfare as is Wacousta. Instead, it introduces the subject of historical conflict through the various conversations of its main characters and in doing so achieves a nuanced, often ambivalent picture of the conflicting interests at stake in forging a national identity. Nevertheless, like Wacousta, A Diana of Quebec ultimately justifies the British conquest of French Canada from the perspective of the British. While McIlwraith’s narrator and the author presumably share a faith in the superiority of the British, this is one of the books where the story-telling seems at war with the required ideology. If Jacques et Marie and Les Anciens Canadiens provide their characters and their readers with a psychological revenge to make up for a historical one, it would be interesting to speculate whether in the ambivalence of her fiction McIlwraith compensated for the party-line required in the school textbooks.
McIlwraith's books have fallen out of print, and she is rarely discussed in critical literature. Her first historical novel, co-written with William McLennan, entitled *The Span O' Life: A Tale of Louisbourg and Quebec* (1899), deals with the fall of Louisbourg in Acadia; in her second, *The Curious Career of Roderick Campbell* (1901), she writes about the members of three Scottish families who support Charles Edward Stuart in 1745 and meet again, as exiles, in North America during the Seven Years' War. *A Diana of Quebec*, in turn, portrays the attempts by its narrator, Mathews, to investigate the causes of social unrest in French Canada, and to locate and arrest the perpetrators of unrest. The book resembles detective fiction in its compilation of leads, hunting down of resources, and follow-ups on hunches that often lead nowhere. The main character is a reader of "clues" with which he attempts to restore social order, but he is often an unobservant reader. In some ways, McIlwraith's novel provides a suitable plot for my own work as a literary historian. In my attempts to hunt down and compile information on McIlwraith, I have felt as though I were engaging in detective work of my own.

Dennis Duffy has located Anne Hébert's *Kamouraska* (1970) at the origins of "a rebirth of the historical novel in Canada," where novelists begin "to handle historical material in new and complex ways" (*Sounding* 54) portraying a "complex reality that yields to no easy moralizing" (75). Yet *A Diana of Quebec* easily falls under Duffy's criteria, as do the earlier fictions, which demonstrate clearly that there is nothing "easy" about their moral messages, which are the products of extended explorations of historical, ideological, and social conflict. (Duffy's comment is reminiscent of Le Moine's criticism of *Jacques et Marie* as a novel whose heavy moral tone diminishes its historical value. See Le Moine, *Napoléon Bourassa*, esp. 106). If *Kamouraska* represents a formal and
thematic transformation in the Canadian historical novel, then that transformation may be said to have its roots in such books as *A Diana of Quebec*. McIlwraith's novel offers the familiar love plot of popular romance and the journey motif of travel narrative; however, her lovers abandon the new world, whose society is torn apart by the effects of history, in favour of a return to Britain, where history and society evolve with reassuring and predictable order. With its focus on the domestic and political spheres as highly fraught sites of an equally fraught nationhood, as well as its portrayal of the emptiness of national character and the fragility of nations in historical time, *A Diana of Quebec* is an important Canadian novel about the ideological future of moments of historical and cultural change.

1 In the nationalist period of the 1860s to the 1880s, French-Canadian novelists justified novel-writing as part of a larger didactic project, involving the description of local manners and customs and the popularization of history, so that religion, cultural values, and historical identity became inextricably linked.

2 The gendering of literary genre and of the canonization of Canadian texts is particularly remarkable in the case of *Wacousta*. Richardson was canonized in the 1970s as Canada's first novelist, thereby revealing literary critics' bias against equally valid "contenders" such as Frances Brooke, whose *History of Emily Montague* was published in 1769, and Julia Catherine Beckwith Hart, whose *Saint Ursula's Convent, Or, The Nun of Canada*, was published in 1824. Hart's novel has received a great deal of critical attention recently, and was published in 1991 in a CEECT edition (the publishers of Douglas Cronk's authoritative edition of *Wacousta*), edited by Douglas Lochhead. In June 1998, the National Library of Canada issued a release, by its Rare Book Librarian, Michel Brisebois, which states that "Saint Ursula's Convent is the earliest recorded novel written by a native-born Canadian and published in book form in Canada" (see Brisebois). Given Beckwith Hart's Canadian birth, and the publication date of her novel, which predates that of *Wacousta*, *Saint Ursula's Convent* challenges the literary critics' choice in Richardson of a "first novelist." It also reveals their masculinist bias, however, for Beckwith Hart's novel deals with the symbolic union of the British and the French Canadians by focussing, from within the domestic sphere, on the social and religious ties of the two families involved. The jacket cover of the CEECT edition stops just short of declaring *Saint Ursula's Convent* Canada's first novel: "[i]n 1824, when the novel was issued in Kingston, Upper Canada, it became not only the first work of fiction written by
a native-born Canadian and published in what is now Canada, but also a significant early attempt by a Canadian of English and French heritage to articulate a vision of a North American nation that linked through family, social and religious ties, the best of Great Britain and France.”

3 Richard Lovell Edgeworth to Daniel Augustus Beaufort, 26 Apr. 1800. Qtd. in Butler 359.

4 See, especially, Hall 12-16.


6 See “Overview on Arts and Culture,” Irish Tourist Board Home Page.

7 See “Literature in Irish,” Department of Foreign Affairs Home Page.

8 See “Famous Creative Women: Maria Edgeworth,” Famous Creative Women Home Page.

9 See Croker, “On the Female Literature of the Present Age,” 274.


11 See British Critic, n. s., 1 (1814): 164.


13 An interesting note about the reception history of Owenson’s novel: in his entry on The Wild Irish Girl in the Cambridge Guide to Women’s Writing in English (1999), Victor Sage writes that “Charles Robert Maturin’s The Wild Irish Boy (1808) satirized the vogue for Celtic kitsch amongst the aristocracy” (667). However, I found myself wondering whether Sage had, indeed, read Maturin’s book for I found little if any trace of the kind of satire that he describes. Instead of producing a satire, Maturin (who haunted the Morgans’ parties “with his long melancholy nose and raven wig, his corsets and his mincing step” [Stevenson 244]) in fact tried to cash in on Owenson’s popularity by producing a male version of the book and then having remarkable success with it. Stevenson confirms this impression. He writes that the “fame of The Wild Irish Girl prompted [Maturin] to bring out a novel with the title The Wild Irish Boy (1808), in which a prominent character is a proud old chieftain, maintaining the ancient glory of Ireland, and served by a devoted chaplain” (97). The influence on Maturin of Owenson’s precedent-setting novel is also apparent in the influence of The Wild Irish Girl on Maturin’s next novel, The Milesian Chief (1811), which, “though less imitative in title, took even more of its theme from Miss Owenson’s book” (Stevenson 97).


15 See Edgeworth, New Monthly Magazine 13 [1820]: 637.

16 See Quarterly Review 1 (1809): 52.

17 See “Some Titles That Elude Me” at the CoquetteNet Home Page for a reader’s account of how she tried to track down the fate of the series, a project of Routledge and Methuen. She was informed after a lengthy odyssey that copyright had reverted to the author(!).

18 For more on the challenges to metropolitan perspectives provided by the national tale, see Ferris’s discussion of The Wild Irish Girl as a novel that “relocates the scene of cultural encounter, confounding the distinction between ‘over here’ and ‘over there’” so that “familiar [metropolitan] categories come under pressure” (“Cultural Encounter” 288). For her discussion of the intersections between the development of the national tale
and of a sentimentalist cultural nationalism in Ireland, both made possible by the
“emergence of Ireland as a cultural truism” in the late eighteenth century, see Burgess,
“Violent Translations,” esp. 33-36.
19 For her summary of Waverley’s reception, publication, and translation history, see
Claire Lamont’s edition of Waverley.
20 This view remained influential well into the twentieth century, and informs Ian Watt’s
discussion of the rise of the novel as a new literary genre in the social context of
eighteenth-century England, and with particular focus on Fielding, Richardson, and
Sterne. See Watt, esp. 35-60. For his response to Watt’s argument, and his impressive
re-evaluation of the connections between the rise of the novel and the social context of
eighteenth-century England, see McKeon, esp. 1-22.
21 See Rev. of Waverley. The British Critic, n.s. ii (1814): 190.
22 This pageant has a complex reception history of its own that reflects Scottish critics’
changing attitudes towards Scott and towards Scottish nationhood. Hugh Trevor-Roper
evaluates Scott’s orchestration of the visit to Edinburgh as an example of Scott’s
willingness to forge (in both senses of the term) Scotland’s monarchical national identity.
A comparison between Buchan’s celebratory description of the visit and Trevor-Roper’s
considerably more sardonic version is revealing. Trevor-Roper states:
The [visit] was a bizarre travesty of Scottish history, Scottish reality.
Imprisoned by his fanatical Celtic friends, carried away by his own
romantic Celtic fantasies, Scott was determined to forget historic Scotland,
his own Lowland Scotland, altogether. . . . Thus was the capital of
Scotland ‘tartanized’ to receive its king, who himself came in the same
 costume, played his part in the Celtic pageant, and at the climax of the
visit solemnly invited the assembled dignitaries to drink a toast not to the
actual or historic elite but to ‘the chieftains and clans of Scotland.’ (29-
31)
For Trevor-Roper, Scott’s contribution to Scotland’s “tartanized” collective identity
represents a falsification of its true national identity and a fictionalization of the past
analogous to Scott’s novel-writing. For another account of this event, see Pittock; for
alternative accounts of the history and role of the tartan, see Cheape; for her alternative
understanding of the use of the tartan and pageantry, in Scott’s The Antiquary (1820), as
tools in the marketing of Scotland’s traditional past in a modern commercial Britain, see
Burgess, “Scott, History, and the Augustan Public Sphere.”
23 For more on Scott’s influence on Canadian historical novelists, see Winnifred M.
Bogaards, “Walter Scott’s Influence on Nineteenth-Century Canadian Historians and
Historical Novelists,” see also Eva-Marie Kröller, “Walter Scott in America, English
Canada, and Québec;” Carole Gerson’s A Purer Taste; and Gwendolyn Davies, Studies in
Maritime Literary History.
24 In this respect, the editors attribute to Trumpener the almost single-handed
transformation of the fields of Genre Studies and British Romanticism, thereby defining
Trumpener herself as a literary critical phenomenon with her own quickly expanding
reception history. The questions that the editors raise about the need to re-examine
Scott’s corpus centre, broadly speaking, on the question of Scott’s contribution to the
discourse of Scottish cultural nationalism and the various forms that it took in the private
and public sphere, comprising romantic and familial relationships, as well as public displays of pageantry. They thus aim to revise Edwin Muir’s account, in *Scott and Scotland: The Predicament of the Scottish Writer* (1936), of Scott as the instigator of a backward-looking and inauthentic nationalism in order to examine his role in defining romantic nationalism as a particularly modern response to cultural and political changes taking place in Scotland and around Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

27 Throughout his lifetime, Richardson himself proved to be the novel’s most devoted publicist, as well as his own. By contrast to Edgeworth, who learned from an unidentified outside source that the King had read *Castle Rackrent*, Richardson himself sent an unsolicited copy of *Wacousta* to William IV, and then used the fact that the King had read the novel to help solicit subscriptions for subsequent editions.
29 The novel’s action-packed story-line contributed to its quick adaptation to the stage. “Wacousta, or The Curse” was performed in New York City in 1833, 1834, 1836, 1849, 1851, and periodically until 1865. It was staged in Detroit in 1837 and in Boston in 1851. For more on the adaptation of *Wacousta* to the stage, see Odell.
30 George Grant and Margaret Atwood are among the critics famous for their formative contributions to the Canadian literary nationalist scene from the 1960s to the 1980s. In a *Lament for a Nation* (1965), Grant bemoans the imminent demise of Canadian nationhood. His argument focuses on the disruptive influence of an individualistic and technologically-oriented American-style nationalism on a country like Canada, which he conceived of as essentially conservative and anti-modern in spirit and history, because as derived from its British cultural and political history. Like Grant, Frye and Atwood locate the greatest threat to Canada’s economic and cultural sovereignty in the U.S. Their arguments implicitly naturalize Canada’s British heritage as formative of, not threatening to, Canada. Atwood is best known for her aphorism, in the Afterword to the *Journals of Susanna Moodie* (1970), that if the United States’ national illness is megalomania, then Canada’s is schizophrenia, caused by Canadians’ self-conscious relationship to Americans. See Atwood, 62-64.
31 As with Owenson, critics of Richardson have enjoyed dwelling on his physical appearance. Ray Palmer Baker describes Richardson in the following terms: “[h]is French blood, which shows in the contour of his face, always gave a picturesque turn to his actions.” Baker then mentions Richardson’s “pistols, his horses, and his pet deer” as evidence of such “picturesque turns,” not to mention his “[d]rinking, quarrelling, [and] duelling” (25).
32 See Grutman, esp. 111.
33 Lorne Pierce’s *William Kirby: The Portrait of a Tory Loyalist* contains, on its title page, a photograph of Kirby, a Victorian gentleman, looking larger-than-life. The reader is looking up at Kirby who appears to be a broad-chested man, a large scarf wrapped around his right shoulder, his eyes staring piercingly ahead of him. In other words, he comes across looking like one of the “Makers of Canada.” This is one of the few instances in these books where the appearance of a male author is an issue, but the
semiotics of the photo are vastly different from the descriptions we have of Owenson and Edgeworth.

34 See, for example, the entry on *Waverley*, as the story of “a young English gentleman [who] visits the Highlands” and whose “intimacy” with the “fiery” Highlanders is depicted with a “picturesque truth” (120-21).

35 The authors also indicate that, in “the case of events which might be termed historical landmarks, a wider range of choice has been presented” (v). Thus, the fall of Québec contains almost as many entries as the Jacobite uprisings of 1745-46, and includes such Canadian titles as Gilbert Parker’s bestseller *The Seats of the Mighty* (1896) and Herbert Strang’s comically-titled *Bob the Ranger* (1897), a “graphic story of the struggle in North American . . . [at] the time of Montcalm and Wolfe” (128).
All of the books under discussion feature a great deal of travel; indeed, the act of travel, its various purposes, and the different ways that have been developed to write about them constitute an integral feature of the political and aesthetic program pursued in these novels. Thus, Thady Quirk’s absentee masters spend as much time away from their Irish estate as possible, with the result that Sir Kit Rackrent “know[s] no more about the land than the child unborn” (14). When he arrives with his new wife, Lady Rackrent looks upon the Allyballycarricko’shaughlin bog outside her window as would a tourist who is used to picturesque prospects, and she wonders “what’s all that black swamp out yonder” and “[w]here are the trees?” (17). Having proven that she is a less accommodating heiress than her husband had hoped, she is, shortly thereafter, locked into her room for seven years and has little time to find out more about her new environment, but Sydney Owenson’s Horatio M— does, and quickly becomes attuned to the beauties of both Glorvina, the Celtic princess, and of western Ireland where “the ocean, calm and unruffled, expand[s] its awful waters almost to apparent infinitude” (65). Reginald Morton, alias Wacousta, first spies Clara Beverly in the isolation of the Highlands, after an arduous climb over massive rocks barricading the way to her “oasis,” where she sits among “roses and honey-suckles . . . dressing the wounded shoulder of a stag”
(Richardson 454), and he journeys all the way to Canada in pursuit of revenge when his friend steals her from him. Edward Waverley, on his way north to Scotland in 1745 to join his regiment, travels into civil war as he makes the acquaintance, in turn, of the Bradwardines, of Donald Bean Lean, and of Fergus Mac-Ivor. Orphaned and in danger after the Battle of Culloden because of his Jacobite affiliations, Archibald de Locheill finds safety in Québec. During his years as a student at the seminary, he frequently makes the journey downriver to spend his vacation with the d’Habervilles before he and Jules d’Haberville leave for Europe to join the British and French armies respectively, with the result that they find themselves on opposing sides during the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. In The Golden Dog, famous traveler and botanist Peter Kalm arrives in Québec and admires the view from the river onto Cape Diamant, while La Salle checks in with Talon at Beaumanoir before setting out to explore the Mississippi and the Great Lakes. The administrators in A Diana of Quebec so frequently travel back and forth on diplomatic business that it is difficult to keep track of them and their whereabouts: it is fitting that, to her surprise, the reader finds at the end that the narrator has been telling his story from retirement in London. Finally, there are the victims of political and military strategizing gone horribly wrong: the Deportation of the Acadians, an enforced and tragic journey, is preceded by some Acadians’ efforts to relocate while they have some choice in the matter, and it results in numerous other forays in search of their families and a new home.

As this list illustrates, travel serves a broad range of purposes in these novels. It may ostensibly be undertaken for personal enjoyment as it is in Archie and Jules’ sleigh-ride along the St. Lawrence in the company of the d’Habervilles’ talkative servant José,
or in Horatio's sketching trips on the west coast of Ireland for want of anything better to
do in the early days of his stay there, or in a picnic near the Montmorenci Falls in A
Diana of Quebec. More often, however, travel is performed in the service of larger
interests, and even such leisure activities often become inseparable from military,
scientific, and educational ones. Even in the thick of action, Edward Waverley likes "to
ride a little apart from the main body, to look at any object of curiosity which occurred on
the march," and when a building or scenery strikes his fancy, he "[leaves] the squadron
for half-an-hour, to take a survey and slight sketch of it" (395). When the Riedesels
prepare for a hasty departure from Québec with the approach of military action,
McIlwraith appeals to the children she typically included in her readership by offering
leisurely details about the preparations necessary for an eighteenth-century Atlantic
crossing, dwelling on the cow and chickens brought on board to provide milk and eggs,
and on the lettuce seeded in crates so that the passengers could be kept healthy and the
children amused while they watched it grow.

In other words, in these travels it is difficult and not always particularly useful to
separate between travel as "business" on the one hand or leisure activity on the other
because the discourses are often found to have the same root. This, to a degree, is even
true with the third kind of travel addressed in this chapter. Closest to the original
meaning of travel as "travail," the enforced migration of the Acadians made it necessary
that they draw on the practical knowledge of the sea they had acquired as fishermen and
dyke-builders in more peaceful times, and that Acadia's memory be kept alive by telling
its story on the road: the more famous heir to Bourassa's Jacques et Marie, Antonine
Maillet's Prix-Goncourt-winning Pélagie-la-Charrette (1979) tells the story of a group
of storytelling Acadians who make their way back from the southern United States to their homeland in a journey that takes them a decade to complete.¹

These combined purposes of travel are also to be found in two travel reports that, more than any other, have influenced the nationalist writing of Ireland and Scotland. One of these is Arthur Young's nine hundred-page *A Tour in Ireland, With General Observations on the Present State of That Kingdom: Made in the Years 1776, 1777, and 1778* (1780), the work of an agricultural economist and editor of *The Annals of Agriculture*. Trumpener criticizes Young's book for paying insufficient attention to the exploitation of tenants by landowners (see 39f), but the wealth of detail he presents is such that, to his contemporaries, it refuted long-held prejudices against the Irish apparently without requiring much interpretive commentary from the author. Edgeworth was greatly impressed with the scrupulousness of Young's observations, as was Owenson. Indeed, the priest in *The Wild Irish Girl* calls *A Tour in Ireland* the work of "an intelligent and liberal countryman of [Horatio’s]," before he cites a passage which, by observing Irish peasants at work "procuring lime for manure," effectively dispels the stereotype of "idleness [as] the chief vice laid to the account of [Irish] peasantry" (188) that Horatio has imprudently reiterated.

Despite its obvious shortcomings as a popular narrative (and its failure—in keeping, it should be added, with the time in which it was produced—to analyze class-relations with any thoroughness), Young's work fared considerably better in public opinion than Samuel Johnson's much maligned *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1775), which angered Scottish nationalists because of its unsentimental depiction of Highland life, its dismissal of oral tradition as a mainstay of cultural
survival, and its advocacy of English ways as the measure of all things. As an imperial ethnography, the book commits an error very similar to Young's, but it does so for the opposite reason: while Young becomes so mired in materialist detail that he cannot conceptualize the larger implications of his observations, Johnson is “[s]elf-immured in literary language, [and therefore] incapable of comprehending the material bases of Scottish culture” (Trumpener 87). Johnson’s alleged failure is all the more ironic because his and Boswell’s journey was undertaken in the Enlightenment spirit of testing his readings against the factual evidence (see Korshin 238f). Too often for his critics, however, it was the evidence that had to measure up to the previous reading.

All of the travelers I discuss retrace in physical terms a particular ideology against which they evaluate the local landscape and culture. Very often (as in Morton’s journeys to the Highlands in *Wacousta*), these criteria for evaluation, and the ideologies to which they are attached, have been influenced by literary precedents. Johnson’s journey, for example, was itself a literary palimpsest: at Boswell’s instigation, their itinerary copied part of Ben Jonson’s in 1619 and, more influentially, it duplicated the travels James Macpherson had made in 1760-61 in search of the alleged *Ossian* manuscripts. Johnson was determined to expose these as fraudulent and the evidence he found (or, rather, the lack thereof) confirmed him in his opinion. In keeping with his method of inquiry (namely, a field trip), he captures the result of his investigations in terms of an expedition: “[b]ut this is the age in which those who could not read, have been supposed to write; in which the giants of antiquated romance have been exhibited as realities. If we know little of the ancient Highlanders, let us not fill the vacuity with Ossian. If we have not searched the Magellanick regions, let us however forbear to people them with
Paragons” (119). On one of the many occasions when the Prince of Inismore and the priest instruct Owenson’s hapless Horatio in Irish lore, they draw the young man’s attention to the instances where Macpherson gives the Scots undue precedence over the Irish. In order to lend scholarly authority to his own conviction that the Irish have a considerably older civilization than the Scots, the priest quotes at some length a passage from Johnson which describes his futile search for documents that would support Macpherson’s assertions that the Ossian poems are based on an ancient original in Erse. However, at the end of this particular lesson, Macpherson still wins the day because Glorvina, diplomatically conceding that “Ossian was an Irishman,” waxes lyrical over the poetry because she “experience[s] in its perusal a similar sensation, as when, in the stillness of an autumnal evening, I expose my harp to the influence of the passing breeze, which, faintly breathing on the chords, seems to call forth its own requiem as it expires” (107). In other words, the scientific spirit of Johnson’s enterprise is marshaled as long as it serves the purpose of Owenson’s nationalist enterprise, but it is dismissed when its coldness threatens to displace the lyricism that her book endorses as a characteristic distinguishing the Irish from the English.

The parallels drawn between Ireland and Scotland in Johnson’s book and discussed in Owenson’s novel became something of a staple in subsequent British travel writings about Ireland, but more often than not they were used to point out that, depending on the author’s point of view, one country had more to complain about its position in the British Empire than the other. One thought, for example, that “[t]here was no fatality in the position of Ireland at all . . . She was in the position of a country destined, by her very geographical situation, to be absorbed into the body-politic of a
greater country beside her” (Leitch Ritchie, qtd. in Hooper 58). Another queried, “[w]ho ever hears of Scotch grievances? Nobody. Why? Because they have none of which to complain” (J. Grant, qtd. in Hooper 75).

The size of Canada and the multitude of interests involved in governing it preclude the existence of a travel report resembling Young’s or Johnson’s that could have influenced all four of the Canadian books in my discussion. Cronk cites Alexander Henry’s *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories, Between the Years 1760-1776* (1809) as a likely source for Richardson, as well as Robert Rogers’s *A Concise Account of North America* (1765), but Richardson’s own extensive travels in North America and Europe probably provided him with a great deal of firsthand knowledge of the geographies he described. Kirby cites Peter Kalm’s *Travels in North America*, originally published in Swedish in 1749-50, with an English translation available in 1770-71. The work closest to those of Young and Johnson in scientific spirit and patriotic effect is Thomas Chandler Haliburton’s *An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia* (1829), a work for which the author conducted a massive amount of research during his travels throughout the Maritimes as a judge. Haliburton was opposed to the union of the Maritimes with the Canadas, and his attention to the history and economy of Nova Scotia was, among other things, motivated by his wish to illustrate the cultural distinctiveness of the region. The *Account* and its depiction of the life and deportation of the Acadians became the source for Longfellow’s *Evangeline*, and it is also frequently cited in Bourassa’s *Jacques et Marie*.²

Even if Johnson’s journey was more often than not a model to contradict, his and Young’s journeys became foundational models of sorts for the investigative journeys that
are at the centre of many nineteenth-century British national tales and historical novels: Walter Scott, in *Waverley*, uses a practical means of transport, the "humble English post-chaise, drawn upon four wheels, and keeping his Majesty's highway" to alert his readers that they are to expect "heavy roads, steep hills, sloughs, and other terrestrial retardations" in the shape of thorough instruction in the political, social, and cultural underpinnings of the story before they arrive at "a more picturesque and romantic country" (63). As these concessions indicate, however, the investigative journey did by no means replace other and often older models of travel such as the *voyage initiatique* of courtly romance, the picaresque novel, the *grand tour*, the sentimental journey (as in Sterne's famous book, *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy* [1768]), and travel as satire (as in Tobias Smollett's ill-tempered *Travels Through France and Italy* [1765]). On the contrary: all of these can be found in the books to be discussed, sometimes to counterpoint the scientific impulse of investigation, sometimes to join forces with it.

**Arrivals**

*The Wild Irish Girl* introduces the young Englishman Horatio M——. Of extravagant habits and artistic ambitions, he is not inclined to follow the career as a lawyer and parliamentarian that his father envisages for him. Lord M—— dispatches his son to the family's Irish estates to mend his ways, a decision greatly resented by his offspring who complains to a friend that he has long associated the place with the barren land of the
“Esquimaux” (33). Still, he duly sets off, fully expecting to find his sojourn there an insufferable “exile” (31) away from the refined enjoyments of the metropolis. Even as the ship approaches the Irish coast, there are indications that the young man’s experiences on the island will be momentous. As the coastline appears on the horizon, an unnamed fellow traveler on the steamship approaching Dublin “compare[s] the view to that which the bay of Naples affords” (38). At a time when Romantic taste had elevated Italian scenery to a standard of beauty (and Owenson later published a book celebrating Italy’s charms), this analogy is high praise indeed, and it regularly appears in contexts in which a location gains in legitimacy by the association: William Kirby too understood the dynamic when he has Peter Kalm exclaim at the beginning of The Golden Dog: “See Naples and then die!” adding “See Quebec and live forever!” (1).

The very use of an analogy is, however, also an indication that, although Horatio is willing to concede that “the bay of Dublin” is “one of the most splendid spectacles in the scene of picturesque creation I had ever beheld, or indeed even conceived” (39), Ireland is also sufficiently “other” to require a comparison, and a rather muddled one at that. Pedantically he comments that “if the scenic beauties of the Irish bay are exceeded by those of the Neapolitan, my fancy falls short in a just conception of its charms” (39), and the lack of clarity in the reference of the possessive pronoun, not to mention his convoluted way of expressing himself, create enough ambiguity to allow for two opposing readings: it could be either Italy or Ireland that sets the standard of beauty. The panorama he sees from the deck provides him with a version of the encompassing view that Mary Louise Pratt, in her study of travel as imperial enterprise, calls the perspective of the “monarch-of-all-I-survey” (92), but his privileged outlook is suddenly obscured by
"a contrary wind": "the weather suddenly changed, the rain poured in torrents, a storm arose, and the beautiful prospect which had fascinated our gaze, vanished in mists of impenetrable obscurity" (38). The resulting disorientation ushers him into the first of several initiatory experiences that gradually draw him deeper into the true Ireland: out of the mist, a boat approaches to receive the mail and convey the passengers to shore. The six oarsmen remind him of "the once formidable race of Irish giants," despite the tattered clothing that alludes to their present destitution and suggests that they may be only "the lingering progeny" of their powerful ancestors. Horatio is sufficiently enthralled by the sight of "these sea monsters" (40) that he too draws on Mediterranean culture to evoke their powerful presence, although he turns to ancient mythology rather than to contemporary Italy when he admiringly assesses their "sinewy contexture of forms, which might have individually afforded a model to sculpture, for the colossal statue of an Hercules" (40). Despite his appreciation of their athletic bodies, however, Horatio treats the oarsmen with the condescension a squire might extend to the laborers on his estate. These giants are diminished and rendered harmless by their docility and quaintness, and Horatio rewards them with a handsome tip, as if they had just provided him with a splendid theatrical performance. Little does he know that these oarsmen anticipate his encounter, not so easily managed, with the Prince of Inismore who, despite his advancing years, has "a form almost gigantic in stature [with] limbs of Herculean mould" (144).

In keeping with Horatio's extraordinary decision, at the end of the book, to remain in Ireland, Owenson takes her time to introduce him gradually and thoroughly to Ireland's magic and thus to prolong his "arrival" well into the book. In so doing, she uses a number of interrelated literary techniques that help her to juxtapose the Anglo-Saxon
mentality which has produced her protagonist with the Celtic culture to which he becomes acculturated. *The Wild Irish Girl* is an epistolary novel, mostly consisting of Horatio’s letters to his friend “J.D. Esq.,” but also, early on, of missives by Lord M—which explain his decision to send his son to Ireland. With its emphasis on dates and names, the epistolary novel famously mimics the truth claims of investigative reporting, and Owenson further underlines the veracity of her text by abbreviating, in the manner of the novelists of her day, the names of places and people as if to protect them from identification. The epistolary novel lends itself to providing blow-by-blow accounts of dramatic events or crises (such as Horatio’s banishment), made all the more suspenseful by the letter-writer’s personal involvement in them, but it is equally suited to conveying the tedium of days with nothing much to do (such as Horatio’s rambles in the neighbourhood of his father’s estate, and his sketching). As a counterpoint to the chronological mode sustained by the epistolary mode, Owenson introduces older literary forms such as the romance and the idyll in which time is eternal and imagination rules over reason. Through “its narratives of encounter,” Ferris explains, “the Irish national tale sought to place certain forms of metropolitan reason under pressure and loosen their configuration” (“Cultural Encounter” 302). Thus, Horatio’s encounter with Glorvina is preceded by three rites of passage typical of the romance: his state of disorientation escalates from obscured vision during the landing in Dublin, through speechlessness when he encounters a group of singing women who do not speak English, to a moment of unconsciousness when he eavesdrops on Glorvina, falls from his perch outside her window, and has to be taken to the Inismores’ rooms to recover.
Glorvina’s family, the dispossessed Irish royalty, who were ousted from their lands by Horatio’s’s great-grandfather during the Cromwellian war, live in a ruined castle. In its dilapidation, it has gradually become part of its natural environment, as Horatio admiringly observes when he comes upon the chapel during a mass commemorating “the anniversary of the day on which [Horatio’s] ancestors took the life of [the] venerable prince [of the Castle of Inismore]”: “Nearly one half of the chapel of Inismore has fallen into decay, and the ocean breeze, as it rushed through the fractured roof, wafted the torn banners of the family which hung along its dismantled walls” (142-43). The overgrown ruin seems taken straight out of William Gilpin’s reflections on the picturesque (in Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty, On Picturesque Travel, and On Sketching Landscape [1792]), a connection that Horatio highlights with great enthusiasm, but it also evokes the enchanted castle in fairy-tales like Sleeping Beauty, with the added complication that he himself temporarily turns into a “Sleeping Beauty” who must be revived from his swoon.

Romance and idyll also make their way into the text through Horatio’s sketching, and here too Owenson carefully sets the scene. As an aspiring artist, Horatio is quick to cite painters and sculptors when describing the Irish scenery to his correspondent. He mentions all the standard aesthetic categories, together with the painters who best represent them. A picturesque scene conjures up Claude Lorrain (1600-82), whose idyllic landscapes evoked visions of lost pastoral splendour, while wild and rugged, and therefore sublime, mountain scenery is seen through the eyes of Salvator Rosa (1615-73), a Neapolitan painter whose eccentric work and personality later inspired Owenson to
write *The Life and Times of Salvator Rosa* (1824) under her married name Lady Morgan. At the foot of a mountain, for example, Horatio exclaims:

> [m]ountain rising over mountain, swelled like an amphitheatre to those clouds which, faintly tinged with the sun's preclusive beams, and rising from the earthly summits where they had reposed, incorporated with the kindling aether of a purer atmosphere. All was silent and solitary—a tranquillity tinged with terror, a sort of 'delightful horror,' breathed on every side—I was alone, and felt like the presiding genius of desolation!

(54-55)

Dramatic light effects and grandiose isolation cloak the presence of the divine; they also become an operatic celebration of the next best thing to the divine, namely the national spirit, an association that Owenson is careful to underline throughout, by showing the Prince of Inismore as working in tandem with the priest.

More often than not, however, Horatio uses Lorrain and Rosa as little more than the guidebook clichés both had become at a time when tourists stumbled through the Lake District, a Claude glass firmly clamped to their eye. Even when he talks about the thing that supposedly separates him most from his commonsensical father—his art—Horatio uses language that is suspiciously similar to his father's, clogged with abstracts, convoluted syntax, and priggish citations from a multitude of learned authorities. In other words, Horatio uses his language—like his sketching—to control an unfamiliar environment. Quite often, however, he achieves the opposite and his way of expressing himself reads like a linguistic performance that has detached itself from the situation that produced it. His curiously ambiguous comment about the beauty of the bay of Dublin is
one such occasion; another occurs when he travels towards his father's estate. After trying to proceed in an "Irish post-chaise," Horatio complains that he was "[u]nable . . . to sit tamely during the 'penalty of Adam, the season's change,' or to sustain any longer the 'hair-breadth scapes,' which the most dismantled of vehicles afforded me, together with delays and stoppages of every species to be found in the catalogue of procrastination and mischance" (41). In other words, the post-chaise may be an extremely decrepit vehicle, but Horatio's rhetoric is not. It outperforms the situation, although his frustration erupts in the spluttering sibilants and thereby undermines its pedantic splendour.

When Horatio observes the Inismores from his dangerous perch outside their window, however, he is rendered speechless by Glorvina's beauty, or at least as speechless as the chief correspondent of an epistolary novel can be permitted to be: "[b]ut how cold—how inanimate—how imperfect this description! Oh! could I but seize the touching features—could I but realize the vivid tints of this enchanting picture, as they then glowed on my fancy!" (74). The tell-tale dashes and exclamation marks, together with the anaphoric sentences loosely held together by coordinates, are a considerable departure from the magisterial entanglements of his earlier writing, although here too he cannot, hilariously, refrain from composing a picture in his mind: "[t]he grotesque figure of her antiquated nurse. O! the precious contrast. And yet it heightened, it finished the picture" (74). On his approach to Dublin, Horatio is surprised when he first hears the giant oarsmen speak. Although they use "an accent and voice that made me startle," they "address . . . me in English at least as pure as a Thames boatman would use" (34). He then corrects the condescension implied in this comparison by alluding to their language as "curiously expressive and original" (34). The oarsmen's musical idiom prepares him
for Glorvina's singing and harp-playing, both of which insinuate themselves into his metropolitan speech, whose cadence and diction herald what Grant Allen calls "the hard-headed organization" of the Saxon, or "Teuton" (268).

In order to explain Horatio's receptiveness to Glorvina and the Irish tradition that she represents, Owenson introduces him from the beginning as a somewhat untypical specimen of Englishness. As suggested above, he is more his father's son than he admits, but he is also a dandy whose aestheticism primes him for his eventual surrender to "the lightness, airiness, imagination, wonder, the sense of beauty and of mystery, the sadness, the sweetness" (Allen 268) of Celticism, even if he must soon enough trade his foppishness for genuine enthusiasm and dedication. A scene preceding his arrival in the Inismores' castle illustrates the transition. Horatio is attracted to a ruined barn by the sound of a chorus of women. He finds a spinning circle of young women led by an old woman (another fairy-tale motif very much in keeping with the story of Sleeping Beauty), and listens to their song until the women abruptly stop when they perceive his presence. He reports that "the old woman addressed me sans ceremonie, and in a language I now heard for the first time." The younger women greet his words with repressed laughter while the older woman makes what he takes to be a gesture of contempt. In this encounter, he is no longer able to maintain the feeling of superiority that he was able to muster towards the giant oarsmen who, after all, obliged him by speaking quaint, but comprehensible English. With these women, Horatio has to confess that he never felt himself "less invested with the dignity of [a man] than while [he] stood twirling [his] stick and 'biding the encounter of the eyes' and smiles of these 'spinners in the sun'" (61-63). Horatio attempts self-irony here by stylizing the encounter into a small literary
satire, but the “twirling stick”—a dandyesque accessory which the reader finds, post-Freud, difficult to countenance with the appropriate composure—indicates that he is uncomfortable in the situation. Here, and in other situations, Horatio is not easily subsumed under the stereotypical headings of either “hysterical Celt” or “manly Anglo-Saxon” (see Alderson 119). Ferris suggests that “[i]n its tactics of displacement the national tale founded by [Owenson] in The Wild Irish Girl" attempts to destabilize imperial narratives (“Cultural Encounter,” 303). These “tactics of displacement” will, in turn, be taken up by Canadian novelists, whose attempts to revise imperial narratives of colonial encounter will be written in the terms provided by Owenson.

Go-Betweens and Border Countries

Horatio M— is the prototype of a number of similar characters in these books whose dispositions allow them to become mediators between two cultures in need of reconciliation. George Gordon, in Jacques et Marie, could easily be Horatio’s twin: dispatched to Nova Scotia by his family because he has committed a number of indiscretions, he decorates his room with portraits of women, each picture suspended by a different-coloured lock of hair (the narrator superfluously comments, “[c]e n’étaient pas des portraits de famille” [67]), and he dreams of adding a sketch of Marie, drawn rococo-style à la François Boucher, with “un ou deux genoux” (89) showing. Marie’s innocence converts him soon enough to a nobility that tries to match hers and to her religion because in his heart he has always known himself to be Catholic. In other words, as a libertine
and an artist, Gordon—like Horatio—is already outside the pale of his class, but he is also young and impressionable enough to be swayed from his rakish life towards the culture to which he has been exiled, when the right woman comes along.

In each case, the hero’s attraction to an alien nation, Ireland or Acadia, is captured in a heterosexual romance, but one in which the gender roles have been temporarily reversed in order to make the male characters’ education in a culture they initially despise plausible. Impressionable and romantic, Gordon and Horatio also become unnaturally good listeners to please the women they love, thus acquiring qualities typically associated with female characters and preparing them for instruction in the culture to which their beloved belongs. However, Gordon’s and Horatio’s femininity are not matched by corresponding masculinity in Glorvina and Marie, both of whom are paragons of womanliness, but displaced, in The Wild Irish Girl, onto the young woman’s father (in conjunction with the priest who keeps a close eye on the Prince’s pagan impulses), and, in Jacques et Marie, onto the father and—in a rather drastic extension of the configuration—onto Jacques, the Acadian fiancé. In other words, in loving Glorvina and Marie, Horatio and Gordon must court the present and future patriarchs of the family as well. As a result Horatio seems to spend much more time being instructed in Celticism by Glorvina’s father and the priest than he spends with Glorvina herself. Indeed, he finds out that not only has he in reality been courting the men and the culture they stand for but he has been standing in for his own father who, it turns out, is also in love with Glorvina and intends to marry her. Once Horatio’s education has been completed, however, the male decoys can be safely removed: his father withdraws from the competition, and Glorvina’s father dies. At this point, the allusions to Sleeping Beauty as a myth about the
rites of adolescence can be safely abandoned because Horatio has been awakened from his ignorance and inducted into the duties of adulthood. Having absorbed enough “feminine” qualities from Celticism to improve the not always praiseworthy ones he had to begin with, and to enhance his education as a responsible and empathetic landholder, he can now also stop being a “woman” and take the place of not one, but two, patriarchs.

For the most part, the gender switching in Owenson’s and Bourassa’s novels is little more than a narrative device that allows the “lesson” to proceed, but in Scott’s Waverley novels such ambiguities appear to have a broader function. In her reading of the Waverley novels, Judith Wilt suggests that in these books both men and women “must journey through the experience of the other, the outlawed, gender, before either one can choose and re-fix the male or female identity appropriate to the new age” (117), and Ferris shows how, in Scott, preoccupation with romance, debilitating enough in a woman but at least restricted to the domestic sphere, becomes dangerously irresponsible in a man: “[Waverley] risks the life of the men on his estate, as well as his own life, and he threatens the order of the state” (102). Indeed, Edward Waverley, whom his creator uncharitably described as “a sneaking imbecile” (qtd. in Hook 11), is so enthralled with the romance of the Highlands that he barely notices how he is being drawn into the Jacobite insurgents’ inner circle. Unlike the narrator of the novel who insists on traveling in a prosaic “post-chaise” (63), Waverley prefers—as it were—conveyance by flying carpet, thus earning himself mockery and censure throughout his adventures.

Waverley’s preference for French and Italian authors makes him suspect both to Flora (“Yes . . . he can admire the moon, and quote a stanza from Tasso” [370]) and to his author. Scott excused Flora’s theatrical appearance in “a sylvan amphitheatere,” where
she proceeds to perform “a wild and peculiar tone” on her harp, the “use of which had been taught to [her] by Rory Dall, one of the last harpers of the Western Highlands” (175-78), by referring “to her French education, in which point and striking effect always make a considerable object” (502, n.0), but he is clearly not prepared to extend similar leniency to Waverley who gawks at her as if she were “a fair enchantress of Boiardo or Ariosto” (177). This fascination with flamboyance is also largely responsible for Waverley’s dangerous infatuation with Flora’s brother and the Young Pretender who, as Jacobites, have strong connections to France. However, while the overblown scene in which Waverley first spies Flora contains all the ingredients that explain his shortcomings, it also proclaims that these will be overcome. Before he even lays eyes on her, he comes upon the two brooks that form the river whose course he has been following: “[t]he larger was placid and even sullen in its course, wheeling in deep eddies, or sleeping in dark blue pools; but the motions of the lesser brook were rapid and furious, issuing from between precipices, like a maniac from his confinement, all foam and uproar” (174-75). Ascending into Flora’s “amphitheatre,” he follows this unruly stream, but its—and his—fate have already been determined: both will soon enough merge into a larger and calmer stream, in which the “sullenness” of one brook cancels out the “mania” of the other, and vice versa. It is clear that this paysage moralisé also has something to say about the kind of state Scott has in mind once Scotland has been merged with England.

Such reconciliations are not as easily brought about when the character is himself the descendant of two cultures, as in Archibald de Locheill’s case in Aubert de Gaspe’s novel. Arché has been erroneously described as simply one of the many stereotypical
British characters who populate nineteenth-century French-Canadian novels (see Hathorn 17). However, as a Jacobite, Archibald is Roman Catholic and speaks French, both factors that make him highly acceptable to the d’Haberville family (see Kröller, “Jacobites,” 169). Moreover, the defeat of the Young Pretender’s followers in the Battle of Culloden resembled that of the French on the Plains of Abraham, the more so since Murray and Wolfe were present at both battles. There was an unsubstantiated rumour that Bonnie Prince Charlie had escaped to Nova Scotia, and Flora MacDonald (“a name,” as Dr. Johnson pointed out, when he met her during his travels, “that will be mentioned in history, and if courage and fidelity be virtues, mentioned with honour” [67]) emigrated to North Carolina until she returned to Scotland via Halifax after the American revolution. The complicated allegiances of the Stuarts and their multilingualism created some startling encounters on the Plains where a group of Highlanders found themselves addressed, in Gaelic, by a “gigantic French officer” who, to them, seemed “his Satanic Majesty in person” (Gibbon 78).

Jean McIlwraith wrote several historical novels using the chameleon-like adaptability of Jacobite characters to give an unusual twist to stories that, by the early 1900s, had already been told several times over. In The Curious Career of Roderick Campbell (1901), Roderick allies himself with “with every imaginable faction in the Old World and the New” (Kröller, “Jacobites,” 171), while Captain Mathews, the narrator of A Diana of Quebec, proclaims that he has “no personal feeling against the French whatsoever. . . . They were the ancient allies of my forebears, and stood by us in our wars with England” (9). However, Mathews, who, as military secretary to the Governor of Québec, is responsible for locating and arresting French-Canadian and American rebels,
is suspicious of Mary Simpson whose father was Provost-Marshal in Wolfe’s army and
died on the Plains of Abraham. She loves Jacobite “ditties,” shows open sympathy with
the French Canadians, and demonstrates an unwomanly interest in political and military
affairs. In other words, she may be the spy for whom Mathews has been looking. (In an
abrupt turn of events, Mathews proves her innocence and discovers that he is in love with
her.) In The Span O’ Life: A Tale of Louisbourg and Quebec (1899), the book
McIlwraith co-authored with William McLennan, one of the characters is modeled on the
historical Chevalier de Johnstone, whose testimony on Charles Edward’s alleged
cowardice during the Battle of Culloden is summarily dismissed by Scott in his Notes to
Waverley. Like Wolfe and Murray, Johnstone fought at Culloden and on the Plains of
Abraham, commenting on both battles in his memoirs and keeping such distinguished
Canadian historians as James Le Moine and P. B. Casgrain busy for years with
speculations about his mother tongue (see Kröller, “Jacobites,” 172).

During his final dinner with the d’Habervilles before the British invasion (in
which he will participate), de Locheill warns the d’Habervilles, and with them all French-
Canadians, of Great-Britain’s selfishness:

Il sied peu à un jeune homme comme moi . . . de se mêler à vos graves
débats; mais, à défaut d’expérience, l’histoire viendra à mon aide. Défiez-vous des Anglais, défiez-vous d’un gouvernement qui a toujours les yeux
ouverts sur les intérêts de l’Empire britannique; défiez-vous d’une nation
qui a la ténacité du bull-dog. Si la conquête du Canada lui est nécessaire,
elle ne perdra jamais cet objet de vue, n’importe à quels sacrifices: témoin
ma malheureuse patrie. (203)
Having made his peace with the British government in order to gain access to his estate, however, he returns to Québec as lieutenant of a Highland regiment whose members he has personally chosen from his clan. His officer, General Montgomery, orders him to set fire to the d’Haberville manor and, indeed, to all property owned by French Canadians that may lie in the path of the troops that he is leading along the south shore of the St. Lawrence. In this way, Montgomery, who is aware of de Locheill’s sympathy for the plight of the French Canadians, tests the young man’s loyalty to the British crown and insists that he is not trustworthy because of his “predilection pour nos ennemis” (220).

The French Canadians mistake de Locheill, in his military uniform, for an “Anglais” and fear for their lives (one young woman pleads with him to show mercy with her elderly father: “[m]onsieur l’Anglais, ne tuez pas mon pauvre vieux père; n’abrégez pas ses jours: il n’a pas longtemps à vivre” [220]), and it takes even his friend Jules considerable time to recognize him on the Plains. However, Aubert de Gaspe continues to emphasize de Locheill’s Scottish heritage, as well as drawing attention to the ways in which Archibald shows nobility in even the most adverse situations (he warns the d’Habervilles that he has to burn their house down), but relationships between Archibald and his adopted family become understandably strained. De Locheill sells his estate in Scotland in order to be able to offer Blanche a comfortable life, but she turns him down, and she and Archibald spend the remainder of their lives competing in celibacy. While Aubert de Gaspe does his best to explain the switches in Archibald’s loyalties, some aspects remain baffling in light of his earlier proclamations of hostility toward Britain (see, for example, Lemire, Grutman, Deschamps). (In these apparent contradictions, de Locheill matches Flora MacDonald who became strongly involved in the Loyalist cause...
while she lived in North Carolina, a surprising course of action perhaps in a woman who
had openly supported the Stuarts and, by implication, opposed the Hanoverians who now
found themselves dealing with a rebellious colony. However, virtually any monarchy
appeared better to people of MacDonald's background than republicanism.) John Lennox
is right to suggest that de Locheill "is the creation of history, an idealized model adapted
by de Gaspé from Scott" (131), but as we have seen, the "idealized model" is a
complicated one.

In *Les Anciens Canadiens* and in McIlwraith's novels, the inconsistencies brought
on by a character's multiple alliances are "solved" by romance, or--in de Locheill and
Blanche d'Haberville's case--a celibate version of that plot. In *Wacousta*, however, no
such reconciliations are possible. This book too uses Jacobite characters to portray a
range of conflicting allegiances. Lieutenant Johnstone tries to make up for his family's
Stuart past by showing exceptional valour, and it could be argued that his efforts are
meant to counterbalance the excesses of Wacousta, whose own life-story closely
resembles that of the Chevalier de Johnstone. When Lieutenant Leslie admonishes
Johnstone that "a too close adherence to that motto [i.e. 'following wherever my gallant
captain leads'] has been, to some degree, fatal to [his] family," Johnstone warmly
responds: "[t]hough the winged spur no longer adorn the booted heel of an Earl of
Annandale, the time may not be far distant when some liberal and popular monarch of
England shall restore a title forfeited neither through cowardice nor dishonour, but from
an erroneous sense of duty" (116). But the Johnstone plot is too slight to make the kind
of a difference required to blot out Wacousta's unethical behaviour, and the abridged
versions of the book tend to excise it as superfluous.
The origins of Wacousta’s vendetta against the de Haldimar family are in Britain, in the Scottish highlands to be precise, where he first falls in love with Clara Beverly. As Clara’s father has withdrawn from society in protest against the Jacobites’ defeat in 1715 and created a secluded home for himself, his daughter, and their maid. Reginald Morton finds her there and entrusts her to his friend de Haldimar. In order to get his rival out of the way, de Haldimar convinces his superiors to have Morton court-martialed and discharged from the military, and he marries Clara himself. Seeking revenge, Morton follows de Haldimar to Culloden, to the Battle of the Plains, and to Detroit. Here he fights on the side of the Jacobites, the French Canadians, and the Iroquois, in the hope of settling the score with both de Haldimar and the British military who, he believes, have unjustly discharged him. In other words, the high civic purpose that motivates Archibald de Locheill (all inconsistencies in his conduct notwithstanding) have here been replaced by personal goals, and fighting on one side or another is strictly a question of the kinds of opportunities they offer to those ends.

While the very landscape proclaims a peaceful resolution of Edward Waverley’s infatuation with Flora, scenery in Wacousta does the opposite. Morton’s invasion of Clara Beverly’s well-hidden Highland retreat is described in terms that make it resemble rape: progressing “like ... a crawling reptile,” his “toes worm [ing] themselves into the tortuous fibres of [the roots],” he gains access to the aperture in the rocks:

I was compelled to drop my whole weight, suspended by one vigorous arm, while with the other I separated the bushes that concealed the opening. A violent exertion of every muscle now impelled me upward, until at length I had so far succeeded as to introduce my head and
shoulders through the aperture, after which final success was no longer
doubtful. (453)

(Startlingly, this violent scene has its origin in a similar one in a work by Scott, the very
popular narrative poem The Lady of the Lake [1810], see MacLaren 49.) This description
of Morton and Clara Beverly’s first meeting occurs towards the end of book and can
therefore not be read as the sort of allegorical premonition that the junction of the two
streams provides in Waverley. Instead, the scene resembles the projection of the
subconscious onto the natural (and architectural) environment typical of the gothic novel.

[n.p.] Richardson’s geographical border countries, in which formal boundaries are
far from established (see Duffy Tale 23), are psychological ones as well (see
Macpherson, 63-66). By the time he reaches the English garrison at Detroit, Morton has
become so savage in his manner and appearance that the soldiers are startled to hear him
speak “in the purest English accent” (264), and Frederick de Haldimar, seeking “to
reconcile the contradiction between [Wacousta’s] dress and features and the purity of the
English he had just spoken,” accuses Morton of belonging to no nation: “[t]here is no
country in the world that would willingly claim you for its subject. Nay, even the savage
race . . . would, if apprised of your true nature, spurn you as a thing unworthy to herd
even with their wolf-dogs” (266). Although he shares numerous features with Aubert de
Gaspé’s de Locheill and with McIlwraith’s Jacobite picaros, then, Wacousta’s
unpredictable allegiances say at least as much about his neuroses as they do about the
politics that make these connections possible.

Unlike the reading of Les Anciens Canadiens and A Diana of Quebec, that of
Richardson’s novel is furthermore complicated by the overlap between the author’s life
and his fiction. Reading the remarkable papers of the 1977 conference on Richardson at the University of Western Ontario (where, under the tutelage of Carl F. Klinck and James Reaney, the *Wacousta* industry appears to have had its inception), one finds numerous efforts to match biographical facts with fictional ones. Klinck’s paper presents a detailed biographical account of Norton (with whom Richardson had an active posting in 1816) only to conclude that “there is no shred of proof for [the] claim” that Norton inspired the character of Wacousta (Klinck “John Norton” 21). David Beasley concedes that Richardson’s shortcomings – his “penchant for gambling, his occasional lies, his disdain for office seekers at the very time when he was himself seeking office, his vanity, and his aggressiveness” were “allowed to come out in the biography” (28). Morton’s restless movements between the old world and the new and within North America are easily matched by Richardson’s own wanderings from Queenston to Detroit, from England to Barbadoes, from Spain to Kingston, Montreal, and New York, an itinerary which led one prospective editor to conclude that “it would be impossible to write a biography of a man who had traveled to as many countries as Richardson had,” because “[t]he atmosphere and the relationships necessary to build up a unity to support the protagonist would be either discontinuous or lacking” (Beasley 26). Richardson’s biography displays so many features of the transnationalism that paradoxically characterizes many of the historical novels written to promote various nationalisms that it deserves to be treated as a “fiction” in its own right.
Ethnographies

Edgeworth, Owenson, Scott, and Aubert de Gaspé by no means found themselves in identical political situations, but all of them faced, in some way, the challenge of embedding their “antiquarian” research in a narrative that proclaimed reconciliation and thus became publishable. Even so, it is important to underline that the very presence of the research is an act of rebellion. In fact, it could be argued that the alacrity with which some of the authors’ findings were turned into fashion items and tourist commodities signals among other things the quickly perceived need to render them politically harmless (see Trevor-Roper).

*Les Anciens Canadiens*, published almost a decade after the abolition of the seigneurial system in 1854, describes a form of society that no longer exists. At the same time, however, it sets out to record in painstaking detail the customs and mores of an earlier era in order to preserve its memory and, with it, the dignity and respect associated with it. When Jules d’Haberville and Archibald de Locheill leave the seminary for the d’Haberville’s manor downstream, their dress is described in painstaking detail. Like twins, they are dressed identically, “en habit de voyage,” which, during the final weeks of winter, comprises “capot de couverte avec capuchon, mitasses escharlates bordées de rubans verts, jarretiers de laine bleue tricotées, large ceinture aux couleurs vives et variés ornée de rassades, souliers de caribou plissés à l’iroquoise, avec hausses brodées en porc-épic, et enfin, chapeaux de vrai castor” (10). This passage uses the hyper-detailed language of nineteenth-century fashion magazines in which description had to compensate for images (expensive to produce and lacking in colour and other features),
but it describes in fact a small compendium of imperial history. For example, although Native people wore *castor gras* pelts long before they were traded, the under fur, or *duvet*, also became an important export article for the European fashion industry where beaver hats were worn until silk hats replaced them in the 1830. Beaver, in fact, was so much in demand that it became the object of intense English-French rivalry. The young men also sport the colourful sashes that had become the trademark accessory of the *habitant* costume as it was popularized in Cornelius Krieghoff's genre paintings of Québec rural life, including his work commissioned for the new Québec Legislative Assembly. Finally, their boots are adapted from Iroquois-style moccasins, footwear better suited to the rigours of a Canadian winter than fashionable European boots and particularly useful in combination with snowshoes. The colourful idiosyncrasy of the young men's clothing and the casual harmony with which it combines several different ethnic and social traditions provides a sharp contrast to the military uniforms both will shortly be obliged to wear, as does the fact that they are dressed alike, for, as military officers, they will wear the colours of opposite camps. Archie and Jules, in other words, are like mobile archives of textile. The detailed description of their clothing nostalgically harks back to an idealized time of mutual understanding and tolerance, but it also looks forward by providing the means of reproducing at least the accessories that went with this golden age when all else is lost.\(^6\)

A similar effect is achieved by the descriptions of the "foodways" that Jules and Archie encounter during the times they enjoy elaborate hospitality on their way to the seigneurie and at the manor house itself. The first three pages of chapter six, "Un souper chez un seigneur canadien," are taken up with an extremely detailed description of the
furnishings of the dining room, the china, cutlery, table settings, and table manners. A paragraph must suffice to illustrate how Aubert de Gaspé turns these passages into another compact narrative of French Canadian history, by drawing attention to idiosyncratic customs, materials, and origins:

[l]e couvert était dressé pour huit personnes. Une cuillère et une fourchette d’argent, enveloppées dans une serviette, étaient placées à gauche de chaque assiette, et une bouteille de vin léger à droite. Point de couteau sur la table pendant le service des viandes: chacun était muni de cet utile instrument, dont les Orientaux savent seuls se passer. Si le couteau était à ressort, il se portait dans la poche, si c’était, au contraire, un couteau-poignard, il était suspendu au cou dans une gaine de marocain, de soie, ou même d’écorce de bouleau, artistement travaillée et ornée par les aborigènes. Les manches étaient généralement d’ivoire, avec des rivets d’argent, et même en nacre de perles pour les dames. (77)

Throughout, Aubert de Gaspé’s attention to the implements and customs of consuming food by far exceeds the one he pays to the food itself, thus underlining the high level of sophistication that characterizes the seigneurie and the culture it represents. In this particular chapter, the loving inventory furthermore documents the terrible loss that will be sustained when Archie burns down the manor, while providing the information necessary to reconstruct all of the items, and the right way to use them, if necessary.

Coarse table manners indicate a society that may require the tutelage of a more civilized one. Thus, in Waverley, Scott describes a Highland Feast that closely echoes Johnson’s description of the Scots before “the Union made them acquainted with English
manners”: “Their domestick life [was] unformed; their tables were as coarse as the feasts of the Eskimeaux, and their houses as filthy as the cottages of Hottentots” (Johnson 28). Finally, in Jacques et Marie, Bourassa contrasts a neatly set table in Marie’s house with the disarray in the dining-room where the English celebrate the deportation of her village, with Stilton cheese and celery (“ce légume prédestiné de l’Angleterre” [277]) as particular evidence of their barbarity.

Aubert de Gaspé’s narratorial stance in Les Anciens Canadiens is that of a leisurely raconteur with little literary ambition: “je n’ai pas assez d’amour-propre pour tenir le moins du monde à mes productions littéraires. Consigner quelques episodes du bon vieux temps, quelques souvenirs d’une jeunesse, hélas! bien éloignée, voila toute mon ambition” (16). However, this casual approach to his work does not prevent him from great vigilance when it comes to possible misuse of his ethnography as a work of merely folkloric interest, and from counterbalancing the ostentatiously careless presentation of these “quelques épisodes du bon vieux temps” with extensive Notes that provide the entire work with a scholarly air, and that are a feature in most of the novels under discussion. The Notes contain autobiographical information and anecdotes; they transcribe oral tales and local legends. Most remarkable, however, is the violence to which they frequently allude. In so doing, the Notes provide a sharp contrast to the highly stylized (and heroized) representation of conflict in the narrative itself. In the first Note, Aubert de Gaspé recounts the public execution, by the ruling British, of a Scotsman, David McLane, for high treason. Gaspé, a child at the time, was carried on the shoulders of an older schoolmate in order to see above the crowd assembled to witness the execution and how he watched with his schoolmate how McLane was hung,
disemboweled, and decapitated. According to Aubert de Gaspé’s note, the reason for this cruelty was that the British were not convinced of the French Canadians’ loyalty to the British crown, despite historical evidence to the contrary: “[l]e gouvernement, peu confiant dans la loyauté dont les Canadiens français avaient fait preuve pendant la guerre de 1775, voulut frapper le peuple de stupeur par les apprêts du supplice” (372). Aubert de Gaspé’s frank expressions of loyalty to the French-Canadian people on the one hand and his unveiled resentment against the British on the other are a far cry from the sometimes strained allegorical formality with which Anglo-French conflicts are resolved in the story of de Locheill and the d’Habervilles. The Notes work to add a rebellious subtext to the conciliatory politics of the main narrative. For example, when Jules d’Haberville’s English wife offers the faithful servant José a cup of tea as he lies dying, the Note informs us that “[l]es anciens Canadiens détestaient le thé,” and that Aubert de Gaspé’s mother, who tried to introduce tea into her husband’s family, was suspected of taking “cette drogue pour faire l’Anglaise” (356).

The decision of English translators of Les Anciens Canadiens and their publishers to eliminate the Notes may be read as a concession to the popular market, but—like the decision, in 1905, to re-issue Charles G. D. Roberts’s 1890 translation under the title of Cameron of Lochiel—it may also be seen as a measure to repress the rebellious subtext of the book (the 1974 NCL edition finally did include the Notes). Although the anglicization of Les Anciens Canadiens has been well-established (see Brierley 163-84), it should be pointed out that the dramatized version of the novel, Archibald Cameron of Locheill, ou un épisode de la Guerre de Sept Ans (adapted by Joseph-Camille Caisse and Pierre-Arcade Laporte for the college stage, first performed in 1865, and popular “well
into the twentieth century” [Doucette 26]), also by necessity simplifies or even eliminates the various subtexts of the book.\(^7\)

Aubert de Gaspé, in offering a passionate work of scholarship as well as a historical novel leisurely told, may have wished to prevent his inventory from becoming a collection of mere local exotica (a very legitimate concern, as the later commodification of the book as a tourist fetish of sorts indicates). He may also have wanted to lend additional dignity to the plight of the French-Canadians by placing it within the context of international literature, and prefacing individual chapters with epigraphs taken from a wide range of literary sources, among them Horace, Virgil, Cervantes, Chateaubriand, Chamfort, Chênedollé, Bernardin de St. Pierre, Young, Shakespeare, Sterne, Burns, Gibbon, Tennyson, Byron, Scott, Goethe, and Heine. The strong presence of British authors, generally cited in the original English, has led Rainier Grutman to suspect that Aubert de Gaspé’s declared loyalty towards French-Canadian culture is disingenuous and that his preference for Scott, Tennyson, and others, confirms not only that books in English were more easily available and more widely distributed than those in French, but that his political convictions were as “surannés” as his reading (Grutman 123). Grutman argues that even the classical authors cited in the epigraphs (and throughout the novel) are evidence of Aubert de Gaspé’s anglophile cultural preferences, because “sans être immédiatement associé avec la tradition française, l’épopée romaine paraît plutôt colorée par l’usage qui en a été fait dans les lettres anglaises, où elle est perçue comme une schema explicateur de la saga ecossaise” (121). Grutman omits, however, the considerable impact of some British authors, such as Scott and Cooper, not to mention Shakespeare, on nineteenth-century French authors. If the classical allusions in Les
Anciens Canadiens indeed confirm British influence on the book (a questionable assumption to begin with), it could just as easily be argued that British authors had been “colorés” by their absorption into French and French-Canadian literature before Aubert de Gaspé even used them. Indeed, Grutman is implicitly conflationg English-language texts with a political preference for “les Anglais,” but a Scot (as is clearly the case with the character Archibald de Locheill) and an American as literary models do not automatically run contrary to a French-Canadian agenda. The sociology of reading underlying Grutman’s argument, although thought-provoking, is not sufficiently attuned to the full range of “hétérolinguisme” available in nineteenth-century French-Canadian historical fiction in general and in Aubert de Gaspé’s novel in particular. In a book preoccupied with characters whose allegiances are not easily classified and with political programs that are at war with each other even while proclaiming peace, it seems important to apply the same caution in “reading” the author.

In keeping with a nineteenth-century woman writer’s need to legitimize her enterprise by drawing on other, usually male, authorities (see Stevenson 65; Ferris 126), Owenson’s annotations tend to be more deferential than Aubert de Gaspé’s. Aubert de Gaspé cites himself more frequently as a source on historical and other matters related to his book. By contrast, Owenson generally draws on written sources and experts such as Joseph Cooper Walker, “the leading authority on the Irish bards and ancient Irish costume” (Stevenson 71), to whom she had obtained an introduction through Alicia Lefanu, sister of the dramatist Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Owenson promptly earned censure for her troubles, much of it distinctly misogynist. In her memoirs, she relates how at a soirée organized by the Dowager Countess of Cork and Orrery she sat “the
lioness of the night! Exhibited and shown off like ‘the beautiful hyena that never was tamed,’ . . . looking almost as wild, and feeling quite as savage!” only to find herself addressed by one of the illustrious guests in the following manner: “Little girl, why did you write such nonsense? And where did you get all these damned hard words?” Owenson responded that “[she] wrote as well as [she] could, and . . . got the hard words out of Dr. Johnson’s dictionary” (quoted in Stevenson 105, 107). In retrospect, she may have been able to muster the irony that she describes here, but her biography is full of incidents in which she spends great amounts of energy proving to her critics that, despite her intellectual pursuits, she is “every inch a woman” (quoted in Stevenson 58) and no slovenly blue-stocking, but an author who receives her guests in a “drawing-room perfumed by a jardin of fresh flowers” (quoted in Stevenson 242). *The Wild Irish Girl* applies the same caution to Glorvina whose bookishness initially alarms Horatio (“I fear however that this girl is already spoiled by the species of education she has received. The priest has more than once spoken of her erudition. *Erudition!* The pedantry of a schoolboy of the third class, I suppose. How much must a woman lose, and how little can she gain, by that commutation which gives her our acquirements for her own graces! For my part, you know I have always kept clear of the *bas-bleus*; and would prefer one playful charm of a *Ninon*, to all the classic lore of a *Dacier*” [56]), before he is presented with plenty of evidence that, in discussions with her elders, she defers to them as he clearly thinks she should, besotted though he is with her.

Like Aubert de Gaspé, Owenson too attempts to counterbalance the restrictions of the narrative mode she has chosen for *The Wild Irish Girl*, namely the epistolary novel, by providing a plethora of painstakingly documented historical, social, and aesthetic
information. Her description of the clothes worn by the Prince of Inismore, for example, bristles with the italicized terminology that signals ethnographic precision:

[t]he drapery which covered this striking figure was singularly appropriate, and, as I have since been told, strictly conformable to the ancient costume of the Irish nobles. The only part of the under garment visible, was the ancient Irish *truis*, which closely adhering to the limbs from the waist to the ankle [sic], includes the pantaloons and hose, and terminates in a kind of buskin, not dissimilar to the Roman *perones*. (145)

This description comes with the Note that “[t]he Irish mantle, with the fringed or shagged borders sewed down the edges of it, was not always made of frize and such coarse materials, which was the dress of the lower sort of people, but, according to the rank and quality of the wearer, was sometimes made of the finest cloth, bordered with silken fringe of scarlet, and various colours” (145). Ferris has suggested that the presence of these Notes splits Owenson’s novel into two irreconcilable texts, one preoccupied with “the private world of sensibility,” and the other with the author’s “cultural and political ambitions” (125). However, the discourses of these two texts are in fact intertwined throughout, and the “ambitions” of the Notes (their “program” would be a better term) shift into the main narrative, while the “private world of sensibility” is on occasion transferred into the Notes where it acquires a “public dimension” (125). For example, Horatio is employed by the Prince to teach Glorvina sketching. Instead, she begins to teach him Gaelic, and both the Prince and the priest provide him with thorough instruction in the history and culture of Ireland. Nor do they indulge in sentimental nostalgia, but consistently draw his attention to the political interests that make
documents disappear and folksongs vanish. When, on cue, Horatio asks how Ireland can lay claim to antiquity when few records are available to support such aspirations, the priest informs him in language that would not be out of place in a contemporary text of post-colonial criticism: “[m]anuscripts, annals, and records, are not the treasures of a colonized or a conquered country[,] . . . it is always the policy of the conqueror (or the invader) to destroy these mementos of ancient national splendour which keep alive the spirit of the conquered or the invaded” (172).

In addition to the teaching relationships that cross over between the Notes and the main text, the epistolary format also helps to expand the horizons of the book. Both Ferris and Brophy find that Owenson does little to put the technical possibilities of the epistolary novel to the test, and it is certainly true that The Wild Irish Girl lacks the sophistication of Clarissa, Les Liaisons dangereuses, or Charles Maturin’s The Wild Irish Boy in which the voices of numerous letter-writers interweave to produce complex points-of-view. The book, however, is not merely “a ribbon of first-person narrative chopped into letter lengths” (Brophy viii) either. When he settles in with the Inismores, Horatio observes that for people who live in some isolation, the Prince and his small entourage write and receive an astonishing amount of mail. Part of this information is linked to a complication in the romantic plot (Glorvina receives letters from Lord M—who, unbeknownst to his son, is competing for her affections), but there is also an implication that Inismore and the priest may be in communication with supporters both in Ireland and abroad. (In his lecture about the significance of archives as part of a people’s collective memory, the priest suggests that papers have been stored for safekeeping as far away as Denmark, France and the Vatican.)
Furthermore, as Horatio addresses his letters to “J.D. Esq. M.P.,” it may be argued that, as an ensemble, they function as documents that pass on the results of his own instruction in Celtic history and lore to an individual who is in a position to translate it into political action. In other words, these are public letters with an educational intention, and technical sophistication in handling the epistolary format would only muddy the issue. Tellingly, at least two editions (the Pandora edition and the [unidentified] edition from which it is reprinted) omit the opening exchange of letters between Horatio and Lord M—, and Horatio and his friend, which—among other things—draw attention to “J. D.s” political office. Like the omission of the Notes in English translations of Les Anciens Canadiens, the result of this abridgement is to make the novel less of a public statement than it was intended to be. It is particularly disturbing that this lacuna should appear in the feminist Pandora edition, and that Dale Spender, the editor of the series, and Brigid Brophy, the author of the introduction to this edition, apparently were not even aware that the crucial early section had been eliminated.

Departures

Many of the historical events discussed in these novels unleashed migrations, both voluntary and involuntary, of large numbers of people. The penal laws of 1655 and 1699 restricted the Irish export of cattle, milk, butter, cheese and woolen goods, thus limiting crucial sources of income. Although the 1798 uprisings do not appear to have accelerated emigration, half a million Irish made their way to North America by the
1850s, particularly in the wake of the Great Famine of the 1840s. The effects of Culloden were equally dramatic: the abolishment of the clan system left Highlanders deprived of the social systems they were used to, but also freed them to seek new places in which to start afresh, especially since rent increases made it impossible for many of them to make a living in their homeland. Emigration became a necessity even for the better situated among them. Indeed, the trauma of some of these departures lingers in recent Canadian literature, including in the phenomenally successful work of Alistair McLeod, especially his novel No Great Mischief (2000), and the memoir the desire of every living thing (1999) by Don Gillmor (who, incidentally, also collaborated on the CBC's Canada: A People's History, as I will discuss in my Conclusion).

Departure to the New World did not protect emigrants from finding themselves at the mercy of imperialist conflicts of interest. "Le grand dérangement," the Deportation of the Acadians from what is now Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, was the result of extended English-French hostility in both the old and the new world. In Bourassa’s Jacques et Marie, the individual episodes in this power struggle are painstakingly documented at the beginning of each section. Bourassa quotes from French historian Edmé Rameau de Saint-Père’s work La France aux colonies (1859), which includes a discussion of Acadian history, and from Garneau’s Histoire du Canada. Indeed, Bourassa’s novel may be understood as part of an increasingly systematic effort, from the 1830s onwards, to record the history of the Acadians and to assert their presence in a way that would make such events as the Deportation difficult to repeat. Thus, Acadians elected members to the legislatures of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island in the 1840s and 50s; the Saint-Thomas seminary, the first francophone institution
of higher learning in the area, was opened in 1854, and in 1867 a newspaper, *Le Moniteur Acadien*, was founded in Shédiac, New Brunswick.

Bourassa, however, also emphatically relies on historical works in English, such as Thomas Chandler Haliburton’s studies, especially the two-volume *An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia* (1823), John McGregor’s *British America* (1832), Joseph Bouchette’s *British Dominions in North America* (1832), and J.R. Brodhead’s *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York* (1853-1857).

Publishing his novel shortly before Confederation, Bourassa claims in his Prologue that he is not interested in “fabriquer des machines de discorde” (30). Yet his insistence on historical sources in English is clearly strategic and designed to allow the other side to hang themselves by their own ropes. Adopting the suspiciously modest pose that also characterizes Aubert de Gaspe’s introduction to *Les Anciens Canadiens*, Bourassa avers: “je ne dirai rien de plus que ce qui a été dit par Haliburton et les écrivains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre: ce livre sera un épisode historique, rien de plus” (30). For the most part, in the introductory sections providing an overview of the historical events unfolding in individual sections of the novel, Bourassa maintains a studied objectivity, enhanced by the supporting evidence in his Notes, and expressions of emotion are largely reserved for the fictional episodes involving his two protagonists, Jacques and Marie. Occasionally, however, the situation that he relates becomes too outrageous to maintain this separation of discourses, and scholarly documentation erupts into the fictional narrative as if to forestall the reader’s disbelief. Describing the cattle’s return to a deserted and burning village, for example, Bourassa comments that “Haliburton dit qu’elles restèrent ainsi,
pendant plusieurs jours, clouées sur ces chères ruines, sans songer à retourner au pâturage ou à l'abreuvoir” (268).

In discussing some of the ways in which Bourassa translates historical “departures” into fiction, I would like to take a cue from his book and begin with a brief synopsis of the events leading up to the Deportation in order to illustrate just how extensively the fate of the Acadian colonists was bound up with decisions made, in sometimes dizzying sequence, on the other side of the Atlantic, frequently with inadequate consultation between the “home-office” and its overseas representations. The Treaty of Utrecht, which ended the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-13), ceded the territory to the English, but France attempted to protect its interests by concentrating on the Ile Saint-Jean (Prince Edward Island) and the Ile Royale (Cape Breton) and constructing the fortress of Louisbourg. Acadians attempted to accommodate themselves to the situation by agreeing to an oath of neutrality rather than an oath of unconditional loyalty, an arrangement of which Governor Richard Philips appears not to have properly informed his government, thus contributing through carelessness to the tragic developments that ensued. Louisbourg fell into the hands of the English in 1745, but was returned to France following the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748. In order to strengthen their strategic presence, the English moved the capital of the Nova Scotian territories from Annapolis Royal to Halifax and thus closer to both Europe and Boston, as well as settling approximately 7000 British colonists in the area in order to counterbalance the presence of the Acadians. The English and French competed in building forts that would protect crucial lines of communication: the construction, by the French, of Fort Beauséjour in 1750 was followed by the erection of Fort Lawrence, by
the English, in the same year. Both were meant to protect the Baie de Chignectou, an important connective between strategically sensitive areas. By 1755, however, more drastic measures seemed to be required to prevent what the English perceived as a fifth column, and a renewed refusal of the Acadians to swear an oath of unconditional allegiance was used as a pretext first to declare the entire population prisoners and then to deport them, a process which continued into 1762.

In order to make the trauma inflicted on Acadians comprehensible, this recital of historical vicissitudes must be complemented with an evocation of the very special type of community that characterized Acadia. Largely descended from the Poitou region in France, the Acadians had developed through five generations into highly self-reliant and close-knit agricultural communities. Early settlers in the area were ill-adapted to the inclement climate and plagued by disease and starvation, but once they had learned to reclaim marshland through an elaborate system of dykes (not to mention learning to adapt to their harsh environment by imitating the ways of the indigenous Micmac population), Acadians prospered and developed a strongly defined sense of group identity. The combination of their faith in the French monarchy and in the legitimacy of Roman Catholicism as unassailable principles, together with the isolation of their villages from communities that were differently constituted, furthermore provided them with a remarkable sense of independence and the determination to resist any authority that would persuade them otherwise.

Bourassa is leisurely and affectionate in his descriptions of Grand-Pré village life, and the time he regularly devotes to intimate, personal scenes contrasts sharply with the increasing urgency produced by the historical sections discussed above. Thus, the
narrative backtracks in part one, when Jacques’s family have already left the village, to
tell the story of the young couple’s courtship, of the time Jacques fed Marie strawberries
and how, in slapping a mosquito along with “le fruit inoffensif” (50), she provided him
with the opportunity to explore her face, especially “la partie la plus arrondie du menton”
(50). Elsewhere, Marie recites her plans for her married household to her mother, and her
eager catalogue outlines the traditional way of life which, at this point, she still expects to
pursue with her fiancé:

[el]t Marie continue, pendant deux heures, ce chapelet de phrases
détaillées. Quand le père Landry vint l’interrompre, elle avait déjà fait
toutes ses invitations pour le mariage, préparé le diner de noces, disposé sa
toilette, monté et démonté sa maison plusieurs fois, fait dix pièces de toile,
autant de flanelle, élevé cinquante douzaines de poules, battu mille livres
de beurre, fait baptiser ses deux aînés, un garçon et une fille qui
s’appelaient Jacques et Marie; Marie ressemblait à sa grand’maman. (54)

In these digressions in particular, Bourassa draws on his experience as a painter, carefully
sketching out the colours and contours of the scene to make them linger in the reader’s
mind, thus building up a strong sense of sympathy with the characters for those episodes
of the book when they do duty as allegorical figureheads. For example, when Marie
appears at the scene of the deportation wearing the wedding-dress and orange-blossom
crown from her trousseau, she is an allegory of Acadia whose trust in her English suitor
has been cruelly betrayed. At the same time, however, Bourassa has been careful to tell
the reader enough about her youthful dreams to show that a very personal promise has
been broken.
From the beginning, then, Bourassa maintains a balance between reciting the numerous indignities that Acadians had to suffer at the hands of the English, and documenting the resilience derived from their traditional ways and sustaining them through even the most draconian measures taken to ensure their dispersal. Indeed, its Christian rhetoric notwithstanding, the book provides Acadians with an immediate revenge that can be read as a therapeutic substitute for the one they were unable to perform in history: having escaped from his threatened execution at the hands of the English, Jacques joins his friends in burning down the presbytery in which the soldiers are engaged in a debauched banquet celebrating the Deportation. Similarly, Bourassa counterbalances a series of historical letters detailing the orders for the Deportation with fictional ones that, after some initial complication, provide his characters with the agency to prove their superior mettle.

Indeed, there was much to make up for. In order to ensure that their own interests be maintained, the English under Winslow considered it essential that Acadians’ spirit of independence be crushed, by making sure that their communities would be so thoroughly destroyed that they would not be able to reconstitute them readily even in exile. Not only were their homes burnt and their lands confiscated to ensure that they had nothing to return to should they somehow manage to make their way back, but many families were deliberately separated and forced to embark on ships bound for different destinations. As the fleet left Minas Basin in late October, the seas were rough, and several ships sank. Many passengers, particularly the elderly, did not survive the voyage, as there were outbreaks of smallpox and onset of malnutrition. Acadians were relocated in an area reaching from Massachusetts to Georgia. With some exceptions, they were ill received,
derided, or even refused entry, because the authorities had not sufficiently coordinated
the operation. Between 1755 and 1763, between 10,000 and 12,000 people were
departed (see Arsenault). Nor was this exodus the end of their tribulations: after the
Treaty of Paris in 1763, Acadians—now widely dispersed—were given eighteen months to
leave the English colonies. Those who had been taken as far away as England were
relocated in France, large numbers settled in Louisiana, while others yet agreed to take
the oath of allegiance and returned to their original places of settlement along the St.
Lawrence, where they joined up with individuals who had escaped the deportation, in
founding new communities. In other words, it is virtually impossible to count the precise
number of enforced "departures" that Acadians had to endure within a decade or so.

One result of the publication, in 1846, of H. W. Longfellow's poem Evangeline,
was to foster, especially through its numerous translations into French, the imaginative
revival of Acadia. At the same time, however, the romanticism of the poem also
generated a nostalgic cult which was easy to exploit in tourism and commercial
advertising both in the United States and in Canada, thus deflecting a great deal of
attention from the appalling historical events that produced the story in the first place (see
Griffiths 28-41, and Coates and Morgan). Although Jacques et Marie is by no means
free of the quietist romanticism of Longfellow's famous poem, the book can still be
something of a shock to the modern reader precisely because it has been so much less
worn down into a tourist commodity; indeed, the book appears to be virtually unknown
now. Throughout, Bourassa draws parallels between the fate of the Acadians and other
historical and mythic events, with the intention of creating a point of reference for their
otherwise unimaginable fate: in order to give a sense of the magnitude of their suffering,
he variously alludes to the *Odyssey*, the *Aeneid*, to the crucifixion, and to the early Christian martyrs. He also uses such comparisons to expose the English as regressive in their cruelty and far more barbaric than the ancient Romans: "[d]ans l’antiquité, c’était un crime de ravir aux exilés leurs pénates; et un peuple moderne a pu en chasser tout un autre sans lui laisser emporter les plus humbles souvenirs de leurs foyers!” (265). Indeed, to the modern reader, the details of the deportation—the separation of men and women, old and young, the destruction of their homes and families, and the overall betrayal of trust—can produce very uncomfortable parallels to more recent events in European and North American history, such as the internment of Japanese Canadians and Americans; the deportation of the Jews to concentration camps; North America’s failure, on some occasions, to provide a haven for incoming ships of refugees; and the massive displacements of Eastern Europeans from their homes as a result of World War II.

Bourassa was born in L’Acadie, Lower Canada, in 1827 into a community which had reconstituted itself after the Treaty of Paris “comme viennent les débris d’un naufrage”:

[d]es pères qui avaient eu des familles nombreuses arrivèrent avec quelques-uns de leurs enfants, ou avec ceux de leurs voisins seulement; des jeunes filles, parties avec leurs vieux parents, se rendirent avec les parents des autres; un homme qui comptait plusieurs frères parvint au terme de la route avec deux ou trois neveux: il n’entendit jamais parler de ceux qui étaient restés en arrière; quelques amis, quelques alliés réussirent à se rejoindre à différents intervalles, mais cela fut rare. Un jeune homme
The “Prologue,” as the opening frame of the book, illustrates how, the efforts of the
British notwithstanding, the Acadian community has not been destroyed because the size
of and loyalty among the dispersed families are such that an extensive fostering system
has virtually replaced them: the ships of the British may have taken them away from their
homelands, but they have survived the “shipwreck” of their existence. The book closes at
approximately the same period and in the same place as those suggested in the Prologue,
with the funeral of Marie’s father and Jacques’s and Marie’s marriage, the latter much
delayed by events. Like the patchwork families in the Prologue, the funeral serves to
assure the reader that order can be restored but, because it does so on the occasion of a
final “departure,” it proceeds with poignant ambivalence. The procession accompanying
Father Landry to his grave proceeds in orderly formation: the casket is borne by “les
vieillards les plus vigoureux de la communauté” (357), followed by Jacques and Marie,
and all of their neighbours. After the burial, some linger to read the names on other
graves to find that the cemetery has become a gathering-place for Acadians from widely
separated villages: “[n]é à Beau-Basin, né à Grand-Pré, né à Port-Royal, né à l’île St-
Jean…” (357).

In an extension of the “chapelet” outlining Marie’s imagined married life in her
community, Bourassa uses processions to juxtapose a way of life that proceeds in
harmony with the seasons and the natural environment, with a situation where this order
has been horribly destroyed, and he increases the intensity generated by the resulting
contrast until it reaches its ultimate crescendo in the deportation scene. In the midst of
growing tension, for example, and with the English looking on, the people of Grand-Pré celebrate the harvest by gathering “autour de la plus belle charrette” on which they display in triumph some of their finest produce. Decorated with garlands of leaves and drawn by two splendid oxen, the cart is accompanied by members of the community “chantant des couplets populaires” (111). Despite this bucolic splendour, however, some inhabitants of Grand-Pré have already grown sufficiently nervous about the situation to leave into voluntary exile. Thus, the Hébert family, Marie’s fiancé included, have left Grand-Pré for the shores of the Missagouache, in order to resettle on land that remains in the hands of the French. On their way to the boats taking them away, the family proceeds in orderly formation. Following Hébert, “chef” and father of fourteen children, are, in descending order, “les fils et les brus, la mère, les filles et les nombreux représentants d’une troisième génération” (41). The discipline of this “cortège” is belied by the motley assortment of household implements that the family’s members carry away into their voluntary exile. Indeed, the narrator compares the indignity of the operation to that of a poorly attended funeral.

The funeral trope gains in intensity in chapter thirteen, much of which is given over to a detailed description of the deportation, in which the men leave the church (desecrated as a military arsenal) in which they have been imprisoned, and formation after formation is lined up, none of them respectful of the bonds that tie the community together:

alors commença le triage des jeunes et des vieux . . . les gardes . . .

séparèrent les enfants d’avec leurs pères, comme le maître d’un troupeau sépare les agneaux qu’il envoie à différents marchés. Les malheureux
The patriarchal order that informs the procession of family members following Father Hébert to the boats is here taken to a horribly logical conclusion: separated by age, the men are herded onto the first two ships (the aged “chefs” having to cede first place to their younger, and therefore more dangerous, sons) while the women and children are crowded in as “remplissage” (263). Several times, the situation of the deported is compared to that of cattle or sheep. The parallel is meant to be demeaning, but it also alludes to the destruction of a way of life in which animals had reason to trust their owners. Indeed, in a scene reminiscent of a similar one in Evangeline (which, most likely, Longfellow borrowed from Haliburton), the animals linger near the village even after it has been abandoned, and it is easy for some fugitives to avail themselves of four fat lambs because Marie has given them pet names and taught them to come running when they are called.

Given the extensive destruction of the original Acadian communities, it is not surprising that so much of Acadian literature should have been preoccupied with the recovery of a widely dispersed heritage, and that contemporary writers have sometimes found it difficult to move away from the theme of a golden past destroyed by the deportation in 1755. Until the late 1950s, historical, biographical, genealogical, and linguistic research were motivated by an encyclopedic desire, typical of peoples who have experienced dispersal and fear a possible repetition, to produce written records that
would make a second attempted destruction of collective memory more difficult. During that period, fiction, poetry, and theatre all dwelled on the patriotic and religious dimensions of the deportation and its aftermath, as well as providing an outlet through which it was possible to relive the trauma as long as it was necessary to do so.

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1 Criticism of travel writing has recently begun to include the writing of refugees and migrants. See, for example, Suleiman.
2 Haliburton may have inspired only fiction with a Maritime setting with his account and may therefore be of limited interest for this study, but his role in the circulation of ideas between North America and Europe is considerable and deserves another look in the context of recent work on the historical novel. Haliburton was suspicious of the advantages to be gained from association with the British Empire (or, for that matter, any empire) because it had little to offer in return for the loyalty of its colonial subjects. *The Letter-Bag of the Great Western, Or Life in a Steamer* (1840) uses the traditional allegory of the ship as a microcosm of society to comment on colonial life as "radically heterogeneous and rootless . . . with nothing holding it together; the boat's passengers, indeed, include emigrants who remain so restless they 'cannot settle' and instead migrate constantly between settler colonies," a restlessness enhanced, as Haliburton's *The Old Judge, Or Life in Colony* (1849) suggests, by "the interchangeability of postings . . . which renders impossible the development of a colonial national character" (Trumpener 276). This view is a far cry from the perception of emigration as a one-way street which dominates 1970s criticism of Canadian literature and which is responsible for some of the distortions to which books popular during that period were subjected, including *Wacousta*.
3 Three years after the publication of *The Wild Irish Girl*, William Combe published the first of several parodies of the cult of the picturesque, *The Tour of Dr Syntax in Search of the Picturesque* (1809), thus indicating that the cults of the picturesque and sublime had indeed run their course.
4 Grant Allen’s account of the mingling of Teuton and Celt in the British national character is enacted as Horatio’s metropolitan speech encounters Glorvina’s music. Allen writes that “[i]n our complex nationality the Teuton has contributed in large part the muscle, the thews, the hard-headed organization, the law, the stability, the iron hand; but the Celt has added the lightness, airiness, imagination, wonder, the sense of beauty and of mystery, the sadness, the sweetness.” As a matter of interest, Allen was a best-selling Canadian author of fiction and a book on travel, *The European Guidebook* (1899). His work stems from Matthew Arnold, whose *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (1866) cause Oxford University to establish a Chair of Celtic Studies. See Arnold in Super.
In her characterization of Horatio, Owenson achieves a similar effect to that described by Ian Duncan with respect to Scott: "Scott's novels," he argues, "rewrite the historical private subject in terms already feminine; there follow two familiar effects. First: masculine subjection is composed upon, and consoled by, a further, secondary and supplementary (but actually primary), feminine subjection. Secondly, and accordingly: the character of this representative, dominant-class male subjectivity, even at its private and essential level of gender, is constituted by the same kinds of ('feminine') hesitancy, ambiguity and irrationality that define its ethical problematic, in the theme of national political allegiance" (Modern Romance 54).

Aubert de Gaspe, in describing the young men's shoes, omits to comment in any detail on the Iroquois beadwork (or, for that matter, on the implications of the beaver trade for Native peoples) – one example among many in these books where "others" outside of the two opposing groups with which the authors are preoccupied (Irish/English, Scottish/English, Anglo-Canadian/Franco-Canadian) are either ignored or disparaged. A recent exhibition at Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum, entitled "Across Borders: Beadwork in Iroquois Life" provides information to show that the historical Iroquois were not as passively subsumed into Canadian nationalist discourse as Aubert de Gaspe might lead the uncritical reader to believe. See Conlogue.

Another play worth noting in this context is Laurent-Olivier David's Le Drapeau de Carillon (1901). David, who supported Wilfrid Laurier's efforts to establish a "bonne entente" between English and French Canadians, produced in Captain Murray (modeled, as David explained, on the historical General James Murray) "a positive portrayal of a member of the enemy forces [that] was unprecedented on the French-Canadian stage" (Rewa 129).
Mothers and Fathers

Jonathan Swift, writing in "The Story of an Injured Lady, Being a True Picture of Scotch Perfidy, Irish Poverty and English Partiality" (1706; publ. 1748), depicts the relationship between England, Scotland, and Ireland as one of a lover between two jealous mistresses. The man intends to make an honest woman out of one of them, an allusion to the allegedly more favourable terms that Scotland had received for its Union with England. Each of the three partners in this eternal triangle occupies a separate house, although these "stood pretty near one another," parted only by a river (that is, the Irish Sea) and "an old broken wall" (that is, Hadrian's Wall). The ménage is described in terms of the complicated arrangements in a large, hierarchical household with outlying buildings, including a steward (that is, "Stuart") who is given autonomy over Lady Ireland's house, and servants whose wages she must pay, "even those (the absentee landlords) who remain living with [the seducer]" (see Trumpener 133).¹

Equally elaborate is the updated allegory in the satirical publication The Anti-Union (1798-99) a century later, in which "Sheelagh" finds herself forced into marriage with John Bull, an unsavoury elderly gentleman who has "another wife still living" (Trumpener 134). Bull uses servants to spy on "Sheelagh" and rob her, and he insists that some servants dress in green and some in orange liveries. This story was followed a fortnight later with another in The Anti-Union, in which Britton, encouraged by "[h]is
ambitious steward Henry” (Trumpener 135) rapes Ierne and forces her into concubinage. However, Ierne learns to love her violator, they have a large family, and Britton finally resolves to make the union legitimate. Further domestic complications ensue when Britton’s “ward, Columbia, elopes to America with a Frenchman” (Trumpener 135) followed by another seduction plot involving Ierne and a younger brother of Columbia’s seducer, who tries to remind her of past unhappiness and thus turn her against Britton. Misunderstandings between Britton and Ierne cause further tension and, although they are formally reconciled, their relationship remains fraught:

> [t]he loving, ardent, faithful wife had vanished; and the injured, abject, cold and reluctant slave remained. Love was for ever fled. She returned not caresses which she loathed, and submitted to, rather than participated. . . . Mr. Britton, conscious that he could not be loved, precipitated into the usual corruption of the human heart, and determined that he should be feared. (quoted in Trumpener 136)

I have deliberately paraphrased these stories at some length to illustrate how literal-minded they can be when they deploy the marriage trope in order to illustrate the complications of political alliance and ethnic hostility. I concur with Trumpener that, particularly in the last example, the story moves from allegory to “female domestic tragedy” (136), that is, to the complex psychological plots of rape and seduction in Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela* (1741) and *Clarissa* (1747-8). Swift’s allegory, however, is very concrete as well in its evocation of unsavoury domestic arrangements, and attends to all practical aspects of the scene, marital relations and household management included. Such stories illustrate yet again just how fluid the boundaries between genres
were in the eighteenth century and continued to be into the nineteenth, although resolute measures were undertaken by early nineteenth-century educators to pen them into the respective domains of writing and orality, and of male and female guardianship. As we have seen in the discussion of critical response to Edgeworth and particularly Owenson, book reviewers were a vociferous and powerful lobby among these educators. Focusing on the case of Scotland, Penny Fielding has described the complicated negotiations that went with these efforts at compartmentalization and the nationalist arguments that they were meant to support. Suitably, Fielding uses the trope of conquest to characterize the process of channeling “illiterate writing,” that is, writing considered unduly linked to orality, when she writes: “[a]s a way of combating illiterate writing, the educationalists ventured into enemy territory, pursuing a policy of containment carried out by means of a process of colonization in which popular forms could be appropriated and controlled by being imitated” (35). Fielding anticipates Trumpener’s work on the changing function of nurses and servants as serving, first, as repositories of popular wisdom and story-telling, and then as dangerously corrupting influences on young minds in need of enlightened literacy (see Fielding 24 et passim; Trumpener 193-241). Included in these dangerously “oral” influences, in both the metaphorical and the physical sense, were the mothers who could not be trusted to instil the manly qualities required by an aspiring nation.

This suspicion carries into several of the novels under discussion where mothers are either dead or might as well be invisible, a feature that is particularly startling in books like The Wild Irish Girl, which was written by a woman (who, as we have seen, found herself vilified by book reviewers for her “barrenness”) and which has, ironically, since been marketed in a feminist series called “Mothers of the Novel.” In Owenson’s
novel, one particularly startling moment occurs when the “decent old man” looking after Horatio’s lodge informs him that the Prince of Inismore “keeps up the old Irish customs and dress, letting nobody eat at the same table as his daughter, not even his lady when she was alive.” The note that goes with this piece of information, has this to say:

“M’Dermot, Prince of Coolavin, never suffered his wife to sit at table with him; although his daughter was permitted to that honour, as she was descended from the royal family of the O’Connor” (30-1). Here, the note clarifies that what one might initially take to be an old man’s eccentric habit, one vaguely following “the old Irish customs,” is in fact an expression of systemic gender hierarchy. By extension, the note offers a reading of the father-daughter relationship as overriding that between husband and wife because, unlike the mother, the daughter is a descendant and heir and therefore a sort of honorary son. Not only is Glorvina’s mother deceased and therefore no longer required to be kept away from the dinner-table, but the nurse who accompanies Glorvina wherever she goes, is habitually cast as an object of ridicule so “fantastic and outré, that the genius of masquerade might have adopted her figure as the finest model of caricature” (40). Glorvina clearly has become the beautiful and learned woman that she is because the Prince and the priest have taken her education in hand. At the end of the book, the nurse is nowhere in sight. As the Prince of Inismore dies and passes his legacy on to Glorvina, she is advised by Father John and mentored by her future husband (now reformed into a fine specimen of responsible manhood) and his father who “had loved the venerable Prince as a brother and a friend” (245). As far as I can tell, we have not once heard of Lady M—.
Although Rose Bradwardine's father is a lovable old fool in whom erudition has become fussy antiquarianism, her relationship with her parents closely resembles Glorvina's with hers: one of the few mementoes of Rose's dead mother is a picture in her daughter's room in which the Baroness appears "in the dress of a shepherdess, with a bell-hoop" (110). Flora McIvor alerts Waverley to the fact that Rose's future husband "will be to her what her father now is—the object of all her care, solicitude, and affection. She will see nothing, and connect herself with nothing, but by him and through him. If he is a man of sense of virtue, she will sympathise in his sorrows, divert his fatigue, and share his pleasures" (183). In order to correct the indifferent education that Baron Bradwardine has made available to his daughter, Flora undertakes to teach Rose herself, "and was attentive to assist her in her studies, and to fashion both her taste and understanding" (367). In her independence of mind and action, fortified by her close bond with her rebellious brother, with whom at times she becomes virtually interchangeable, Flora has—as Waverley understands them—distinctly masculine attributes, and she confirms her independent status by choosing celibacy and entering a convent after her brother's execution.

Even when the mothers are alive, they are often exposed as too ignorant to oversee the kind of education their daughters require if they are to be burdened with the duty of becoming their father's ideological heirs (or should it be fathers', to accommodate the numerous stand-ins?) In The Golden Dog, a novel obsessed from beginning to end with the institution of matrimony, "Dame Bédard, the sharp landlady of the Crown of France," calls in "Master Pothier . . . the travelling notary" (40) to draw up the marriage contract for her daughter Zoë, who is unable to comprehend it because she
has only received “a tincture of learning in the day schools of the nuns” (82). Kirby is careful to disparage the notary as “one of that unuseful order of itinerants of the law, which flourished under the old régime in New France” (40) and to refer to the document he has devised as a “crabbed law text” and a “sea of legal verbiage” (82), but in a book which consistently uses the shortcomings of New France to extol the accomplishments of the British rule that followed it, he is perhaps less concerned to insist that greater attention will be paid to the education of women under British government than he is to anticipate the improved quality of the British legal system. The profound irony implied in even making this distinction between the law and women’s educational status surely need not be pointed out.

Even more blunt about women’s lack of education and their resultant limited usefulness in determining national identity is Bourassa’s *Jacques et Marie*, where Madame Landry, mother of eighteen children, puts an enormous pair of spectacles on her nose “qui brillaient devant la flamme comme des oeils-de-boeuf de cathédrale au soleil couchant” in preparation for reading Gordon’s letter to her husband. The exercise turns into a first-grader’s reading exercise supervised by an increasingly impatient teacher, with Marie’s mother stumbling over words like “colonel” (“c, o, co...c, o, co...de notre coco, que j’ai pu obtenir de notre coco...”) and “vaisseaux” (“des bais...des bestiaux...des vessies, des vais...”), and having to refresh herself with a glass of water because she is exhausted after reading out an entire paragraph “sans obstacles.” Bourassa manages to insert a phonetic lesson when Madame Landry puzzles over the word “coeur,” until it becomes apparent to her that what is meant here is the word she is accustomed to pronouncing as “tieur” (199-200), but I disagree with Roger Le Moine,
who reads this and other scenes in the book as mere comic relief (Napoléon Bourassa 104). The dismissiveness with which both Père Landry and the author of the book respond to Madame Landry at this point is all the more worth noting as formal education was poorly developed in 1755 Acadia, a factor which resulted in the paucity of written records that would have assisted in reconstructing the society after the dispersal. The nineteenth-century revival of Acadian culture, by contrast, strongly emphasized the development of a culture relying on written literacy, including the recording of the oral traditions and genealogies that had provided ethnic cohesiveness in the absence of written records (see Arsenault). To mention Antonine Maillet’s inestimable contribution to Acadian literature yet again, it is in her novels that women’s role in transmitting orality receives literary acknowledgement, and it is in her books that speech is faithfully transliterated into script.

While Father Landry’s condescension to his wife does not sit well with the contemporary reader, there are other more alarming commentaries on the inequality between male and female power to consider in these books. In her assessment of the sort of wife she expects Rose Bradwardine to make, Flora adds, “[i]f she becomes the property of a churlish or negligent husband, she will suit his taste also, for she will not long survive his unkindness” (183). This, like the note on the dinner seating-arrangements in the Prince of Inismore’s household, is one of the moments in these books where some of the contemporary social realities of matrimony become briefly apparent—so briefly, in fact, that Elizabeth Butler Cullingford comes to the conclusion that the proponents of the matrimonial analogy [for the union between England and Ireland] saw it as an ideal paradigm, designed to promote harmony
and end strife, [but] they were not accustomed to reflect that the conditions of nineteenth-century matrimony did not favour the female partner. . . . In legal terms, marriage transformed husband and wife into one person, and that person was the husband: we can therefore see that matrimony was a better (and more damning) analogy for political union than many of its proponents realized. (28)

The most brutal incident of abuse occurs in *Castle Rackrent*, where Kit Rackrent’s Jewish wife Jessica is locked up in her room for refusing to hand over her jewels. Clearly alert to the likelihood that her reader will understand (and dismiss) this episode as a gothic abnormality in an otherwise truthful tale, and one furthermore filtered through the limited comprehension of Thady Quirk, Edgeworth provides this footnote, which is worth quoting at some length because it supplies realistic details that quite knock the wind out of the narrative’s archness:

> [t]his part of the history of the Rackrent family can scarcely be thought credible; but in justice to honest Thady, it is hoped that the reader will recollect the history of the celebrated Lady Cathcart’s conjugal imprisonment. The editor was acquainted with Colonel M’Guire, Lady Cathcart’s husband; he has lately seen and questioned the maid-servant who lived with Colonel M’Guire during the time of Lady Cathcart’s imprisonment. Her ladyship was locked up in her own house for many years. . . . At [her husband’s] death her ladyship was released. The editor, within this year, saw the gentleman who accompanied her to England after her husband’s death. When she first was told of his death, she imagined
that the news was not true, and that it was told only with an intention of deceiving her. At his death she had scarcely clothes sufficient to cover her; she wore a red wig, looked scared, and her understanding seemed stupefied; she said that she scarcely knew one human creature from another: her imprisonment lasted about twenty years. (50)

The “editor,” namely Maria Edgeworth in male disguise, adds that such abuses are no longer possible under the current political system, that is, at the time of the publication of *Castle Rackrent*. However, reading the novels under discussion as an ensemble, with particular attention to their understanding of marriage as reality and trope, the story of Lady Rackrent’s imprisonment becomes merely an excessive example in a string of situations where it appears necessary to contain women lest, with their verbal and physical “incontinence,” they endanger the project of national identity.6

In a final example, Madame d’Haberville, in *Les Anciens Canadiens*, “bonne et sainte femme, âgée de trente-six ans, entrait dans cette seconde période de beauté que les hommes préfèrent souvent à celle de la première jeunesse” (102), hardly ever says a word. On the one occasion when she does speak at length, she tells the story of a mother who grieves over her beautiful young daughter’s death so passionately that the child cannot find peace in her grave and has to return to reproach her mother. With the help of a monk, the latter promptly stops crying, and the daughter henceforth rests comfortably. The mother, “qui était riche,” devotes the remainder of her life to charitable works, adopts several orphans, and has “Ci-git la mere des orphelins” written on her own tombstone (160-61). Madame d’Haberville’s story goes on for too suspiciously long to be merely one of the numerous folkloric tales that dot the narrative, and that in Aubert de
Gaspé’s book are generally the domain of picturesque servants and eccentric uncles (but never of the head of the household). It is likely that the author also meant the story to serve as an allegory exhorting French Canada to cease its mourning over the lost glories of New France and get on with it under the British government. The emphatically feminine nature of the plot casts French Canada in the role of a woman who must learn to face reality. The melodramatic story requires a woman to tell it, but the resulting lessons must be implemented by the men. Thus, her son Jules finds himself “une jeune demoiselle anglaise d’une grande beauté” whom he teaches lessons other “celles de langue et de grammaire françaises” (275) and who, as I have illustrated in the previous chapter, makes her presence chiefly known in her new home by dispensing unwelcome cups of tea.

Courtships

In both *The Golden Dog* and *A Diana of Quebec*, Quebec City stands in for the whole of Quebec as a woman ready to be conquered, “a belle in a gossamer ball-gown” (McIlwraith 198), who looks down upon the Ile d’Orléans, “which the river encircled in its arms like a giant lover his fair mistress” (Kirby 4). Kirby’s book in particular provides a complex mesh of courtships, all of them abortive, in order to expose the betrayal of New France at the hands of France at every level of governance. Kirby places the stories of these relationships within a richly developed high Victorian aestheticism pretending to be an accurate rendition of Louis XV’s France in the colonies. “Courtship”
conventionally suggests a pair, but the only clearly constituted couple in *The Golden Dog* are Amélie de Repentigny and Pierre Philibert, whereas all the other main characters are involved in multiple courtships, in imitation of the numerous cross-over allegiances that characterize the political situation of New France. Amélie’s brother, Le Gardeur, is in love with Angélique des Meloises. She, in turn, loves François Bigot, who owns “letters and billets from almost every lady in Quebec” (470), and hides his mistress, Caroline de St. Castin, in the dark depths of Beaumanoir. As a matter of fact, not even Amélie’s and Pierre’s relationship is a pure twosome, as—like Blanche d’Haberville—she has fallen in love with him because her brother brought him to their house, and because Pierre seems like a better version of the dissolute Le Gardeur. In one of the watery accidents that are a stock feature of nineteenth-century novels set in Quebec, Pierre has saved Le Gardeur from drowning, earning himself Amélie’s gratitude and admiration as a consequence. Logically, it is also Le Gardeur who separates the lovers just before their wedding, when Amélie decides she has to immure herself in a convent in atonement for Le Gardeur’s unpremeditated murder of Pierre’s father. The concluding pages of *The Golden Dog* are unmitigated tragedy, with the exception of a sly comment Kirby inserts in the middle of it: “[a] feeling of pity and sympathy for these two affianced and unfortunate lovers stole into the hearts of the coldest nuns, while the novices and the romantic convent girls were absolutely wild over the melancholy fate of Pierre and Amélie” (565). Here, the historical novel becomes temporarily replaced by a boarding-school story, and Amélie’s self-sacrifice is turned into soap opera. The passage may be read as Kirby’s equivalent of Walter Scott’s note on Flora McIvor whose excessively poetic nature the author blames on her French education. As *The Golden Dog* depicts it, French Canada has brought on
its own decline not only by the dissolution represented by the Intendant François Bigot and his cronies, but also with the exaggerated emotiveness with which even morally unimpeachable characters like Amélie and Pierre approach a sober subject like matrimony.

Throughout the book, the population of Quebec City is preoccupied with the question of making the city “impregnable against the rumored attack of the English” (9). “The people had come in—many were accompanied by their wives and daughters—to assist in [building] the bulwark” (9), but while Governor de la Gallissonnière insists that “Quebec . . . must be made safe against all attack by land or water” (131), he receives the King’s dispatch informing him that the defense of New France is not a priority, and he finds his resolve further undermined by the treacherous self-interest of François Bigot and his canaille. As a result, the city and all of New France with it lay themselves open like an unprotected woman who cannot hope for legitimate union with a responsible husband. “[I]f you want vengeance,” Cadet advises Bigot when the Intendant suspects Angélique of having murdered Caroline, “take a man’s revenge upon a woman . . . ! It will be better than killing her, much more pleasant, and quite as effectual” (472).

Because he has to take care that the persistent announcements of Quebec’s impending violation are not misunderstood as applying to the impending British victory on the Plains of Abraham, Kirby props up his narrative with historical information and anecdotes in flash-forward mode that underline the harmonious union of the French and the English following the Conquest. For example, Kirby relates the story of Louise de Brouague, who, “in the full maturity of her charms as the wife of the Chevalier de Léry,” accompanied her husband to the court of George III to pay obeisance to her “new
sovereign” and was greeted with the compliment that beauties like her made the
Conquest “a conquest” indeed (181). Elsewhere, Kirby repeatedly details French-
Canadians’ refusal to join forces with the Americans during the War of Independence,
and he ascribes their proud contrariness to the death of Jumonville de Villiers, who died
at Monongahela, unmarried, leaving “all the maids and matrons of New France [to]
lament [his] fate with tears” (215).

The Golden Dog draws on the full repertoire of romantic imagery, together with
Victorian ideas about nature and artifice, to paint its stories of love and betrayal (see
Kröller, “George Eliot”). Angélique, the schemer and “pantheress” (355), is consistently
compared to the voluptuous paintings of the Renaissance, to portraits by Titian and
Giorgione. Landscape paintings on her walls are likely to depict a scene where a herd of
horses “ha[s] broken fence, and [is] luxuriating in the rich forbidden pasture” (150).
Amélie, by contrast, resembles a “fawn” (13) and “a sensitive plant” (158), and she is
shown to best advantage sitting “on the twisted roots of a gigantic oak forming a rude but
simple chair” (289) or on an outing with Pierre in “the little valley of the Lai'ret, which
wound and rippled over its brown glossy pebbles, murmuring a quiet song down in its
hollow bed” (505). Likewise, the artificial gardens of Bigot’s Beaumanoir and the
debauchery inside the manor, where all windows are habitually shut against the sunlight,
are contrasted with the profusion of flowers in the parklands surrounding the Philibert
and Tilly mansions, and with the wholesome atmosphere governing these households.
The lush narrative draws on the widely disseminated views of John Ruskin (in, for
example, The Seven Lamps of Architecture [1849] and The Stones of Venice [1851-3])
about the suspect sensuousness of Renaissance art, implying that the glamour of New
France of François Bigot is equally corrupt, while the Philibert and Tilly establishments anticipate the British government as a healthy and "natural" regime. Throughout, the narrative singles out old trees, "some old oak or elm... saved... from the axe of the woodman" (263) to underline the legitimacy of a rule that honours the best in the traditions that it has inherited—which just happens to be the best in its own.

While, in *The Golden Dog*, it is the French who must be brought around to a healthy existence, in *Jacques et Marie*, Bourassa proposes exactly the opposite. Like Horatio, Gordon must abandon his epicurean tastes in general and his lascivious attitude towards women in particular before Marie is prepared to respect him. Shortly after his arrival in the village, he observes a few young Acadiennes in white bonnets who, in his imagination, become infernally alluring. However, his environment soon enough has an excellent effect on his virtue. His courtship of Marie is not narrated with as much pastoral leisure as that of Jacques and Marie, but it is significant that a major stage in Gordon’s education towards wholesomeness occurs over a small house owned by Marie that his soldiers have defiled and that he has restored to make amends: "[u]ne porche eleganté s’élèvait devant l’entrée, surmontée d’un timpan pointu et d’une petite fleche gracieuse; trois legers balcons, avec des details gothiques, ornaient les fenêtres; d’autres aiguilles s’élevaient sur le toit, dont une surmontée d’un coq tournant; les meubles étaient installés à l’intérieur; la boutique n’avait plus de secrets" (92). The elaborateness of the design, together with the "gothic" details that Bourassa, as a student of Flandrin and Overbeck, would have associated with spiritual aspiration and purity, make this house an appropriate one for Marie to inhabit, although Gordon probably wanted, above all, to ingratiate himself with Marie when he decided on its restoration. In its miniature
compactness, the house also provides a poignant counterpart not only to the wholesale
destruction of the village that will shortly occur, but of the house in which Marie and her
father will make a new beginning when they settle in *Petite-Cadie*.

**Broken Promises**

*The Golden Dog* depicts the violence of imperial encounter as taking the forms of private
passions. Because the relationship of Bigot and Caroline de St. Castin has been
consummated, with disastrous consequences for her, and because Caroline is of mixed
race, this particular encounter deserves separate attention. The book is set in a six-month
period, from summer to winter, 1748. The economic exploitation of New France by the
French Grand Company of Traders, in the hands of Louis XV's mistress, La Pompadour,
has just begun. This exploitation, as the novel makes clear, will ruin New France
financially and will open the door to British expansionists. At the beginning of the novel,
Québec is preparing for invasion by the British. All levels of French-Canadian society
are organized on one side or the other of a power struggle that pits the monopoly of La
Friponne, the branch of the French Grand Company of Traders based in New France,
against its major commercial rival, the Golden Dog trading company, owned by the
Bourgeois Philibert. At the same time as this commercial rivalry is growing, the
Jansenists and the Jesuits are at odds, partly over a question that can be reduced to a
conflict between national authority and Papal authority (595-96). This religious schism
has been aggravated because "the idea [has] got abroad, not without some foundation,
that the society of Jesus [has] secret commercial relations with the Friponne” (596). Thus, there exists an alliance between the Jansenists and sympathizers with the Bourgeois, and the Jesuits and the head of La Friponne, the Intendant Bigot. Religion and commerce are fundamentally intertwined.

In historical terms, the novel attributes the fall of New France to the actions of Bigot, who “might have saved New France, had he been honest as he was clever” (55). In allegorical terms, however, it represents the fall of New France as the fall from virtue of Caroline de St. Castin, who has been seduced by Bigot’s false promise of marriage. Caroline is a “fallen woman,” a figure with whom Victorian society was obsessed, as Lynda Nead has illustrated:

[t]o begin with, the notion of the ‘fall’ implied that she had been respectable but had dropped out of respectable society. . . . A woman’s ‘fall’ from virtue was frequently attributed to seduction and betrayal which set the scene for her representation as victim. Most importantly, the victimized fallen woman mobilized none of the connotations of power and independence; her deviancy did not involve money and thus, to a certain degree, she retained her femininity, that is, she remained powerless and dependent. (95-96)

Caroline is the daughter of an ancient and noble Acadian family, and her father commands great respect both in New France and at Versailles, even after the fall of Acadia, but her seduction by Bigot makes her the victim of the same sexual intrigues and greed that will lead to the Conquest of New France at Québec.
Caroline’s function as an allegory of the fall of New France is underlined by the narrator: “[t]he ways of Providence are so mysterious in working out the problems of national existence that the life or death of a single individual may turn the scale of destiny over half a continent” (230). Caroline’s fall from grace and her death thus symbolize the powerlessness of New France against the seductions of Versailles, a corrupt court whose influence derives from its material wealth and from its network of commercial ties and sexual intrigues. France, however, is not defined simply as a male seducer who brings about the fall of New France. Rather, Versailles is corrupted by sexually deviant behaviour (the adulterous behaviour of both sexes), by sexual rivalry between women (Angélique’s jealousy of Caroline and her desire to usurp La Pompadour’s position at Versailles), and by commercial rivalry between men (comprising the rivalry between Bigot and the Bourgeois Philibert).

The Château of Beaumanoir, Bigot’s country residence, provides a powerful architectural metaphor for the moral and ideological differences between New France and Versailles. The Château was built by Jean Talon, the Intendant of New France during the reign of Louis XIV, for whom Beaumanoir “[w]as a quiet retreat when tired with the importunities of friends or the persecution of enemies, or disgusted with the cold indifference of the court to his statesmanlike plans for the colonization of New France” (49). With Talon as Intendant, Beaumanoir was the site of negotiations and meetings that determined France’s imperial success in North America. While a visitor at Beaumanoir, for example, the explorer La Salle conferred with Talon before heading off to explore the Mississippi, to claim Louisiana for Louis XIV, and to explore the Great Lakes (49).
With Bigot as Intendant, uninhabited areas of the Château have fallen into disrepair. The tower that stands a short distance from Beaumanoir, built under Talon as a place of defence and refuge during wars with the Natives in the preceding century, now stands in ruins. Bigot is less interested in the military defence of New France and more concerned with amassing profits from trade. He thus competes ruthlessly with the Bourgeois Philibert for trade in corn, wool, flax, timber and even ginseng (117). The fruit trees that Talon had planted are now laden with fruit which is, significantly, neglected by Bigot and left to ripen on branches that are bending under the weight of their burden (50). Moreover, those areas of the manor used regularly by Bigot are in a state of disarray. Wine overflows onto tables, chairs remain overturned “where a guest had fallen in the debauch and been carried off by the valets” (54). Bigot and his friends drink wine “better than Bacchus ever drank” (59) and eat from dishes of “Parmesan cheese, caviare and other provocatives to thirst” (54). With Bigot as its resident, Beaumanoir’s main function is to aid La Pompadour in acquiring allies in politics and commerce (which are virtually inseparable) by seducing guests with the kinds of food and drink that could only be acquired by a powerful trading company with connections throughout the Empire.

The narrative describes Bigot’s trading company, La Friponne (meaning “the swindle”), in terms similar to those which it refers to the oligarchy at Versailles:

[t]he Friponne, as it was styled in popular parlance, was the immense magazine established by the Grand Company of traders in New France. It claims a monopoly in the purchase and sale of all imports and exports in the colony. Its privileges were based upon royal ordinance and decrees of
the Intendant and its rights enforced in the most arbitrary manner—and to the prejudice of every other mercantile interest in the colony. As a natural consequence it was cordially hated, and richly deserved the maledictions which generally accompanied the mention of the Friponne—the swindle—a rough and ready epithet which sufficiently indicated the feeling of the people whom it at once cheated and oppressed. (35)

The oppressive monopoly of La Friponne and the arbitrary rule of La Pompadour demonstrate the degree to which the political and commercial practices of Versailles have been corrupted by the breakdown of the royal family and the power of La Pompadour. Kirby’s condemnation of Versailles has a strikingly Burkean tone to it. For the disintegration of the natural ties that bind the French royal family together, in The Golden Dog as in Burke’s Reflections on the Revolution in France (1790), result in the loss of France’s cultural values and national character. Thus, in The Golden Dog, the Governor of New France declares that “if New France be ever lost, its fall will be due . . . [to] the decay of loyalty, [and] the loss of the sentiment of national pride and greatness in the mother country” (425).

The fall of New France is precipitated by the breakdown of patriarchal society, first at Versailles, and then at Québec. The arrangement of the Great Hall at Beaumanoir is a visual metaphor of this breakdown. At the head of the room hangs “a full length portrait of the Marquise of Pompadour, the mistress of Louis XV . . . [whose] bold voluptuous beauty seemed well fitted to be the presiding genius of the house” (53). While La Pompadour is the symbolic head of the colony, Bigot is her symbolic representative in New France. Bigot sits below her portrait, at the head of the table. His
“countenance” is “ugly and repulsive” but his “magnetic” eyes betray “the force of a powerful will and a depth and subtlety of intellect that made men fear, if they could not love him” (54). Round the table over which Bigot presides sit the “revellers—in the garb of gentlemen, but all in disorder and soiled with wine—their countenances . . . inflamed, their eyes red and fiery, their tongues loose and loquacious” (54). Despite his gentlemanly appearance, Bigot, in his behaviour and his character, violates a gentleman’s code of conduct. That is, while his behaviour may seem chivalrous, he lacks “the soul of honor” (69) which the narrative identifies as the true sign of chivalry. Moreover, Bigot’s voluntary subordination to an adulteress represents a violation of ideal masculine behaviour, which is embodied by Bigot’s rival, the Bourgeois Philibert, whose “force of character, self-control . . . quiet compressed will, and patient resolve” render him a natural leader of men (211). Bigot is thus neither a true gentleman nor a natural leader of men. It is no coincidence that Bigot, his paramour, Angélique des Meloises, and his patroness, La Pompadour, are described in similar terms, as “vain, selfish, ambitious, and . . . possessed of neither scruple nor delicacy in attaining [their] objects” (88).

Far below the Great Hall, in the vault of Beaumanoir, resides Caroline de St. Castin. Caroline understands that her fall represents a betrayal of her family and society. She has fled Acadia so as to avoid inflicting further shame on her father. She also refuses to appear in public at Bigot’s parties, and escapes to the solitude of the vault to pray for his soul and for her absolution. The vault is spacious, and richly decorated with tapestries woven by the “looms of the Gobelins” (67). The Gobelin tapestry manufactory in Paris was purchased by Louis XIV in the mid-seventeenth century and was famous for its pieces commemorating the King’s achievements. Caroline’s surroundings link her to
Talon's rule in New France during the reign of Louis XIV, and thus, to a more benevolent and virtuous colonial government. Significantly, these tapestries are tucked away, along with Caroline, in the Château's vaults. The tapestries testify to New France's former greatness, while Caroline, the sole inhabitant of the vaults, symbolizes New France's former social respectability.

Caroline presents a sharp contrast to the spaciousness of the vault, for she lies prostrate, her hands clasped above her head, hidden in a shaded alcove in a secret chamber in the vault. Her appearance corresponds to the images of fallen women in Victorian literature, for her hair is dishevelled and her complexion is pallid and drawn. Her former virtue is symbolized by the white robe that she wears at all times. Caroline's fall represents an irrevocable violation of her femininity. Femininity, in the novel, centres on women's married or unmarried status. Two characters, La Corriveau and Amélie de Repentigny, give voice to very different notions of femininity. Amélie de Repentigny, for whom a "good noble man is after God the worthiest object of a woman's devotion" (25), represents the narrative's ideal of femininity, which proves to be synonymous with domestic and sexual virtue. La Corriveau, on the other hand, detests women who willingly "enslave" themselves to "some man through life, while aspiring to command all men" (495). In a society where women's beauty and sexual desirability make them politically powerful, Angélique and La Pompadour conflate sexual and monetary power with political power. Caroline thus becomes a kind of commodity over which Angélique and La Pompadour battle to win the undivided attention and devotion of Bigot.
Caroline is at the centre of all intrigues, political and sexual: she inadvertently stands in the way of Angélique’s ambitions to marry Bigot and to become the rival of La Pompadour at Versailles; she also stands in the way of La Pompadour herself, who has other matrimonial designs for Bigot. Nevertheless, Caroline’s identity has been erased. Her occupation of Beaumanoir is, for the most part, unknown, and those who have heard rumours of Bigot’s kept woman speculate about her identity, which remains a mystery to them. Although her powerful father has solicited the support of La Pompadour in looking for his daughter and has made Bigot nervous enough to seek out another hiding-place for her, Caroline’s fate in the end corresponds to the conventional fate of the fallen woman, to die in obscurity.

Caroline is of combined Acadian and Native heritage. The narrative refers to the latter as the “red stain” of her Abenaquis “blood” (68). Caroline thus personifies two cultures threatened with oblivion, at the same time as the “red stain” foreshadows her death, when she will be poisoned and stabbed with a stiletto blade, and her blood will stain her white robe. This imagery is significant, for while the narrative consistently downplays Caroline’s Native heritage and underlines, instead, her ties to a noble Acadian family, her Native character is effectively responsible for her death. It makes her gullible enough to open her door to la Mère Malheur, who appears to Caroline in the guise of a fortune-teller and interpreter of dreams, but who comes to arrange the fatal meeting between Caroline and La Corriveau. As the narrative indicates, although Caroline “was not superstitious,” her Abenaquis heritage “inclined her to yield more than ordinary respect to dreams” (464). Thus, Caroline lets la Mère Malheur into her room (the only
visitor to whom she has granted entry) in the belief that the meaning of her recent dream, of a bright angel carrying her up to heaven, will be deciphered for her (464).

Carl Murphy has rightly identified marriage, "or rather its absence, [as] a key metaphor in Kirby's novel. It is the inability of characters to marry and the subsequent collapse of their personal relationships which become the metaphors for the collapse of New France" (14). While this may be so, the inability of the characters to marry is inextricably linked to the failure of domestic and sexual virtue, as well as the corruption of traditional notions of femininity by the emasculated court of Versailles, embodied by Bigot and, by extension, the monarch, Louis XV, who allows his court to be run by his mistress. French-Canadian values, defined as domestic and sexual virtue, duty to God, and loyalty to France, require the kind of domestic stability that the novel portrays as lacking in the royal family at Versailles.

Ménages à Trois

Throughout much of Wacousta, the conduct of the British fails to live up to the ideal of their national character, defined by benevolence, rational thought, and equanimity, because the dual pressures of interpersonal and intercultural conflict are too strong to allow them to do so. The novel employs many standard Gothic tropes to portray the breakdown of social harmony: the doubling of Wacousta's identity with that of his nephew; the haunting resemblance of Clara de Haldimar to her mother; Ellen Halloway's curse on the de Haldimar family; the alien oppressive power of Wacousta; and Colonel de
Haldimar’s radical militancy. The characteristic haunted house is here replaced by an impenetrable wilderness, haunted by simian-like Natives, whose “dark and flitting forms” are seen “gliding from tree to tree along the skirt of the wood” (147). These Gothic tropes are the expression of the anguish and chaos caused when, thirty years before, a young Colonel Haldimar stole Reginald Morton’s fiancée, Clara Beverly, and married her.

_Wacousta_ correlates the breakdown of British society with the breakdown of friendships between men, and of romantic relationships between women and men. After stealing Clara from Morton, de Haldimar persuades his superiors to have Morton court-martialed and discharged from the military. Morton then follows de Haldimar, to Culloden, to the Battle on the Plains, and to Detroit. He fights on the side of the Jacobites, the French Canadians and the Iroquois respectively, in the hope of taking his revenge on both de Haldimar and the British military, which he perceives as having unjustly charged him. All failed relationships in the novel can thus be traced back to de Haldimar’s marriage to Clara and Morton’s vow to avenge de Haldimar’s betrayal of their friendship. For example, the union between de Haldimar and Clara produces three children, Frederick, Charles, and Clara. Morton (known in Canada as Wacousta) succeeds in murdering two of the three children and is himself murdered before he has taken the life of the third. Charles de Haldimar’s friendship with Sir Everard Valletort ends tragically when Charles is murdered by Wacousta. Shortly thereafter, Clara de Haldimar’s secret marriage to Sir Everard ends in violence when Wacousta murders them both.
Among all the triangulated relationships in this book, two stand out, the one between Sir Everard and Charles, and the one between Frederick and Oucanasta.

Anticipating Eve Sedgwick’s work by seven years, John Moss discusses “trisexuality” in his book *Sex and Violence in the Canadian Novel* (1977) as “usually involving two men and a woman, and as usually exploiting traditional gender stereotypes” (85), in which “a passive male, self-conscious and unsure of his own identity” is pitted against another male who is “aggressive, assertively masculine.” Between them is a “self-effacing, sensitive and loving female” (85). The Everard/Clara/Charles triangle, however, dispenses with such gender stereotypes by making all three participants passive and feminine, with particular attention reserved for Charles’s girlish beauty, which is described with Richardson’s “usual slurping relish,” to borrow Jay Macpherson’s inimitable phrase:

[n]ever had Charles de Haldimar appeared so eminently handsome; and yet his beauty resembled that of a frail and delicate woman, rather than that of one called to the manly and arduous profession of a soldier . . . The light brown hair flowing in thick and natural waves over a high white forehead; the rich bloom of the transparent and downy cheek; the large, blue, long, dark-lashed eye, in which a shade of languour harmonised with the soft but animated expression of the whole countenance,—the dimpled mouth,—the small, clear, and even teeth,—all these now characterised Charles de Haldimar; and if to these we add a voice rich, full, and melodious, and a smile sweet and fascinating, we shall be at no loss to
account for the readiness with which Sir Everard suffered his imagination
to draw on the brother for whose attributes he ascribed to the sister. (107)

We have come across a triangular relationship constituted by a woman between
two men earlier in our discussion of The Wild Irish Girl, where it is important that
Glorvina, while representing the lyricism and creativity of the Irish “soul,” be tutored by
men in the fulfilment of her destiny and where there is a latent incestuousness to prop up
the arrangement. Another variation of the triangle occurs in Les Anciens Canadiens
where the women—Blanche d’Haberville and Jules’s English wife—are distinctly
secondary to the friendship between Archibald de Locheill and Jules d’Haberville.
Throughout, their relationship is characterized in terms of Greek mythology, “Pythias et
Damon, Pylade et Oreste, Nysus et Euryale” (33), but tellingly it is the Bible that is called
upon to legitimize their love as “plus aimable, suivant l’expression emphatique de
l’Ecriture, que l’amour d’aucune femme” (69). In Wacousta, the oblique eroticism that
propels the triangular relationships in Owenson and Aubert de Gaspé erupts into full­
blown melodrama and cannot be adequately contained by even the most resolute reading
of Wacousta as colonial or national allegory, although efforts have certainly been made in
that direction (see, for example, Ballstadt, 1-9). As in the readings of Castle Rackrent
and Waverley, and what they have to say about the outrageous situations in which women
can find themselves when they enter matrimony, here too the trope begins to unravel and
expose its psychological and realist underside.

Moss also refers to the triangle that exists between Frederick, Madeline and
Oucanasta, an Iroquois woman, and concludes that this “is just a triangle” (89).
However, Frederick, as the only surviving de Haldimar child, represents the potential for
redemption of Britain's divided character. As the next generation of the de Haldimars in
Canada, he symbolizes the relegation to the past of his father's crime against Morton. By
replacing his father's tyrannical rule over the garrison with a more benevolent form of
government, he represents the realization of Britain's ideal character. Revealingly, in
order to fulfill his potential, Frederick must first terminate his sexually charged liaison
with Oucanasta and marry his cousin, Madeline. Likewise, before he becomes a rational
and benevolent leader, he must undergo a series of changes. Specifically, he must
address his own masculinity, threatened when he is captured by Wacousta and held
prisoner by the Iroquois, and also challenged by his behaviour towards Oucanasta.

In order to help Frederick to escape his Iroquois captors, Oucanasta cuts the ropes
that bind him. This act literally frees Frederick and symbolically subordinates him to her,
for the conventional roles of female captive and male liberator are here reversed. After
she frees him, Oucanasta insists that Frederick wear her moccasins and that she
accompany him barefoot. Frederick at first objects: "[t]his was too un-European,—too
much reversing the established order of things, to be borne patiently. As if he had felt the
dignity of his manhood offended by the proposal, the officer drew his foot back,
declaring, as he sprang from the log, he did not care for the thorns, and could not think of
depriving a female, who must be much more sensible of pain than himself" (240). He
changes his mind, however, when Oucanasta shows him her foot and urges him to feel it:

Oucanasta . . . calmly reseated herself on the log, drew her right foot over
her left knee, caught one of the hands of her companion, and placing it
upon the naked sole, desired him to feel how impervious to attack of every
description was the indurated portion of the lower limb . . . Most men love
to render tribute to a delicate and pretty foot. Some, indeed, go so far as to connect every thing feminine with these qualities, and to believe that nothing can be feminine without them. . . . [W]hen [Frederick de Haldimar] had passed his unwilling hand over the foot . . . that set all symmetry at defiance, a wonderful revolution came over his feelings . . . [and he] no longer offered any opposition. (240-41)

It would be easy to write a whole volume analysing the obsession, in these novels, in keeping with the “geography” of erogenous zones on the nineteenth-century female body, with women’s feet,8 suffice it to say that in this scene, de Haldimar appears to be experiencing “a wonderful revolution” because he has allowed Oucanasta to switch gender roles with him and her foot has become a substitute male organ. However, like their passionate kiss later on, when “the young officer [catches] the drooping form of the generous Indian wildly to his heart” and the two fall “with a heavy and reverberating crash among the leaves and dried sticks that [are] strewed thickly around” (260), thus richly alerting everyone to their presence, the foot-fondling and Frederick’s resulting feminization are too transgressive to be permitted a repetition. Oucanasta renounces her love for him and becomes a kind of maiden aunt to Frederick and Madeline’s children, “bearing curious presents, the fruits of Indian ingenuity” (543), while her warrior-brother acts as a sort of personal trainer to them, teaching them “the athletic and active exercises peculiar to his race” (543).
Matrimony

Most of the novels under discussion are preoccupied with the preliminaries of matrimony, its numerous complications, or its failure, while marriage as a functioning institution is relegated to the sidelines, and few of these are depicted as a partnership. Although idealized as a relationship between saints, marriage between the Landrys, as illustrated in the letter-reading scene, is one in which authority clearly rests with the man of the household. Indeed, it is easy to forget Madame Landry and her seventeen other children, as the bond between Marie and her father is so strong that, even before the family is deported, they seem to be on their own much of the time. Madame Landry’s self-effacement seems to be the rule. When Jacques’s mother feels death approaching during the deportation, she assembles her family around her and “demanda à son mari et à ses enfants de lui pardonner le mal, les chagrins et les scandales qu’elle avait pu leur causer dans la vie” (171), before she turns her eyes heavenward and expires.

Juxtaposed with Bourassa’s hagiography of “nos saintes mères” (46) and the marriages they entered at the age of fourteen is the persistent depiction in *The Golden Dog* of marriage as a business transaction between shrewd and elusive partners, and of wives as a form of currency more valuable than the paper-money that Kirby includes in his list of factors that contributed to the downfall of New France. Marie Exili, who prepares the poison that kills Caroline de St. Castin, arrived in Quebec as a *fille du Roy,* “one of a cargo of unmarried women sent out to the colony, on matrimonial venture, as the custom then was, to furnish wives for the colonists” (334). Marriage is the subject of tough and prolonged negotiations, and Angélique engages in several of these in an effort
to ensnare Bigot. Dame Tremblay, attendant to Caroline de St. Castin, torments her mistress with an endless tale about her marital adventures when she was the “charming Josephine” (138), marrying first for love, then for money, and finally settling comfortably as the housekeeper at Beaumanoir. While the sentimental Caroline wants to hear that Bigot loves no woman but her, Dame Tremblay offers the kind of re-assurance that she understands best, by reciting the mantra of “money”: “[m]en love beauty and marry money. Love is more plentiful than matrimony, both at Paris and at Quebec, at Versailles as well as at Beaumanoir” (142) and “The Intendant loves you . . . He may, indeed, marry a great marchioness, with her lap full of gold and châteaux[. . .] If a girl cannot marry for love, she will marry for money; and if not for money, she can always marry for spite” (145). Money, of course, also plays a large role in Zoë Bédard’s marriage contract, and it finally is of crucial significance when Amélie and Hortense enter the convent, and a lively discussion over their dowries ensues before they can enter, and more negotiations follow between the convent and Lady de Tilly when the girls take the veil:

Mère Migeon was especially overjoyed at this prospect of relieving the means of her house, which had been so terribly straitened of late years. The losses occasioned by the war had been a never-ending source of anxiety to her and Mère Esther, who, however, kept their troubles as far as possible to themselves, in order that the cares of the world might not encroach too far upon the minds of the Community. Hence they were more than ordinarily glad at this double vocation in the House of Repentigny. The prospect of its great wealth falling to pious uses, they
regarded as a special mark of Divine Providence and care for the house of Ste. Ursule. (562)

Soldiers’ wives sometimes enter Kirby’s narrative in brief anecdotes about their ruses to bring their husbands home sooner (the wives spread false rumours about Iroquois movements) or about their own capture (Pierre Philibert reports how his regiment “captured a convoy of soldiers’ wives from New England, [then] escorted them with drums beating to Grand Pré and sent a cask of Gascon wine for them to celebrate their union with their husbands” [95]. But they are clearly in a different league from the aristocrats and bourgeoises whose economic ethos dominates the narrative.

* * *

*A Diana of Quebec*, however, features a high-ranking military couple, the Riedesels, who are not only the only uxorious pair in these books, but who are also the doting parents of four young daughters. The distinctly domestic ambiance of McIlwraith’s book makes for a refreshing contrast to the stereotypical plot of colonial administration and espionage that *A Diana of Quebec* shares with Kirby’s and Richardson’s novels, as does the courtship between the gruff Captain Mathews and Miss Simpson, who both adore the young Riedesels, and begin to warm to each other through their affection for the children: “[a]ttractive little mortals they were, babbling away in their broken English, repeating the one I had heard, as well as other counting-out rhymes Miss Simpson had evidently taught them, for she corrected errors as we went along. After a while she addressed me from the other side of the horse” (96). It is interesting to speculate what kind of readership McIlwraith may have had in mind for this book. The emphasis on the children, who are described through the cantankerous voice of the Captain and are therefore spared the saccharine characteristics that often mar fictional
children of the period, suggest that she may have addressed herself primarily to women and to young readers. It would also be illuminating to study the book in the context of historical novels of the same period, that is, the years before the outbreak of World War II, to see if the kind of intimate domesticity that characterizes McIlwraith’s work despite its accomplished handling of historical material was typical of the genre at the time. Compared with the other books, it is much more difficult to ascertain in *A Diana of Quebec* what its national allegory amounts to. Like *The Golden Dog*, McIlwraith’s novel does confirm that the union between the English and the French has been a success, and that “the French Canadians, who were hostile neutrals, could they be called such at all, twenty-five or thirty years ago, now tak[e] up arms for the maintenance of the British connection, as the best thing for themselves. At Châteauguay last year three hundred of their volunteers defeated ten times that number of Americans!” (314), but her narrative is so dominated by administrators coming and going that it is difficult to derive the kind of jingoism from it that *The Golden Dog*, its decadent aestheticism notwithstanding, proclaims page after page.

**The Big House**

In virtually all of these novels, a manor serves as a focal point for the development of a plot that centres on the flourishing, destruction, and sometimes restoration of a society. The most famous of these is probably Tully-Veolan in *Waverley*, the manor of the Bradwardines. Edward Waverley approaches it in a carefully orchestrated scene, in
which he is first confronted with a filthy village “where children, almost in a primitive
state of nakedness, lay sprawling, as if to be crushed by the hoofs of the first passing
horses” (74), and then rides up to the house along an avenue which lush vegetation has
made into a tunnel of pastoral beauty channelling him, as it were, into a fairy-tale world
of gentle eccentricity and domestic sweetness. The description lingers lovingly over the
play of sunlight on the grass, and it is equally attentive to the elaborate arrangements of
terraces, gardens, and water fountains adorning the building. Everything and everybody
in this house and around it has a comfortably assigned place, including Rose, whose room
features a balcony providing a splendid panorama of the gardens below and just enough
of a view into the distance. After Culloden, Waverley rides towards Tully-Veolan again,
and “[a] single glance announced that great changes had taken place” (433). The gates
that previously sheltered the paradise inside have been broken, the building burnt, the
fountains ruined, and “two immense horse-chestnut trees . . . shivered to pieces by the
explosion of gunpowder in the trunk” (434). Baron Bradwardine is found to have been
hiding in a cave, with “his old friend Titus Livius” (444) as his only companion. The
house, however, is restored as well as can be managed, and the marriage contract
between Rose and Edward stipulates “a wee bit minute of an antenuptial contract, *intuitu
matrimonii*, so it cannot be subject to reduction hereafter, as a *donatio inter virum et
uxorem*” (487).

The patient tracking of Tully-Veolan’s fate provides the architectural equivalent
to the mnemonics generated by the journeys outlined in the previous chapter, and indeed
the narrative articulates several links between the solidity of the house and the mobility of
the journey, by suggesting that the privilege of one is dependent on the other. Thus,
Edward Waverley has earned the right to inhabit the Bradwardines’ restored house as the Baron’s son-in-law because he has travelled through the trials generated by his self-deceptions first.

Aubert de Gaspé’s d’Haberville manor, although adapted to the topography of Quebec, is clearly modelled on the description of Tully-Veolan, as are its destruction and restoration. Although Archibald de Locheill has come to the place several times during his years as a student at the seminary in Quebec, it is the visit just before his and Jules’s departure to Europe that is given the most elaborate attention because it becomes the watershed between one historical time and another. The narrative spends a full four chapters getting the young men to the d’Haberville mansion, with story-telling and various adventures along the way that bring Arché into intimate contact with the people and customs along the shores of the St. Lawrence. On his departure to Britain, he will therefore carry with him a compact memory of the culture he is leaving behind and that he will return to destroy as a member of the British army.

Located on a promontory overlooking the river, with a view of the ships that sail into Canada and out of it, the mansion is like an outpost and a beacon, as well as being an elegant and sophisticated dwelling, with “remises, granges et étables, cinq petits pavillons... un jardin potager, au sud-ouest du manoir, deux vergers, l’un au nord et l’autre au nord-est” (99) to complete it. Aubert de Gaspé takes care to inventory the trees—“ormes, érables, bouleaux, hêtres, épinettes rouges, frênes, merisiers, cèdres, mascouabinas, et autres plantes aborigènes” (98)—because he knows from hindsight that they are about to perish. This narrative has the added complication that Archibald himself will give the order to burn this and other buildings on the army’s way to Quebec, and the humiliating
consequences of his action are brought painfully home to him when he delivers Jules’s letter to the d’Habervilles and finds them living in a modest house, their “argenterie . . . réduite au plus stricte nécessaire.” The meal that they enjoy, complete with the dessert, “tout composé de fruits de la saison,” is served on maple leaves instead of crystal dishes (234). Because of his complicity in the Conquest of New France, de Locheill is not granted the privilege experienced by Edward Waverley of marrying the daughter of the house and occupying the mansion with her. Blanche refuses him, and vows to remain celibate. Arché, who matches her resolve and never marries, lives nearby and comes to visit frequently, although Blanche gradually becomes “une soeur d’adoption” (280). Blanche offers her sacrifice to the memory of New France at the same time that she admits together with the entire d’Haberville family that the English and the French must co-exist peacefully.

A house set aside from the manor is also featured in The Wild Irish Girl, where Horatio discovers the Lodge that his father occupies during his visits to Ireland. He initially suspects Lord M— of keeping the Lodge as a love-nest—a suspicion not completely off-the-mark given the Lord M—’s infatuation with Glorvina—but then realizes that, although there is little furniture in the place, it is filled with books on Irish lore. Together with the “initiation rites” discussed earlier that Horatio has to undergo, the Lodge is a first indication that he is moving away from the metropolitan culture that so far has kept him enthralled, and towards the proudly ruinous world of the Inismores. In these buildings the superior social status of their inhabitants is clearly displayed; this, however, is not true for Castle Rackrent in Edgeworth’s novel. It is a modest house without much domestic comfort, and as Jessica Rackrent instantly observes, its “grounds”
consist of bog and skimpy shrubbery. There is no wide drive leading up to the building, doors are low, and the kitchen is too close to the living quarters. Because the Rackrents do not have the necessary repairs done, windows are broken and roofs leaky. In a famous scene, Thady is seen “fastening up [his] slate against the broken pane; and [he] wipe[s] down the window-seat with [his] wig” (78). And yet Condy Rackrent and his wife live in grand style, and do their best to transform the house into the elegant mansion it never was: “[m]y lady had a fine taste for building, and furniture, and playhouses, and she turned every thing topsy-turvy, and made the barracks-room into a theatre, as she called it” (63). The spendthrift couple’s marriage is as sham as their social aspirations and fails soon enough. Alone, Condy loses the house to his steward’s ambitious son and stages a mock wake for himself in the Lodge. While the Lodge as an outlying building serves as a stepping-stone in Horatio’s education, it becomes the end of the Rackrent line in Edgeworth’s novel.

The fact that the Rackrent women “do not reproduce biologically may be taken as emblematic of the disorder Edgeworth locates in familial and social relations: themselves treated as the site and medium for property exchange between men, the ladies Rackrent fetishize what they accumulate, seeing self-interest as the limit of their interest” (Corbett 48). Such intersections between gender and exchange of property, as outlined by Mary Jean Corbett in her discussion of Castle Rackrent, continue to manifest themselves in literatures of cultural encounter in Canada, as in Kirby’s novel, where Angélique des Meloises resigns herself to life as a sexual “go-between” between her lover, Bigot, and de Péan, the man whom she will marry. Repeatedly, women in these novels retain their femininity by remaining powerless and dependent (like the virtuous Amélie de
Repentigny and Caroline de St. Castin) or risk transgressing the conventional boundaries of feminine behaviour by acting out their sexual desires and political ambitions (often, one through the other). The novels studied here reveal a remarkable number of failed romances that have disastrous results. The paradox inherent in the marriage metaphor, the "damning analogy" to which Cullingford refers, is neatly captured in the complex closure to *Les Anciens Canadiens*, where the forced optimism that inheres in Jules’s marriage to the unnamed Englishwoman (who, like Jules’s mother, speaks only once in the novel) is countered by the resistance to intercultural union in Blanche’s refusal of de Locheill’s offer of marriage.

Excluded from direct action, women, like Blanche, are subsumed symbolically into the colonized culture as its boundary and metaphoric limit, thus revealing the limits of the marriage metaphor in restoring moral and social order. It is also important to note, however, that not all men enjoy the privilege of political contiguity with one another, as their relations are differently inflected by class, culture, and history. For example, while de Locheill’s class and historical backgrounds render him initially acceptable to the French Canadians, his cultural background will later make him untrustworthy to them. However, it is his class, and the wealth that is restored to him after his repatriation, that enable him to “buy” his way back into French Canada, to settle on lands that neighbour the d’Haberville estate. Horatio similarly earns the right to remain in Ireland, not only through marriage, but through his inheritance of the Inismore estate upon the Prince’s death. In an early passage in the novel, Horatio encounters a crying child, trapped inside its “hut,” with the wooden door taken off its hinges and placed horizontally in front of the opening. Horatio, describing the child’s cries as
“perfectly in unison with the vocal exertions of the companion of his imprisonment, a large sow,” approaches and, without asking questions, “remove[s] the barrier: the boy and the animal escaped together, and I found myself alone in the centre of this miserable asylum of human wretchedness—the residence of an Irish peasant” (57). Horatio’s symbolic tearing down of the hut contrasts with his later participation, through marriage, in the symbolic restoration of the Inismores’ estate. Yet, as Corbett, Ferris, and others have pointed out, this restoration restores Horatio’s position of superiority over the Irish as a necessary preliminary to achieving intercultural union: “[t]o dispossess landowners of their property, even if that property originally came into their hands by violent and oppressive measures, would open up the possibility that the ongoing legacy of conquest might be the continuation of hereditary antagonisms, rather than the establishment of the intercultural means for repairing them” (Corbett 61). This dilemma can be said to apply to all of the novels under discussion, yet, ironically, Glorvina, as the female body through which such exchange of property and hereditary rights takes place, may actually fare better than most other women discussed here. This is especially true when her fate is compared to that of characters such as Oucanasta, whose role in the restoration of social order is to play nursemaid to de Haldimar’s children; to Blanche d’Haberville, who performs an analogous role in raising her brother’s children; and, worse still, to Caroline de St. Castin, who, through a premeditated act of violence, has no place whatsoever in Canada’s future.
2 The ancient Greek name for Ireland, meaning “land in the west;” the name “Ierne” is related to “Erin,” which remains in use. See Adrian Room.
4 See Houston, esp. “Oral Culture and Literature Culture,” 193-210, where he speaks about the “separate cultural compartments” into which orality and literacy must be categorized.
5 For their discussions of such systemic gender hierarchies, see Sedgwick and Rubin.
6 For her work on gender aspects of language, see Sorensen, esp. 205-7; 77-84; et passim, on women’s language as an expression of incontinence, see Patricia Parker.
7 See, more recently, Dickinson, Here is Queer (1999).
8 See, for example, Angélique’s feet in The Golden Dog: “[h]er dainty feet, shapely, aspiring and full of character as her face, were carelessly thrust forward and upon one of them lay a flossy spaniel, a privileged pet of his fair mistress” (150), or Marie’s “petit pied blanc” (49), which attracts Jacques’s fancy during their courtship.
9 For a discussion of the Big House in the Anglo-Irish novel, see Kreilkamp.
Epilogue

History for the “Television Age”: The CBC as National Historian

The Series and Its Reception

In January, 1999, Mark Starowicz, executive producer of the joint CBC-SRC epic miniseries Canada: A People’s History, gave a keynote address at the plenary session of the conference “Giving the Past a Future,” held in Montréal. He titled his address “A Nation Without Memory,” and argued that Canadians are so cut off from each other and from their country’s past that they seem to have suffered a cataclysmic “stroke,” rendering them incapable of constructing a national historical identity. “There is a crisis in the transmission of our society’s memory,” he begins. “In fact, there is no real memory. Canadian society has had a stroke that has virtually eliminated long-term memory, our emotions buffeted by a sound bite, bewildered by a film clip” (see Starowicz, “A Nation Without Memory”). According to Starowicz, because Canadians’ minds have come to work in a way that mirrors the media through which they communicate, any historical project has an ethical imperative to employ these very media, for television has become “the marketplace of fiction, discourse and entertainment. . . . [A]nyone who holds precious any idea, cause or sensibility has the moral obligation to bring those ideas to where the people are.” Not surprisingly, in the first episode of the series, the narrator defines Canada: A People’s History as “the first history for the television age” (see “When the World Began”). The program thus
becomes a mnemonic in itself, styled to provide viewers with a narrative of Canadian history sustained by common themes (in this case, migration, war, and romance—much as in the historical fiction studied here), but divided into forty one-hour episodes, each with its own internal subdivisions, lasting approximately ten to fifteen minutes each. This chapter will address the following questions: what are the narrative conventions that the series employs, and how (if at all) does the medium of television succeed where the classroom teaching of history has apparently failed? This chapter will focus on the first and fourth episodes, entitled “When the World Began,” and “Battle for a Continent,” which deal respectively with aboriginal history, the Deportation of the Acadians and the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. It will pay particular attention to the reception of these episodes in English and French Canada.

*Canada: A People’s History* represents the CBC’s attempt to write a pluralistic and gender-inclusive narrative of Canadian history that succeeds where history textbooks have failed. Starowicz’s conception of the relationship between historiography and nationhood calls to mind Eric Hobsbawm’s assertion that “historians are to nationalism what poppy-growers... are to heroin addicts: we supply the essential raw material for the market. Nations without a past are contradictions in terms” (“Ethnicity” 255). If nationhood is impossible without a national historian, then Starowicz posits himself, as producer of the CBC series, in such a position. He evokes his own background, as the child of Polish immigrants, both to establish his credentials as producer of the series and to legitimate its revisionary narrative:

I came to this country, to Montreal, when I was eight years old, speaking neither French nor English. My genetic provenance has no link with the
early stories of Canada, except through the transcendent humanity of people seeking refuge and hope for their children. That is the single, unifying theme of Canadian history[.] . . . I descend from neither the filles du roi, nor the Loyalists, nor the aboriginal nations. Yet their stories are also my own; since I am Canadian, they are my ancestors. . . . [The stories of] the Haitian, the Sudanese, the Vietnamese, and Chinese Canadians . . . these now belong to Canada, to the native people, to the French and to the English. (Foreword xi)

Starowicz’s desire to present a pluralistic narrative of Canadian history is reflected in the various narratives modes that the series uses in order to accommodate a variety of voices, mainly taken from life-writing, such as journals, diaries, and letters. What interests me most here, however, is the voices that are left out. The producers’ choice to foreground life-writing alongside a traditional narrative of historical dates and battles establishes a narrative formula which proves unable to accommodate the voices of those whose letters may not have been as judiciously preserved, such as, at least in these episodes, the letters written by women. And the Natives are cited through the words of white witnesses and historians, rather than their own, which are not extensively documented in written records. In the first segment, the visual imagery portrays the Natives as existing outside of chronological time: the Natives are frequently surrounded by mist, the lighting is much darker in this episode than in the rest, and the absence of references to chronological time, combined with the focus on legendary time, give the impression that the Natives comprise a part of Canada’s prehistory.
The television series features heroic music, sea battles, elaborate ball-room scenes, and grand panoramas (some of which were produced digitally because the producers lacked the budget to do otherwise). Most remarkable about these episodes is the amount of movement in each scene. Rarely does the camera allow for full-body shots. Instead, it focuses on head-and-shoulder shots and facial expressions to convey a sense of emotional immediacy and virtual proximity to events. Just as Owenson’s strategy, in *The Wild Irish Girl*, is to challenge Horatio’s metropolitan perspective through a discourse of proximity, the repeated cinematographic emphasis on such close-up shots (often in tandem with a rousing musical score) is meant to elicit the kind of affective response that challenge what Starowicz has described as Canadians’ endemic indifference to their past.

If the visual elements of the series can be conceived in terms of metaphor, then the extended metaphors in the series are those of the face and the hands. Repeatedly, the camera focuses on hands that are busy with a variety of activities, such as loading guns, setting fire to canons, and writing letters. In an interesting conflation of military aggression with the printed word, the opening scene of Episode Four features a hand loading what looks, at first, like bullets, but what is revealed instead to be individual typeface inserted into a printing press. The printing press, it turns out, belongs to Benjamin Franklin, whose newspaper, as the narrator explains, played an important role in rousing anti-French sentiment in what were to become the American colonies. Indeed, Franklin seems to be the symbolic centre of the episode. As the narrator reminds us, his desire to ensure that the New England colonies would remain “Anglo-Saxon and Protestant” means that Canada stands “at the centre of everything that threatens the
Americans.” Thus the Deportation of the Acadians (covered in about ten minutes) is, surprisingly, reduced to a conflict between Canadians and Americans. The scenes in *Jacques et Marie* that recall the Deportation and the burning of Grand-Pré are depicted briefly as having been instigated by the Governor of Massachusetts, a Franklin sympathizer, who sent “American colonists” to burn the Acadian villages. Yet, viewers’ responses to the “abridgement” of Acadian history have been minimal. What response there is, however, seems divided as to the historical justice of the scenes included. One viewer concludes his entry into the online discussion forum at the CBC website by stating, “[b]y the way, I am an Acadian and am tired of the popular view that my people are nothing but victims.” He does believe that “the series did an acceptable job in describing the plight of the Acadians” (see Pettipas). Another viewer, by contrast, found the episode “to be very disappointing [for the] Acadian story is in fact a topic unto itself . . . and to have it glossed over so lightly was an injustice to these people” (See McLeod).

Given its emphasis on tracing the fall of New France to the Governor of Massachusetts and Benjamin Franklin, the series transforms the North American events of the Seven Years’ War, which revolve in the episode around the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, into a conflict between Canadians and Americans. This raises important questions about the series’ intended audience, namely, whether this audience was meant to include Americans. Not surprisingly, this confusion is reflected in the content of the CBC online discussion forums. One viewer wrote to congratulate the producers for having taught him more about “Canadian and American history” (see Roberts). It also raises questions about the likelihood that successful American historical miniseries (such
as the very popular PBS series *The Civil War*), as well as American films, were used as models for *Canada: A People's History*. One sceptical viewer wrote to ask whether the producers were aware of the fact that the musical score resembled the score for the film *The Last of the Mohicans* (see Campbell). Starowicz himself seems to have had American television in mind as a model for the series, for he asserts that Canadians' lack of interest in their own history is not a "problem [with] American television." Instead, the problem lies with "the relative absence of Canadian equivalents" ("A Nation Without Memory").

Like the hero of *Waverley*, whom Scott characterizes as a mediocre individual caught up in major historical events despite himself, the heroes of *Canada: A People's History* are, as the narrator explains in the first episode, "ordinary people caught up in the great currents of history" (See "When the World Began"). Yet, in this instance, the visual imagery and the narrative are at odds with one another. The narrative presents even major historical figures as "ordinary" people whose public goals often interfere with their private aspirations. Thus, the viewer is told that Montcalm "would renounce every honour" to return to France to be with his wife, and that Wolfe intends to quit the military service once the Battle is over (see "Battle for a Continent"). The coffee-table book which derives from the series challenges, even more than the series itself, the notion that these are "ordinary" people. The "packaging" of the book, along with its content, reveal that the producers envisioned a similar kind of readers for the book as viewer for the series. The book is printed on glossy paper, is full of maps of Canada that change throughout the centuries, of portraits of famous historical figures, and artists' renditions of famous historical events. In other words, the images lack those "ordinary" people and
instead, provide a colourful glimpse of the past. The captions that go with the pictures are often anecdotal, including quotations from historical figures or anonymous writers (rarely, if ever, properly documented). For example, the caption below the portrait of Louis XV’s mistress, Madame de Pompadour, reads as follows:

Louis XV’s mistress was described as a woman ‘whom every man would have liked to have as his mistress and who was very tall for a woman, but not too tall. A round face, all the features regular, a superb complexion, very well made, a superb hand and arm, her eyes were rather pretty than large, but with a fire, a wit a vivacity that I have never seen in any other woman. She was rounded in all her forms as in all her movements.’

(Gillmor 120)

The representation of women in both the series and the coffee-book is double-sided. On the one hand, they are, like Madame de la Pompadour, represented as key political players. Madame de la Pompadour’s adultery is thus represented as the source of her agency as a powerful influence on political affairs. On the other, as with the women portrayed in the historical fiction studied here, the women in Canada: A People’s History symbolically define the limits of national power as between men. The most notable of the “women” would be the nation of Canada itself, repeatedly gendered as female, the soil on which men’s battles are won. Women, and Canada itself, are thus, as Anne McClintock suggests about the gendering of nations in another context, “subsumed symbolically into the national body politic as its boundary and metaphoric limit” (354).

Viewers in English Canada proved particularly responsive to the series’ visual and aural effects, with one viewer writing to the CBC online discussion forum to say that
he “was very impressed with the quality of the program. The acting, costumes, scenery, facts and the atmosphere were well presented, and entertaining” (see Estey). If the producers were out to make Canadian history memorable, then the medium of television succeeded. More than anything, viewers wrote in to applaud the series’ scope and vision, where vision is meant literally to refer to the grand scenery, and the scope of the panoramas. Viewers repeatedly note their emotional responses to the visual effects, with one viewer admitting that “[qu]and je regardais Mon [sic] histoire j’avais des frissons sur tout le corps” (see Victor). While some viewers applauded the representation of historical fact, their commentary more often focussed on the ways in which the music and the cinematography brought history to life. Canada: A People’s History thus provides the imaginative and emotional expansiveness that the producers intended, but the fact and accuracy of its representations remain a controversial subject for viewers. Significantly, viewers in English and French Canada seem, on the whole, to be divided on this point.

Although many viewers wrote in to the online discussion forum on the CBC website to debate the accuracy of the series’ historical representations, French-Canadian participants in the forum seem, overall, to display a better knowledge of their history, so that many were disappointed by the series, while, in English Canada, participants applauded the series for teaching them something new. The “newness” of their history seemed, in some cases, to produce inaccuracies rather than to clarify them, as in the case of a male participant, who wrote that, by watching the series, he learned which “groups of people [Europeans and Natives] was [sic] more ‘civilized’. It’s quite obvious that Europeans [sic] had little to contribute to humankind back then. We [have left] a legacy of rapes, murders, and betrayals to show how ‘superior’ we were. Thankfully today, we
are more enlightened" (see Cabana). French-Canadian viewers, by-and-large, questioned the series on a metadiscursive level, emphasizing not what they saw, but what the series had left out, and why: "[l]a responsabilité du scenario retenu, le choix des images, du découpage . . . le choix des mots et des anecdotes appartiennent au réalisateur(s)" (see Blanchet). Indeed, the notion that the series was "une représentation fabriquée" appears frequently in the French-Canadian commentary, and is worth considering here. Earlier, in Chapter One, I discussed the critical debates that have arisen over the last few decades over Walter Scott's orchestration of the pageant in honour of the King's visit to Edinburgh. These debates have centred on the nature of such pageantry as an "invention" of nationhood, and the degree to which such invention constitutes a forging, or a forgery (Hobsbawm, Trevor-Roper) of nationhood. In his Introduction to The Invention of Tradition, Hobsbawm suggests that "the peculiarity of 'invented' traditions is that the continuity with [the past] is largely factitious" ("Introduction" 2). Thus, to imagine a national identity involves one's submission to a kind of hoax that undermines the very basis of the identity which people believe to constitute their nation. Tradition becomes "a myth masking real history" (Craig 13), and it was received as such by one French Canadian in particular, who called "cette histoire du canada [sic]" a "genre de clichés" (see Boisbriand).

The different responses to the series go beyond English and French Canadians' diverging approaches to evaluating the visual imagery. First of all, the titles in English and French are, as historian Michael Bliss points out in his review, noticeably different (see Bliss "Canada's History Multiplies"). Canada: A People's History aired on the SRC network under the title Canada: une histoire populaire. The English-language title is
more declarative, announcing its status as a national history, comprised of a variety of people, of cultures, thus capturing Starowicz's aims for the series. To identify the series as a "popular history," however, transforms the declaration of nationhood in the English-language title into a less grandiose description of a populace. Thus, Canada's history should appeal to viewers who inhabit its boundaries, as members of this area. It also turns it into a fad, the product of a moment, aimed at a general, and not a specialized, audience. If a title is meant to direct national sentiment, then that direction is lacking in its title as a popular history. The overall qualitative differences between the English- and the French-Canadian participants in the online forums may also be the result of the remarkably different ways in which the CBC and SRC website treat their forums. The SRC website is much easier to navigate, and the discussions are organized by episode and by week. The CBC website, by contrast, guided viewers' responses by asking them to respond to questions related to each episode. Thus, viewers were responding to such question as "How important was the fur trade in the political and economic development of Canada?" and, simply, "What did you think of Episode One?" (or, Two, and so on). The questions in the forum were thus modeled after a classroom, and, indeed, seemed to attract more responses by young people than the SRC forum whose demographic seems to represent a wider range of ages. The cultural rapprochement that he envisions the series thus seems to take place on English-Canadian terms. That is, by introducing English Canadians to their history, the series also function to introduce them to their lesser-known francophone partner.
A Literary Critic's Response

Canada’s inability to produce a national historian has preoccupied English-Canadian literary critics throughout the last century and a half. Ten years before Confederation, Thomas D’Arcy McGee wrote a retrospective essay entitled “Protection for Canadian Literature,” in which he linked Canada’s chances of producing a great national literature to its need to produce a great national historian:

> [e]very country, every nationality, every people, must create and foster a National Literature, if it is their wish to preserve a distinct individuality from other nations. If precautions are not taken to secure this end, the distinctive character and features of a people must disappear; . . . [Canada has] not as yet produced a name renowned in literature—if we except the Historian of Canada, Mr Garneau, Judge Haliburton, and one or two others. (43)

If a nation requires a historian to ensure its cultural survival, then its history must be written according to romantic conventions for, as McGee stipulates, the Canadian literature that he envisions in the future “must assume the gorgeous coloring and the gloomy grandeur of the forest. It must partake of the grave mysticism of the Red man, and the wild vivacity of the hunter of the western prairies” (44). McGee’s Ossianic understanding of the Canadian cultural landscape as shrouded in mist and mystery results in an “otherization” of the Natives and the wilderness (similar, again, to how they
converge in *Wacousta*) and a regionalized view of Canada, where the prairies are just as “other” to McGee (who lived in Montréal for much of his later life) as the Natives.

George Stewart, the owner and editor of *Stewart’s Literary Quarterly Magazine* (1867-1872) was much more critical than McGee in his assessment of Canada’s literary and historical prospects. In a statement that Starowicz will echo over a century later, Stewart declares that “[i]t is sad to contemplate the gross ignorance which prevails, even at this day, among our people in regard to the history of their country” (95). Acknowledging that Garneau’s *Histoire du Canada* “both in French and English, is a work of rare ability” Stewart claims Garneau for both French and English Canada by declaring him “a genuine Canadian Historian” (96). Garneau’s work thus represents, to an English Canadian, how Canada’s history should be narrated in order for Canada to compete with European nations in literary and historiographical achievements: “[a]ny accurate observer can write a book of annals, but a life has to be devoted to literature ere such masterpieces are produced as Macaulay’s ‘History of England’[.] ... The charm of such books depends as much on their style as on the information they convey, and such style is not so much the gift of nature as the product of art” (103). Garneau’s *Histoire*, a celebration of French Canadians’ valorous contributions to the consolidation of Canada (and, indeed, through their settlement around North America, to the development of North America’s culture and history) is written according to the romantic conventions outlined by McGee, and represents an important model for Stewart of how a Canadian history should be written.

The views of McGee and Stewart about the romantic criteria for a national history and a national literature are typically Victorian, and are echoed in Europe by such
historians as Thomas Babington Macaulay in Britain and Augustin Thierry in France, for whom the emotive value of history became especially important in the wake of Scott. In his essay on “History,” Macaulay invokes the model of Scott’s historical novels as standards for writing history. Recalling a stained-glass window in Lincoln Cathedral, said to have been constructed by an apprentice with the fragments of glass rejected by his master, Macaulay states that “Sir Walter Scott, in the same manner [as the apprentice], has used those fragments of truth which historians have scornfully thrown behind them, in a manner which may well excite their envy. He has constructed out of their gleanings works which, even considered as histories, are scarcely less valuable than theirs” (365). Macaulay’s reference to historians’ envy serves his purposes well: it encapsulates his larger argument that Scott has changed how history should effectively be written, and it points to the affective power of Scott’s novels which made them so popular.

In France, Augustin Thierry, in his *Histoire de la Conquete de l'Angleterre par les Normands* (1825), based his study of the Norman Conquest not only on chronicles, but on Scott’s *Ivanhoe* (1820). In particular, Thierry took on board the idea that the serious divisions between Saxons and Normans continued after the Norman Conquest. Thierry had a pronounced influence on Garneau, whose atavistic understanding of Canadian history as the product of historical antagonism between the English and the French derives from Thierry’s understanding of Norman-Anglo-Saxon relations. Because Garneau had such a powerful effect on French-Canadians’ historical self-understanding in the nineteenth century, this genealogy of influences enables us to trace Garneau, through Thierry, to Scott. French Canadians in the post-Garneau era emerged with a strong sense of self-understanding and, like Aubert de Gaspé in *Les Anciens Canadiens,*
openly acknowledged their debt to Garneau’s romantic nationalism. The inaugural issue of the influential journal *Les Soirées canadiennes* is a case in point. The founding of the journal in February 1861, marked a defining moment in French-Canadian literary history. The journal went on to publish such disciples of Garneau and notable poets and novelists as Henri-Raymond Casgrain who was (also its editor) and Philippe Aubert de Gaspé. The inaugural issue opened with the following epigraph from the French poet Charles Nodier: “[h]âtons-nous de raconter les délicieuses histoires du peuple, avant qu’il les ait oubliées” (see Casgrain 66). *Les Soirées canadiennes* thus begins its issue with the imperative to French Canadians that they employ the journal as an antiquarian tool and mnemonic device to rescue their history and customs from the potential threat of oblivion. Garneau’s romantic nationalism is apparent in the journal’s opening imperative, and indeed sets the tone with which French-Canadian history will be written in the following decades.

Macaulay’s reference to fragments of glass as a metaphor for historical truth, which has to be moulded from various fragments into narrative shape, forecasts the connections between historical narrative, historical truth, and popular reading that Starowicz will make in his plenary speech at the Montréal conference. Indeed, the English-Canadian view that Canada lacks a national historian has persisted well into the twentieth century, and can be said to constitute the motives for the production of *Canada: A People’s History*. As Starowicz maintains in his Foreword to the book, contemporary Canadians lack not only a knowledge of their past, but also (and, he suggests, more importantly) a narrative form that is at once authoritative and accessible to Canadians. The series’ combinations of literary modes and conventions, from the epistolary narrative
and diaries, to historical facts, thus harkens back to similar issues facing nationalist
novelists in Britain and Canada in the nineteenth century respecting the literary modes
and narrative voices necessary to write a history at once popular in its appeal, yet
authoritative and convincing.

In emigrating to Canada, Irishmen like McGee (and Scotsmen like John A.
MacDonald) contributed to the political foundation of Canada. Yet, as I have discussed
throughout this dissertation, Irish and Scots immigrants imported their own narratives,
which became (as in McGee's literary historical essays) foundational to Canadians'
efforts to build a national literature. In my examination of “transcolonial circuits,” I
have explored what historical fiction in the nineteenth century and a television series in
the early twenty-first have to tell us about the ways in which Canadian history has been
written and taught to Canadians. François-Xavier Garneau was phenomenally successful
because he gave French and English Canadians the tools with which to write history.
Similarly, Thomas Chandler Haliburton provided material for both English and French
Canadians to adapt to their own narratives of history. My dissertation intervenes in the
current historiographical debates in Canada (the power of which is evident in the
complicated production of Canada: A People's History) by arguing that Starowicz’s
conception of historiography for the “television age,” a postmodern approach whose
newness he repeatedly asserts, deserves itself to be historicized, for its roots lie in the
comprehensive work being done on Irish and Scottish literature.
1 Starowicz is the most recent in a line of Canadian cultural critics (be they television producers, literary critics, or novelists) to evoke a metaphor of illness or disease in describing Canadian society. For Starowicz, Canada’s “illness” is a loss of consciousness which results in a rupture in the collective memory, and an ensuing inability to construct a narrative of historical self-understanding. For Margaret Atwood, Canadians’ “mental illness” is “paranoid schizophrenia” (Afterword 62), whose effects she describes in literary, or narratological, terms. Referring to her disappointment at reading Susanna Moodie’s *Roughing It in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings* (1853), Atwood explains that “the books had little shape: they were collections of disconnected anecdotes.” She concludes that “what struck me most about [Moodie’s] personality was the way in which it reflects many of the obsessions still with us” (62). Thus, Moodie, through her disconnected narrative, comes to stand synecdochically for Canada. Like Starowicz’s “Canadians,” Susanna Moodie also cannot manage to create a coherent narrative of herself. Northrop Frye’s concept of the garrison mentality, although not described in terms of a disease, also defines Canadians by their state of mind, which prevents them from constructing a coherent national identity. Frye’s concept refers to the fortress mentality at the root of Canadian consciousness, caused by what he suggests is their fear of the wilderness. This fear results in Canadians’ alienation from the land and from one another. Historically, he suggests, this has resulted in their inability to move beyond a regionalized to a national understanding of themselves.

2 There is a different kind of historical uncovering currently taking place in Grand-Pré, where extensive excavations has begun to unearth the remains of what is believed to be the original church, which was burned by the British during the Deportation. Geologists have examined the rocks, which show signs of having been exposed to extreme heat.

3 They also imported their hostilities. McGee was murdered on Parliament Hill by a Fenian. The coffee-table book describes the murder as follows: “[s]hortly after 1:00 a.m., McGee left the House, lit a cigar, and walked to Mrs. Trotter’s boarding house on Sparks Street, where he stayed while in Ottawa. It would be his birthday in six days, and he was looking forward to returning to Montreal to celebrate it with his wife and family. As he was turning his key in the block, he was shot in the head and died immediately.” It was generally believed that “the murder was the work of Fenian terrorists. Patrick James Whelan was arrested within twenty-four hours. He was tried and found guilty, though he maintained his innocence, and it was never proven that he was a Fenian” (Gillmor 279).
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