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CANADA'S CHILD IMMIGRANTS

BY KENNETH BAGNEW
Britain's children who came to stay

BY KENNETH BAGNELL

One day in June in the early 1920s, a small boy named Horace Weir stood nervously on the deck of an old steamer and watched the buildings of the port of Halifax begin to rise in the thick, gray mist. He was 11, a frail child who had been born into poverty in Britain and was now about to arrive in Canada to begin a new life as a farm boy somewhere in the Maritimes.

He gripped the rail and peered into the cold fog. He was worried, not just for himself and what lay ahead for him, but for his five brothers and sisters who were also on board that day. He, after all, was the oldest boy, the one to whom the others looked. He worried for them, wondering where they were headed and what awaited them. They, too, were bound for life on a farm, his brothers as chores boys, his sisters as mother's helpers, all except Beatrice, who was not quite 3 and would, he was told, be adopted. He worried most of all for her. He always had, ever since that night a year earlier when his parents, broken by illness and terrible poverty, signed over all their children to an organization in Birmingham that sent boys and girls overseas to Canada.

It was almost dark when the six Weir children came down the gangplank. In the darkness and the confusion of landing — or perhaps it was planned that way to avoid the sadness of parting — Horace Weir did not see any of his brothers or sisters to say goodbye. That same evening he was put on a train for the Annapolis Valley in Nova Scotia, where he was met by a farmer in whose home he would pass his lonely childhood and in whose fields he would work until he was an adult and able to find a job for himself.

When he reached the age of 18 and was on his own, he began to search for his brothers and sisters, though he did not know for certain where any of them were.

Often people told him he should try to forget them, but he could not. Over the years he found his brothers and sisters, all but the youngest, Beatrice. But as he found them, he found as well that on that evening when they landed in Halifax their family had been broken forever. Once, after he had located one of his brothers, he put his feelings into words: "For brothers, it was not like brothers." All his life he wondered about Beatrice, who was so young, so helpless, and who had disappeared so completely. When he was in his thirties someone told him that she had been adopted by a family living in Prince Edward Island who had then moved to the United States, and so he was certain she was gone forever.

In June 1974, 50 years after he arrived in Canada, Horace Weir, who was then in his early sixties, a respected carpenter living near the Annapolis Valley community of Bridgetown, put his tools in the back of his car and began the drive home. Along the way he wondered idly if he and his wife might go to the ball game or perhaps drive down the road to visit his son and grandchildren. When he reached home and turned onto the driveway he was curious to notice, beneath the trees in front of the house, a man and woman. He got out of the car. The man, whom he had never seen before, spoke softly and a bit formally. He gave his name and said he was a retired officer of the Canadian services who had lived abroad for many years. Then, turning to the woman beside him, he asked Horace Weir if he had ever met him. Horace Weir looked and smiled but said no, he had not.

"Mr. Weir," the man said, "this is your sister. This is Beatrice." He would always remember that day and how they stood there a long time, saying nothing. Then she reached out and shook his hand.

Horace Weir and his sisters and brothers came to this country in one of the most dramatic schemes in the history of immigration to Canada, one in which more than 80,000 children, many just out of infancy, were gathered from the poor neighbor- hoods of Britain's cities — London, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester — and sent to Canada to live on farms, some in the Maritimes and Quebec, but most in Ontario and Manitoba. During the peak period of the movement, the early 1900s, scores of organizations and individuals were busily shipping children to Canada. Some of the children, those too young to work, were adopted into families, often informally, but most were expected to
spend the years of their childhood working in the fields or tending the cattle in an indenture that was stern and lonely. It was a practice that in some cases revealed the decay of early Canada.

The child immigration movement began over a century ago, on a day in early November 1860 when a woman named Mary Rye, a British suffragette whose aspirations were as strong as her personality, arrived in the pleasant Ontario farmland near what is now Niagara-on-the-Lake, bringing with her 77 children, mostly girls between five and 16, whom she planned to entrust to anyone who would take them. She had gathered the children from the slums of the east end of London, where life was a squallid enslavement to poverty, disease, and crime from which death was an almost compassionate release.

"The sight of so many little orphans," said The Niagara Mail and Advertiser when they arrived, "nearly all of whom are, we believe, deprived of both father and mother, moved all hearts with sympathy."

The children were housed in a former jail which had been donated to Miss Rye for use as a dormitory and distributing centre.

For people in Britain who feared for the welfare of the children in Canada, Mary Rye had an answer that would be repeated for the next 50 years by those who, like her, brought children to Canada. "Can anything I introduce them to in Canada or America be worse than that to which they are doomed if we leave them where they are now?"

In those same months another woman in London, a deeply religious social worker, Annie Macpherson, who would have an even larger influence over child immigration, wrote a pamphlet for distribution among the well-to-do in London. Her message was clear: "We who labor here are tired of relieving misery from hand to mouth, and also heartbreak of seeing hundreds of families pining away for want of work, when over on the shores of Ontario the cry is heard, 'Come over and we will help you.'"

Thus, in the spring of the following year, 1876, Miss Macpherson and her workers chose about a hundred boys from the children's shelter she had opened and sailed for Canada. In late May they arrived with them to train in the quiet Ontario town of Belleville, where the local council met her and invited her to establish her Canadian "distributing house."

Within two years she opened a second home, in the town of Galt. Then, in 1877, convinced that Quebec should not be overlooked, her sister Louisa opened a third in the village of Knowlton, not far from Montreal, from where she sent children to the farms of the Eastern Townships for many years.

Still, though Mary Rye brought out the first children, and Annie Macpherson, enlarged upon her work, it was a slight, dapper young medical student who would make child immigration a phenomenon of Canadian history and, in the process, become its most famous personality. His name was Thomas John Barnardo, and the organization he founded, which still bears his name, would send over 50,000 children from 1882 to the early 1900s to Canada with the promise that there was scarcely a farming district in Ontario or Manitoba that did not have a number of Barnardo boys and girls, with their cookery, accents, their plain clothes, and often, too often, their lonely and frightened faces.

Barnardo was in his mid-twenties, a medical student in London, where Annie Macpherson began her work, but he was so appalled by the presence of homeless children that he gave up his ambitions in medicine and became a full-time child worker, opening his first hostel, in the slums of east London, in 1870. Before long the building swarmed with boys, so many that

Barnardo was forced to find new ways to accommodate the numbers who were so desperately in search of food and shelter. Emigration was the answer, made obvious by the woman with whom he worked while still a student, Annie Macpherson. Thus, in the middle years of the 1870s, the first Barnardo children began arriving in Canada in the care of Annie Macpherson, who brought them, along with her own parties, and settled them throughout Ontario, mainly in the farming districts between Belleville and Galt.

By 1882, however, Barnardo's work and ambition grew so large that he set up his own immigration scheme, with hundreds of children arriving every spring, summer, and fall at the Barnardo Homes in Toronto, Peterborough, and Winnipeg, and at the training farm in northern Manitoba, near the community of Russell. Barnardo, who referred to child immigration as "The Golden Bridge" and "The Highway of Hope," saw it not just as an idealistic opportunity for his children but as a necessity if they were to expand his work. As he often told his supporters, "An open door at the front demands an exit door at the back." Thus, in 1897, when he was in his late forties, a famous figure in Britain and Canada, Dr. Barnardo's Homes were sending out a second children a year, the number of child immigrants remained steadily right up to 1914, when World War I interrupted the program.

Thomas Barnardo was a complex mix of philanthropist and individualist. After he opened his hotels in London, he could be found, night after night, combing the streets until almost dawn, searching out the homeless children who slept beside sheds and beneath bridges. Sometimes he would return to his hotel just before dawn with a dozen boys, providing them with the first food and shelter they had had for weeks. Eventually, many of them in the workhouse, willingly gave their children in a desperate hope that under his hand they might have a chance for a decent life in Canada. He became, while still a young man, a legend.

When he came on his visits to Canada he was greeted with something approaching awe, especially by the children he had sent out. Before each visit, his Canadian staff would send word of his coming to the thousands of children already on the farms and, on an appointed day, great numbers of them would gather either at the Canadian headquarters in downtown Toronto or, in the case of the girls, on the tree-shaded lawns of Hailebear, a large house donated to him in Peterborough which he set aside as the receiving centre for girls. Often after he visited Hailebear and had been the honored guest at an afternoon tea attended by hundreds of his girls, he would set out the next day, alone, by horse and buggy down dusty roads, a striking figure in frock coat and top hat, calling at farms along the way to visit as many children as he could.

Once, he set out for an obscure village a short distance from Peterborough, hoping to visit two small girls, both under 12, who had been sent from England two years previously. "I walked down a long and beauti- fully shaded street," he wrote of his visit that day, "and knocked at a detached, old-fashioned house, standing apart from the others and back from the road." He was met by an elderly woman, who said that since she was alone and needed the companionship she hoped he had not come to remove the children. He spoke with her for a few minutes, asking about the girls' manners and their willingness to work.

Thus he was ushered into the front parlor where she sat alone while the woman went to bring the two children to meet their surprise visitor.

The girls were brought to him separately.
so that he might talk to each one privately. As each entered the parlor, alert with shyness, he stood up, removed his glasses, and extended his hand. He spoke gently, kindly, and, with his incredible memory for family details, was able to recall the parents they had left and to assure them that, even if it were lonely and hard, their choice had been for the best. He asked if they went to school and to church and if they were reading the Bible — the one he had given each of them, the one he had been carrying in his briefcase and signature on the front cover — and then, in a gesture that was as sincere as it was brief, he asked them to do their best to live the good life.

Then he shook hands again and, with the girls holding back tears, he bowed, kissed the tops of their heads, and left. For such children, many of them lonely and heartbroken, a visit from Dr. Barnardo, the only father some of them would ever know, was the most memorable event in their lives.

He was, as well as a visionary, an extraordinary fund raiser; so that while he was able to defend some of the costs of sending children to Canada through government grants and free travel, the enormous expense of maintaining and expanding his homes, feeding and clothing his children, came from money raised almost alone, as a preacher, writer, and, often, a showman. Every year, beginning in 1880, he remitted for the annual meeting of Dr. Barnardo’s Homes the great Albert Hall in London, turning the meeting into an extravaganza in which thousands of children took part, singing anthems, performing drills, and demonstrating the trades in which they were being trained in his homes — ironmongers, carpenters, tailors, domestics. But, with his keen sense of drama, he held the most emotional display for the end. After the songs were sung and the drills had ended, Barnardo, who always chaired the meetings, would step to the centre of the stage. He would say that now was the time for the prayers of all people everywhere for these “gray boys and girls,” those who were about to leave him for good. A trumpeter would then sound, and from one side of the stage, slowly at first but with gathering pace, a line of children would enter. Hundreds of them, all bowed for Canada, boys in dark wool suits and shoulder-length flannel jackets and girls in long dresses carrying suitcases. Then, at the end of the long line, would come a child, usually a small girl, bearing a banner with only one word: “Goodbye.” Invariably the audience was swept with emotion.

One day in the spring of 1909, a couple in Montreal, Mr. and Mrs. Godbee Brown, sat in the living room of their comfortable home, and for most of an hour they studied the pages of the recently published yearbook of McGill University. There, among the many various likenesses of young men on their way into the professions of law and medicine, was the photograph of a young woman, a striking girl, around whom

Right on a work farm, King’s County, N.B., 1907
Centre at work in the fields of New Brunswick, 1910
Bottom: an arriving group, Saint John, N.B., 1912

centred all their afternoons and ambitions.

This was Theodore, their daughter, their only child, who was now graduating from McGill with honours, the vice-president of her class.

The outline of Theodore’s career at Mount, carried beside her photograph, made no reference to her early life, but even if she agreed to explain it, there was little she could have told. Her birth was a mystery even to her. Her childhood in a brief note written years earlier when she was taken by someone and given into the care of one of the child organisations in London. When she was five years old she was put aboard a steamer and sent to Canada. Since she was too young to be played out as a music hall helper, she remained in the distributing home to which she had been sent, at Belleville, Ont. Then, one autumn day, she showed a remark that would affect Theodore’s life in a remarkable way: “You know what? You’re not Theodore Brown, you’re a Home Girl. You came from the home.” Her mother did her best to explain, but for the rest of her life, as in the case of many children like her, the memories of that day would never go away. Despite all her gifts, her friends noticed a deep yearning for the past in her life, as if she were seeking to find out whose child she really was, not out of curiosity or bewildered ment but to fill some void in her spirit. When she had a daughter of her own, Phyllis, she would remind the girl over and over again that she was her mother’s “own flesh and blood.” In 1948 her daughter, who had married and had her first child, returned to Montreal to bring Theodore Brown and her granddaughter. Theodore’s joy in seeing her grandchild was of a special kind. “It meant,” her daughter would recall long afterward, “that she could once again say that a child was her own flesh and blood.” In time, her daughter would become a student of genealogy and would spend years trying to unravel the riddle of her mother’s childhood in Britain. But Theodore Brown’s early life would remain the mystery of an abandoned child who had a fortunate destiny.

Other children were less fortunate. Barnardo and those who did similar work in the other organisations were often rightly dedicated, but given the secrecy of funds, the multitude of children, and the small number of workers, especially in Canada, it was inevitable that misfortunes would occur. Some children would be placed in homes where they were worked too hard, deprived of normal affection and, in some cases, seldom visited by a worker from the organisation that had brought them to their lonely life in Canada.

One spring in England, not long after the turn of the century, a thin, lonely boy named Fred Trusche, who had been put in one of the homes because of his father’s death and his mother’s extreme poverty, was taken aside by one of the workers, a kind woman whom he had come to trust, and told that soon he would be going to Canada.

When he arrived in Montreal, he was put aboard a train and taken to Toronto. There he was put on another train with a rag on his jacket saying he was destined for a farmer in a small community in Ontario, known as Elmvale. The work was hard and, for a boy of 12 who had never seen a farm, very strange. For weeks the farmer tried to teach him to milk, but he could not learn quicly enough, and though the man said little, it was obvious that he was growing impatient. One night when, as usual, Fred was eating alone in the kitchen, he overheard the man telling his wife that the boy was not working out, that he was nothing but “a green Englishman.” Several times the farmer, who seemed to believe that punishment would teach Fred to milk, beat him severely, so severely that people who managed the home received a note from Mr. and Mrs. Godbee Brown, well-known members of St. James Methodist Church, Montreal, asking if they had no children, might take one of the children to raise as their own. Thus, in October 1909, Theodore was chosen by one of the leading families of church and society in Montreal, a couple whose home would include a library and conservatory, where her father would read her the classics. She would be surrounded by the advantages of affluence and the affections of a man and woman who took great joy in her arrival in their lives.

One day in winter, two years after she had come to the Brown, she saw some children rolling a snowball and ran to join them. Suddenly one of them, an older girl,
poster carrying a photo of a smiling farm boy and the words: ‘Come to Canada. Own Your Own Boss at 21.’ Within a matter of days, since he was old enough to emigrate on his own, he signed an agreement saying he would take whatever farm job was offered to him in Canada. Then he sailed. He was sent to a small, poor farm near Lindsay, Ont., to live with a man and his very aged mother, terns people, but neither of whom had much sympathy for the lonely, precocious boy who sat at the table in the evening writing poetry. He found his best friend, indeed his only friend, to be a local minister, Reverend Robert Simpson, who, following Sunday services, would invite him to his home, where they would talk of ethics and ideals. The boy would never forget him.

Within two years the boy came to Toronto. Since the Depression had struck and he had neither education nor skills, the only job he could find was selling doughnuts on the street in return for a bed and all the doughnuts he could eat. In a decision that would influence his life more than he could have imagined, he joined a working boys’ club at Toronto’s Beaches YMCA. There, two of the administrators, Murray Ross and Richard Davis, sensed in him special gifts. Davis suggested that he should complete his education — he had never gone to high school — and, as an afterthought, told him that, if he wished, the Y would give him a text to measure his progress. He finished it at just over half the time. He answered every question; virtually every answer was correct. Murray Ross, later to become the first president of York University, would never forget the astonishing paradox of that day, the shabby, homeless orphan with the rare, extra-spectacular intelligence. ‘We took the results,’ Ross told a friend years later, ‘to psychology at the University of Toronto. They said he was literally one in a million.’ Within a few months, through the encouragement of Richard Davis and using textbooks at home, the boy finished his high school studies and was entered as an undergraduate at the University of Chicago in sociology, where he completed his degree in less than three years.

Thus began the career of the man many believe to be the most brilliant sociologists Canada has yet produced, a child emigrant from Britain named John R. Seeley. He became, in time, the head of sociology at York University, Toronto, and is today associate dean at a private college in Los Angeles. Like all the others, he would never forget the loneliness and the hardship of those early years in Canada. But in the end, most of all he would remember how one person, a country minister named Robert Simpson, befriended him in his ordeal and touched his life with hope. Often, he says, he goes back in his mind to the Sunday afternoons in the mame near Lindsay, Ont., and the long conversations with the aging Presbyterian clergyman. Perhaps John R. Seeley was speaking for many of the men and women who came to Canada as he did and found one person who cared for them, when, a few years ago, he spoke to the American Academy of Psychoanalysis. Recalling the influence of one man on his life he told his audience: ‘I know that for brief times, on small scales, as far as an arm will reach, good people still do good things.’

Adapted from "The Little Immigrants" by Kenneth Bagnell, to be published in October by Macmillan of Canada.
UP, UP AND AWAY
Taking to the air with Imperial

By Paul Miller

From Nome in December 1929 the word flashed to the warmer world: Eielson is lost. Carl Ben Eielson, who had gained fame one year before when he flew over the North Pole with Sir Herbert Wilkins, had disappeared during a relief mission to an American schooner trapped in heavy ice off the coast of Siberia. Anxious days passed without news. A search was organized; T.M. "Pat" Reid was chosen to lead it. Reid's qualifications for the mission were impressive. The previous year he made the first northwest passage by air and became the first man to circumnavigate Hudson Bay in an airplane. During six months in which he covered more than 45,000 kilometers of uniquely difficult terrain, he had paused from his duties as a pilot for a mineral exploration firm to embark...
alone on the first aerial search-and-rescue mission in the Northwest Territories. One week of zigzags across the barren lands to the west of Hudson Bay to Eureka proved the resilience of cloth and wood over a seemingly endless expanse of unmapped territory. Frightened by the experience, the company decided to cease flying.

The most damaging of all the early setbacks occurred in 1933, during their flights over the North Atlantic, and by Wylie Post and Hardman Stewart, the first two pilots of the Winnie Mae, with Imperial Aeroplane Service. The aircraft was lost during a flight between Disco and St. Marys, Nunavut, with the loss of three crew members.

In 1933, during one of their flights, the plane crashed in the mountains of the Northwest Territories. The pilots, including the company's founder, were killed. The company was forced to disband, and its assets were sold to another company.

However, the company continued to operate until 1936, when it was officially dissolved. Its legacy lives on, though, through the many stories and experiences of its pilots and crew.
Down at the station
Where the waiting room is busier than ever

BY EILEEN PETTIGREW

There's still a feeling of the past, a whisper of long skirts and genteel conversation, in the Station Gallery at Whitchurch, Ont. This gracefully turned, clapboard railway station, built in 1903 by the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada and later used by the Canadian National Railway, was scheduled for demolition in 1969 when Whitchurch Arts Incorporated bought it for the sum of one dollar as a permanent centre for their classes and exhibits.

It’s happening all over the country. A combination of reluctance to discard old structures and an awareness of today's building costs has led communities everywhere to cast speculative eyes on railway stations no longer needed in these days of dwindling passenger use. Because of their size and locations, these buildings make ideal galleries, museums, libraries, restaurants, and town meeting places. Groups approaching the railway companies with such plans usually find a receptive ear; the companies, concerned about vandalism and accidents to prowlers, often make the buildings available to communities on renew-
many more to nonprofit enterprises that benefit the community as a whole. Municipal, provincial, and federal grants have helped out in many cases, as have donations from interested citizens. Most of all, hard physical work, dedication, and imaginative planning have turned these buildings into attractive community centres that work well and retain the flavor of their beginnings.

In Winnipegosis, Man., about 60 kilometres north of Dauphin, Steve Lytwyn and a group of local citizens moved fast when they heard that the gray stucco station of the Great West Railway & Canal Company, circa 1897, was no longer needed. They arranged a $2000-a-year rental for the land from the company and, with other townspeople, turned the building into a base for a combination of community functions. Since the spring of 1979 it has housed a gallery for the work of local artists and craftsmen, a museum to display artifacts from the area's past, a town lending library, and the headquarters for the Youth Employment Office.

The building, remodeled in several stages over the years, had a 17-foot-high storage room which, with the help of a Canada Works grant, was divided into two floors. Against a backdrop of walls finished with pecked and varnished logs, visitors view early scenes of such trades as lumbering, ice fishing, and farming. Other rooms are fitted out as pioneer living areas and hospitals, while the main waiting room has been kept as it was, with wickers and the original potbelly stove. Added bonuses for tourists are the 65-foot freighter anchored nearby and a coashed which the committee hopes to turn into a copy of an old blacksmith shop. Financial problems are eased by the presence of library and employment office staff, who keep the Winnipegosis Historical Society Museum open to the public. There is a lot of history here. Lake Winnipegosis was the site of explore La Verendrye's first fort in the year 1742 and of Canada's first salt mine.

Railway companies usually prefer that these revitalized buildings be moved, but in St. Stephen, N.B., it wasn't practical to relocate the handsome limestone station built by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company in 1929. As a result, patrons of the town library are pleasantly reminded of the building's origins two or three times a day when freight trains rumble by.

Counterclockwise from below: one of the few stations still in their original locations, at St. Stephen's, N.B., is now occupied by the St. Croix Public Library (bottom left). The main door of the library (bottom right) was originally the men's entrance. The CPR station in Osboue, Sask., (far right) was transformed into the Ralph Allen Memorial Art Centre. Displays of local artifacts (top right and bottom left) have been set up in what was once the station agent's living room.

within 12 feet of the window. Librarian Elva Hart sits at a desk originally used by the railway telegrapher; it's one of the treasures the new occupants were able to salvage.

The town pays for maintenance and gave the library a grant of about $60,000 to cover the cost of converting the building. Renovators pulled out the ticket wicket to open up the main area, carpeted some of the floors, re-modeled the baggage room, and added central heating. The library, previously crammed into one room of the local high school, has a registered membership of 3,000 and uses the whole building. Storage is in the basement, book circulation in the ladies' waiting room, the main library in the central station area with its high, domed ceiling and attractively bricked walls, and the boys' and girls' departments upstairs, housing about 12,000 books, in the baggage room. "Before we moved here in 1971 we could accommodate only 54 books for children," says Elva Hart.

One of the most graceful of all the stations now in re-use is the Gare du Palais in Quebec City, a beautiful building opened in 1915 which still reflects the elegance of its original design. A central tower and turrets bearing symbols of France, Britain, and Ireland. Quebecers who knew the station in its grand days, mostly in the twenties and thirties, still remember how, in the summers, wealthy families from the United States would arrive, often traveling in private cars filled with summer finery and an entourage of maids and butlers, on their way to spend holidays in places such as La Malbaie or St. Simon.

Today, the trains no longer pull up at the old station with the sloping copper roof. It is now a marketplace, and every day except Sunday its spacious waiting room is filled with dozens of farmers, selling poultry, eggs, cheese, fruit, vegetables, and flowers. The travelers who once stepped into the gracious welcome of the huge concourse have been replaced by hundreds of shoppers from the city, out buying food for the daily menu. But looking down on them all is the large ornamental clock, there since the station first opened, a reminder of Canada's yesterday.

The CPR station built in Calgary in 1885, a sandstone building divided into two sections with a covered walkway between and topped by a chalet-style roof, was replaced in 1911.
old station was then dismantled and one half sent to High River, the other to neighboring Claresholm, to serve as town railway stations. Today both are community museums.

High River’s Museum of the Highwood, which opened in 1971, had 7,000 visitors in 1979 to see a recreation of the area’s past, from Indian days through the ranching era to the day of the settler. The town moved the building from Canadian Pacific for $10 a month until 1976, when it was purchased for the sum of five dollars. Funding of $140,000 — partly from the town and partly from the Main Street Alberta Program, which was set up to assist small towns to improve their downtown areas — allowed for repairs such as a new roof, painting and plastering, rebuilding the old platform, remodeling of washrooms, and installation of a wheelchair ramp. Remaining funds were used to create a small park and parking lot.

In British Columbia in 1967, the Peace River & District Museum and Historical Society bought the 1931 relicsiding Northern Alberta Railway Station for one dollar. The station was moved three blocks to a town-owned lot and, with the help of a centennial grant, opened to the public in 1972. Local people have worked hard to gather materials representative of the area’s early days. They have divided the building into small rooms for individual displays, including such homemade items as a wooden washboard so well used that nearly all the ridges have been worn away, and a stove, an organ, and a spinning wheel brought in over the Edmonton trail from Edmonton long ago. Other rooms re-create a pioneer hospital, a school, and a parlor. Many of the displays include handmade mannequins; in the schoolroom the young students even have freckles on their faces.

The town gives the museum an annual grant of $2,700, but operating expenses run around $5,600. The difference is made up by committee-sponsored events such as rallies and, on one occasion, an old-time concert followed by a box social. The committee recently received a provincial grant which enabled them to complete a copy of an early store in a log cabin they had moved from a few kilometres up the valley.

For many communities the first railway station was a boxcar, to be followed by a wooden building and later, perhaps, by still another building.

Oxbow, Sask., reached by steel in 1891, was one of these. In 1970 when their third station, dating back to 1923, was no longer needed, a committee of townspeople headed by the editor of The Oxbow Herald approached the Canadian Pacific Railway and bought the red-painted frame building for $200. The town donated a lot overlooking the Souris River Valley, and the building was relocated in time for a 1972 opening.

Oxbow’s Ralph Allen Memorial Museum, dedicated jointly to the pioneer past of the area and to the memory of its namesake, the eminent Canadian journalist who spent much of his youth in that very building as the son of the station agent, received federal and provincial grants plus personal donations amounting altogether to about $10,000.

In summertime, volunteer townspeople, many of them senior citizens, keep the museum open for visitors who come to see the main waiting room, just as it was, with oil floor, walls, and the original benches and telegrapher’s equipment. A display on what was the express room highlights the oil industry of the area, and heavy articles such as an old car, a fire truck, a sleigh, and a railway express cart are exhibited in the old freight shed. One room has been dedicated to such Ralph Allen memorabilia as pictures, awards, and scrapbooks; upstairs other rooms recreate pioneer life right down to furniture and costumes.

The steam era, which ended in 1960 for regularly assigned train service, holds a special place in the hearts of Canadians. The haunting sound of the train whistle stirred the restless and the adventurous, but the stations were important in a more intimate way.

Town people often made a stroll to the station a part of their daily routine, to check their watches against the time on the big railway clock or just to sit around and pass the time of day. Railway fanciers recall nostalgically the smell of the oiled wood floors and the coal-burning stoves, the click of the telegrapher’s key, and the smooth oak benches in the waiting room.

Since the public has turned to other modes of travel, all this has gone; but it seems that the old buildings may not have outlived their usefulness after all, as Canadian communities look for ways to conserve — and, in the conserving, use — the buildings that are their heritage.
In 1974 I visited Poland for the first time, but before I left Canada a friend told me, "You have a fan club in Poland. You're very popular over there!" I was amazed, and I certainly didn't understand why. I'd never been to Poland before, but as it turned out the Poles heard me regularly on Polish radio. Thanks to the CBC International Service they received transpolar and other performances that I'd recorded years earlier for the CBC, recordings that were never intended for commercial release but were licensed for radio broadcast. These recordings were put out to radio stations and Canadian embassies all over the world. It pleases me to imagine that I have other audiences in places that I've never visited, heard of, or thought about. The single truth is that music in our time has benefited enormously from the technology that disseminates it. Unlike literature, which is still published much as it always was, and unlike paintings, which are still made one at a time to be sold as single, unique objects, and even unlike theatre, which may function on film, television, and radio but can't quite get the ideal of a live performance in front of an audience, music in our time may continue for its own sake but will certainly reach a much larger audience through radio, television, and phonograph records. That technology affects the way we think about music, and it has distinctly altered the history of Canadian music.

That technology also makes it possible for us to have national Canadian composers and performers. Even as recently as 20 or 30 years ago, problems of communication made it terribly difficult for a Montreal-born performer like myself to know about a new work by a Vancouver composer. The country was so vast, and there was no central clearinghouse of professional musical information until the foundation of the Canadian Music Centre, which first opened in Toronto in 1959 and later established offices in Montreal in 1975, in Vancouver in 1977, and in Calgary in 1980. The somewhat harsh truth is that if we were to consider only the professional history of Canadian music, we'd find ourselves dealing with the youngest and least developed of Canadian art forms. We're often reminded that even though our country has a long history, our culture is painfully new. Because of our geography and history of settlement, it's sometimes easier to approach our culture as it developed separately in each region.

And even then, music can prove to be a slippery subject to grasp historically. For one thing, as Helmut Kallmann wrote in Aspects of Music in Canada (1969), it's easy to confuse music history with the history of composition or the history of making music in Canada with the history of making Canadian music. Our history of performing music — for our own amusement as well as to entertain others — can be traced back to our earliest settlers. But it is largely a history of amateur music-making, community singing, church organs, and fiddlers who had to wait months for a performance. Some might not regard this as musical history at all. Willy Aitmann The fifth in a series of six essays by well-known Canadians on aspects of culture in Canada... wrote in his book, Music in Canada 1600-1800, "No other aspect of our cultural past has received so little attention or been subjected to less careful investigation than the musical history of early Canada." His book is a response to those who believe that Canadian music history begins with the 20th century or, at the earliest, with the arrival of British military bands and travelling entertainers after 1759. If all this sounds confusing, I ought to add that it's compounded by the scandalous lack of a single decent, readily available volume detailing our country's musical history. With the exception of Aitmann's splendid book, nothing that has been published remains in print. It shouldn't require access to a university library to find out something about our own musical history, but it does. And, of course, that's one of the biggest reasons why so many cultivated Canadians know so little about our early musical life.

Perhaps because secular musical activity reflects the extent to which an area has been settled, our own history is peculiarly sparse compared with the American colonies. As Dr. Aitmann notes, Canada in the mid-17th century wasn't really being settled but merely explored as a fur-trading post. By 1656 there were no more than 500 Europeans in all of Canada. Even that population was largely transient, so that, compared with the colonies to the south, it was an unpropitious place and time for music-making.

Two possible musical sources at the time were the French court and the church. But the French court music of the time didn't lend itself to amateur music-making at home. The early priests did bring liturgical chants with them and taught these to the Indians, but instrumental music was literally unheard of. We can find early references to the French tradition of the chanson, the folk song, and the dance. But with a negligible population of musically literate settlers, New France continued to suffer a musical poverty.

Our frustratingly fragmentary history continues well into the 18th century. Some historians have assumed that musical performances in New France were simply a direct echo of what was fashionable in Paris at the time, but Dr. Aitmann contradicts this view and argues that, in fact, there's no evidence that any such performances took place. Apart from the absence of suitable instruments, there seems to be little evidence that even a taste for such music existed. There's a rather jaundiced line written by General Montcalm in 1757, in which he describes an evening's entertainment, saying, "There was as good music as it is possible to perform in a country where the taste for art has not gained much foothold."

Montcalm's remarks would seem to confirm Dr. Aitmann's claim that the French art music of the time was not exactly blossoming on the shores of the St. Lawrence. In turn, that raises the question of what happened to the French popular music of the time. The folk fiddlers of today play dance music, including jigs, reels, and hornpipes, which is exclusively English, Scottish, or Irish. The French dance music of the 17th century has not survived. It seems to have disappeared. There's no satisfactory answer as to what happened to the light entertainment of the time, except to say that the people preserved what they preferred.

But if the British eventually conquered the dance floor, the traditional French chanson endured with a life of its own. Folklores at the turn of this century began collecting French folk songs in earnest, and they produced astonishing numbers. More than 9,000 melodies and 15,000 texts have been discovered, many of them dating back to the 17th century. But few of the lyrics and even fewer of the melodies are Canadian originals.

I remember growing up in a lower middle-class French-Canadian neighborhood in Montreal where most of our entertainment was supplied by ourselves, our girlfriends, and sitting on car bumpers and harmonizing. We'd sing all the folk songs that we heard on the street, and if we skipped rope we did it in French, like Garçon et Boue-bâde-boum. Maurice Barbeau, a pioneering folk song collector and anthologist of the first part of the 20th century, was actually the firstest Canadian musical figure whose work I encountered. And I still include some of this music in my recitals. You can hear the rhythm of the oars in the old voyageur songs, and the beat of the step dances is infectious, even to a sophisticated European audience.

But even so, if 100 great a dependence on French popular art seems to have retarded and inhibited the development of an indigenous and original
folk art, then, too, we must also con-
sider the difficulty of assimilating
native Indian songs and dances. These
creations attract little attention from
the early explorers, but, at the same
time, they did convene
musical exchanges. In 1615, the
Eur-
pean music, Indian music emphasized
the interpreter and expressive element over the
substance of the music. As Dr. Amtmann sums it up: "It is not what how it is done."
And so, even though we might
pursue successfully teaching their
Indian students to sing European
songs, we still cannot quite understand how to return the compliment.

The arrival of the British after the
Treaty of Paris in 1763 caused many
changes, but one of the least obvious effected our musical life. The British
regime had a profound influence on
bands, and many of the British settlers were
quite ardent musical amateurs. They brought their instruments, their train-
ing, and their music to a place that, as
Moncalm observed, had no particu-
larly strong sense of time. The
bandmasters played at civil and
military functions; they paraded and
they performed at public gatherings.
In addition, many German merce-
ny soldiers who came to fight in
America and also learned to play in
Canada, bringing with them a vital
tonal musical tradition that had
taken root in the local population was growing
rapidly, from some 70,000 in 1760 to
approximately 800,000 in the first
decade of the 19th century.

Music dealers advertised their wares in
the Montreal newspapers, import-
ung instruments and other instrumen-
ts. In 1789, Mr. Charles Watt of London
opened the first school of music and art
in Montreal. Regular subscription
concerts began in 1790 in Quebec City.
The subscription concerts were
enjoyed the first performance of the
first comedy with music written and
performed by the Bolingbroke elm and
di Colombe (Cret) Joseph Quesnel,
who lived and worked in Boucherville. (In-
corporating an ad for his shop, which
were rearranged and arranged by
the modern Toronto composer,
Goulding, in a single, summer season.
recorded by the CBC and is available
on Select Records CG-15.001.)

The growth of cities and large urban
centres is often accompanied by
migrations that were both solidly estab-
lished and professional. With a stable
and rich social network, they could
begin to find musical institu-
tions that have remained intact down to
today. However, the city's
ing and, after the war, immigrants
had poured into Canada. These included
many other classical musicians and
musicians and music lovers. From the
late 1950s to the present we have
created dozens of new concert halls and audi-
toriums, from the Easton Centre for the Performing Arts to the Ottawa National Arts
Centre, Montreal's Place des Arts, the
Rebecca Cohn Auditorium in Halifax,
Winnipeg's Mavis Conservatory Centre, Saskatchewan's Centennial Auditorium, and
many others.

The centennial also produced a sur-
prising amount of music of lasting
value, including such durable or-
chestral works as W.A. Mozart's
Concerto for Harp and Chamber
Orchestra, Otto Joachim's Contrastes,
and Murray Baxter's Melbourne's Orches-
tra in 1967. In the field of chamber music,

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REFINING THE REFINERIES

New skills in an old industry

When he was still a schoolboy in Edmonton, Dave McDowell used to consider the old Imperial Oil refinery his playground. There was a large, empty field adjoining the refinery, and he retains vivid memories of being chased by the security guard across the property and out over the chain-link fence. However, it wasn't just the lure of wide-open spaces that attracted him. "I was intrigued by the refinery," he recalls, "and I can remember staring with fascination at the towers and pipes."

Today, at the age of 27, McDowell works as a computer applications engineer at Imperial's modern Strathcona refinery, which was built on the site of that old Edmonton plant. The new refinery, which began operations in 1975, replaced four smaller and aging refineries in the Prairie provinces. It is one of the most modern and efficient anywhere in the world and offers a stark contrast between old and new.

In many ways that contrast between the old and new in refining is also symbolized by Dave McDowell and hundreds of other young engineers and technical workers employed at Imperial's five refineries across Canada, which produce roughly one-quarter of all refined products in the country. These men and women are bringing new skills to an old industry and changing it in ways hardly dreamed of when they were teenagers.

Today the refining process, once controlled manually, is managed by computer systems with dramatic precision from beginning to end. Enormous improvements are being made in environmental protection. New and better products are being manufactured and effective gains made in energy conservation. An old-timer returning for a tour of a modern Imperial refinery would be very surprised to see the changes wrought during the last 10 years. Yet, encouraging as many of those changes are, they represent no more than the beginnings of the tough job that lies ahead. Over the next few years, refinery experts will have to solve many of the problems normally associated with other, more glamorous segments of the oil industry.

"In its simplest terms, the refining industry faces a fourfold challenge," explains Bill Keough, Imperial's assistant general manager of logistics. "The composition of the crude oil or raw material used in refining is changing. The crude that the industry will have to rely upon in the future will be heavier and contain more sulphur. It will be harder to refine."

Converting that crude into high-quality products will demand plenty of ingenuity, but what will make the job even tougher is the second challenge. Canadians are demanding much more high-quality diesel fuel and motor gasoline and a lot less of such easily refined products as heating fuel and heavy industrial fuel oils. The third challenge is environmental. Together,
government and industry have set improved levels for air and water emissions, and the refining industry must work hard to meet the new standards.

These three challenges, tackled without regard to energy conservation and boost energy consumption beyond all acceptable levels. But because energy consumed in the production of petro-lem products represents about 40 percent of operating costs, refinery engineers are working to reduce the proportion of crude oil consumed as fuel. And that’s the fourth big challenge: energy conservation.

A few years ago we were seriously concerned about the lack of challenge in the refining industry, said Smith, manager of Imperial’s refinery in Sarnia, Ont. “We expected that working at the plant would become simply a matter of maintaining operations and that as a result we would lose good staff. We were completely wrong. Now we’re facing more chal-

The refining industry’s giant leap into the future began in the mid-1970s, long before the oil embargo, rising crude prices, and the possibility of shortages combined to create the term “energy crisis.” At that time Imperial and other companies were just begin-

Though still at Strathcona, Bent Donkers has now moved on to a different engineering group, which is tackling two of the other vexing chal-

The refinery then began building larger distillation towers and improved the flow of steam and fuel oil through the existing equipment. But the real breakthrough came in 1975, when Imperial began to test new techniques for finding and refining new kinds of heat sinks. The result was a dramatic increase in the efficiency of the process, with a corresponding decrease in the amount of fuel oil consumed.

The Strathcona refinery is a prime example of the new approach. With the help of a large, powerful steam turbine, the refinery is now able to produce enough steam to meet the needs of the other plants in the complex. In addition, the refinery has been able to reduce the amount of fuel oil required to operate the process by more than 50 percent. This has resulted in a savings of more than $500,000 per year, which is equivalent to an increase in the refinery’s annual production of about 50,000 barrels of crude.

The Strathcona refinery, as well as many other oil refineries in Canada, is an excellent example of the new approach to refining. By using new technology and innovative methods, the refinery is able to produce a high-quality product at a lower cost. This has resulted in a significant increase in the refinery’s efficiency and profitability.
training development officer, has recently been hired to devise intensive training programs for new technical workers. It's a demanding chore. Fukushima, working closely with experienced technical workers, is developing about 75 training programs that cover every technical skill in the refinery. "Basically, we are studying the ideal requirements of every job in the refinery. With that information we are setting standards of performance and providing trainees with all the information and skills they require. The result is a training program that reflects a balance between classroom instruction and on-the-job training."

This formalized approach to training is already considered to be something of a success at the Strathcona refinery, a fact that Fukushima credits largely to the experienced workers participating in the project. "A lot of the older fellows who have been working in refineries for years are interested in taking the training program, because they feel they've missed some skills along the way. Once the courses for new trainees have been set up, we'll turn our attention to them."

Kim Nickolchuk is a 19-year-old British Columbia native who recently began working at the Strathcona refinery. He is in the early phases of the training program for becoming a process technician. A big, burly young man with a good sense of humor, Nickolchuk put in time working on pipeline construction before joining Imperial. "I have relatives working in the refinery industry in British Columbia," he says, "so I knew something about it. But what really struck me about this job at Strathcona is the opportunity to get ahead. The job is good and the guys are great. He's impressed with the kind of training program that Fukushima has put together. "When I first came here, I thought I'd never learn this stuff. Now it's a lot simpler; it breaks right down. I feel I know how a refinery works."

His buddy, Dennis Bonner, also 19, worked on the drilling rigs for a few months before being hired by Strathcona. Bonner feels he's learned a lot from the classroom training so far but is eager to begin working more in the refinery, learning the practicalities of his job. He has been struck by the rapport that has developed between the younger workers and the experienced refinery employees. "There's no generation gap here at all. I really appreciate the way some of the older guys go out of their way to help us."

Dennis Bonner and Kim Nickolchuk are native westerners. But some of Strathcona's other talented staff come from far more distant points. Jila Mahalec is an Iranian-born chemical engineer, with a PhD from the University of Houston. She is a design engineer and describes her job in Jayman's language as solving bottleneck problems. She is now analyzing methods of increasing motor gasoline production to meet growing western

Canadian demand. "We are working with really important problems, which makes the job rewarding. You never know what sort of problem you'll be working on next. You're learning all the time."

Her husband, Vladimir, a native-born Yugoslav, also works at the Strathcona refinery as an engineer in charge of computer control for one of the refinery's complexes. He finds the challenge of solving crucial problems in so essential an industry highly rewarding. Attracting and keeping talented people doesn't just happen. It requires management systems to stimulate creativity, foster teamwork, and integrate experienced people with new employees. Imperial Oil has developed several on- and off-the-job training programs to develop both technical and personal skills. At the Sarnia refinery, for example, Don Lambert, manager of supply and technical services, has developed an innovative production team approach. Older and younger employees work together, passing on skills and ideas to one another. Teams are structured to follow projects through a number of phases, rather than working only with one phase. Lambert believes the greatest management challenge today is to eliminate the divisions between management and staff in order to encourage innovation. "I have administrative responsibilities for 160 people. That includes technicians, technologists, and engineers, some of the latter having PhDs and MBAs. But the whole key is that there are no second-class citizens. We've got a lot of challenges ahead, and whatever is accomplished will be the result of teamwork."

And how do today's new refinery professionals feel about those challenges? As Dave McDowell puts it, "It's the most fascinating industry I can imagine. You're dealing with new problems and different kinds of problems every day. It's demanding. But it couldn't be any more exciting."
In Closing

"A man's real possession," someone said, "is his memory." It was an offhand remark, I suppose, but every year about this time, as summer begins to rust into autumn, I know that it is true. I start remembering a fall day almost 50 years ago — an afternoon in September when the sun seemed dim and cool — when I arrived in a small town in New Brunswick, Sackville, and began life as a student at Mount Allison University. It was an experience I would come to look back upon with a mixture of fondness and penitence, but mostly gratitude.

I spent the day on the train in company with two fellows of my own age from Cape Breton, also bound for the university, and two older ones who were resuming residence at the Maritime penitentiary in the next town to Sackville, Dorchester. It was late in the day, almost supper-time, when the train entered the soft twilight over the Tantramar marshes around the town. At the station we were met, not by a flock of taxi drivers bidding for our fares, but by three students, all wearing the wool sweaters of the university, maroon and gold with a winged A on the back. Each student was very serious in style, with that benign condescension that I, a teenager from Nova Scotia, would come to believe was the hallmark of senior students, especially senior students who came from Ontario. "You are about to begin," said one of them, a theological student from Newfoundland with a portentous voice, "the most important period of your lives. Good luck to you." For a moment I thought I should salute. But instead I stepped aside to be out of his way as he strode up and down, directing our trunks be piled into the back of a pickup truck driven by one of his friends. Then, after waving the drivers off, he mentioned the three of us to the backseat of an old Chevrolet, and we drove silently up the main street of Sackville to the campus, which, as the name Mount Allison attests, is on a low rise within the town.

That week I began my first classes, and since I was determined to learn everything as quickly as possible, I enrolled in an "Introduction to Philosophy," which was taught by a man named Clayton Baxter, who would become, for me and a great many others who took his lectures over his nearly 30 years at Mount Allison, a warm and enduring memory. He was the only teacher of philosophy in the university, and seemed to have certain meditative, faraway moments in class and on the streets, leaving a freshness behind the feeling that he was in the presence of the kind of professor around whom legends are told. Usually Professor Baxter would be in class before any of us arrived, leaning over a book on his lectern, so long as we entered his lecture room in Centennial Hall, a vine-covered building only a minute's walk from the residence where I lived. He was a man of medium height with a trim mustache who, in his most serious moments, seemed to close his eyes slightly, tilt his head a bit to the left, and begin with the words, "You see . . ." In most things he said, he was trying to help us to think, carefully, critically, to realize that life's choices were far more complex than they first appeared. His strongest criticisms were reserved for those who spoke patronizingly of others, usually farmers, as leading "the simple life." He had, along with his commitment to philosophy, a remarkable retention for times and places, so that every spring, according to the story, he was able to tell any student traveling home or to a summer job the best way by train to anywhere in Canada, along with the time of arrival. Too soon, he retired to his farm and left generations of Mount Allison graduates wondering that his shadow would linger in the classrooms where he had taught.

I believe it was in 1959, toward the end of November, when I heard about a part-time job that, as it turned out, would have an influence on my life's work that was greater than I could have ever imagined. I was sitting in my room in the men's residence, Trueeman House, when someone said idly that the town newspaper, The Sackville Tribune-Post, was looking for a student who would write up news from the campus, especially sports. He didn't know what the pay might be, but since I didn't have enough money to buy even a bottle of pop — the strongest drink I had ever had — I decided I'd better look into it. The next morning, just before noon, I presented myself in the office of the editor, Charles W. Moffatt, and in an instant I was a sports columnist, complete with free tickets to hockey and basketball games. The editor explained that I would also write up the news from the campus — plans for new buildings, appointments of new professors, announcements of new scholarships. I was elated, not just at having such an exciting job but at the prospects of my new-found prosperity. I was almost out the door when Moffatt looked up and said that I'd forgotten something.

"What about money," he said. "I write through college — it costs money. We haven't talked about your pay." I said that really that was secondary to the opportunity and the experience, though in my own mind I was certain that whatever the pay, it would be plenty, probably more than I would actually need.

"We'll pay you 10 cents," he said. "Ten cents an inch." He then explained that every time a column or article of mine appeared I should clip it and save it. Then at the end of the month I was to bring them to the office, paste them all together in a line, and he would measure them, paying me at the rate of 10 cents an inch. In the end the job did not pay much, but I relished it, and I hope I learned something from it; it set me on a path I was to follow the rest of my life.

But while the classroom and the job were to move me in directions I had never thought of, it was a chance experience in my third year that was to affect me most of all and make Mount Allison such a deep and affectionately remembered part of my life. One of the students at the hall, who was planning to become an electrical engineer, set up a makeshift radio station in his room, one that could be picked up not only throughout the residence but, most important of all, in the rambling set of buildings across the street, known in those days as the University Girls' Residence. It was all very innocent — those were, after all, rather innocent days — but a couple of us who were asked to be announcers on Sunday evenings played nothing more unconventional than the music of David Rose or Mannovani.

We had, however, a small problem in that we were never certain if, in fact, we were on the air and reaching our audience in the large, many-windowed buildings across the way. The solution, decreed by our engineer, was to ask us as soon as we began broadcasting if we were being heard. "If so," I mimed one snowy evening in December, "would the girl in the corner room on the third floor of Borden Hall please flick the lights?" She did, all because of the magic of radio! In time we all became a bit more polished, so that each Sunday evening I entered her room, not on the air but by phone. I began to confer with her, and she gave me announcements that would be interesting and helpful to listeners. I called her "our program representative in Borden Hall." For so many of us those years at Mount Allison were as affecting as they were fleeting, touched with a seriousness we did not then imagine. I knew they were for me. For along with the philosophy of Clayton Baxter and the journalism of Charlie Moffatt, I married the girl from Borden Hall.