Lawren S. Harris

Urban Scenes and Wilderness Landscapes
1906 - 1930

Art Gallery of Ontario

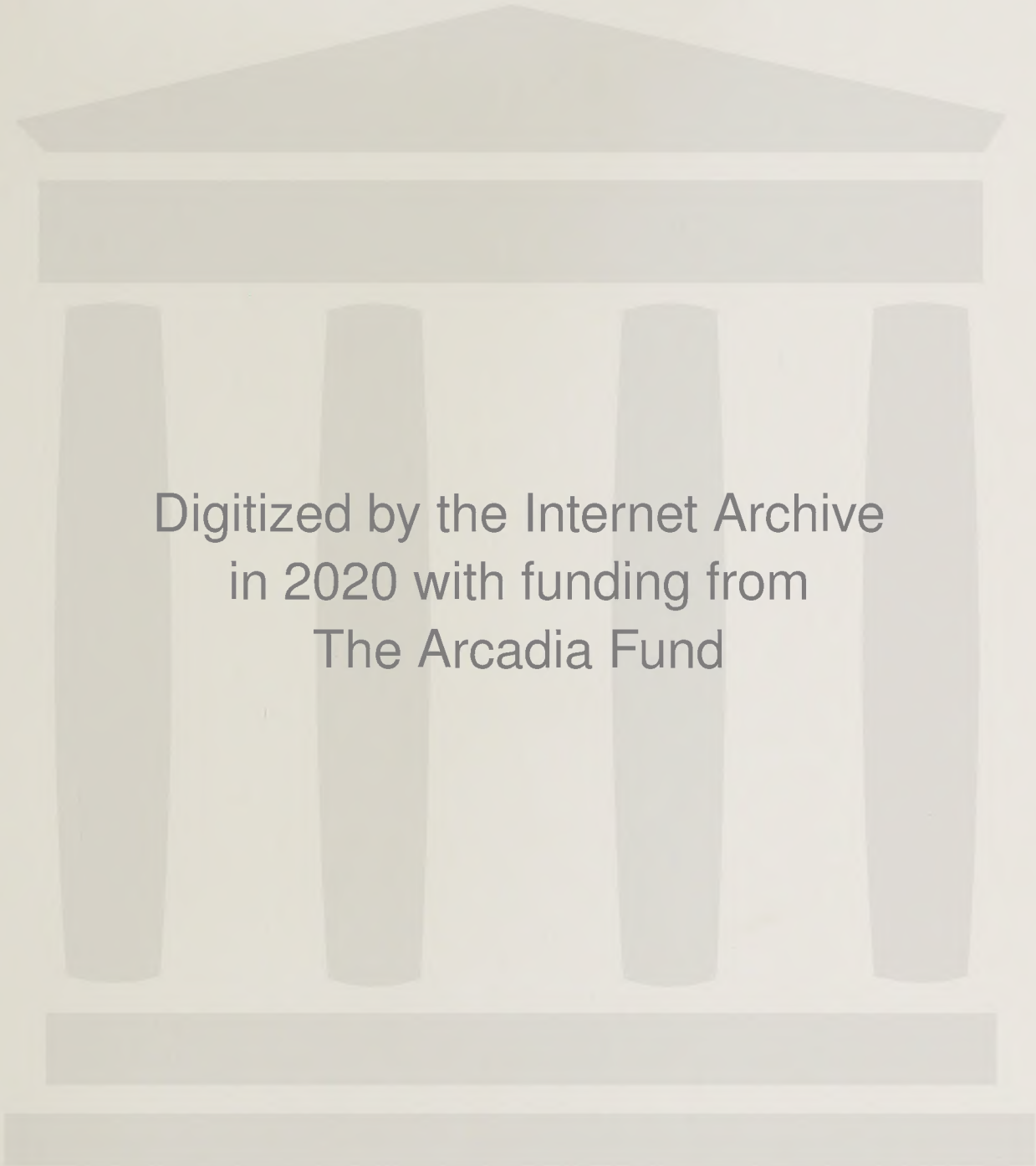
Lawren S. Harris
Urban Scenes and Wilderness Landscapes 1906-1930

is a concentrated study of a Canadian artist's work.

Lawren Stewart Harris (1885-1970) produced . . . some of the most exciting canvases ever painted in Canada. Best known today as one of the original members of the Group of Seven, he not only helped found that loose association of painters, but was in many respects the individual most responsible for its creation. His enthusiasm and financial support . . . sustained the national landscape movement which flourished in the post-First World War period. In an informal organization of equals, Harris was the unofficial leader and with A. Y. Jackson the Group's chief spokesman. . . .

One of the first Canadian painters whose figurative style, in the mid 1930s, evolved into abstraction, [Harris] actively supported that type of painting . . . with the same intense dedication that had characterized his defence of the aspirations of the Group of Seven. A leading creative spirit, he played an important role in the cultural life of the nation, devoting his considerable energies to promoting the highest standards in Canadian art.

William J. Withrow,
Director, Art Gallery of Ontario



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Jeremy Adamson

Art Gallery of Ontario

January 14 - February 26, 1978

Typesetting in *Palatino* by Compeer Typographic Services Limited
Printing and binding by The Hunter Rose Company
Colour separations by Colourgraph Reproduction Incorporated
Graphic realization by Helmut Weyerstrahs

Colour photography of entries 130, 135 courtesy National Gallery of Canada; entries 72, 102, 153 Art Gallery of Ontario; entry 84 by James Chambers, Art Gallery of Ontario; all others by Larry Ostrom, Art Gallery of Ontario.

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ISBN 0-919876-35-8

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Foreword

In the late fall of 1948, the Art Gallery of Toronto presented one of its most important exhibitions of Canadian art: *Lawren Harris, Paintings, 1910-1948*. A well-balanced retrospective, it contained one hundred and eighteen canvases, oil sketches and drawings from both the artist's representational and abstract periods. A second comprehensive show including eighty works, organized by The National Gallery of Canada in 1963, was seen in Ottawa and subsequently at the Vancouver Art Gallery.*

When first informed in May, 1947 of the Exhibition Committee's decision to mount a show of his paintings, Lawren Harris enthusiastically concurred though he asked "But why did they (or it) pick on me?"** The reasons were as self-evident then as they are today. At that time, the Art Gallery staff was fortunate to have had Harris' active participation in various aspects of the project — selecting the pictures, assisting with the design of the catalogue and helping with the installation itself.

Lawren Stewart Harris (1885-1970) produced, during a career which spanned a half century, some of the most exciting canvases ever painted in Canada. A leading creative spirit, he played an important role in the cultural life of the nation, devoting his considerable energies to promoting the highest standards in Canadian art.

Harris is best known today as one of the original members of the Group of Seven. Their first exhibition, held at the Art Gallery of Toronto in May 1920, was a landmark in the history of art in Canada. He not only helped found the loose association of painters, but was in many respects the individual most responsible for its creation. His enthusiasm and financial support during the formative years sustained the national landscape movement which flourished in the post-war period. Though an informal organization of equals, Lawren Harris was its unofficial leader and with A. Y. Jackson the Group's chief spokesman. In the Foreword to the catalogue of that 1920 exhibition, Harris wrote that "an Art must grow and flower in the land before the country will be a real home for its people."***

Harris was one of the first Canadian painters whose figurative style evolved into abstraction in the mid-1930s. He actively supported that type of painting in the face of conservative reaction with the same intense dedication that had earlier characterized his defence of the aspirations of the Group of Seven.

I was delighted when Jeremy Adamson, Curator of Canadian Historical Art at the Art Gallery of Ontario, first proposed the subject of this exhibition early in 1976. The retrospective held in 1948 was organized during the tenure of my predecessor, Mr. Martin Baldwin. Now a new generation has the opportunity to experience a large part of Lawren Harris' work. The reasons for limiting the selection to pictures painted between 1906 and 1930 are based on two factors. The representational period is a distinct segment of the artist's production and a close examination of Harris' paintings from the little-known student works to the Arctic canvases provides an excellent opportunity to investigate in depth Harris' characteristically Canadian themes. The artist's abstract pictures, though related in part to his landscapes of the late 1920s and early 1930s and their informing spirit, will be the topic of a separate exhibition organized by The National Gallery of Canada to be held in 1981.

Lawren S. Harris, Urban Scenes and Wilderness Landscapes, 1906-30 is a concentrated study of a Canadian artist's work. Mr. Adamson here examines Harris' vision in detail, systematically documenting the various phases of his pictorial and philosophic development. The exhibition and accompanying catalogue mark an important advance in Canadian art historical scholarship and establish a firm basis for subsequent research into our cultural heritage.

With the recent opening of the Canadian Wing of the Art Gallery of Ontario and the permanent display of its Canadian collection, the Art Gallery continues to be a leading exponent of the view that a serious appreciation of Canadian art is fundamental to an understanding of ourselves as a nation.

We are most grateful for the essential support of the Canadian Council in realizing *Lawren S. Harris, Urban Scenes and Wilderness Landscapes, 1906-30*.

William J. Withrow
Director
Art Gallery of Ontario

* Ottawa, The National Gallery of Canada. *Lawren Harris Retrospective Exhibition 1963*, 7 June - 8 September 1963.

** Letter from Lawren Harris to Sydney Key, Curator, Art Gallery of Toronto, 17 May 1947 (Archives, Art Gallery of Ontario). Harris provided important documentation of his early career for the organizers of the 1948 retrospective in a series of letters written to Key and Martin Baldwin in 1947 and 1948. See Appendix, p. 219.

*** [Lawren Harris] "Foreword," *Group of 7* (exhibition catalogue), Toronto: Art Museum of Toronto, 7-27 May 1920.

Acknowledgements

The present exhibition has benefited from the gracious assistance of Mr. Peter Larisey. A dedicated Harris scholar, he generously supplied information on the artist's life and work, collaborated on the picture selection and prepared the Chronology.

The exhibition has been realized with the assistance of many individuals. We should like to thank Mr. Lawren Phillips Harris, the artist's son, and Mrs. Margaret Harris Knox, the artist's daughter for their kindness and generosity throughout the organization of the show. The latter's husband, Mr. James H. Knox, was also most helpful. We are also grateful to Mr. John Comeau, The National Trust Company, Vancouver, for his aid. To Mrs. Doris Huestis Speirs I owe a considerable debt. Her delightful reminiscences of the artist and his friends allowed me to reconstruct a time long passed.

On numerous occasions, Mr. Dennis Reid, Curator of Post-Confederation Art, The National Gallery of Canada, shared his insights into the work of Lawren Harris. His scholarly publications on Canadian art during the first half of the twentieth century are the firm foundation upon which many essential aspects of the catalogue essay are based.

I am forever in the debt of Miss Sybille Pantazzi, Librarian, Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario, without whose support the necessary research and writing of the catalogue could not have been accomplished. Her staff, Lee Greenough, Library Coordinator; Larry Pfaff, Assistant to the Librarian; Karen McKenzie, Cataloguer; and Helen Hogarth, Information Officer, have been of continual assistance.

I wish also to thank Mrs. Eva Robinson, Registrar; Mr. Barry Simpson, Assistant Registrar; Mrs. Parin Dahya, Secretary, Registrar's Office, for their careful attention to innumerable details; and Mr. Ian McMillan, Traffic Manager. Mr. Eduard Zukowski, Conservator, has brought new life to several of the paintings in the exhibition and Mr. Ralphus Ingleton has ably assisted him.

I should also like to thank Maia-Mari Sutnik, Coordinator, Photo Services; Faye Craig, Assistant to the Coordinator; James Chambers, Head Photographer; Larry Ostrom, Photographer; and Carlo Catenazzi, Technician, for providing many of the photographs of works of art illustrated here. I am grateful to Mrs. Alice Armstrong, Chief, Reproductions and Rights, The National Gallery of Canada, for her help in obtaining photographs of Lawren Harris paintings.

For her skilful editing and designing of the publication, I should like to thank Mrs. Olive Koyama, Head, Publications Department. I am most grateful to Merike Kink and Hilary Read; their organizational and clerical skills have made my task considerably lighter.

I wish to thank Mr. John Ruseckas, Chief Preparator, and his staff for their professionalism in handling the works of art and installing the exhibition.

Colleagues in the Curatorial Department have contributed in a variety of ways and I am grateful for the help of Mr. Bill Auchterlonie, Curatorial Coordinator; Dr. Roald Nasgaard, Curator of Contemporary Art; and Dr. Richard J. Wattenmaker, Chief Curator. My thanks also go to Mr. William J. Withrow, Director of the Art Gallery of Ontario, for allowing me to undertake the project and for contributing in many ways to its success.

Jeremy Adamson
Curator of Canadian Historical Art
Art Gallery of Ontario

Lawren S. Harris, c. 1920
Photo courtesy National Gallery of Canada

Chronology

1885-1898
On October 23, 1885, Lawren S. Harris was born. His parents were Thomas Morgan Harris and Anna Stewart Harris.

For the first three years of his schooling, Harris attended public school in Brantford. His father was secretary of The A. Harris, Sons & Co. Ltd., prosperous manufacturers of farm machinery, which in 1891 amalgamated with its main competitors, the Massey family business of Toronto, to form the Massey-Harris Company. After the death of her husband in 1892, Mrs. Harris and her two sons (Howard, Lawren's brother, was born January 14, 1887) moved to Toronto, taking a house at 123 St. George Street. In the fall of 1894, Harris entered Grade 4 of Huron Street Public School. He left this school in 1898, having completed Grade 7.

1898-1899
During the 1898-1899 academic year, Harris (who was probably ill) did not attend school but had a personal tutor. In September 1899 he entered Grade 8 at St. Andrew's College, a private school which opened that year in Toronto's fashionable Rosedale. Among his contemporaries there were Fred B. Housser (1889-1936) and Vincent Massey (1887-1967).

1903
In the spring, Harris left St. Andrew's College, having completed Grade 10. After a summer spent partly in Northern Ontario — at the Royal Muskoka Hotel on Lake Rosseau — Harris was accepted as a freshman student at University College, the University of Toronto, in September 1903. He remained at the University only half a year. An alert mathematics professor (A. T. DeLury, a future president of the Arts and Letters Club), having seen Harris' pencil drawings of his teachers and classmates, convinced Mrs. Harris that her son should study art in Europe.

1904
In the fall, Harris arrived in Berlin. He lived in the same pension with William Stewart (1875-1944), his young uncle, and enrolled in large, private studio classes under three different teachers, among whom was Franz Skarbina (1849-1910).

1905
After his first year as a student, during which he drew with charcoal and pencil and painted with water colours, he visited Canada for the summer and returned to Berlin in the fall. Harris stayed in Europe, mainly in Berlin, but doing extensive travelling (England, France and Italy) until late in 1907. The many exhibitions he would have seen in Berlin would have included the tenth, eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth exhibitions of the Berlin Secession, led by Skarbina's friend, Max Liebermann (1847-1935).

1906
Harris would have seen, in 1906, the enormous *Ausstellung Deutscher Kunst aus der Zeit 1775-1875*, a comprehensive review of nineteenth century German art which included a large selection of works by Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840).

In the summer of 1906, he went on a walking and sketching tour in the Austrian Tyrol with Adolf Schlabitz (1854-1943), one of his teachers, and had his first experience of mountain climbing, near Brixlegg in Austria.

1907
His last summer in Germany, Harris went again on a walking tour with Schlabitz, during which he met the poet, philosopher and regionalist painter, Paul Thiem (1858-1922) whose unorthodox ideas deeply impressed him.

In late November of 1907, Harris was in Damascus, with the Canadian writer Norman Duncan (1871-1916), as illustrator on assignment for *Harper's Magazine*. (Harris may have returned from Germany to Canada first and left immediately.) He remained in the Middle East, travelling also to Jerusalem and Cairo, partly by camel, until at least late February 1908, when he returned home.

1908
Back in Canada, Harris went on his first Canadian sketching trip to the Laurentians — with Fergus Kyle (*c.* 1876-1941). Harris became a charter member of the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto along with his friends Roy Mitchell (1884-1944), Augustus Bridle (1869-1952) and others.

1909
In January or February, Harris spent two weeks — again with Norman Duncan — on assignment for *Harper's Magazine* in a Minnesota lumber camp. On January 28, Roy Mitchell joined the Toronto Theosophical Society. In the spring, Harris went on his second Canadian sketching trip, this time with J. W. Beatty (1869-1941) to Haliburton, Ontario. In the fall, on his third Canadian sketching trip, Harris went again with Beatty, to Memphramagog, Quebec.

1910
On January 20, Harris married Beatrice (Trixie) Phillips at the Church of the Redeemer, Toronto. It was a small family wedding and the couple left Toronto for a southern honeymoon. During this year, Harris painted *Houses, Wellington Street*.

1911
Roy Mitchell was elected secretary of the Toronto Theosophical Society. Harris' contribution to the 1911 Ontario Society of Artists show in April was praised by critic Augustus Bridle, especially *Houses, Wellington Street*. Harris saw the first private showing of sketches by J. E. H. MacDonald (1873-1932) at the Arts and Letters Club in November and began sketching with MacDonald that winter. On December 20, Harris likely went with the Arts and Letters Club when they visited the exhibition of the French group, the *Société des Peintres et Sculpteurs* at Buffalo, New York. This exhibition included works by Rodin and an urban landscape by Le Sidaner.

1912
From the OSA exhibition of 1912, Harris' wilderness landscape *The Drive* was purchased by The National Gallery of Canada. In the spring Harris went with J. E. H. MacDonald on a sketching trip into the North, to Mattawa and Temiskaming.

1913
In January, the Studio Building financed by Harris and Dr. James MacCallum (1860-1943) was opened.

On June 4, Harris published a letter in the *Globe* criticizing the policies of The National Gallery of Canada. In response, Sir Edmund Walker (1848-1924), a colleague of Harris in the Arts and Letters Club and an influential member of the Board of Trustees of The National Gallery of Canada Committee, visited the Studio Building and promised official help for the cause of Canadian art. That year The National Gallery bought works by Harris,

A. Y. Jackson (1882–1974), Arthur Lismer (1885–1969), MacDonald and Tom Thomson (1877-1917).

1915
Lawren Harris' brother, Howard, joined the Imperial army in May. In the fall, Harris and MacDonald went on a sketching trip to Minden, Ontario. In Toronto, Harris had a shack fixed up behind the Studio Building for Tom Thomson to live and paint in.

1916
In the spring Harris, with Thomson and MacCallum, went to Algonquin Park for sketching. A little later Harris himself enlisted in the army. On May 5 he was given his C.O.T.C. certificate. On June 12, he was appointed Lieutenant with the 10th Royal Grenadiers Regiment and on June 20 declared medically fit. On July 12 Harris started at Camp Borden as a Musketry Instruction Officer. He spent some time at Hart House, University of Toronto, an army headquarters. On August 9 he was re-assigned to Camp Borden.

Roy Mitchell resigned as Secretary of the Toronto Theosophical Society, and left for New York.

1917
On March 24, critic Hector Charlesworth (1872-1945), also a member of the Arts and Letters Club, called Harris' contribution to the O.S.A. exhibition, *Decorative Landscape*, a "garish poster."

Tom Thomson died in Algonquin Park. It was the first of two major shocks for Harris, who thought Thomson was murdered. Harris' brother, by then a captain, was awarded the Military Cross in April. Late in the year Harris negotiated permission for himself and other officers for a trip to New York which lasted from December 30 to January 7, 1918.

1918
On February 22, Howard Harris was killed in action while inspecting a German trench. Deeply disturbed, and uncomfortable within the confines of military life, Harris suffered a nervous breakdown from which he needed more than a year to recover. On May 1, he was medically discharged from the army. Later that month he left Toronto with his friend Dr. MacCallum on a sketching trip designed to help his recovery. The trip was of great importance for his art because he discovered in the Algoma region of Northern Ontario an exciting place to paint.

In August, from his summer home, "Woodend," at Allandale on Lake Simcoe, Harris wrote to J. E. H. MacDonald. He discussed the important role of mysticism in his life and in his improving health. Harris also persuaded MacDonald to join him on the first boxcar sketching trip to Algoma, along with Franz Johnston (1888-1949) and Dr. MacCallum. On September 10 or 11 they left Toronto. From Sault Ste Marie they penetrated the region of the Algoma Central Railway. They returned to Toronto in the first week of October.

In November, two of Harris' paintings were included in an exhibition organized by The National Gallery of Canada to tour the United States.

1919
In April the exhibition, *Algoma Sketches and Pictures*, was shown at the Art Gallery of Toronto. Harris again spent the summer at Woodend, Allandale, and wrote to MacDonald about another boxcar trip to Algoma. In mid-September, Jackson, MacDonald, Johnston and Harris left for a second boxcar trip to Algoma, returning in mid-October.

Harris' friend Roy Mitchell came back to Toronto, as director of the Hart House Theatre.

1920
The first Group of Seven exhibition was held at the Art Gallery of Toronto from May 7 to 27.

In the middle of May, Harris, Jackson, MacCallum and Lismer went to Algoma for about ten days. Harris spent part of the summer at Woodend, Allandale. Jackson, MacDonald, Johnston and Harris again went to Algoma in the fall, but not in a boxcar this time.

1921
Roy Mitchell was elected Vice-President of the Toronto Theosophical Society on February 16 (but resigned in September because he was leaving for New York). In late winter or early spring, Harris went on a sketching trip to Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. Later in the spring, with Jackson and Lismer, Harris went to Agawa River and Montreal Lake in Algoma.

The second Group of Seven exhibition was held at the Art Gallery of Toronto from May 7 to 29. In May, June and September, drawings by Harris were published in *Canadian Forum*, then in its first year of publication.

In the fall, Harris, Jackson and Lismer went to Sand Lake, Algoma. Later, Jackson and Harris travelled for the first time to the North Shore, Lake Superior to sketch.

1922
Harris, Lismer and Roy Mitchell were named part of the Decoration Committee of the Toronto Theosophical Society on February 15. On April 19, Harris' friend Fred Housser and his wife Bess (1891-1969) were elected members of the Society.

The third Group of Seven exhibition was held at the Art Gallery of Toronto from May 5 to 29. From August 26 to September 9, at the Canadian National Exhibition, Toronto, Harris exhibited for the first time a Lake Superior painting *Grey Day, North Shore, Lake Superior.* In the autumn, Harris and Jackson went to the North Shore, Lake Superior, camping at Coldwell for one week in early October. Harris published *Contrasts, a Book of Verse.*

1923
In February, in his review of two books dealing with mysticism, *Cosmic Consciousness* by a Canadian friend of Walt Whitman, Dr. Richard Bucke, and *Tertium Organum* by the Russian, P. D. Ouspensky, Harris revealed the widening dimensions of his own mystical vision. In March, Harris, who had been for some time "member at large" in the international Theosophical Movement, was affiliated formally to the Toronto Theosophical Society. Also in the spring, Harris, Jackson, Lismer and Dr. MacCallum left on a sketching trip to Algoma. Harris spent August and September sketching for the first time in the Rocky Mountains, in and around Jasper Park. *Maligne Lake* was one of the paintings from this trip. Harris was travelling with Jackson who had earlier been to the Rockies. In the fall, Harris and Jackson went to the North Shore, Lake Superior.

1925
The fourth Group of Seven exhibition was held at the Art Gallery of Toronto from January 9 to February 2. In the fall, Harris went to the North Shore, Lake Superior, with Jackson, Frank Carmichael (1890-1945) and A. J. Casson (b. 1898). In December, Harris published an article in the *Canadian Bookman* on the relationship of artist and audience which he understood in clearly mystical terms.

1926
The fifth Group of Seven exhibition was held from May 8 to 31. In July, Harris published an important article, "Revelation of Art in Canada," in the *Canadian Theosophist*. In the

same month Harris and his family arrived at Lake O'Hara Cabin Camp in the Rockies. For the fall, Harris went to Coldwell, North Shore, Lake Superior, with Jackson. Late in the year F. B. Housser, Harris' friend and colleague in the Theosophical Society, published *A Canadian Art Movement: The Story of the Group of Seven*.

1927

In May, Harris wrote in the *Canadian Forum* a defence of the *Société Anonyme's* exhibition of modern — even abstract — art at the Art Gallery of Toronto. In August Harris and his wife, having vacationed at Temagami in Northern Ontario, returned to Toronto and moved into their new home on Oriole Parkway. In the fall, Harris and Lismer went to the North Shore, Lake Superior. Harris gave more lectures on Theosophy and Art beginning in November. On November 17, Harris and Emily Carr (1871-1945) met for the first time in Toronto.

1928

In February the sixth exhibition of paintings by the Group of Seven was held at the Art Gallery of Toronto. Also in February, Harris was again the leader of a group of students in Theosophy. At the end of July he joined his wife at Lake O'Hara in the Rockies. In the fall, Harris, Jackson, Carmichael and Casson went to the North Shore of Lake Superior, the last group sketching trip.

In December Harris published in *The McGill News (Supplement)* another comprehensive article, "Creative Art and Canada," in which he combined his main themes of mysticism, nationalism and Canadian Art.

1929

Harris and Lismer collaborated on a plan for the decoration of the Lecture Hall of the Theosophical Society in Toronto. In the fall, Harris and Jackson went by car along the South Shore of the St. Lawrence River as far as Rimouski, near which Harris did the sketches and drawings for *Lighthouse, Father Point*. Plans were made at the Theosophical Society in November for another series of lectures by Harris.

1930

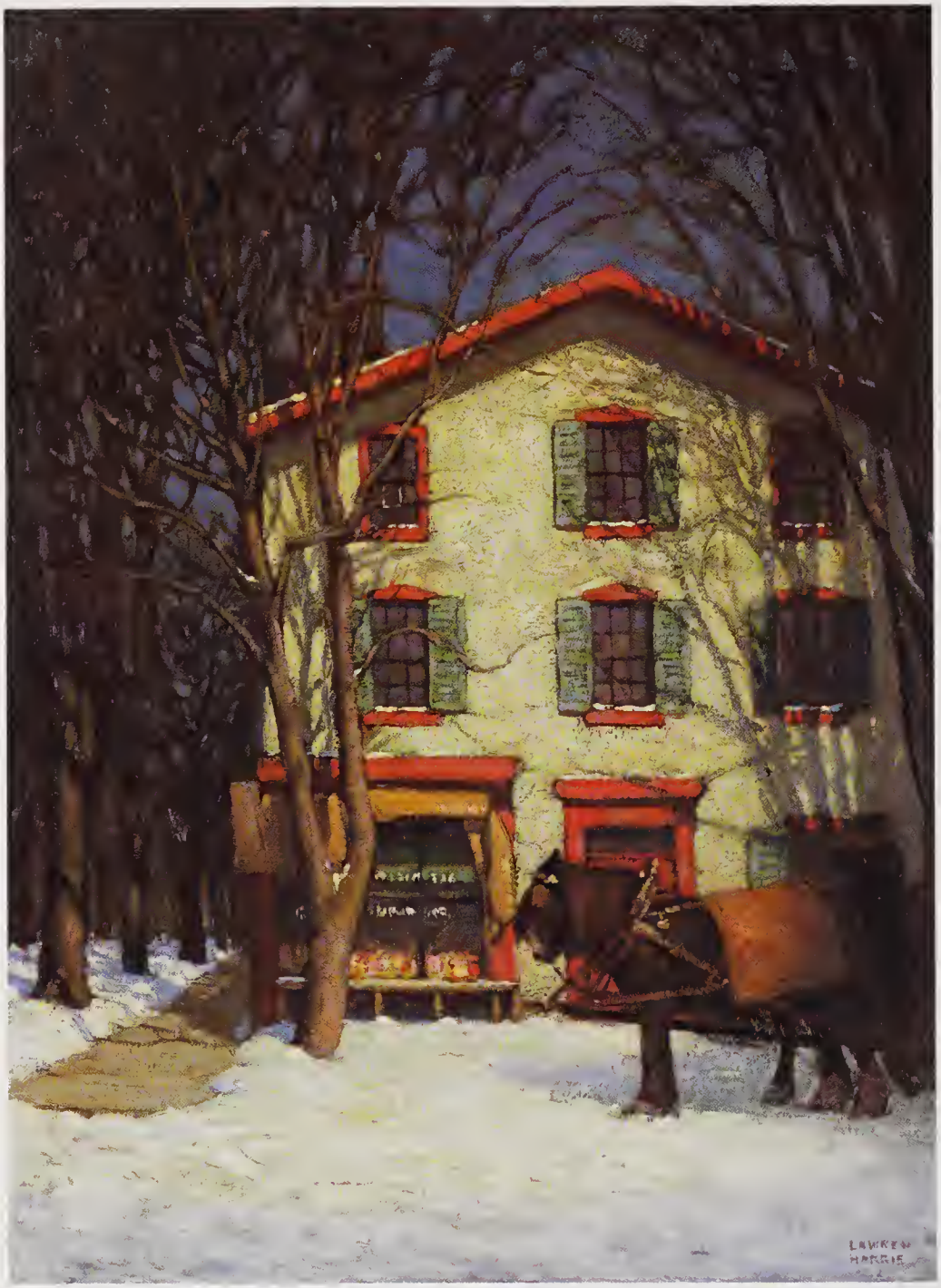
In April the seventh exhibition of the Group of Seven was held at the Art Gallery of Toronto.

In early May, Harris and his wife travelled to Europe on a trip that lasted six weeks. They went to at least two German cities — Stuttgart and Munich — and visited France. He implied, in a letter to Emily Carr, that he had seen works by Cézanne, Picasso, Matisse and Derain.

One of Harris' reasons for going to Stuttgart was to examine modern houses there, so that he could judge the designs for what he called his "new mansion." This was to be built on Ava Crescent, and was being designed by the Russian immigrant architect, Alexandra Biriukova (1893-1967). In 1931 Harris moved in.

On August 1, 1930, Harris left with Jackson from Sydney, Nova Scotia, on the ship *Beothic*, for Greenland, the Canadian Arctic and Labrador. During the trip, besides painting many sketches, Harris made an exciting movie of stormy seas, Eskimos visiting the ship, and icebergs. On September 27 the ship arrived back in Sydney. This was the last regionalist sketching trip in Harris' Canadian landscape career.

Peter Larisey
Department of Art History
Carleton University, Ottawa
November, 1977



23. The Corner Store, *1912*
oil on canvas
35 × 26 in.; 89 × 66 cm
Private collection

Lawren S. Harris

Urban Scenes and Wilderness Landscapes 1906-1930

The Early Years

Lawren Stewart Harris was born October 23, 1885 in Brantford, Ontario into a family recently made wealthy by the invention and manufacture of a farm implement, a light reaper-binder. In 1891 the Harris business interests merged with their chief competitor, Hart Massey's Toronto manufacturing company, to form the Massey-Harris Company. This successful venture was to ensure Harris' financial independence and allow him the personal freedom to unrestrictedly devote his life to art. It also permitted him to assist in the support of like-minded artists in the period *c.* 1913-20 which saw the early development of the northern landscape school popularly known as the Group of Seven.

Harris inherited not only wealth from his forebears but also a strong and dedicated spiritual idealism. His grandfather Stewart Harris had emigrated from England as a young Presbyterian minister and two other members of his immediate family were clergymen: his uncle Elmore Harris was pastor of the Walmer Road Baptist Church in Toronto; and an uncle by marriage, Dr. William Wallace, was minister of the Bloor Street Presbyterian Church. His mother was a dedicated Christian Scientist and a prominent member of the First Church of Christ, Scientist on St. George Street during the latter part of her life in Toronto. No doubt this more militant religious background influenced Harris' own deep commitment to a life-long search for spiritual truth although his own orientation — even as a young man — was not toward sectarian orthodoxy.

Mrs. Harris was widowed in 1892 at the age of thirty and moved to Toronto the following year with her sons Lawren and Howard (born 1887). Lawren, who had already completed three years of public school in Brantford, entered grade four at the Huron Street Public School and attended classes there until *c.* 1898. As a boy he was not robust and was bed-ridden a certain amount of time. During these periods he began to amuse himself by drawing and painting and carried this sickroom entertainment outside where he sketched all the local neighbourhood houses.[1]

In 1899 the Harris brothers entered St. Andrew's College, a private boys' school which opened that year in Toronto's fashionable Rosedale area. Neither was a dedicated student, but both were enthusiastic athletes — Lawren playing hockey and cricket. In the fall of 1903 Harris entered University College in Toronto but spent more time sketching in his notebooks than listening to lectures. His obvious artistic talents attracted the attention of one of his professors, A. T. DeLury, who convinced Lawren's mother that her son could devote his time more profitably to studying art, and Harris left University College without completing the freshman year.[2]

Mrs. Harris agreed to allow Lawren to study abroad and decided that Berlin would be the best location, as a young married uncle was a post-graduate at the University there and young Harris could room at the same pension. The question of when and for exactly how long Harris was in Berlin is difficult to determine precisely.[3] However, from all available data it

1. Interior of a Clothes Closet, *1906*
water colour
12 3/16 × 9 3/4 in.; 31 × 24.8 cm
Private collection

would seem that he arrived in Germany in the early autumn of 1904 and except for the summer of 1905 when he returned to Canada, he was in Europe through at least mid-1907.

The training Harris received in Berlin was thoroughly academic. Throughout the nineteenth century art students often spent at least two full years drawing from casts, still lifes and the model in order to perfect their technical craftsmanship. Graduation to colour and oil paintings only took place after considerable and often tedious training in draughtsmanship. Harris' first two years were devoted to pencil, charcoal and water-colour sketching in large private studio classes. There were morning and evening sessions working from models with other students but the afternoons were spent out-of-doors. In a letter dated May 9, 1948 Harris stated that "afternoons I went to the older parts of the city along the River Spree and painted houses, buildings, etc. — small water colours. Also went the rounds of the public and dealers' galleries. My whole conditioning was academic."[4] During the last two winter seasons, *c.* 1905-07, he worked in oils, painting mostly portraits and figure studies.[5]

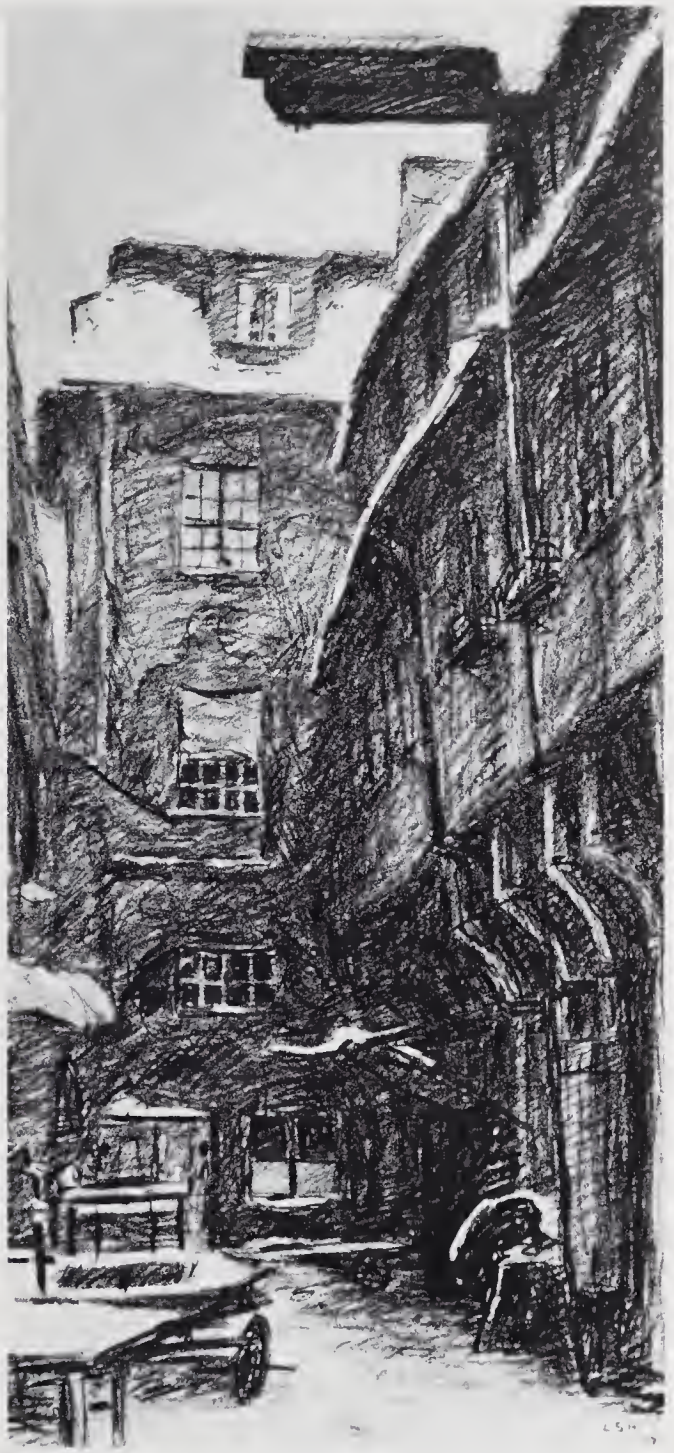
Harris' first Berlin teacher was Fritz von Wille (1860-1941) who was a graduate of the arduous drawing classes of the Dusseldorf Academy.[6] His second teacher was Adolf Schlabitz (1854-1943)[7] with whom he worked in the day time, while in the evenings he attended classes in the studio of Franz Skarbina (1849-1910).[8] Young artists like Harris who were either disinterested in or unable to gain entrance to the Berlin Fine Arts Academy attended private art classes in the studios of well-known local painters. This provided them with a focus for their activities and the opportunity to draw from a live model. The teachers were unlikely to give individual instruction to the many pupils who crowded the studio and often only made infrequent visits to the classes, giving offhand critiques of students' work.[9]

There are at least four extant works from Harris' student years. The earliest, a watercolour entitled *Interior of a Clothes Closet* (cat. no. 1) is dated February 1906 and is a study done in Harris' Berlin lodgings. Views of studio corners and pension rooms were among art students' stock in trade during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries at European academies. In this picture Harris depicts his open wardrobe containing starched shirt collars on an upper shelf and what

appears to be a winter cape. The most detailed objects are the series of bottles arranged on the lower shelf. To the right, beyond the door, is the artist's travelling trunk. In dark, primarily brown tones, the painting reflects the realist aesthetic then popular in Berlin art circles.

A pencil drawing, *Street in Berlin*, dated 1907 (cat. no. 3) indicates the style of draughtsmanship typical of German studio classes. Heavily shaded, it depicts a picturesque corner of the old city. The downtown area was a popular place for students to sketch for it was full of variety and interesting architecture. Harris' other water colour, *Buildings on the River Spree, Berlin* (cat. no. 2), also dated 1907 is surprisingly close to the type of urban composition that he would explore later in his Toronto pictures. All the components of the scene are placed in receding layers parallel to the picture plane to create a very structured composition. A horse and cart is located in front of the building façades, a motif which often reappeared in the artist's Toronto pictures between 1910-1913. The fourth extant student work is a charcoal drawing entitled *Portrait of an Elderly Woman* (Estate of Howard K. Harris); it exhibits the artist's early competency as a portraitist and prefigures the portraits painted between *c.* 1919-32.

During the spring of 1905 and 1906 Harris travelled to Italy, France and England, and in the summer of 1906 he and his teacher Schlabitz — "an interesting character"[10] — made a walking tour through the Austrian Tyrol. In the Alpine region, Harris made his first mountain climb near Brixlegg.[11] Later,



3. Street in Berlin, *1907*
pencil on cardboard
13 × 6 1/8 in.; 33 × 15.6 cm
Private collection

2. Buildings on the River Spree, Berlin, *1907*
water colour
23 1/2 × 18 in.; 59.7 × 45.7 cm
Lent by the Art Gallery of Windsor
Gift of Mr. & Mrs. E. D. Fraser,
Willowdale, Ontario, November 1971

after 1924, he would spend considerable time in the Canadian Rockies well above the tree line sketching the austere mountains. For part of the summer of 1907, Harris was in Bavaria with Schlabitz at the latter's home in Dinkelsbuhl and there he met the German landscape painter Paul Thiem (1858-1922). Thiem was the son of an important art collector, Adolf Thiem, and had earlier graduated from the Munich Fine Arts Academy. By 1907 he had turned to painting the quiet rural landscape of Southern Germany in a manner then popularly known as *Heimatgefühl* — or full of "home-feeling."[12] At this time a number of German painters were attempting to depict the specific character of the local landscape in a realistic fashion and to capture the unique flavour of Bavaria. Their ideas and their pictures may well have played a part in directing Harris' thoughts towards painting the distinctive landscape of Canada.[13]

Thiem's landscapes had been exhibited at the Gurlitt Gallery in Berlin in 1907 and Harris probably saw them as he made the rounds of the city's commercial galleries. But more importantly, Thiem's philosophic ideas were to have a great impact on the young Canadian. Through him, Harris was introduced to religious "unorthodoxy" which he found "shocking and stirring"[14] and in conflict with his strong Christian background. Harris had come in direct contact with a theosophist. The German section of the International Theosophic Society was one of the most active and non-conformist of the various national Theosophic societies and was then under the secretary-generalship of the Goethe scholar and educator Rudolf Steiner.[15] That Thiem was, in fact, a Theosophist remains at present a supposition. But as his meeting with the young artist was so eventful and as Harris later became a member-at-large of the International Society before becoming a member of the local Canadian section in March 1924, there is little doubt that he was.

Harris probably returned to Canada at the end of the summer of 1907. However, he almost immediately set off to Palestine with the Brantford-born author Norman Duncan. The

latter had been commissioned to write a book about travelling in the Middle East and he asked the twenty-two-year-old to accompany him to provide illustrations of the trip by camel from Jerusalem to Cairo. Few art students would have had such a professional opportunity offered to them so early in their careers and Harris welcomed the chance. The overland trip began in November 1907 and the party arrived at their destination after a number of desert adventures in January 1908. Duncan's book, *Going Down from Jerusalem*, was serialized in *Harper's Magazine* from July 1908 to April 1909 and Harris' illustrations in that leading periodical reached a remarkably wide audience. Later in his life, the artist was embarrassed by these early illustrations and insisted that they were "the world's worst."[16] But in the limited context of his student work, they are attractively designed compositions. From those reproduced in full page colour, it is evident that they were all small oil sketches and therefore are his earliest datable paintings. The smallness of their size can be determined by the large scale initials, L S H, in the bottom corners and the highly visible brushstrokes. The colours used are generally warm and pale and are contrasted with light blue tones. The figures of Arabs gathered around oases and clustered in the narrow streets of bazaars are simplified in shape and the detail that gives such romantic anecdotal interest to the more accomplished illustrations of Howard Pyle and N. C. Wyeth is markedly reduced.

Both Duncan and *Harper's* must have been impressed with the young artist, for he was commissioned to provide illustrations for another of Duncan's articles published in the magazine.[17] For a two-week period in January-February 1909 Harris and the author were in the northern lumber camps of Minnesota. Here the artist first came in direct contact with the austere majesty of the northern winter. The squalor of the lumbermen's lives set against the grandeur of nature deeply affected him.[18]

Except for his later portraits, Harris never again turned to such figurative subjects.[19] The small scale figures that often appear in his Toronto house pictures have no discernable facial features or psychological role. They are merely simplified shapes that provide compositional accents.

After nearly four years' absence, the twenty-four-year-old returned to Toronto and rented a studio over Giles' Grocery Store on Yonge Street near Cumberland Avenue.[20] His wife later reported that "the impact of returning to Canada was terrific. . . ." He was "transferred, transported . . . into a whole new experience. He became aware of the extravagant buoyancy and energy of this continent. The quality and clarity of the light excited him."[21] Though Harris ostensibly settled back into his own milieu, his own nature and recent training set him somewhat apart. While he had an immediate entrée into the oligarchical and patrician circles of the city's Anglo-Saxon elite, he was never fully comfortable with its relatively restrictive social and cultural values. "He was not," F. B. Housser wrote, "in on the game of empire-building and money making and had no reason for joining it."[22] But except for his later divorce, the artist was never openly to rebel against his class values and as late as 1930 he was duly listed in the Toronto *Blue Book*.[23]

In January 1910 Harris married Beatrice (Trixie) Phillips, from one of Toronto's leading families, who lived in Queen's Park near his mother's house. Before their marriage she, Lawren and the young Vincent Massey were to be seen among the invited guests at Albert Austin's strawberry teas held on the terrace of "Spadina," the mid-Victorian mansion set on the hilltop above the corner of Spadina Avenue

and Davenport Road. The metaphoric distance between such establishments and his rented studio above Giles' Grocery Store would always be an essential part of the contrast between Harris' social and psychological character.

Harris is listed among the charter members of the Arts and Letters Club, founded in 1908.[24] The Club was an informal association of professionals in the creative arts and lay members and businessmen interested in the enjoyment and promotion of cultural activities. After 1910 the Club's membership and enthusiasm for its activities greatly increased and it soon became "through its informal gatherings and organized activities, the centre of living culture in Toronto."[25] Here, among many kindred spirits, he began to define his artistic and cultural ideology and find the support to carry it forward as the basis for a new and distinctly national landscape art.

Urban Scenes, c. 1909-13

Harris' pencil studies, oil sketches and paintings of houses between *c.* 1909-26 constitute a distinctive segment of his art. During this period he continually turned to urban scenes, treating them from an emotional point of view that is often at variance with his wilderness landscapes. No other member of the Group of Seven painted Toronto subjects as consistently as Harris and his house pictures were regarded by many people as among his most attractive works. While the development of his landscape pictures is of greater importance to his artistic vision, and that of the national landscape movement, his working-class house "portraits" shed an interesting sidelight on aspects of his more private character.

The earliest downtown Toronto scenes are a series of pencil sketches that date from *c.* 1909-10 (cat. nos. 4-9) and depict subjects that had not previously been of much interest to Canadian artists: downtown slum buildings, small corner stores and debris-filled backyards.[26] Drawn in a vigorous fashion, they are directly related to his student works depicting the working class districts of Berlin. These drawings are all essentially descriptive and what appears to have excited the artist's interest most was the picturesque variety of the architectural motifs. There is no psychological focus on the inhabitants or the socio-economic character of the slums. Though he almost always chose his housing subjects from the poor, working-class areas, there are no overt Marxist overtones. Only in his scenes of the Halifax slums does he react with a sense of outrage, but even in such exceptional cases it was primarily an aesthetic response.

8. Frances Street Near King, c. *1909-10*
pencil on paper
8 5/8 × 6 3/8 in.; 22 × 16.2 cm
Private collection

9. Adelaide Street Near Simcoe, c. *1909-10*
pencil on paper
7 1/8 × 10 5/8 in.; 18.1 × 27 cm
Private collection

4. Col's Grocery, c. *1909-10*
pencil on paper
6 3/4 × 8 1/2 in.; 17.1 × 21.6 cm
Private collection

5. Peter Street Below King, c. *1909-10*
pencil on paper
5 1/2 × 6 1/2 in.; 14 × 16.5 cm
Private collection

6. Rear of Adelaide and Simcoe Streets, c. *1909-10*
pencil on paper
6 5/8 × 7 1/2 in.; 16.8 × 19 cm
Private collection

7. Rear of Roxborough and Yonge Streets, c. *1909-10*
pencil on paper
6 5/8 × 8 in.; 16.5 × 20 cm
Private collection

15. Top of the Hill, Spadina Avenue, *1909-11*
oil on canvas
14 1/2 × 16 in.; 36.8 × 40.6 cm
Mr. Austin Seton Thompson, Toronto

Harris' first urban painting is *Top of the Hill, Spadina Avenue* (cat. no. 15), painted in 1909 and partly reworked in 1911. The title seems highly ironic. On the actual hilltop in 1909 were a number of Toronto's most wealthy homes: "Spadina," Samuel Nordheimer's "Glenedyth," the elaborate Casa Loma stables and Sir John Craig Eaton's "Ardwold" completed in 1909.[27] The small wretched houses and outbuildings in the painting would certainly not have been found close to the homes of the rich. Probably the structures were located further to the north near St. Clair Avenue on the opposite side of the ravine. Given the amount of public interest at the time in the Spadina hill, where Sir Henry Pellatt was building his remarkable gothic "castle," Casa Loma, Harris' picture must surely have been a satiric comment. It is a realist work painted in gloomy colours. There is little in the picture that prepares us for his first major painting, *Old Houses, Wellington Street*, 1910 (cat. no. 17).

A small oil sketch, *Little House* (cat. no. 16), probably painted in the winter of 1909-10, is contemporary with *Old Houses, Wellington Street*, and presages several important stylistic elements in that larger picture not to be found in *Top of the Hill, Spadina Avenue*. The rear façade of the red brick building is placed frontally to the picture plane and the sunlight of a late winter's afternoon casts a warm glow over the snowcovered roof and upper storey. Harris applies the paint to the surface of the house in a consciously constructive fashion using short horizontal and vertical strokes that contrast to the freedom of those employed in the area of the sky.

In *Old Houses, Wellington Street*, the artist first developed his characteristic urban composition of the 1910-19 period: façades of terraced houses are placed parallel to the picture surface; rows of trees provide a screen in front

16. Little House, c. *1910*
oil on board
7 3/8 × 5 1/8 in.; 19.9 × 14.2 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario

17. Old Houses, Wellington Street, *1910*
oil on canvas
25 × 30 in.; 63.5 × 76.2 cm
Laing Galleries, Toronto

18. Winter Twilight, *1911*
oil on canvas
12 × 16 in.;
31 × 41 cm
Collection of the Art Gallery of Hamilton

of the houses; and figurative elements are arranged in profile. Harris uses sunlight in an arbitrary fashion, to flood the centre of the continuous façades with strong illumination that leaves the end units in shadow. Presumably, faced with a long row of houses set relatively far back in the middle distance with a rhythmic screen of trees to emphasize its continuous, planar nature, Harris decided to provide the composition with a consciously conceived focal point.

A number of the compositional features of *Old Houses, Wellington Street* are to be found in his early Berlin water colour *Buildings on the River Spree* (cat. no. 2). The vantage points are similarly low with the façades located in the middle distance parallel to the picture plane. This arrangement is further emphasized by the use of verticals and horizontals placed in layers between the façades and the picture surface. The observer is made forcefully aware of the numerous architectural elements. Their manifold geometric nature is increased not only by the sheer number of glazed doors and windows, which are broken down into smaller, rectangular details by the mullions, but by the brushwork which, like that of *Little House*, is composed of vertical and horizontal strokes. The structural network of the brushwork on the façades contrasts with the looser treatment of the tree branches above, tracing soft-edged, linear arabesques against the sky.

The picture was one of four canvases shown by Harris in the Ontario Society of Artists

19. Houses, Richmond Street, *1911*
oil on canvas
30 × 32 in.; 76.2 × 81.2 cm
Arts and Letters Club Collection, Toronto

exhibition at the Art Museum of Toronto in April, 1911.[28] In *Notes on Pictures at the O.S.A. Exhibition* published for the public's benefit, a number of the artists provided insights into their motives and the works themselves. Harris recorded that "In 'A Row of Houses, Wellington Street,' the endeavour was to depict the clear, hard sunlight of a Canadian noon in winter. An attempt was also made to suggest the spirit of Old York."[29] However, the clarity and sharpness of winter sunlight that he describes, which is evident in the brilliantly and evenly lighted foreground snow,contrasts strongly with the subjective character of the depicted light cast on the façades of the Wellington Street houses.[30] A second house painting was also included among works in the exhibition. The aim of *Along Melinda Street* (unlocated) was described as the suggestion of "the movement of a snow storm — the way in which it swirls around things and gets into every nook and opening as if nature were endeavouring to clean the works of man of their grime and dirt."[31] The two other entries, *The Return from Town* (unlocated) and *A Load of Fence Posts* (private collection), were subjects from his Minnesota trip in early 1909. Shortly after *Old Houses, Wellington Street*, Harris painted the small oil sketch *Winter Twilight*, 1911 (cat. no. 18), in which he allows the row houses to continue beyond the frame. Here, he sets before the façades a motif of a line of trees, whose upper branches are treated in a soft-focus manner. In this study the mood of winter light is paramount.

Among the six entries Harris submitted to the O.S.A. exhibition in March 1912 were at least three Toronto scenes: *The Eaton Manufacturing Building*, 1911 (cat. no. 20), *In the Ward* (unidentified) and *Houses, Richmond Street*, 1911 (cat. no. 19). The first is one of two known downtown industrial subjects that Harris painted in the winter of 1911-12. The T. Eaton Company building on Queen Street West is seen from the rear rising majestically above a series of small, mean foreground sheds. The multi-storeyed structure is treated in a highly impressionistic manner and seems to project a golden, corruscating light by means of a field of small, bright brushstrokes.[32]

In *Houses, Richmond Street*, 1911, Harris has made a number of significant advances over *Old Houses, Wellington Street*. In conception and execution it is completely unified. The façades of the two-storeyed working class homes have been brought forward, closer to the picture plane, allowing only a shallow foreground space. There are consequently fewer architectural details and Harris maximizes pictorial effect with a minimum of means. The composition is broken vertically into three bands: the foreground street and sidewalk; the house façades and tree trunks; and the upper foliage and sky. Vertical accents are dramatically reduced in comparison with the earlier picture and provide an internal means of coherently structuring the composition. Yellow autumn leaves with blue shadows are scattered on the street and sidewalk, enlivening those relatively unvaried surfaces and the screen of trees creates dappled light effects across the building façades. The shimmer of natural light is embodied in short broken brushstrokes that are distributed judiciously over the surface of the canvas.

Houses, Richmond Street is almost square in shape and indicates new, decorative pictorial interests. A square format requires that all elements within the picture make visual reference to the equidistant framing edges. Harris' emphatic vertical accents and horizontal lines signify his recognition of this factor. In New York, the Canadian painter David Milne was engaged in similar compositional arrangements in his square painting *Billboards*, 1912 (National Gallery of Canada).

21. The Gas Works, *1911-12*
oil on canvas
23 1/16 × 22 3/16 in.; 58.6 × 56.4
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from the McLean Foundation, 1959

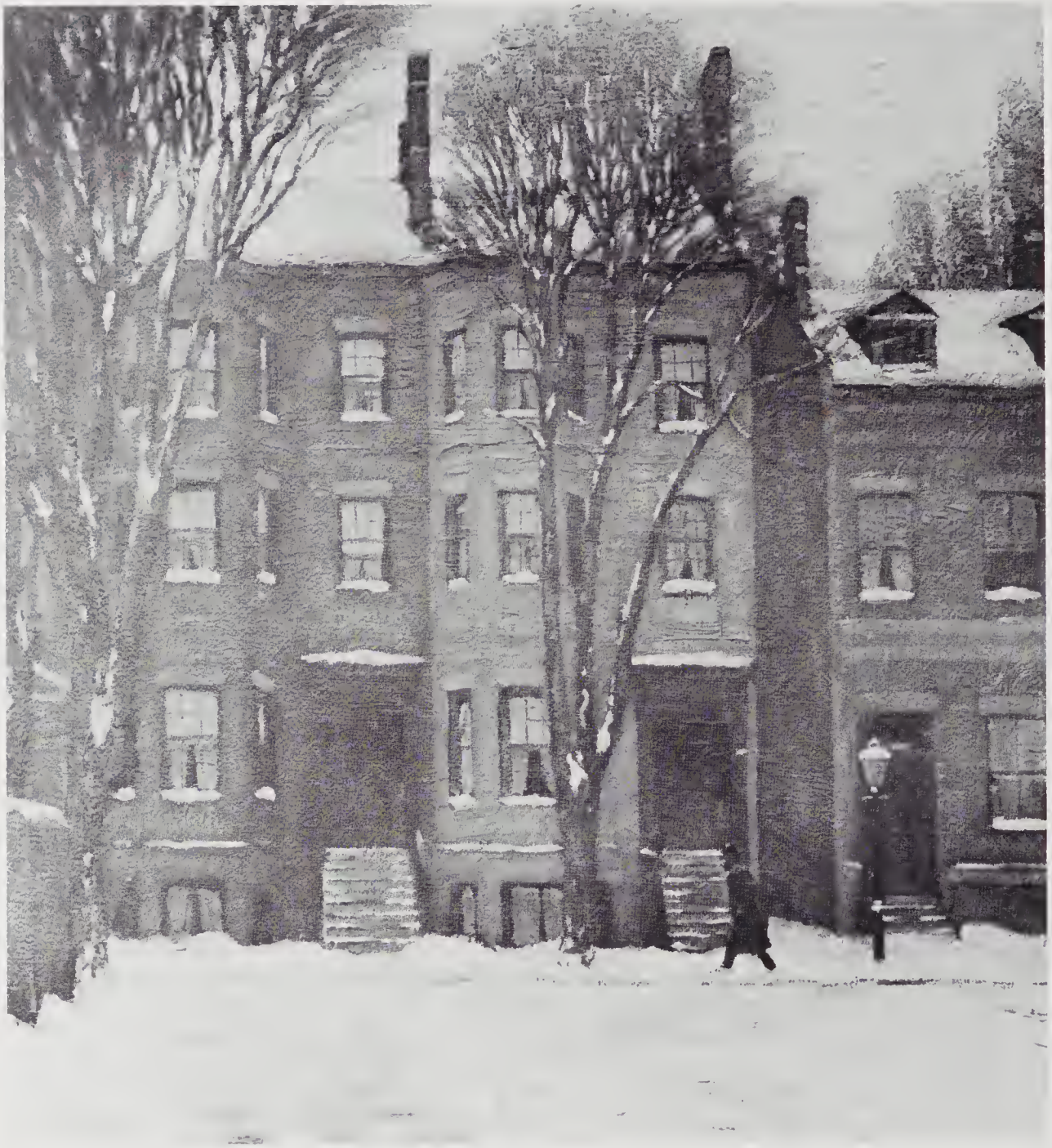
The third city scene in the 1912 O.S.A. exhibition, *In the Ward*, is not identified but is the earliest instance of a subject taken from St. John's Ward.[33] The "Ward," as it was popularly known, was the centre and soul of immigrant Toronto in the early twentieth century. Waves of newcomers from first Ireland and the British Isles, then central and southern Europe, entered Canadian society through this cramped and crowded residential area. As language skills, education and fortunes generally improved, many moved on to other population centres or to better working class residential areas within the city such as "Cabbagetown" in St. David's, the easternmost ward.[34] It was, according to the critic and author, Augustus Bridle, "the most cosmopolitan part of Toronto, on cross streets and side streets [are] the rows of blinking little modern shops, the phonograph blaring at the corner; everywhere the shuffling, gabbling crowds and the flaring little shops — fronted with people."[35] For Harris, it was an environment with which he had been familiar in Berlin and one to which he was attracted immediately upon his return to Toronto.

An exception to the early planimetrically composed urban scenes is *The Gas Works*, *c.* 1911-12 (cat. no. 21), the artist's second known Toronto industrial subject. The greyed hues and gloomy atmospheric quality of this work are reminiscent of *Top of the Hill, Spadina*, 1909-11 and *The Eaton Manufacturing Building*, 1911. The picture was the result of sketching along with the artist J. E. H. MacDonald (1873-1932) in the winter of 1911-12 in the vicinity of the gas works at the foot of Bathurst Street. MacDonald painted a large scale canvas from this vantage point, *Tracks and Traffic*, 1912 (Art Gallery of Ontario) which, in contrast to Harris' painting, was his most ambitious work up to that time.

Harris' use of grey tonality is limited to the period *c.* 1909-12 and to only a few pictures: the three mentioned above and *Gerrard Street*, 1912 (cat. no. 22). The muted colours and the general mood they evoke appear to reflect the influence of artists exhibiting with the Canadian Art Club, 1908-15. The Art Club members were Canada's most "modern" and attempted to bring a more progressive, painterly European manner into Canadian art. In relation to the high finish and descriptive realism of academic painting in the late nineteenth century both in Canada and abroad, the work of such members as J. W. Morrice, Curtis Williamson, Edmund Morris, W. E. Atkinson and Archibald Browne reflected new, predominantly aesthetic influences. Their atmospheric, almost monochromatic pictures reflect the influence of Whistler, the Barbizon landscape painters and the Dutch artists of the Hague School in the last third of the nineteenth century.[36] The subjective character of Canadian Art Club works was perceived as a distinct advance over the literal, illustrative quality of the academic figure painters and indigenous romantic-realist landscapists.

Harris was well aware of the Canadian Art Club's annual exhibitions held in the Toronto Reference Library between 1908 and 1915, and contributed a review of their 1913 exhibition to the *Yearbook of Canadian Art*, 1913.[37] To him the Art Club had been of "undoubted benefit to Canadian art," providing needed "stimulus."[38] His one criticism was the lack of local subjects among their works, but he stated: "The extraordinary variety offered by Canadian life has been recognized by some of our best men, and we look for a wider appreciation in this direction."[39] One native scene, J. W. Morrice's *Mountain Hill, Quebec* (unlocated) was reproduced with Harris' article.

The question of the possible influence of



22. Houses, Gerrard Street, Toronto, *1912*
oil on canvas
35 × 20 in.; 89 × 59.8 cm
George E. Bridle

Morrice on Harris' house pictures has yet to be fully answered. The Montreal-born and Paris-based painter had earlier developed the planimetric composition that Harris so often used. Flattened building façades, screens of trees and figurative elements placed in profile are among the features each shared in common. Harris' work, however, was more heavily painted, more intensely coloured, and completely lacked Morrice's often delicate Whistlerian tonalism. Nonetheless, a work such as *Return from School*, *c.* 1900-03 (Art Gallery of Ontario) which was exhibited by Morrice in the January 1911 Canadian Art Club exhibition has a gloomy tonality and a textured grey snow that is similar to areas in Harris' *The Eaton Manufacturing Building*, 1911 and *The Gas Works*, 1911-12.

In November, Harris included three canvases in the 1912 Royal Canadian Academy exhibition held in Ottawa. All were Toronto subjects: *Houses in the Ward* (unidentified; presumably the work in the March 1912 O.S.A. exhibition); *The Eaton Manufacturing Building*, 1911 and *The Corner Store*, 1912 (cat. no. 23). The latter, done no doubt in the late winter of 1911-12, was one of Harris' most popular early pictures. The white surface of the sunlit building is enlivened with red painted windows with green shutters, a red roofline and sparkling colours depicting goods in the store window. To the left a snow-cleared tree-lined sidewalk recedes diagonally into the distance creating the illusion of deep space. The simplified shapes of the horses set in a flat plane in front of the store are surprisingly close to those in Morrice's small city sketch *Winter Street with Horses and Sleighs*, *c.* 1905 (Art Gallery of Ontario). Although Harris would never have had an opportunity to see this particular study, he would have been aware of similar motifs in other Morrice pictures exhibited at the Canadian Art Club exhibitions and reproduced in *The Studio* magazine. His use of horses in these early Toronto scenes indicates interests at least corresponding to if not directly influenced by Morrice.

In comparison with *Old Houses, Wellington Street* and *Houses, Richmond Street, The Corner Store* exhibits a new reliance on descriptive and anecdotal subject matter. The picture, a Toronto vignette, is not an advance over the radically constructed composition of *Houses, Richmond Street*. An urban scene painted the following year, *Houses*, 1913 (cat. no. 27), further develops this new interest. A large horse-drawn cart moves along a wintry street in front of a row of gabled houses whose architectural details are painted in pale, pastel tones. The scale and prominence of the cart provide a psychological focus for the picture. The relatively rough texture of *The Corner Store* is here increased as Harris uses a dry brush to build up a material ruggedness, similar to that found in Homer Watson's landscapes shown contemporaneously in the Canadian Art Club exhibitions. The fluid pigmentation of the 1910-11 urban scenes has been renounced for a more tactile surface that reduces the definition of outlines and in general diminishes detail. This same rough, dry texture can also be seen in such landscapes as *Laurentian Landscape*, 1913-14 (cat. no. 32) and *Morning Sun, Winter*, 1914 (cat. no. 34).

Another city scene of 1913, *Hurdy Gurdy I* (unlocated), employs the visual effects of scattered autumn leaves and dappled light found in *Houses, Richmond Street*, 1911, but the presence of the immigrant organ grinder and the knot of excited children continues the new interest in figurative subject matter. A later painting of the same motif, *Hurdy Gurdy*, *c.* 1918 (cat. no. 80), focuses on the organ grinder but discards the diagonal placement of the street in favour of a strict frontality common to the early urban scenes, bringing

the figures and building close to the picture plane.

During 1913, Harris submitted a house picture with a poetically descriptive title, *Sunrise Through Rime* (unlocated), to both the April O.S.A. exhibition in Toronto and the November R.C.A. exhibition in Montreal. It was described as "an example of the beauty of the commonplace; a scene with an outlook through elms and across backyards and woodsheds [which] is made into an enchanted setting for a romantic fantasy."[40] Among his four paintings in the 1913 O.S.A. exhibition were two landscapes. One, entitled *Summer Clouds* (unlocated), was characterized as "atmospheric, filmy, floating, intensely realistic from overhead to skyline."[41] Other landscape pictures in the exhibition were Tom Thomson's *Northern Lake*, 1912-13 (Art Gallery of Ontario); J. E. H. MacDonald's *Fine Weather, Georgian Bay*, 1913 (National Gallery of Canada), and Arthur Lismer's *The Clearing* (unlocated). A reviewer noted, however, that out of ninety-one paintings on exhibition only about ten were of "subjects directly of this country."[42]

27. Houses, *1913*
oil on canvas
30 1/4 × 32 1/4 in.; 76.8 × 82 cm
Private collection


L S H

Landscapes, 1908-13

Harris' small oil studies reproduced as illustrations in *Harper's* between July 1908 and April 1909 contain only a minimum of desert landscape elements and do not provide us with any real insight into his landscape capabilities at that time. Although he did paint scenery during his travels in Southern Germany and the Austrian Tyrol during the summers of 1906 and 1907, there are no European oil sketches or paintings known among his early works. While it is tempting to try to identify some of these early landscape sketches as European subjects, an analysis of landscape and architectural details as well as their technical handling locate them within the 1908-13 period.

At some point in the early fall of 1908 Harris and Fergus Kyle, a fellow member of the Arts and Letters Club, travelled to the Laurentians.[43] This was the artist's first sketching trip into a northern Canadian landscape, and we can identify several works from that early excursion. *Laurentian Village*, 1908 (cat. no. 10), is a small oil sketch on the type of thin, grey-coloured composition board that Harris brought back with him from Europe and often used between 1908-13. The realism and sombre tonality of this study does not situate his painting style within any of the progressive European traditions. Another work that dates from that 1908 Laurentian sketching trip is *Near St. Jovite* (cat. no. 14). In comparison to *Laurentian Village*, this is a more expressive picture and the rather concise handling and atmospheric consistency makes it an important example of Harris' earliest landscape style. Within a very limited range of muted warm and cool earth tones, the artist has translated the natural qualities of colour and light of a dull fall day. The brushwork is vigorous in comparison with that seen in the colour reproductions of his Near Eastern scenes in *Harper's*, indicating both the rugged character of the landscape and an increased painterly interest. *Laurentian Landscape with Barn* (cat. no. 13), *Autumn Trees* (cat. no. 11), and *Laurentians, Near St. Jovite* (cat. no. 12) all appear to have been painted on this 1908 trip. *Near St. Jovite* and *Laurentian Landscape with Barn* are both signed with Harris' earliest form of signature, the block-like initials L S H, which seems to have been discontinued *c.* 1911.[44]

In the spring of 1909, after spending two weeks in January–February in the Minnesota lumber camps working on illustrations for the aforementioned *Harper's* article, [45] Harris travelled with J. W. Beatty (1869-1941) to Haliburton, Ontario, north and east of Toronto and later in the fall to Lake Memphramagog in Quebec's eastern townships. No works, however, can be confidently identified from these excursions with Beatty.[46] Harris' large oils painted between late 1909 and early 1912 are largely urban scenes — except for the Minnesota subjects, *Return from Town*, and *A Load of Fence Posts*, both from 1911, which were exhibited in the O.S.A. show that year.[47]

In early 1911 J. E. H. MacDonald, then head designer at the Grip Limited Studios, was elected a member of the Arts and Letters Club and in November he exhibited at the Club a series of oil sketches painted near his home in High Park as well as others in the general

11. Autumn Trees, *1908 (opposite)*
oil on board
5 9/16 × 8 5/8 in.; 14.1 × 22 cm
Private collection

13. Laurentian Landscape with Barn, *1908*
oil on board
8 × 10 in.; 20.3 × 25.4 cm
Rita and Max Merkur, Toronto

12. Laurentians, Near St. Jovite, *1908*
oil on board
6 × 8 1/2 in.; 15.2 × 21.6 cm
Private collection

vicinity of Toronto. Like the other artists employed at the Grip studios, Tom Thomson, William Broadhead, Frank Carmichael and Arthur Lismer, MacDonald had developed an interest in sketching outdoors on weekends. A superb designer, he nonetheless longed to develop his talents as a painter and at the design studio he and the others often discussed art issues. C. W. Jefferys (1869-1952), himself an artist of local landscape scenery, extravagantly reviewed MacDonald's exhibition in *The Lamps*, the Arts and Letters Club magazine:

> Mr. MacDonald's art is native — native as the rocks, in the snow, or pine trees, or the lumber drives that are so largely his themes. . . .so deep and compelling has been the native inspiration that it has to a very great extent found through [MacDonald] a method of expression in paint as native and original as itself.[48]

Harris was impressed with MacDonald's lively landscape studies and sought him out after the exhibition. Sympathetic in their artistic interests, they began to sketch together along the industrial waterfront of the city in the winter of 1911-12. For the O.S.A. exhibition held in the spring of 1912, both Harris and

24. The Drive, *1912*
oil on canvas
35 1/2 × 53 3/4 in.; 90.1 × 136.5 cm
The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

MacDonald made their strongest showing, each exhibiting six canvases.[49] Two of Harris' pictures, *The Drive*, 1912 (cat. no. 24) and *Deserted Barn in the Laurentians* (unlocated) were his first, full scale Canadian landscape paintings.

The Drive was Harris' largest picture to date, measuring 35½'' × 53¾'', and his first distinctive northern Ontario subject. The picture was finished in time for the March O.S.A. exhibition, but its conception may well be traced to a logging picture by MacDonald entitled *By the River, Early Spring*, 1911 (Hamilton Teacher's College) that Harris had seen in the O.S.A. exhibition that previous year.[50] In his comments in *Notes on Pictures at the O.S.A. Exhibition*, MacDonald stated that his aim

> . . .was to convey a sense of the awakened strength and motion of a nature after the comparative quiescence of winter. . . . The general colour is sombre, suggesting soft and

> dull weather but there is a hint of veiled blue in the sky.[51]

A small logging subject was doubtless among the sketches exhibited at the Arts and Letters Club and would have been one of the "lumber drive" themes that C. W. Jefferys noted in his review.[52]

Although he could have witnessed such a scene on the upper reaches of the Humber River not far from Toronto, Harris appears to have based not only his concept of *The Drive* but the scale and action of the four small figures on MacDonald's earlier picture. The broad, bravura brushwork of the painting is similar to the facture of *Old Houses, Wellington Street*. The effects of natural light also correspond to that earlier picture. In *The Drive*, the sun breaks through the cloud cover to illuminate the centre of the large composition, providing both visual coherence and an atmospheric interest that heightens the drama inherent in the logging drive itself.

In the spring of 1912 MacDonald sketched in the Burks Falls area, along the Magnetawan River. Harris was also in Northern Ontario during the same time painting in the vicinity of Haliburton, as his oil study *Outskirts of Haliburton* (cat. no. 25) dated that year attests. Broadly executed in strong, dark colours, it is a notable advance in expressive power in comparison with his earlier landscape sketches. At some point in the summer, both MacDonald and Harris were at Go Home Bay in Georgian Bay. MacDonald had been offered the use of a houseboat moored near Split Rock Island by Dr. James MacCallum, a Toronto eye doctor, who had admired his landscape sketches exhibited at the Arts and Letters Club. Harris may have rented a cottage nearby. His small study *Georgian Bay* (McMichael Canadian Collection) is clear evidence of an interest shared with MacDonald in the luminous clarity of the area's expansive sky.[53] The older artist was delighted with Georgian Bay and later painted a number of important canvases based on works produced on this trip.[54] Harris, on the other hand, was less intrigued with the pictorial possibilities of the region and never painted a significant Georgian Bay composition.

In January 1913 Harris and MacDonald travelled to the Albright Gallery in Buffalo to see a large exhibition of modern Scandinavian painting.[55] In later years they stressed the significance of this exhibition in the development of their landscape art. Harris wrote that

> MacDonald and I had discussed the possibility of an art expression which should embody the varied moods, character and spirit of this country. We heard there was an exhibition of modern Scandinavian paintings at the Albright Gallery in Buffalo — and took the train to Buffalo to see it. This turned out to be one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences either of us had. Here was a large number of paintings which corroborated our ideas. Here were paintings of northern lands created in the spirit of those lands and through the hearts and minds of those who knew and loved them. Here was an art bold, vigorous and uncompromising, embodying direct first-hand experience of the great North. As a result of that experience our enthusiasm increased, and our conviction was reinforced.[56]

MacDonald also referred to their enthusiastic response to many of the pictures:[57]

28. Farm Houses, *1913*
oil on board
8 × 10 in.; 20.3 × 25.4 cm
Private collection

> Now Harris and I were fortunate in this exhibition. We were full of associated ideas. Not that we had ever been to Scandinavia, but we had feelings of height and breadth and depth and colour and sunshine and solemnity and new wonder about our own country, and we were pleased to find a correspondence with these feelings of ours, not only in the general attitude of the Scandinavian artists, but also in the natural aspects of their countries. Except in minor points, the pictures might all have been Canadian, and we felt "This is what we want to do with Canada."[58]

What particularly pleased him was "a sort of rustic simplicity" which made the Scandinavian pictures seem "an art of the soil and woods and waters and rocks and sky. . . .[and] one with its foundations planted on the good red earth."[59] To MacDonald, the Scandinavian painters

> seemed to be a lot of men not trying to *express themselves* so much as trying to express something that took hold of *themselves*. The painters began with *nature* rather than with *art*. They could be understood and enjoyed without metaphysics, or the frosty condescension of super critics on *volumes* or dimensions, and other paraphernalia.[60]

In the exhibition were some 165 works of art by 45 artists from Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. The contributors best known today are Edvard Munch and Anders Zorn, but the ones to whom Harris and MacDonald appear to have been most attracted were

29. Laurentian Hills, *1913*
oil on board
8 × 10 in.; 20.3 × 25.4 cm
Private collection

Gustav Fjaestad and Hârâld Sohlberg.[61] The former's decorative scenes of snow- or frost-covered trees set in a winter landscape, often with tracks of departed skiers or animals receding into the distance, must certainly have appealed to MacDonald who had recently produced several winter scenes in Toronto's High Park of a similar nature. Harris, while he had painted several snow-filled city scenes and *The Drive* prior to the Buffalo exhibition, had not yet found much of pictorial interest in the Canadian winter.

In April 1913, Harris and MacDonald travelled to Mattawa and Temiscaming on the upper Ottawa River near North Bay, Ontario. Both artists sketched views of rural farms and, in MacDonald's case at least, the town of Mattawa itself.[62] Harris' *Farm Houses* (cat. no. 28) is a study painted on this trip.[63] Nearly all his Mattawa studies concentrate on log buildings and do not focus on the rugged northern landscape itself. Perhaps he was not yet confident enough to turn his full attention to the depiction of natural forms and effects and required an architectural subject around which to build his composition. Neither of

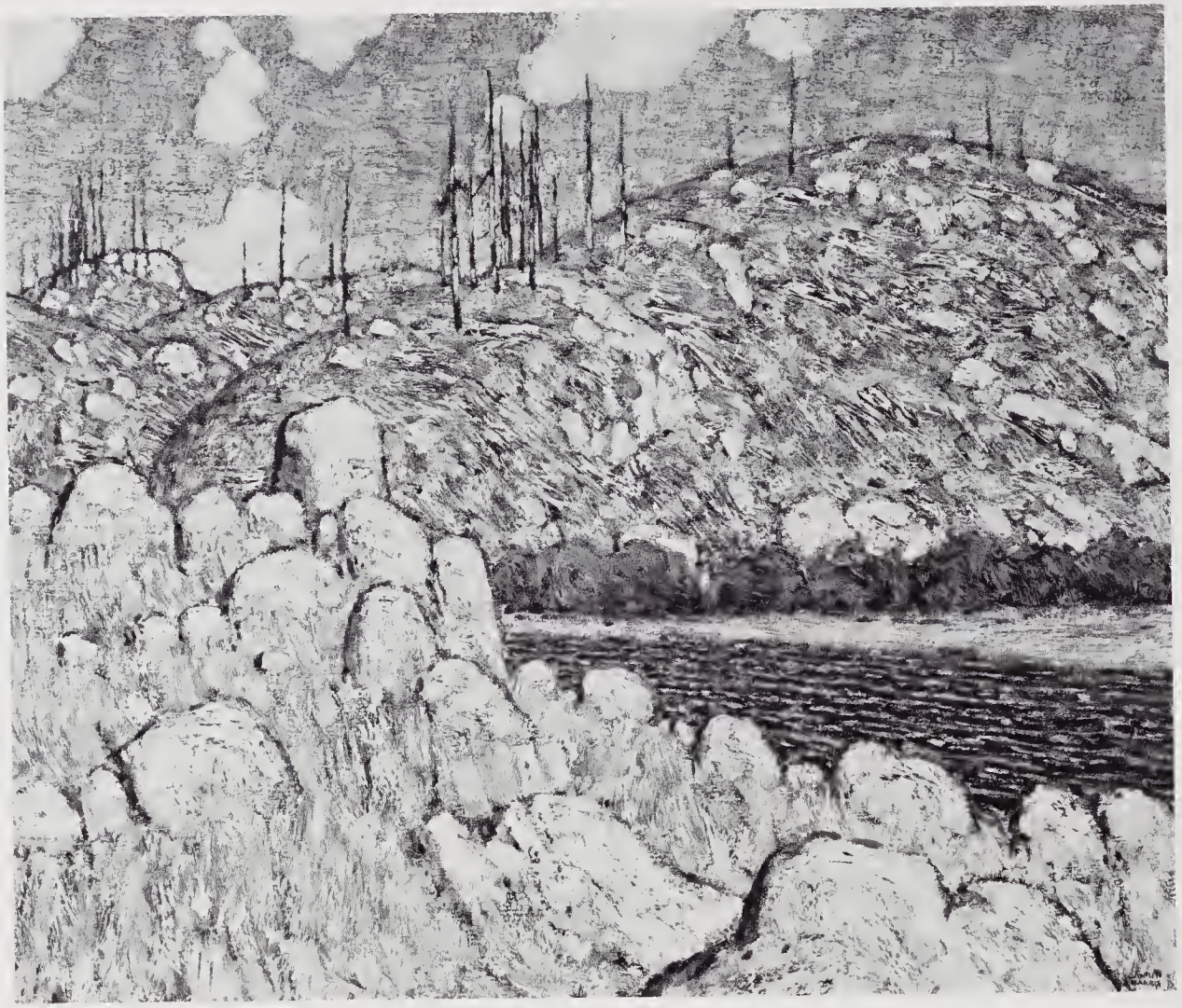
31. Laurentian Farm, *1913*
oil on board
8 × 10 in.; 20.3 × 25.4 cm
Private collection

the painters worked up any large scale compositions from this excursion.

In the fall of 1913, the two artists travelled eastwards to the Laurentians where Harris had sketched five years earlier in the company of Fergus Kyle but which was unfamiliar territory to MacDonald.[64] A number of small works by Harris can be identified with that October excursion: *Laurentian Hills* (cat. no. 29), *Laurentian Farm* (cat. no. 31) and *Laurentian Monadnock* (cat. no. 30). In these, the more intense colours are the result of MacDonald's influence, for the latter employed the brighter greens, yellows and mauves more consistently in both his Laurentian studies and several later canvases: *Laurentian Hillside, October*, 1914 (Mr. W. Howard Wert) and *Laurentian Village*, 1916 (Hart House Permanent Collection).

Later that year, another painter was drawn into the growing circle of landscape artists around Harris and MacDonald. A. Y. Jackson, with whom Harris had corresponded earlier concerning the purchase of his *Edge of the Maple Wood*, 1910 (National Gallery of Canada), had been on the verge of leaving for the United States in disgust with art conditions and opportunities in his native Montreal. However, on a sketching trip to Georgian Bay in the summer of 1913 Jackson had met Dr. MacCallum, who told him about the group of younger men in Toronto who were beginning to commit themselves to the ideal of painting the northern landscape in a bold and direct fashion. Jackson decided to come to Toronto and assess the situation for himself. Harris invited him to share his studio on the top floor of the Bank of Commerce Building on the corner of Bloor and Yonge Streets and he moved in during the late fall.

Both Harris and MacCallum soon convinced



32. Laurentian Landscape, *1913-14*
oil on canvas
30 × 34 3/4 in.; 76.2 × 88.3 cm
Private collection

14. Near St. Jovite, *1908*
oil on board
5 1/2 × 8 1/4 in.; 14 × 21 cm
The Ontario Heritage Foundation
Firestone Art Collection, Ottawa

him that he would receive both artistic and financial support in the city, and offered him space in the Studio Building which the two were having built in the Rosedale ravine.

The Studio Building was apparently Harris' idea and both he and the doctor financed its construction. Harris firmly believed that the provision of a physical centre for the younger artists would result in a more active and cohesive artistic development. His confidence in the others and in his idea of a Canadian landscape movement was strong enough for him to risk sufficient capital to erect the imposing structure. Certainly, there was no building in Canada that was set aside solely for the use of artists and its construction demonstrated Harris' often ambiguous role as both patron and participant. In his words, it was designed "for artists doing distinctly Canadian work," [65] and not for those whose art reflected conservative, European values. "It was built as a working place for those artists primarily interested in painting Canada in its own terms — a new creative venture. If it had not been for A. Y. J[ackson], J. E. H. MacD[onald], [Tom] Thomson, etc., it would never have been built."[66]

As the Studio Building was nearing completion, Jackson worked on a large imposing Georgian Bay canvas entitled *Terre Sauvage* (National Gallery of Canada) in Harris' Bloor Street studio. At the same time, MacDonald and Harris were painting Laurentian subjects, *Laurentian Hillside, October* and *Laurentian Landscape*, 1913-14 (cat. no. 32). All three pictures marked a new collective departure toward a more brightly coloured and boldly designed landscape composition.[67] The use of complementary colours, patterned two-dimensional arrangement of shapes, and emphatically broken brushstrokes are all to be found in varying degrees in these works and indicate that the artists were working closely together.

Harris' *Laurentian Landscape* was based on his small sketch *Near St. Jovite* painted in 1908. In a comparison with his earlier large landscape, *The Drive*, the painting is a surprising departure from his straightforward, realistic vision of nature. Highly textured and brightly coloured, it is a unique picture in the context of his work. Painted side by side with Jackson's novel *Terre Sauvage*, it was obviously the result of considerable artistic interaction between the two painters. Jackson later wrote that Harris' experimental canvas was affectionately dubbed "Tomato Soup"[68] and recalled that

> there were lively interchanges of opinion [in Harris' studio]. There was the stimulus of comparison and frank discussion on aims and ideals and technical problems which resulted in various experiments. One of Harris' efforts to get vibrant colour was to drag his brush quickly through three or four colours and slap it on the canvas.[69]

In comparing *Laurentian Landscape* to the small study *Near St. Jovite*, two features are worthy of comment. Harris has made a radical departure toward a new, intense colour scheme by aggressively juxtaposing thick strokes of complementary hues to add a new vitality to his work. As well, he has significantly altered the format of the painting to create an almost square composition. Jackson implied that the technique of the work was the result of experimentation,[70] but both features are surprisingly close to an early Maine landscape painted by the American artist Marsden Hartley entitled *Carnival of Autumn*, 1909 (Boston Museum of Fine Arts). In this canvas Hartley used a technique popularly known as the "Segantini stitch" after the distinctive manner of the Swiss impressionist painter Giovanni Segantini. The brushwork and rough texture of *Carnival of Autumn* result in a brilliant, tapestry-like effect much like the character of *Laurentian Landscape*. Harris may well have seen Hartley's work on exhibit during an undocumented trip to New York or, if not, he would have had opportunities to become familiar with Segantini's pictures in European museums.

The square shape of the canvas contrasts sharply with the horizontal proportions of *The Drive*, though it compares with the format of *Houses, Richmond Street* and *Houses*, 1913. Both Jackson's *Terre Sauvage* and MacDonald's *Laurentian Hillside, October* are similar in configuration and also indicate an interest in rejecting tradition and advancing in new directions. Like MacDonald's picture, *Laurentian Landscape* eliminates the atmospheric play of light and shade and reduces three-dimensional forms to two-dimensional patterns. Interestingly, both compositions incorporate a foreground horizontal that cuts diagonally across an emphatic horizontal line located in the middle distance. This device often reappears in both sketches and canvases by other artists such as Jackson and Thomson.

On January 19, 1914 the Studio Building was finally ready for occupancy.[71] Jackson and Thomson were the first to move in, sharing Studio One, but they were soon followed by MacDonald and Harris. The other members of the small band of younger artists, F. H. Varley and Arthur Lismer, did not move into the building. At this stage they had already been identified as a group that shared similar artistic interests. In a review ostensibly of an exhibition of Jackson's Georgian Bay sketches at the Arts and Letters Club in late 1913, the writer Peter Gadsby wittily attacked both his and the others' work, calling the painters members of a new "Hot Mush School."[72] MacDonald replied in kind in a letter to the editor, and the artists doubtless relished their new-found notoriety.[73] The mood in the Studio Building in early 1914 was ebullient. Jackson later remarked that "Every day was an adventure — Lawren Harris experimenting with broken colour. . . . Thomson finally submitting to become a full-time artist; [and] MacDonald happy as a child, working out strange rhythms and designs on canvas."[74] Varley, in a letter of May 1914 to his family in Sheffield, England, also expanded on the subject of the group's activities and outlined their new, artistic aims:

> There's a small party of us here, the young school, just 5 or 6 of us and we are all working to one big end. We are endeavouring to knock out of us all the preconceived ideas, emptying ourselves of everything except that nature is here in all its greatness, and we are here to gather it and understand it if only we will be clean enough, healthy enough, and humble enough to go to it willing to

> be taught, and receive it *not* as we think it should be, *but as it is*, and then to put down vigorously and truthfully that which we have culled.[75]

Harris would later echo Varley's thoughts on the ultimate importance of the direct experience of nature in conditioning their pictorial approach to landscape painting:

> The main source of inspiration of the Group of Seven came from the discovery of the great and varied landscape of Canada. . . . The emphasis and dedication and consequent search was different from that of European artists. This was a search for a native way of seeing and painting which could be achieved only if the creative search was animated by the informing spirit of the country itself.[76]

As to the relative importance of his European training and experience on the development of his later art, Harris stated that "when I returned from Germany and commenced to paint in Canada my whole interest was in the Canadian scene. It was, in truth, as though I had never been to Europe. Any paintings, drawings or sketches I saw with a Canadian tang excited me more than anything I had seen in Europe. . . ."[77]

41. Spruce and Snow, Northern Ontario, *1916*
oil on canvas
40 × 45 in.; 101.6 × 114.3 cm
Private collection

Winter Landscapes, 1914-16

In the spring O.S.A. show of 1914 Harris exhibited his *Laurentian Landscape*[78] along with two other paintings, *Decorative Landscape* (unidentified) and *Morning Sun, Winter* (cat. no. 34). This latter work marks the first appearance of the decorative winter landscape in Harris' art. The orginal inspiration of this and the other snow scenes painted between 1914 and 1918 was Gustav Fjaestad's Scandinavian winter subjects that he and MacDonald had seen the previous year.

MacDonald recorded that he and Harris found Fjaestad's work "perhaps the most interesting of all" in the Buffalo exhibition.[79] The rising foreground field of snow topped by snow-covered trees in *Morning Sun, Winter* is close to the compositions of the Scandinavian's *Winter Morning*[80] and *Hoarfrost*.[81] Harris' delicate colour scheme is based on Fjaestad's "colourful" snow in *Winter Morning* with its "finely harmonized pinks and purples and blues and cream yellows" that MacDonald later remembered.[82] A contemporary American review of the exhibition noted that Fjaestad's "winter scenes are remarkable in their interpretation of the beauty of snow" and that his large canvases were filled with "the sentiment of his subject."[83] In the artist's biography in the catalogue of the show, the Scandinavian-American scholar Christian Brinton commented that he

> views native landscape with something of an arbitrarily chosen viewpoint . . . bringing out the decorative elements . . . in snow drifts heaped together by the wind. . . . It is . . . through his snow scenes from wintry Sweden that he had won . . . appreciation abroad, and rarely have snow and frost effects have been painted so convincingly. . . . In all this work he has unquestionably said new and personal things concerning the treasury of beauty, left unregarded for centuries, to be found in the fantastic and varied shades and shapes the snow can assume, the snow which had previously been regarded in art and literature from but one point of view — that of white, virgin purity.[84]

Between 1914-18, Harris seems to have set himself the task of rivalling Fjaestad in the decorative depiction of snow-laden fir trees, set this time against the backdrop of a Canadian winter landscape. It is difficult to determine exactly how many full scale snow subjects he painted during these years since the titles of works exhibited are often not those by which the pictures are known today. There were at least seven paintings entitled *Snow I* through *Snow VII*, and others whose exhibited titles are more descriptive, such as *Winter Twilight*, *Snow Patterns*, and *Snow in the Bush*.[85]

All the canvases can be classified as decorative. The forms are highly stylized and arranged in receding planes; the colours are muted harmonies based on mauve, pink, pale blue and cream-yellow hues; and the brushwork is composed of arbitrary patterns that stress the two-dimensional nature of the work.

While Harris had earlier introduced snow into his urban scenes of 1910-13 and *The Drive* of 1912, *Morning Sun, Winter* and *Winter Morning* (fig. no. 1) both painted in 1914 are his first pure winter landscapes devoid of human action. *Morning Sun, Winter* was painted in the Studio Building in January-

Fig. 1 Winter Morning, *1914*
oil on canvas
40 × 44 1/2", 101.6 × 112.6 cm
National Gallery of Canada

February 1914 and continued the experimentation of *Laurentian Landscape.* The paint is applied in dry-textured layers like that of *Houses*, 1913 and delicate pinks and blues are juxtaposed to create a subtle tonalism. No doubt, he was trying to duplicate the "pinks and purples and blues" that MacDonald had admired in Fjaestad's *Winter Morning*. Harris' second winter landscape, *Winter Morning*, is a large scale composition of a stand of tall, dead spruce set against the living edge of the northern forest. Obviously painted after *Morning Sun, Winter*, it was first shown in the November 1914 R.C.A. exhibition. The degree of realism in this canvas indicates that it was painted in direct response to an actual experience of the wilderness. By contrast, *Morning Sun, Winter* is an idealized studio conception. To have seen such a desolate landscape, Harris must have made an excursion well beyond the Toronto area and, on the basis of the picture's realism, a trip to the north before the end of the winter of 1913-14 must be considered.

In February 1914, A. Y. Jackson, after hearing Tom Thomson's enthusiastic descriptions of the beauties of Algonquin, decided rather precipitously to go north to the Park. He arrived at Mowat Lodge to find the temperature — as he reported in a letter to MacDonald — some 45 degrees below zero Fahrenheit.[86] "I landed last night," he wrote, "and found it just as Lawren had said, you don't notice the cold one bit, all you notice is your breath dropping down and splintering on the scintillating ground."[87] Had Harris (as Jackson's letter seems to imply) already been in Algonquin Park and was therefore in a position to report on the winter weather conditions there? The question cannot be firmly answered. Perhaps Harris had simply described the northern cold he had experienced during his two-week visit to the Minnesota lumber camps in January–February, 1909. Certainly he and Jackson would have talked about the weather before the latter's daring trip to Algonquin Park in the dead of winter. But there is a further and more substantial indication that Harris may in fact have gone to the Park before February 1914. A small but relatively finished oil sketch entitled: *Sunburst, Algonquin Park in Winter* (cat. no. 33) depicts rays of light bursting out behind the edge of a cloud cover over a desolate northern landscape.[88] Possibly stimulated by the Scandinavians' winter scenes at the Buffalo exhibition, Harris had gone north to experience the snow-bound Canadian landscape sometime in January–February 1913. The only opportunity to visit Algonquin Park before Jackson's trip would have been either the early winter of 1913-14 or in January 1914.[89]

In March of the same year MacDonald and J. W. Beatty travelled to Algonquin and

painted full scale winter landscapes on their return. MacDonald's *March Evening, Northland*, 1914 (National Gallery of Canada) shares with Harris' *Winter Morning*, 1914 the motif of trees standing in silhouette against a winter sky. But Beatty's picture *Morning, Algonquin Park*, 1914 (National Gallery of Canada) is surprisingly close to Harris' actual composition. The subject of both paintings is a stand of dead trees in a field of snow set against the impenetrable wall of the northern forest. The coincidence of these three pictures seems to argue that Harris had, like the others, gone north to the Park in an undocumented excursion.

The snow scenes painted between 1915-18 also appear to have been based on an appreciation of the northern winter wilderness. Very few are subjects from the vicinity of Toronto. The dense forests of pines, vistas over frozen lakes and the generally austere tone reveal a reliance on a northern experience. But these later works do not have the same degree of visual truth as *Winter Morning*. They reconstitute experience in a more purely decorative fashion. The elegant tree forms, the delicate colour harmonies and the arbitrary nature of the designs indicate more conceptual values.

Harris' earliest dated decorative snow painting is simply entitled *Winter Woods*, 1914 (unlocated) and was probably a winter scene from the Rosedale ravine nearby the Studio Building.[90] While there is a general relationship to *Winter Morning* and *Morning Sun, Winter* (cat. no. 34) painted the same year, in *Winter Woods* Harris treats the entire picture surface as a two-dimensional decorative plane. In the O.S.A. exhibition of 1915 the artist submitted two snow scenes, *Winter Twilight* and *Snow Pattern*. Neither of these is securely identified, yet presumably they are among the snow pictures in the present exhibition. The following year, the artist submitted two more

34. Morning Sun, Winter, *1914*
oil on canvas
40 1/4 × 45 1/4 in.; 102.3 × 115 cm
Private collection

decorative winter landscapes, *Snow I* (unidentified) and *Snow II* (cat. no. 42), to the O.S.A. exhibition.[91] Later that summer he exhibited a work entitled *Snow in the Bush* (unidentified) at the Canadian National Exhibition.[92] Among the snow scenes exhibited in 1915 and 1916, only *Snow II* can be precisely identified. However, from an examination of the snow pictures known today a chronology can be established.

Winter Woodland (cat. no. 38) is a departure from the early *Winter Woods* of 1914 in that the wall of trees has been opened up to include a shallow sunlit middle ground. The impenetrable barrier of snow-laden spruce is set farther back and is seen through a screen of slender foreground trees that are cast in a delicate mauve-grey shadow. The tall foreground trees are morphologically related to *Winter Morning*, 1914 and they re-appear in *Winter Sunrise* (cat. no. 39). In the foreground

Fig. 2 Winter Woods, *1914*
oil on canvas
40 × 32", 101.6 × 81.2 cm
Unlocated. Photo, National Gallery of Canada

of *Winter Sunrise* Harris has introduced strongly massed foreground snow drifts that are built up with long brushstrokes that follow the rhythmic contours of the snow forms. There is a delicate linear sense to these strokes as they articulate the snow shapes moving into space from the immediate foreground. Directly in front of the middle ground screen of vertical trees are several rounded snow-covered spruce that, along with the undulating foreground drifts, create a sense of volume and an illusion of space that is lacking in the more planimetric composition of *Winter Woodland*. A small gap in the screen of slender middle distance trees allows a glimpse into deep space and a distant view of a forest wall seen across a field of snow. The sky in both these pictures is composed of an open network of brick-like strokes that, tonally allied to the brushwork in the foreground zone, give the surface of the picture a tapestry-like quality.The "finely harmonized pinks and purples and blues and cream yellows"[93] that MacDonald admired in Gustav Fjaestad's work are very apparent in these and later snow scenes by Harris. However, the tapestry-like treatment and the rather shallow layered composition did not hold Harris' interest for long. The space introduced in *Winter Sunrise* becomes much more fully developed in what appears to be a series of at least four decorative snow scenes that were painted between March 1915 and August 1916.[94]

The first of this series, *Spruce and Snow, Northern Ontario* (cat. no. 41), elaborates the foreground snow drifts of *Winter Sunrise* into a field of swelling, rhythmic mounds which take the eye from the immediate foreground into the middle distance where it is stopped by a screen of spruce. This is the most space-filled, decorative composition to date. On each side of the canvas large, snow-laden trees are cut off by the framing edges and help direct our attention to the delicate light and colour effects of the sky that are reflected in the central field of snow. The painting is delicately and harmoniously coloured. The wide twilight sky is composed of long horizontal brushstrokes that are arbitrarily arranged in decorative patterns. Against the background of this warm yellow light are placed irregular bands of mauve clouds that establish a poetic mood.

From this canvas, Harris appears to have turned to *Snow I* and *Snow II* (cat. no. 42) which were both in the March 1916 O.S.A. exhibition. The first is unlocated but appears to be documented by a photograph in the National Gallery of Canada (fig. no. 3).[95] It is closely related to *Snow II* as it uses a foreground motif of small, squat spruce that are weighed down

38. Winter Woodland, c. *1915*
oil on canvas
40 1/8 × 45 in.; 102 × 114.3 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

39. Winter Sunrise, c. *1915*
oil on canvas
50 × 47 1/2 in.; 127 × 120.7 cm
Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery,
University of Regina

40. Snow, c. *1915*
oil on canvas
27 × 42 in.; 71.2 × 110.5 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario

with large mounds of snow. It places these tree forms not against the wide spacious setting of the latter, but against the impenetrable wall of spruce that was first introduced in *Winter Morning*. In both these pictures the elaborate, linear character of the earlier scenes has been dispensed with in favour of a more relaxed three-dimensional handling of forms in space.[96]

In *Snow II* the small rounded foreground trees are cast in delicate mauve shadows and set against the brilliantly lighted backdrop of a frozen northern lake with distant snowbound hills rising beyond. In this work, space has been more fully realized than in any of the 1914-16 decorative snow pictures. Yet it still retains an overall flatness through the patterned brushwork that accords with the general decorative principles at work in Harris' art at this time. Eric Brown, the first director of the National Gallery of Canada, who had purchased the canvas from the 1916 O.S.A. exhibition, described Harris' aesthetic and the picture itself in an article published in 1917:

42. Snow II, c. *1916*
oil on canvas
46 3/4 × 49 3/4 in.; 118.7 × 126.4 cm
The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

> Lawren Harris leans more toward decoration than any other [of the Studio Building group]. Thus, as may be seen from his *Snow* [II] he finds in the snow laden spruces and stark pines the patterns for his compositions which do not evade a sufficient truth and add to it a satisfying surety of space and balance. Lawren Harris is a seeker, and the problems he attacks change from year to year, and his buoyant and fetterless art admirably typifies the new spirit of Canadian landscape painting.[97]

In this early assessment of Harris' art, Brown correctly noted the artist's conceptual concerns for isolating and attacking pictorial "problems" but also indicated the degree of "sufficient truth" that his decorative canvases contained.

Harris' brushwork in the sky of *Snow II* is characterized by the relatively short, brick-like stroke common to the other contemporary snow scenes, and mauves, pale blues, cream yellows and pinks are likewise distributed across the surface of the canvas. The snow-covered foreground trees, like those in *Spruce and Snow, Northern Ontario*, are cut off by the lateral and upper framing edges, stressing the essentially planar nature of the composition. The patterned treatment of the distant lake and sky also emphasizes this two-dimensional character, the space and more intense light notwithstanding. The picture's subject is undoubtedly a Northern Ontario scene and again argues that Harris was familiar with the north well before his first documented trip to Algonquin in April 1916.

The artist's decorative snow subjects are distinctly different from those painted at about the same time by such Canadian Art Club members as J. W. Morrice, Marc-Aurèle de Foy

Fig. 3 Winter Woods, *1915*
oil on canvas
47 1/2 × 50 1/4", 120.7 × 128.7 cm
Unlocated. Photo, National Gallery of Canada

Suzor-Coté, Clarence Gagnon and Maurice Cullen. These European-trained artists generally treat the winter landscape from a more poetic and subjective point of view. Suzor-Coté and Cullen represent the point of view of second-generation impressionism which stressed the decorative character of the short broken brushstroke and the psychological effects of muted colour. In none of their compositions, however, do they treat their subjects in such an uncompromising, structural manner as Harris.

The 1915-1918 snow scenes continue the almost square format used in such earlier canvases as *Houses, Richmond Street*, 1911, *Houses*, 1913 and *Laurentian Landscape*, 1913-1914. Traditionally, landscape compositions were horizontal, like Harris' *The Drive*, 1912, stressing the continuous nature of the horizon

48. Landscape, Algonquin Park, *1916*
oil on board
10 5/8 × 10 3/4 in.; 27 × 27.3 cm
Private collection

to allow a wide angle of vision for the action and drama of natural light. By the 1890s, however, the square format was popular among such American landscapists as Childe Hassam, John Twachtman, J. Allen Weir and can also be found occasionally in the work of Maurice Prendergast. The conspicuous use of such a shape in the snow scenes indicates Harris' appreciation of the decorative values that it tends to impose on compositions, as well as his recognition of its effective use among contemporary artists in North America.

Other occupants of the Studio Building painted winter subjects in 1914-15. Jackson's *Near Canoe Lake*, 1914 (Art Gallery of Hamilton), made from sketches during his February excursion to Algonquin Park, is a straightforward, naturalistic depiction of brilliant sunlight on snow. But MacDonald's *Snowbound*, 1915 (National Gallery of Canada) comes closer to Harris' decorative compositions, though his own pine branches are not highly patterned shapes like Harris' spruce trees. Tom Thomson created an effective tapestry-like area on the upper half of his canvas *Snow in October*, *c.* 1915-16 (National Gallery of Canada), but allowed a spatial recession in the lower section to conflict with the flattened surface forms. Thomson, with Harris' help, would increasingly work toward a more consistent level of decorative pattern in his large scale canvases of 1915-17.

In April 1916, Lawren Harris, Dr. MacCallum and Harris' cousin Chester accompanied Tom Thomson to the Cauchon Lakes area in the northeastern district of Algonquin Park.[98] This is the first trip to that region that is conclusively documented. It was on this tour that Thomson painted the small studies for his late masterpieces *The West Wind*, 1916-17 (Art Gallery of Ontario) and *The Jack Pine*, 1916-17 (National Gallery of Canada). Harris later reported an incident that related to the execution of the sketch for the former:

> I remember one afternoon in the early spring [1916] on the shore of one of the Cauchon lakes in Algonquin Park when a dramatic thunderstorm came up. There was a wild rush of wind across the lake and all nature was tossed into a turmoil. Tom and I were in an abandoned lumber shack. When the storm broke, Tom looked out, grabbed his sketch box, ran out into the gale, squatted behind a big stump and commenced to paint in a fury.[99]

Dr. MacCallum also remembered the particular event and added a new detail to the story. "It

47. Laurie Lake, Algonquin Park, *1916*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 14 in.; 26.7 × 35.6 cm
Private collection

49. Log Shack, Algonquin Park, *1916*
oil on board
14 × 10 11/16 in.; 35.3 × 27.1 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario

may interest you to know," he wrote, "that the 'West Wind' was done at Lake Cauchon. Thomson, myself, Lorne [sic] Harris . . . were up there. It was blowing very hard and Lorne Harris was painting further up the shore. The wind blew down the tree of the picture and Harris at first thought Thomson was killed but he soon sprang up, waved his hand to him and went on painting."[100]

Laurie Lake, Algonquin Park (cat. no. 47) is contemporary with Thomson's study for *The Jack Pine*. The presence of snow patches on the distant hills in the latter and on the foreground rocks of the former place the creation of both at the same moment. Harris' sketch is boldly designed and a significant advance over his earlier landscape sketches such as the rather impressionistic *Red Sumachs, Haliburton, c.* 1915 (cat. no. 37). It is vertical in format and the trees that rise from the foreground to the top of the composition stress this shape. Yet the emphatic horizontal line of the water's edge balances the upward thurst. The colours are particularly decorative and harmonious. The work is based on rose, mauve, pale blue and dull orange hues that strike most effective tonal chords. The fluid handling may be the result of working with Thomson whose sketches of the same period are equally rich with texture. The other works, *Landscape, Algonquin Park* (cat. no. 48) and *Log Shack, Algonquin Park* (cat. no. 49) also indicate a similar reliance on decorative values. The former is square and like *Laurie Lake, Algonquin Park* composed of layered, compositional planes from the foreground rocks to the distant light-filled band of sky. Two of Thomson's sketches made at this time share similar qualities of design and colour with Harris' Algonquin studies: *Little Cauchon Lake* (National Gallery of Canada) and *Deep Water* (McMichael Canadian Collection). The weft and warp of their collective pictorial concerns cannot easily be separated to indicate what strands each artist contributed to the substance of the other's aesthetic vision.

There was an obvious reciprocal relationship between the painters who occupied the Studio Building during the winter seasons preparing large scale compositions for the spring O.S.A. exhibitions. They watched each other's pictures progress and often provided criticism and help if specific problems arose in their works in progress. Thomson must have been intrigued by Harris' decorative snow scenes as they took

shape. The stylized shapes and the patterned brushwork influenced his own paintings of the 1915-17 period. *The Pool*, *c.* 1915 (National Gallery of Canada) incorporates the network of open brick-like strokes that Harris employed in the areas of the sky in his *Winter Woodland* and *Morning Sunrise*. Later works such as *The Pointers*, *c.* 1916 and *The Jack Pine* owe a strong debt to Harris' decorative facture if not to his delicate colours. As Dennis Reid has noted, Harris was "of the few artists close to Thomson, the strongest proponent of an art that would move forward on the strength of its decorative qualities; striking beauty of form and harmonious structure of colour. . . ."[101] Dr. MacCallum described Thomson's art as the combination of a "sense of design, of pattern, of rhythm and decoration with the sense of character and feeling."[102] These qualities could equally well describe Harris' series of snow scenes produced between 1915-1918.

One location that Harris often explored during 1912-1916 was Kempenfelt Bay on Lake Simcoe, 60 miles north of Toronto. The artist and his mother owned vacation property there and Harris and his family spent part of the summer at their summer home "Woodend." The majority of his Lake Simcoe sketches are studies of trees set against an expansive sky and indicate pictorial interests differing from those of his decorative studio snow scenes. The earliest, *Two Trees* (cat. no. 53), represents two large deciduous trees on a lawn seen from a low vantage point that emphasizes their height. *Birches* (cat. no. 26), dated 1912, takes an opposing view, examining a boulder-strewn foreground with birch trunks dramatically cut off by the upper framing edge of the vertical composition. The vertical character of this sketch was expanded in a large 50 ½" × 20" decorative canvas mistitled *Algonquin Park* (private collection).[103] The subject is a stand of tall gracefully curving

53. Two Trees, *n.d.*
oil on board
14 × 9 1/2 in.; 35.6 × 24.1 cm
Collection of the Art Gallery of Hamilton
Gift of Mr. M. F. Feheley, 1971

autumn birches in a rocky foreground with a wall of yellow-foliaged trees immediately beyond. The birches are silhouetted against a large cloudy sky. The heavy texture relates it to the period of experimentation that was initiated in *Laurentian Landscape*, 1913-14.

Harris' sketch *Red Sumachs, Haliburton* (cat. no. 37) has traditionally been dated *c.* 1912, but comparison with his sketch *Outskirts of Haliburton*, 1912 (cat. no. 25) indicates that the

26. Birches, *1912*
oil on board
13 1/2 × 10 5/8 in.; 34.3 × 27 cm
Private collection

work must be located well within his decorative landscape period, 1914-18. The short, active and directional strokes give *Red Sumachs, Haliburton* a lively painterly quality and capture the transient effects of autumn sunlight playing over the sumach bushes. It reveals virtually no technical resemblance to Harris' October 1913 Laurentian sketches. The only other picture by a fellow Studio Building artist that employs the subject of autumn sumachs is Arthur Lismer's *Sumach and Maple*, 1915 (private collection).[104] The shared interest in a jungle of crimson and yellow underbrush brought forward to the picture plane indicates that the two works — both subjects titled from the Haliburton region — were probably painted at the same time. Until a closer examination of Harris' sketches of the 1914-16 period proves otherwise, *Red Sumachs, Haliburton* should be dated 1915.

Another fall sketch, here titled *Northern Landscape* (cat. no. 36), raises once again the possibility of an undocumented northern trip before March 1916. The light colours and the summary handling of details relate this work stylistically to the early autumn of 1913, therefore contemporary with the Laurentian excursion of October. The subject is taken from the geographical area of the Canadian Shield; the rocky shoreline is covered with scrub and small dead pines. A comparison with the treatment of *Red Sumachs, Haliburton* proves that *Northern Landscape* was painted at an earlier stage and must therefore predate *c.* 1915. On the evidence of colour and relatively aggressive brushwork this sketch likely dates from the fall of 1914 when Lismer, Varley, Jackson and Thomson were in Algonquin Park.[105] In both motif and handling, *Northern Landscape* is similar to Jackson's and Thomson's studies of October, 1914. Harris, however, did not accompany them to the Park on that trip and if he did go north that season he must have travelled alone.

36. Northern Landscape, c. *1914*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 12 in.;
26.7 × 30.5 cm
Private collection

37. Red Sumachs, Haliburton, c. *1915*
oil on board
10 5/8 × 12 in.;
27 × 30.5 cm
Private collection

43. Building the Ice House, Hamilton, c. *1916*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 12 3/4 in.; 26.7 × 32.4 cm
Private collection

Landscapes and Urban Scenes, 1916-18

From 1914 to 1918 Harris exhibited large decorative snow scenes almost exclusively at the annual O.S.A. and C.N.E. art exhibitions.[106] Though several small urban house sketches were painted during this time, Harris put almost all of his creative energies into decorative landscapes.

In April 1916, Harris enlisted in the army. According to military records, he received his Canadian Officers Training Corps Certificate on May 5, 1916 and on June 12 was commissioned a lieutenant in the 10th Royal Grenadiers.[107] A month later he was assigned as a musketry officer to Camp Borden, not far from Kempenfelt Bay. During his twenty-three months in the army, Harris devised targets for marksmanship training. A. Y. Jackson later recorded that while at Camp Borden "his creative mind devised means of speeding up training with more realistic targets, Fritzies that popped up and disappeared and other innovations."[108] At some point in 1916, Harris was sent to military headquarters in Toronto and was attached to the musketry training section then at Hart House.[109] The men's union of the University of Toronto was not yet completed, but was put at the service of the army authorities for use as a training centre. The building was a gift to the University from the Massey Foundation, and Harris' friend Vincent Massey was its enthusiastic sponsor. The Hart House theatre was used as a rifle range, and it was here that Harris continued his military instruction. It is difficult to determine exactly how much time he spent there, but Harris later noted that the Toronto posting allowed him to paint in the evenings and more extensively while on leave.[110]

In the Ward of 1916 (private collection)[111] is one of four known urban sketches which were painted during the artist's war-time service.

Lieut. L. S. Harris.
Photo, National Gallery of Canada

The foreground chestnut tree, the figure of a man wheeling a barrow and the row houses are highly simplified shapes which relate this study to the decorative snow canvases of 1915-16. The colours are especially bright and by placing complementaries side by side the artist achieved a chromatic brilliance not found in his earlier work. *Building the Ice House, Hamilton* (cat. no. 43) has been traditionally dated 1912,[112] but shares with *In the Ward* a

44. Houses Under Construction, c. *1916*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 3/4 in.;
26.7 × 35 cm
Mr. Austin Seton Thompson, Toronto

number of features that place it within the artist's decorative period. The large wooden building is composed of verticals and horizontals and Harris stresses the architectonic character of the form: brushwork in sky and foreground areas, arbitrarily arranged in corresponding vertical or horizontal patterns, complements the actual construction of the ice house itself. The contrast of blue and orange relates the sketch to *In the Ward* and a more appropriate date for this small study is *c.* 1916.

In another war-time urban scene, *Houses Under Construction, c.* 1916 (cat. no. 44), Harris again focuses on the interrelationships of architectural forms, though, with a greater number of diagonals introduced into the composition, the design is less rigid than that of *Building the Ice House, Hamilton*. The colours are especially lively and are linked to the chromatic interests of both the 1916 Ward sketch and the Hamilton scene. In *Building the Ice House, Hamilton* and *Houses Under Construction*, Harris employs actively posed figures of workmen. The simplified shapes with their legs apart and arms raised are seen from the rear. They differ strongly from the figures normally found in his urban pictures, in which people walking along the sidewalks or riding in sleighs are placed in profile and have far less active roles.

An undated snow scene, *Winter Landscape* (cat. no. 50) appears to have been painted after *Snow II, c.* 1916 and therefore during Harris' period of military service. The composition is less structured and more spacious; relaxed movement pervades the canvas. The snow-covered spruce trees located in the middle distance are set against a large, distant hillside and the planar character of the earlier picture has been eliminated.

During the winter of 1916-17, Harris was

50. Winter Landscape, c. *1916-17*
oil on canvas
47 1/2 × 50 in.; 120.7 × 127 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

under an emotional strain that would in the following spring lead to a nervous breakdown. The precise reasons for this are difficult to determine, but the crisis was probably precipitated by his army duty. The disruption caused by the war was heart-breaking for Harris and his companions. The new landscape movement had been on the verge of blossoming into full maturity when hostilities broke out. Patronage of art dropped off dramatically after the winter of 1914. F. B. Housser in *A Canadian Art Movement* wrote that "the national spirit of the day provoked a desire to express what he felt about the country in a more creative and magnificent communion than the communion of war."[113] The forced inactivity and the break-up of the group caused by Jackson's enlistment in mid-1915 and by Thomson's death in July 1917 took its toll on all of them, but on Harris most of all. His emotional distress may also have been partly the result of an increasing attraction to the occult and a profound questioning of his religious and spiritual beliefs.

Thomson's death was an especially severe shock. He and Harris had spent considerable time together during the winters of 1915-16 and 1916-17, the latter's military duties notwithstanding, working on exhibition canvases in the Studio Building, and Harris was convinced that Thomson's death was the result of foul play.[114] Jackson summed up the group's feelings in a letter to MacDonald written from France in August 1917:

> . . . without Tom the north country seems a desolation of bush and rock. He was the guide, the interpreter, and we the guests partaking of his hospitality so generously given. . . . my debt to him is almost that of a new world. . .and a truer artist's vision.[115]

On February 22, 1918, Harris' brother Howard, a captain in the army, was killed in France inspecting a German trench. This blow added significantly to his psychological trauma and on May 1, 1918, Harris was discharged from the forces on medical grounds.[116]

One event during the winter of 1917-18 whose significance has yet to be fully examined was a trip to New York that the artist arranged for himself and several of his fellow officers. On leave for the week of December 30 — 3 — January 7[117] Harris had an opportunity to visit two important exhibitions. The first was a selection of European and American works from the collection of A. E. Gallatin at the Bourgeois Gallery on Fifth Avenue for the benefit of the American War Relief.[118] Paintings by Renoir, Manet, Puvis de Chavannes, Toulouse-Lautrec and Daumier were placed alongside works by Ernest Lawson, Childe Hassam and J. Alden Weir. At the same time, the winter exhibition of the National Academy of Design had opened. A reviewer noted that it was "one of the finest exhibitions of contemporary American painting held . . . for several seasons."[119]

During 1917-18 Harris painted several landscapes that reveal his continued reliance on principles of decorative design: *Kempenfelt Bay, c.* 1917 (cat. no. 52), *Winter in the Northern Woods, c.* 1918 (cat. no. 54) and *Winter Landscape with Pink House* of 1918 (cat. no. 56). The first two are among the artist's largest and they suffer somewhat from an inflation in scale. Their compositions are less emphatically structured in relation to such earlier works as *Snow II*, but with *Winter Landscape with Pink House*, Harris regains the confidence of his 1915-16 period. The foreground configuration of tree shapes and shadows is based on *art nouveau* decorative linear design. One of the finest examples of his dramatic snow scenes, it is the last of the 1914-1918 series of winter landscapes.

52. Kempenfelt Bay, c. *1917*
oil on canvas
46 1/2 × 53 in.; 118.1 × 134.6 cm
Private collection

46. Birch Tree
oil on board
10 1/2 × 14 in.; 26.7 × 35.6 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from Friends of Canadian Art Fund, 1938

Almost immediately after his discharge from the army on May 1, 1918, Harris accompanied Dr. MacCallum on a leisurely trip to the north. They travelled to Manitoulin Island and crossed to the mainland where they caught a westbound train to Sault Ste Marie. There they transferred to the Algoma Central Railway and, after spending some time at a northern lumber camp, pushed on to Michipicoten Harbour on the eastern end of Lake Superior. Undoubtedly the trip was conceived as a therapeutic exercise for Harris and the change of scene partly restored his spirits. He was excited by the large scale of the Algoma wilderness and decided, on his return, to arrange another excursion that fall — this time in the company of several of the other artists who had remained in Toronto.

Several large canvases done *c.* 1917-18 deserve an examination before the Algoma sketches and paintings are considered. *Kempenfelt Bay, c.* 1917 (cat. no. 52) is a large decorative landscape of autumn birches and spruce, taken from the Lake Simcoe area, that is related in subject and somewhat in treatment to his earlier stylized pictures of birch trees, *Birches* (cat. no. 26) and the so-called *Algonquin Park* discussed earlier. The handling of the sky and the middle-ground screen of spruce relate the work to Harris' *Winter Morning*, 1914 and to the later stylization of the snow pictures of 1915-16. The colours, however, are pale and somewhat pallid in relation to these earlier decorative landscapes and indicate, with several other large canvases of this period, a decrease in the artist's creative power during this time. Another birch subject, the sketch *Birch Tree* (cat. no. 46) may also date between 1916-18 and certainly relates to Thomson's use of the flat-patterned, foreground tree set against an expansive sky in *The Jack Pine*. The vivid blues of the lake and distant shore are, however, a significant chromatic advance over *Kempenfelt Bay* and may indicate an even later date of execution.

Winter in the Northern Woods (cat. no. 54) is Harris' largest known canvas and appears to be contemporary with *Kempenfelt Bay*. Traditionally dated 1918, it may well have been painted during the winter of 1917-18 while the artist was beginning to suffer from the emotional or nervous problems that would result in his medical discharge. The inflated scale of the composition and the overall lack of disciplined control results in a disappointing and weak picture. The screen of spruce trees in the middle distance is morphologically related to that in *Kempenfelt Bay* and there is a similar pallid quality to the general colouration. In comparison with the earlier snow pictures the formal organization is loose and relatively limp, and it contains none of the strength of character or taut discipline of *Snow II* or even *Winter Landscape*. With a more controlled and

54. Winter in the Northern Woods, c. *1918*
oil on canvas
55 × 72 in.; 139.7 × 182.9 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

decorative work signed and dated 1918, the richly coloured *Winter Landscape with Pink House* (cat. no. 56), Harris appears to have completed his cycle of snow scenes that began with *Morning Sun, Winter*, 1914. Almost square in format, the stylized foreground shapes and tree branches reveal a reliance on the sweeping arabesques of *art nouveau* linear design — one of the few known instances in which he turned to such decorative sources.

During his military service, 1916-18, Harris exhibited relatively few pictures. In 1916 he showed three snow subjects and in 1917 only one picture, entitled *Decorative Landscape* (unidentified) that Hector Charlesworth, the art critic for *Saturday Night*, had derisively called "a garish poster."[120] In November 1918, he submitted eight small sketches to the O.S.A. *Little Pictures* exhibition — presumably Algoma sketches done during his May 1918 trip to the north with Dr. MacCallum, but in 1919, with his general health and strength of purpose more completely regained, Harris made a particularly strong showing in the spring O.S.A. exhibition with eight canvases: six Toronto urban scenes and two decorative winter subjects, *Snow V* and *Snow VI*. In the summer art exhibition at the C.N.E., he included a third, entitled *Snow VII*. Of these three, *Snow VI* can be identified as *Winter Landscape with Pink House* (cat. no. 56)[121] by examining contemporary reviews of the O.S.A. exhibition.

The reviewer for *The Weekly Sun* was particularly taken with the vivid colours of the works on view: "When I stepped through the arch of entrance into the full view of the blaze of colour, involuntarily I took a deep

breath . . ." but more specifically the reviewer made the following comments about the heightened colour of *Snow VI*:

> (85) Peculiar picture — entitled "Snow," I do not know why. The parts of the picture in which the snow could reasonably be expected to lie is strong yellow. The trees are mauve with patches of yellow — road mauve — houses orange with yellow [snow?] on roofs. Sky green. Now I know that snow under strong sunlight is yellow, and that the shadows are mauve, and so are tree trunks. . . But certainly the colours are exaggerated. As to the sky, I have seen it in delicate tints of apple green, but never have I seen it entirely and uniformly green. However, I do not rashly declare that there never was a green sky.[122]

Lewis W. Clemens, reviewing the exhibition for the *Toronto Sunday World*, reported:

> The most important leader of this [modern] movement is Mr. Lawren Harris, whose work possesses strength in colour composition and tone. Anyone who is at all interested in the art of Canada, should not under any circumstances miss seeing this exhibition for, while we have had other opportunities to see the clever work of Mr. Harris and the other artists represented, still there has never been before offered in Canada a consistent show of this new work. The light on the snow of a pine tree in shadow, as contrasted against snow in sunlight, [*Snow VI*] is an example of the fidelity to nature in which Mr. Harris is working.[123]

It is interesting, in the light of the recent trip into Algoma in 1918, when the Studio Building artists stood on the edge of a new and brilliantly productive period, that Harris should exhibit three decorative snow pictures and six urban scenes during 1919. Unlike J. E. H. MacDonald and Frank Johnston he did not devote the winter of 1918-19 to new Algoma subjects, but in a spurt of renewed energy recapitulated his earlier decorative aesthetic and concentrated his efforts on urban scenes.

56. Winter Landscape with Pink House, *1918*
oil on canvas
47 1/2 × 49 1/2 in.; 120.7 × 125.7 cm
From the Toronto Dominion Bank's
Collection of Canadian Art

72. Algoma Country, c. *1920-21*
oil on canvas
40 1/2 × 50 3/16 in.; 108 × 127.4 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from the Fund of the T. Eaton Co. Ltd.
for Canadian Works of Art, 1948

Algoma Landscapes, 1918-22

During the summer of 1918 Harris set about organizing a fall excursion to Algoma, once again assuming his characteristic role of patron and participant. In a letter to MacDonald, he asked whether the latter could join him on "a sketching trip for two weeks — from about September 20 to October 4? This is an invitation — meaning that it would be a privilege for me to take care of the material end."[124] Impressed during his spring trip with Dr. MacCallum by the value of the Algoma Central Railroad line as a point of departure into the surrounding landscape, Harris enquired if the railway authorities could facilitate the fall tour. Not long after his first letter, he followed up to MacDonald: "Well James, Me boy, down on your knees and give great gobs of thanks to Allah! . . . we have a car awaiting us on the Algoma Central!!!"[125] The "car" was a refitted railroad boxcar that was to be their travelling campsite and studio on wheels. Harris had approached Frank Johnston to accompany them and on September 10 or 11, 1918[126] he, MacDonald, Johnston and MacCallum left Toronto for Sault Ste Marie where they took possession of the boxcar, arranging to have it attached to the end of a freight train and dropped off at the railway siding at Canyon, Ontario, one hundred and thirteen miles north.

This was the most northerly point they reached on that trip and after several days sketching in the vicinity of the Agawa River, they caught a southbound train and were dropped at the Hubert siding.[127] Near this spot are the scenic Montreal River and Lake. Looking at the majestic site from the rail line, MacDonald wrote that "we felt we could understand something of the feeling of the early Canadian explorers. The whole scene seemed so primeval and unspoiled."[128] With

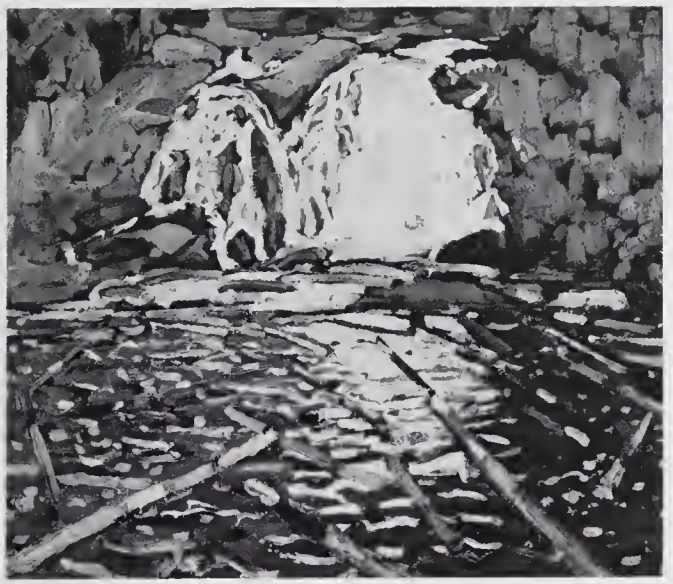


Fig. 4 Falls, Agawa River, *1918*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 12 5/8", 26.7 × 31.7 cm
Private collection

the fast changing autumn colours, each day afforded a whole new range of tints. MacDonald was most attracted to the colourful panorama; Harris responded to the brilliant fall leaves with a series of dramatic sketches introducing the motif of a dense wall of woods over whose dark surface he scattered touches of crimson, pink and pale yellow. The emphatic structural character seen in such small studies as *Building the Ice House, Hamilton, c.* 1916, is considerably relaxed in these relatively spontaneous works. There is a new sense of action to such sketches as *Algoma Woods I* (cat. no. 58) and he imparts a similar quality to his study *Falls, Agawa River,* (fig. no. 4) which captures the fugitive effects of shimmering light glancing off the water at the foot of the falls. The work is close to MacDonald's oil study entitled *The Little Falls,* 1918 (Art Gallery of Ontario).

58. Algoma Woods I, *1918*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 5/8 in.;
27 × 35 cm
Private collection

From Hubert, the party moved south to Batchewana, their last stop. The weather turned cold; with the leaves gone from the trees they dropped the boxcar off at Sault Ste Marie and were back in Toronto by the end of the first week in October. The trip was a great success and partly rekindled the collective enthusiasm of the pre-war period. During the winter of 1918-19, the artists worked up several large canvases from their Algoma sketches and Johnston and MacDonald showed some of them at the March 1919 O.S.A. exhibition. Harris, however, directed most of his energies to painting Toronto house subjects, entering six of them along with two decorative snow scenes in the same show. For some reason, he alone did not feel prepared to concentrate on wilderness themes.

Harris and Johnston, along with the academic portrait painter Wyly Grier, were members of the three-man picture selection committee for the 1919 O.S.A. exhibition and became embroiled in a minor controversy which was reported in the local press. Among the works they rejected were two paintings by Elizabeth A. McGillivray Knowles — scenes of roosters and hens entitled *Interned* and *Judgement of Paris*. The works were precisely the sort the artists regarded as anathema. The painter's husband, artist F. McGillivray Knowles, was outraged and protested, calling attention to the fact that the pictures had already been accepted by exhibition committees in New York and therefore there could be no justification for their refusal in Toronto. A reporter vistited Harris to discover the jury's reasons for rejecting the works, and his response indicated the conflict between the

younger artists and those working in more traditional styles:

> . . . artistic tastes have changed more in the last ten years than in the four hundred years previously. The only possible way for artists in Toronto to avoid squabbles is to hold two exhibitions, one for the work the older men consider meritorious and another for what pleases the younger men, which latter may neither be so safe or so sane but is much more likely to produce something really significant.[129]

Both Harris and Johnston were more concerned with the harmony of the exhibition as a whole and felt it necessary to reject the barnyard scenes.

The artists' Algoma sketches and larger paintings caught the attention of Sir Edmund Walker, financier and art patron who was then president of the Art Gallery of Toronto, and he arranged for some of their works to be shown in the Art Gallery from April 26 to May 19, 1919. This three-man exhibition permitted Harris and the others to recognize more fully the value of a separate exhibition outside the context of the annual O.S.A. shows and must have quickened their interest in a larger display that would include paintings by Jackson, Lismer, Varley and others committed to their ideals. The foreword to the catalogue explained that all the works were arranged "approximately in the order of their production, and the advance of the Fall may be noted by comparing [those] made at different points."[130] Furthermore, it stated that

> the larger pictures shown were painted at home after the trip, some of them as efforts to reproduce, with a deeper truth of feeling or character, a representative scene sketched and studied on the spot. . . . The whole collection may be taken as evidence that Canadian artists generally are interested in the discovery of their own country.[131]

Harris entered two canvases, one entitled *Near Mitchell Lake* (unidentified) and the other *Northern Evening*. The latter is probably *Evening Solitude*, 1919 (cat. no. 63). The picture is an expressive recreation of the mood of twilight in the wilderness, and though the mauve-tinted clouds are reminiscent of the colour harmonies of his earlier snow scenes, this singular painting is notable for its greater naturalism. The mood imparted to the composition by natural light effects is a feature that Harris occasionally introduced into his Algoma pictures after this date. Aside from these two canvases, Harris had forty-five oil sketches on display. MacDonald included two large paintings and thirty-six Algoma studies. Johnston's contribution totalled fifty-six works. While most were small in scale, the one hundred and forty-one wilderness scenes must have had a strong impact on all who saw them. No previous Canadian exhibition had been so predominantly devoted to the theme of the northern landscape.

A. Y. Jackson returned in late April 1919 from Europe, where he had been painting for the Canadian War Records, and soon after was demobilized from the armed forces in Montreal. He arrived in Toronto in time to see the Algoma show, and moved back into the Studio Building. That summer he went to Georgian Bay to recuperate after nearly four years as a combatant and war artist. In the fall, Harris once again arranged with the Algoma Central Railroad to have a boxcar made available for a month and with MacDonald, Jackson and Johnston left Toronto on

63. Evening Solitude, *1919*
oil on canvas
32 × 38 in.; 81.3 × 96.5 cm
Private collection

September 15 for Sault Ste Marie. They repeated the pattern begun the previous year and worked their way south from Canyon to Hubert and finally Batchewana.

The accommodations were spartan: built-in bunks, a table and four chairs, an iron stove for cooking, a sink, water tank and storage shelves for books and materials. The artists decorated the car with a small fir tree and a moose skull under which they inscribed the motto *Ars Longa Vita Brevis* along with a monogram of their initials. They were supplied with a three-wheel hand car that could hold two of them on short trips up and down the tracks from their stationary campsite, and they had brought a red canoe to launch in the nearby lakes and rivers. It was on the second Algoma trip that the artists affectionately dubbed this boxcar "A.C.R. 10557" after its railway designation. The car and the 1919 excursion were the basis for an article written by MacDonald and published in the December edition of *The Lamps*.[132] The excitement that had characterized their pre-war days in the Studio Building and Algonquin Park was fully revived and they recommitted themselves to painting the northern scenery in bright colours and bold designs.

At Canyon, they explored the dark waters of the Agawa River, gliding in the canoe "through the yellow floating leaves, and breaking the still reflections of crimson and gold and green with waving streamers of sky colour."[133] Usually they split into pairs, one group taking the hand car and "ringing down the track until some attractive composition of spruce tops or rock and maple [called] for sketching,"[134] while the others launched the

canoe in search of river or lakeside motifs. During the evenings they examined each other's sketches and read. "Two Henry's [were] in favour for reading — Henry Thoreau and O. Henry, and some other scriptures of east and west [which were] apt to lead on the talk until art [seemed] the mere A.B.C. of existence."[135] Jackson remembered the nights were frosty "but in the boxcar, with the fire in the stove, we were snug and warm. Discussions and arguments would last until late in the night, ranging from Plato to Picasso, to Madame Blavatsky and Mary Baker Eddy . . . [while] outside, the aurora played antics in the sky, and murmur of the rapids or a distant water-fall blended with the silence of the night."[136] Harris, apparently, instigated many of the philosophic discussions and metaphysical arguments.[137] He was then exploring the writings of a number of mystics, seeking a higher spiritual truth and a deeper meaning to the question of existence.

The fall colours once more astonished them. The variety of tints and the changes wrought each night by the falling temperatures were remarkable. "Birch woods, that were dense yellow in the morning, were open grey by night. But the wild cherry trees still hung as though the high fifes and violins were to finish the great concert of colour. . . . Each day advanced the passing of the leaf. . . . The hills that had been crimson and scarlet with maple were changed to purplish grey."[138] The Montreal River, near the Hubert siding, attracted MacDonald and he made sketches in the neighbourhood of the falls that resulted in his large canvas *Falls, Montreal River*, 1920 (Art Gallery of Ontario). Among all the painters, he responded most deeply to Algoma, creating a magnificent series of large scale compositions from the sketches done during this fall excursion. Harris, while he did a large number of sketches on this trip and worked up several full size paintings, was not as strongly inspired by the landscape. In Jackson's later estimation, it was "too opulent for him."[139] The superabundance of colour, the infinity of detail and the continuous change in the appearance of the countryside as winter approached did not suit his artistic temperament. In his Algoma works, he sought to reduce landscape features to essential shapes which were usually locked into carefully composed structural arrangements. Jackson also realized the necessity of simplifying: "Seldom was there found a subject all composed and waiting to be painted; out of the confusion of motives the vital one had to be determined upon. Sketching there demanded a quick decision in composition, an ignoring or summarizing of much of the detail, [and] a searching-out of significant form."[140] The party stopped at Batchewana, the last point on the trip, and remained there for about a week.[141] Near Mitchell Lake they discovered a castle-like hill of rock that caught their attention; from this high vantage point "the hills lifted endlessly in the purple grey of bare trees, broken only with the dark spruce."[142] With winter fast approaching, the artists packed up their materials and were back in Toronto by the middle of October, 1919.

The following year, about May 15, 1920, while the first Group of Seven exhibition was still at the Art Gallery of Toronto, Harris, Jackson, Dr. MacCallum and Arthur Lismer went to Algoma for a period of ten days.[143] There they stayed in a rented cabin at Mongoose Lake.[144] It was Lismer's first trip to the area, as he had been in Halifax painting for the War Records in the fall of 1918 and was unable to join the artists for their second boxcar trip because he had been appointed vice-principal of the Ontario College of Art. Later, in September 1920, Harris, Jackson and Johnston returned to the region to sketch once

Fig. 5 Algoma Interior II, *1918*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 9/8 in.; 27 × 35 cm
Private collection

again in the vicinity of Mongoose Lake.[145]

In the spring of 1921, Harris was accompanied by Lismer and Jackson to Algoma, shortly after the opening of the second Group of Seven exhibition on May 7. They planned to divide their time equally between the Agawa River area and Montreal Lake before returning to Toronto. Later that year, in September-October, Harris once more travelled north with Lismer and Jackson, finally arriving at Sand Lake. At the conclusion of the trip, when Lismer had to return to his teaching duties in Toronto, Harris and Jackson decided to push further north and west, along the shore of Lake Superior. There, in a stark burnt-over landscape with only a minimum of new growth to ameliorate the bleak, rocky countryside, they found "new and inspiring subjects, both in the hills along the shores of the great lake and inland in the high country with its rugged scenery, rocky streams, and innumerable lakes."[146] It was Harris' first experience of that majestic geographical area and it would stimulate him to reach new heights of pictorial power. If Algoma was "MacDonald's country,"[147] the barren beauty of the north shore of Lake Superior was to be Harris' greatest inspiration.

In a variety of ways, the Algoma experience prepared Harris for the Lake Superior landscape and his new epic vision of nature. Here, he learned to seize upon and isolate the significant motif from among the multitude of subjects that was spread before him; he learned lessons of campcraft that would help him during his later wilderness treks; and he came to a deeper understanding of the infinite range of spiritual states that lay behind the outward appearance of nature. He later noted that:

> This was a time for criticism, encouragement, and discussion, for accounts of our discoveries about painting, for our thoughts about the character of the country, and our descriptions of effects in nature which differed in each section of the country. We found, for instance that there was a wild richness and clarity of colour in the Algoma woods which made the colour in southern Ontario seem grey and subdued. We found there were cloud formations and rhythms peculiar to different parts of the country and to different seasons of the year. We found that, at times, there were skies over the great Lake Superior which, in their singing expansiveness and sublimity, existed nowhere else in Canada. We found that one lake would be friendly, another charming and fairy-like, the next one remote in spirit beyond anything we had known, and again the next one harsh and inimical. . . . And we found that all these differences in character, mood, and

spirit were vital to a creative expression in paint which went beyond mere decoration and respectability in art.[148]

While it is difficult to date Harris' Algoma sketches with complete accuracy, it is often possible to determine during which trip they were painted on the basis of fall or spring colours and distinctive landscape subjects. Waterfalls, for example, are likely to come from the Agawa Canyon area which was full of such subjects. The presence of the castle-like rock formation in a small study indicates it is a Batchewana subject and therefore more likely from the second boxcar trip, during which time the artists climbed around and up its walls. Once one can establish a date, then the technical handling and general style provide the basis for determining a chronology for other sketches.

Algoma Woodland (cat. no. 59), painted in the fall of 1919, represents an advance over the 1918 sketch *Algoma Woods I*. Both studies depict a dense wall of forest trees over whose patterned surface bright autumn colours are distributed. In the later work the handling is more relaxed, the colours delicate and the forms more gracefully attenuated. Harris' *Algoma Sketch CIX* (cat. no. 61), also from the second boxcar excursion, silhouettes a large spray of autumn leaves against a dark wilderness backdrop. Another work from that trip is *Mitchell Lake, Batchewana* (cat. no. 62). The distinctive rocky hill blocks out the lake almost entirely, and Harris concentrates his attention on the expressive shape of two dead spruce trees seen against the clouded sky.

Near Canyon, Harris sketched the lower section of the Agawa Falls which fell in long streams down the face of the rock-bound river walls. A low angle of view, frontal placement of the subject and general interest in

59. Algoma Woodland, *1919*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 5/8 in.;
27 × 35 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario

interlocking patterns relate *Waterfall, Algoma Canyon* of 1919 (cat. no. 60) to many of his earlier works done in Toronto. In contrast with the 1918 waterfall sketch, *Falls, Agawa River*, Harris has eliminated the play of reflected light and sense of movement in his 1919 study to create a more static design. From a number of these small sketches he developed several large compositions during the winter of 1919-20. *Autumn, Algoma* (cat. no. 65), dated 1920, is based in part on the study of foliage in *Algoma Sketch CIX*, 1919 (cat. no. 61). Exhibited in the first Group of Seven show in May 1920 as *Decorative Landscape*,[149] the intense contrast between the warm yellow autumn foliage in the foreground and the cool mauves and blues of the wilderness backdrop relate the colour scheme to the chromatic values of the 1915-18 snow scenes. It was to be Harris' last purely decorative landscape, and one of his best. Augustus Bridle, reviewing the exhibition,

65. Autumn, Algoma, *1920*
oil on canvas
40 × 50 in.;
101.6 × 127 cm
Victoria College, University of Toronto

60. Waterfall, Algoma Canyon, *1919*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 14 in.;
27 × 36 cm
Private collection

62. Mitchell Lake, Batchewana, *1919*
oil on board
10 3/4 × 13 3/4 in.;
27.3 × 35 cm
Mr. P. Roth, Toronto

64. Waterfall, Algoma, c. *1920*
oil on canvas
47 1/4 × 55 in.; 120 × 139.7 cm
Collection of the Art Gallery of Hamilton
Gift of the Women's Committee, 1957

68. Algoma Lake, *c.* 1920
oil on panel
10 1/2 × 14 in.; 27 × 36 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from Friends of Canadian Art Fund, 1938

wrote that "*Decorative Landscape* is — no place on earth. The maple leaves in the foreground are a swank of gorgeous colour against a shimmering fog of phantom blue spruces, and an enchanted lake on the 20th plane. . . . When the artist stops experimenting with nature and settles down to fall in love with some simple thing, just as God made it, he will be a great painter."[150] The reference to "the 20th plane" was doubtless an oblique comment on Harris' interest in mystical levels of supersensory reality.

A second Algoma subject was also included in the 1920 Group of Seven exhibition: *Waterfall, Algoma, c.* 1920 (cat. no. 64). The painting is partly based on the Agawa River sketch, *Waterfall, Algoma Canyon*, and the flat stylized tree shapes in the upper right section of the canvas are morphologically related to those silhouetted against the sky in *Autumn, Algoma*. The canyon wall is an emphatic, two-dimensional surface comprised of interlocking, angular shapes which are bound together by the vertical lines of falling water. Bridle commented that the picture "looks at close range like a dirty pond tumbling through a dam made of a totem pole picket fence. But at a certain angle and distance it becomes what it was meant to be, a sullen and powerful epic of the eternal rocks."[151] Harris' waterfall composition appears to have influenced MacDonald's treatment of the same subject in his picture, *Algoma Waterfall*, 1920 (Art Gallery of Hamilton). The structural character of Harris' painting was in large measure adopted by MacDonald, and is an unusual feature among the latter's Algoma paintings.

Beaver Swamp, Algoma, 1920 (cat. no. 79) was created the same year as *Autumn, Algoma* and *Waterfall, Algoma*. It is Harris' most moving

73. Algoma Landscape, *1922*
oil on canvas
46 × 54 in.; 117 × 137.1 cm
Private collection

74. Tamarack Swamp, c. *1922*
oil on canvas
42 1/2 × 50 1/4 in.; 108 × 128 cm
Private collection

75. Rocky Cliffs, Algoma, *1922*
oil on canvas
48 1/4 × 60 1/4 in.; 122.6 × 153 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Bequest of Charles S. Band, 1970

79. Beaver Swamp, Algoma, *1920*
oil on canvas
47 1/2 × 55 1/2 in.; 120 × 140.3 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift of Ruth Massey Tovell in memory of
Harold Murchison Tovell, 1953

66. Beaver Country, c. *1920*
oil on panel
10 5/8 × 13 7/8 in.; 27 × 35.2 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from the Fund of the T. Eaton Co. Ltd. for Canadian Works of Art, 1951

landscape. In this canvas, the artist has considerably heightened the evocative mood he imparted to *Evening Solitude* by means of the portrayal of evening twilight. It appears to have been painted after the other canvases — most likely after Harris' spring and fall trips to Algoma in 1921. In the foreground is a stand of dead spruce drowned in the beaver-made lake. An eerie quality, produced by the looming, dark skeletal shapes of the trees, is intensified by the spectral glow of light that floods the evening sky. The use of a dark red undercoat of pigment, seen on close examination at the edges of the screen of branches, amplifies the sombre mood. This technical feature had earlier been used by Thomson to obtain a similar effect in *The Jack Pine* of 1916-17. This is not the only instance of the latter's reliance on Thomson's art in the Algoma landscapes. Many of Harris' 1918 and 1919 sketches of autumn woods are close to Thomson's Algonquin studies of fall foliage.

Beaver Swamp, Algoma, its foreground plane of spruce notwithstanding, indicates a new interest in deep space. The glow of light from behind a low horizon pulls our eye to the distant shore while the scale of the small, rounded volumes of forest trees is emphasized by the *repoussoir* effect of the screen of dead trees.

Algoma Country (cat. no. 72), however, is Harris' most space-filled picture to date. Seen from atop a high rocky promontory, the rolling wilderness landscape stretches to the far horizon. In comparison to *Beaver Swamp, Algoma* and indeed to most of the artist's canvases before *c.* 1921, the compositional vantage point is radically different. The artist angles his vision downward from a point far above the landscape. In the immediate foreground a stand of four tree trunks reaches the full height of the composition. These simplified tubular forms function in much the same manner as the screen of dead spruce in *Beaver Swamp, Algoma*, as a *repoussoir* to push the landscape elements far into the illusory distance. A 1920 sketch, *Algoma Lake* (cat. no. 68), is close in general design to the studio canvas. The vantage point, the colour scheme and the simplified tree shapes are similar in both the small study and the large canvas. Another sketch comparable to the spacious composition of *Algoma Country* is *Silent Land, c.* 1920 (National Gallery of Canada)[152] in which the view from a mountain top overlooking a vast area provides a very wide angle of vision. Several large Algoma canvases date from 1922: *Algoma Landscape* (cat. no. 73); *Tamarack Swamp* (cat. no. 74); and *Rocky Cliffs, Algoma* (cat. no. 75). The first is a scene near Mitchell Lake, Batchewana and incorporates the prominent castle-like hill of rock. The leafless trees and patches of snow in the foreground indicate that

the composition was likely based on studies made during the latter part of the 1919 boxcar trip. MacDonald recorded that it was here the first snowfall of the season caught up with the party and the leaves had almost all disappeared from the trees.[153] Harris painted a similar Batchewana composition entitled *Rocky Cliffs, Algoma* (cat. no. 75) based on the fall 1919 sketch, *Mitchell Lake, Batchewana* (cat. no. 62). In the later canvas, Harris eliminated the detail of the small study by boldly massing the foreground rocks and simplifying the tree shapes that appear far in the distance to the lower left. Their stylized patterns are similar to those in *Beaver Swamp, Algoma* and *Algoma Country*. The natural elements of *Algoma Landscape* are far less abstracted than those in the other compositions of 1922. The deep blue tones, intensified by the small spray of red maple leaves, reveal that here the artist's intent was to create a sombre emotional effect. *Rocky Cliffs, Algoma* is partially a recapitulation of the artist's earlier canvas *Waterfall, Algoma* (cat. no. 64). Its central motif, the rock formation, is emphatically broken down into interlocking flat patterns whose textured surfaces are richly variegated. Diagonal lines in the foreground rocks lead the eye up to the dramatic shape of the dead spruce whose stiff angular branches are strongly silhouetted against the grey sky. This shape, emphasized by Harris, is emblematic of a mood of anguished isolation and assumes for the artist almost talismanic connotations.

After his first excursion along the north shore of Lake Superior in the late fall of 1921, Harris continued to produce Algoma canvases. *Algoma Country II*, 1923 is based on the small study *Silent Land, c.* 1920, and is a later manifestation of his interest in panoramic space found in *Algoma Country*. This elevated point of view is an uncommon feature of Harris' art, but can be found in a number of other Algoma pictures by his companions, for example, Jackson's *First Snow, Algoma, c.* 1919-20 (McMichael Canadian Collection); MacDonald's *Solemn Land*, 1921 (National Gallery of Canada); and Johnston's *Fireswept Algoma*, 1920 (National Gallery of Canada). As F. B. Housser noted, "the northern Ontario canvases by the Group of Seven were dictated by the country itself. . . ."[154]

Harris' Algoma experiments significantly advanced his landscape vision. To a large extent, the decorative snow scenes were conceived in the studio, not based on studies made out of doors; they reflect his first-hand experience in the north, but lack the more pronounced naturalism of the large scale compositions from 1919-22. During the period when the other members of the Group of Seven were concentrating on large landscapes based on their northern sketches, Harris turned his attention primarily to housing subjects.

There is an unresolved conflict in Harris' artistic vision during the years 1919-22. He vacillates between the pristine beauty of the primeval wilderness and the ugly squalor of the urban slums. He was seized by the contrasts between the man-made and natural environments, often seeking to exorcise his feelings of social guilt by treating the most miserable of human habitations in a direct fashion.

76. Algoma Country II, *1923*
oil on canvas
40 1/2 × 50 in.; 102.9 × 127 cm
The Ontario Heritage Foundation
Firestone Art Collection

78. Algoma Waterfall, c. *1925*
oil on canvas
34 1/2 × 40 1/2 in.; 87.6 × 102.9 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

84. Old Houses, Toronto, Winter, *1919*
oil on canvas
32 1/2 × 38 5/8 in.; 82.5 × 98.1 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift of the Canadian National Exhibition Association, 1965

Urban Scenes, 1919-1922

A breakdown of the entries in the O.S.A., C.N.E. and Group of Seven exhibitions between March of 1919 and August of 1921 reveals that Harris considered the urban subject his most important theme. He placed thirty-seven house pictures in thirteen exhibitions, supplementing them with twenty northern landscapes, four portraits and a single decorative snow scene. No other Canadian artist and certainly none of Harris' close associates was as strongly attracted to such subjects. These paintings are among his finest works.

Between mid-1918 and March of the following year, Harris produced at least seven large city scenes, once again demonstrating a singularity of purpose that had earlier characterized the winter canvases of 1914-18. Of the six house pictures exhibited in the 1919 O.S.A. show, five can be identified and located today: *Outskirts of Toronto,* 1918 (cat. no. 81; previously titled *Shacks, Earlscourt*); *Shacks,* 1919 (fig. no. 7; called *Shacks, Lambton*); *In the Ward I* (unlocated); *Houses, Chestnut Street,* 1919 (cat. no. 82; exhibited as *In the Ward II*); and *Return from Church* (cat. no. 83; exhibited as *Sunday Morning*).[155]

Harris also had two decorative snow pictures in the exhibition and the impact of the eight works as a whole was remarkably strong. One reviewer noted that the display was

> . . . dominated by the astonishing canvases from the workshop of Lawren Harris. People who know nothing of Art will remember the charming studies of scenes in the Ward which this artist had produced in the past years — quiet old houses with a charm of colour and a reality that held the unversed, the mere outsider, cub reporters and all the rest spellbound.
>
> This year Mr. Harris has pressed the very brightest tubes upon his palette, and has let his brush, knife, trowel, shovel or whatever tool he has used run away with itself. The pictures shout from the walls, and quite disturb the equanimity of the show.[156]

The exhibition was a personal triumph for the artist and all commentators singled out his outstanding contribution and made favourable remarks. To many, he seemed the leader of the younger group of painters and the spokesman for the new more aggressive art.

To the interested observer, the change in Harris' house pictures was marked. Many considered that the charm of such earlier works as *The Corner Store*, 1912 had been rejected in favour of a new and disturbing stridency in colour and a rich texture that eliminated much of the detail of the 1910-13 city scenes. But the recent paintings were found to be both exhilarating and challenging — signs of a new direction in Canadian art. The first of the 1918-19 series was *Outskirts of Toronto*. The same size as *Houses*, 1913, in many respects it marks a reassessment of the urban theme. A spring scene, it was based on studies made in the Earlscourt area around the time of his discharge from the army. Harris described Earlscourt as "a picturesque semi-slum district west of Bathurst and south of Eglington,"[157] and the open, rolling countryside with its detached homes inspired a new compositional arrangement. The narrow, tree-lined streets of the Ward had led to flat-patterned designs, but the suburbs demanded a more space-filled composition with a wider angle of vision.

81. Outskirts of Toronto, *1918*
oil on canvas
32 × 37 in.; 81.2 × 94 cm
Rita and Max Merkur

Outskirts of Toronto, a transitional work, is the first of his city scenes to incorporate such new spatial values. Its light greens and mauves are a throwback to the colours of the earlier Laurentian landscape sketches of 1913. The brushwork, loose and patchy, and somewhat disorganized, is distinctly different from the conspicuously regular arrangement of strokes in the decorative snow paintings. The tentative character of *Outskirts of Toronto* can be seen by placing it in relation to the earlier urban study *In the Ward*, 1917 (cat. no. 51) and *City Street, Winter Afternoon, c.* 1918 (private collection),[158] both of which reveal the artist in greater command of pictorial effects and decorative treatment.

Of all the works in the March O.S.A. exhibition, *Houses, Chestnut Street* seemed to several critics closest to the early city pictures. "One of the familiar Ward streets on a wet autumnal day, chestnuts with thinning yellow leaves upon the branches, and a thick mat of yellow leaves upon the drenched sidewalks. . . . It would not be a pleasant scene in reality, but the picture conveys the indefinable autumnal feeling."[159] This "feeling" was a result of the mood created by his representation of the effects of wet weather, and the emotional tone that appears for the first time is one that Harris increasingly imparts to his subsequent urban canvases. *Houses, Chestnut Street* is close to the composition of *Houses, Richmond Street*, 1911, but the detail of the earlier painting has been eliminated by the heavy surface texture that Harris applied with a palette knife. Because the artist has not used it consistently, this technique results in a spatially ambiguous composition. The foreground tree has been left with only a thin undercoat of paint and appears to recede into the textured façades of the houses immediately behind. In *Old Houses, Toronto, Winter*, Harris also used a palette knife

51. In the Ward, *1917*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 1/2 in.; 26.7 × 34.3 cm
Private collection

but all parts of the picture have received an equal treatment which creates a unified visual effect. Differing strongly from the melancholy character of *Houses, Chestnut Street*, the dominant yellows and reds establish a light-hearted mood that is reinforced by the motif of the woman and child bundled in warm winter clothing.

Return from Church presents a more sombre aspect of Harris' mood. No sunlight animates the scene, a solemn procession of church-goers returning home along the snow-covered street. Their dark clothes contrast sharply with the bright garments worn by the figures in *Old Houses, Toronto, Winter. Return from Church* is the artist's most anecdotal subject — no other painting contains as many figures. Yet none are given distinctive personalities or engage in any psychological interaction. Faceless and featureless, they function primarily as compositional accents. Harris used his palette knife extensively to give the picture an almost

82. Houses, Chestnut Street, *1919*
oil on canvas
32 × 36 in.; 81.2 × 91.4 cm
Private collection

all-over material consistency.

Chronologically the last of the series of house pictures exhibited in March 1919 is the winter scene *Shacks*. The surface of the structures and the foreground snow drifts are encrusted with heavy layers of pigment applied with sweeping strokes of the palette knife. The word "shack" had particular connotations in Toronto at this time. The term itself is North American slang for a poorly built outlying house, and shacks were to be found in such suburban areas of Toronto as Earlscourt and Lambton. In an article written in 1909 by Augustus Bridle, the sociological character of such housing was outlined.[160] There was, he noted, "hope" in a shack. The residents had usually constructed their own homes and as a result had created a strong sense of community and self-reliance: ". . . most of us built . . . our own shacks . . . and [because of it] . . . we came to know each other well."[161] By comparison, he wrote, the Ward tenant scarcely knew the name of his upstairs neighbour. Unlike the European-dominated downtown residential areas, the suburban shacktowns were populated by British working class families who had consciously avoided the Ward district that Bridle characterized as a "huge Babel."[162] Harris first painted "shacks" in *Outskirts of Toronto* and continued to do so in a number of house pictures between 1919 and 1922.

Harris painted *A Side Street* (cat. no. 86) in late 1919 and exhibited the work the following summer in the C.N.E. show as *Morning Sun, Winter*. In comparison with the other urban scenes painted the same year, there is a greater plasticity to the composition. Shadows cast by an unseen tree in the left foreground lead the eye across snowdrifts to the façades of the houses, establishing a greater degree of space than is found in the earlier Ward works. At the point where they fall across the plane of the

Fig. 6 Return from Church, *1919*
oil on canvas
40 × 48 in.; 101.6 × 121.9 cm
National Gallery of Canada

Fig. 7 Shacks, *1919*
oil on canvas
41 × 50 1/4 in.; 106.1 × 128.7 cm
National Gallery of Canada

85. Toronto Houses, *1919*
oil on panel
10 5/8 × 12 3/4 in.; 27 × 32.4 cm
The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

buildings a gateway reveals a courtyard beyond. In this fashion, Harris punctures the dominant two-dimensional character of the picture and presages the spaciousness of his later urban paintings. The sculptural nature of the trees and the general configuration of the design can be assessed by comparing *A Side Street* with the study upon which it is based, *Toronto Houses, c.* 1919 (cat. no. 85). The latter is a flat-patterned sketch which is similar to such works as *Houses, Chestnut Street* and contains little of the sense of volume found in the larger painting.

After 1920, a new psychological dimension is imparted to many of Harris' urban pictures. They become expressive "portraits" of slum houses and reveal a darker side to the artist's private vision. Often the emotional intensity of these works is startling as Harris manipulates light, colour, texture and space to produce evocations of a deeper sentiment that is not to be found in any of his previous pictures. In these later city scenes, Harris raises moral questions about the human condition; they document his state of mind and the philosophic values he held at the time.

Harris also wrote poetry, and a volume of his literary works was published in Toronto in 1922. Entitled *Contrasts*, the poems were divided into five sections: Descriptive; Emotional; People; Definitions; and Spiritual.[163] Advertised as "a book of impressionistic word pictures done in free verse,"[164] it was critically reviewed by Barker Fairley in the *Canadian Forum:*

> Mr. Harris has been betrayed by the appalling laxity of the *vers libre* habit, now rife on this continent, into publishing an extremely bad book of verses. . . . It has . . . an extrinsic interest for students of Canadian art if not students of literature.
>
> In his writing, Mr. Harris seems to be preoccupied to an almost monotonous extent with vague, transcendental reflections on life and humanity. He shows no interest in or feeling for Nature and no interest in particularized individual human life. His mind runs to humanity in the abstract and the aggregate. For this shadowy Leviathan he entertains a mixture of affection and irony which seems to be personal to him. . . . It helps to explain the coldness and lack of intimacy in his landscapes and his preference among city subjects for houses and streets with no people in them. The shack brings him closer to humanity in the abstract than the human individual does, and yet holds him in the visual world which he wishes to paint.[165]

86. A Side Street, *1919*
oil on canvas
36 × 44 in.; 91.4 × 111.8 cm
Lent by the Art Gallery of Windsor
Gift of the Detroit Institute of Arts,
November 1956

Fairley astutely reveals the basic ambiguity with which Harris approaches the subject of man in his house pictures of 1920-22: the unresolved conflict between the particular fact and the generalized concept. While he was deeply moved by the material poverty he witnessed in Toronto and several Maritime cities, it was the idea rather than reality that attracted his attention. Harris was not committed to social change or to leftist political ideologies, but nearly all his housing subjects were taken from working-class districts. In his pictures produced after 1920, he obliquely condemns the aesthetic desolation of slum housing without castigating the socio-economic causes of such conditions. As the title of his book suggests, it was the contrast between what he actually saw and what he conceived should be, that attracted him.

Such poems as "The Age" reveal a deep cynicism concerning human values:

> This is the age of the soul's
> degradation,
> Of tossing into the sun's light
> The dross and slime of life,
> And glorying in the miserable
> glitter.[166]

But others sound a more heartening note:

> In people
> There is a sun,
> A centre of light, of hope,
> A rose of bliss.[167]

As Fairley noted in his review, Harris' own character was one of basic conflict: "He has a streak of Heine in him and a streak of Whitman, and the two do not blend. It is for Mr. Harris, whether he writes or paints to master this discrepancy in himself."[168] It is against the background of these poems that the urban scenes of 1920-22 must be seen and

89. White Houses, *1920*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 in.; 27 × 33 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from Friends of Canadian Art Fund, 1938

evaluated in order to more fully appreciate the artist's intentions.

The first picture to embody this new psychological dimension is *A House in the Slums*, 1920 (cat. no. 90). It is based on a small urban sketch, *White House, c.* 1920 (cat. no. 89), but a comparison between the two reveals that an almost complete transformation has taken place in the large painting. The study is a realistic representation of a Ward scene on a rainy day and contains none of the dismal associations of spiritual and material poverty present in *A House in the Slums*. Harris distorts the reality of the original significantly. The clean, white surface of the building in *White Houses* has, in the large painting, become a thick pink and yellow segmented crust. It is Harris' most textured exterior and on a later drawing of the composition (Estate of Howard K. Harris) he wrote the word "mange" to describe the yellow cladding of the house.

90. A House in the Slums, *1920*
oil on canvas
32 × 38 in.; 81.3 × 96.5 cm
Private collection

Fig. 8 Grey Day in Town, *1923*
oil on canvas
32 1/2 × 38 1/2", 82 × 97.7 cm
Private collection

With this graphic metaphor, he reveals a new sense of revulsion toward a feature which earlier would have attracted his aesthetic interest. Such paintings as *Old Houses, Toronto, Winter*, 1919 emphasize the picturesque nature of the rough-cast siding, but in *A House in the Slums*, the outer shell of the structure becomes, metaphorically, a diseased skin. The poem "A Note of Colour" further substantiates this new vision of the Ward house:

> In a part of the city that is ever
> shrouded in sooty smoke, and amid
> huge, hard buildings, hides a gloomy
> house of broken, grey rough-cast,
> like a sickly sin in a callous soul.[169]

Harris' literary image is a far cry from the sun-filled scenes of the 1910-13 and 1919 Ward pictures. Only *Houses, Chestnut Street* seems, in retrospect, to prefigure the change in emotional point of view.

Harris has selectively edited the form of the building in *A House in the Slums*. The relatively clean lines and symmetrical shape of the house in the original sketch have metamorphosed into a more plastic configuration. The roofline sags and the walls tilt inward at the top and bulge outward at the centre to give the structure a distinctly biomorphic character. The light has also been altered to a more generalized and emotive atmosphere that bears little resemblance to reality. In fact all the pictorical elements have been carefully adjusted to create an eerie mood that is completely lacking in *White Houses*.

In *January Thaw, Edge of Town*, 1921 (cat. no. 93), Harris steps back from the symbolic significance he injected into *A House in the Slums*. The suburban shacks, set in wet surroundings over which the grey sky casts a pall of gloom, project a melancholy sentiment that is simply the result of the dismal weather conditions. The dark, relatively colourless composition is similar to a later urban scene *Grey Day in Town* of 1923 (fig. no. 8). Both these scenes are close to the pictures of stark, mid-western frame buildings painted by the American artist Charles Burchfield between 1920-21. The latter's grey, monochromatic water colours *February Thaw*, 1920 (Brooklyn Museum) and *Wires Down*, 1921 (Carnegie Institute) are conspicuous examples.

In *Morning, c.* 1921 (cat. no. 92), Harris smoothes the textured and anguished surfaces found in *A House in the Slums* and introduces a new, oblique angle of vision from which to examine the rear of a row of Ward houses. The frontality of the earlier urban compositions and their implicit decorative character has been firmly rejected. The buildings in the foreground loom menacingly as a result of the strong contrast of light and dark and the low angle of view which stresses their height. An unnatural light streams diagonally across the

92. Morning, c. *1921*
oil on canvas
38 1/4 × 44 1/4 in.; 97.1 × 112.4 cm
Gift of The W. Garfield Weston Foundation
Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, N.B.

93. January Thaw, Edge of Town, *1921*
oil on canvas
42 × 50 in.; 106.7 × 127 cm
The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

street and through the gaps in a broken board fence to create long, dramatic shadows. There is a theatrical quality to this picture that is a novel feature in Harris' urban scenes.

First exhibited in the 1922 O.S.A. show, *Morning* received several notices in the press. One writer commented on the "subtle sentiment" that conveyed "with much feeling the squalid surroundings of an old house in the slum district,"[170] but another disdainfully remarked that

> Canadian art is indeed indebted to the artist for this record of what happened to the fence in the rear of the home of Mr. Two Dimensions during the coal strike, also for the domestic hint that if washing is suspended from the second storey it is less liable to the depredations of line robbers. This painting is much admired — by some people, which suggests that the less one knows of artists, the better you can arrive at an unprejudiced opinion about art.[171]

To an increasing number of people, Harris' house pictures had lost their earlier charm and seemed to imply social criticism. The artist's *Spring in the Outskirts*, 1922 (fig. no. 9) was based on a light-filled sketch of the Earlscourt area (cat. no. 97) and though relatively brightly painted drew the following press notice: "His squalid studies of city homes, even when the colour is bright like that in 'Spring in the Outskirts,' might be taken as social propaganda. . . . Mr. Harris runs strongly to ugliness in selecting his subjects, and one wonders why he aims for such a ruler-like effect in his buildings. . . ."[172]

In the early spring of 1921, before his trip with Jackson and Lismer to the Mongoose Lake area of Algoma, Harris travelled to the east

97. Shacks, Earlscourt, c. *1922*
oil on board
11 1/4 × 14 1/4 in.; 28.6 × 36.1 cm
Mr. and Mrs. H. Reuben Cohen, Moncton, N.B.

Fig. 9 Spring in the Outskirts, *1922*
oil on canvas
38 1/2 × 44", 97.7 × 111.8 cm
Private collection

Fig. 10 Black Court, Halifax, *1921*
oil on canvas
38 × 44", 96.5 × 111.8 cm
National Gallery of Canada

coast, visiting Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. In Halifax, he discovered urban slums that deeply shocked him. He was totally unprepared by his Toronto experiences for the aesthetic assault of the wooden tenements off Barrington Street near the harbour. The stark, unameliorated box-like buildings horrified his sensibilities. The structures with a rigid geometry forced on them by unpainted clapboard sidings had none of the richness of texture or colour he had found appealing in the Ward. Recognizing that the physical ugliness of the setting imposed an unrelenting spiritual desolation on the inhabitants, Harris painted two important canvases on his return: *Elevator Court, Halifax,* 1921 (cat. no. 94) and *Black Court, Halifax,* 1921 (fig. no. 10). These were the artist's most expressionistic works.

F. B. Housser appreciated the significance of the paintings and discussed their importance to the artist's development in both stylistic and philosophic terms:

> These Halifax pictures were painted at a time in Harris' life when so distinct a change is marked in his work that everything since done may be easily divided from that which went before. This change shows itself outwardly by an abandonment of the two-dimensional design for that of three-dimensional form and restrained colour. Less obviously, it is apparent by the plus quality of a philosophical idealism and more emotionally considered surfaces.[173]

In his comments, Housser overstates their unique nature: Harris had earlier abandoned the flat-patterned composition in *Outskirts of Toronto,* and had certainly employed "emotionally considered surfaces" in *A House in the Slums* painted the previous year.

The spatial recessions in the Halifax slum scenes, however, are particularly dramatic. By placing buildings in the foreground set at right angles to the picture plane, Harris allows the horizontal, black-edged clapboards to function as emphatic orthogonal lines in an uncompromising system of linear perspective which dominates the works. In *Elevator Court, Halifax,* the eye plunges into deep space along the converging lines of the tenements. From the dark, distant shoreline the yellow light of dawn expands upward, directing the observer's eye back to the picture surface along pink-edged clouds aligned in the sky. In *Black Court, Halifax,* the recession is blunted by the two tenements placed frontally in the middle distance but the viewer seeks out the far shore of the harbour seen in the gap between them, penetrating this planar phalanx. The colour scheme of green, grey and

94. Elevator Court, Halifax, *1921*
oil on canvas
38 × 44 1/8 in.; 96.5 × 112 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from the Albert H. Robson
Memorial Subscription Fund, 1941

Fig. 11 Glace Bay, *c. 1925*
ink drawing
Private collection

blue conveys a mood of deep depression. The sky in this picture is painted with fluid strokes of luminous pigment, and is close both in shape and emotional function to the expressionistic skies found in Edvard Munch's lithographs *The Shriek,* 1895 and *Anxiety,* 1896, which Harris may have seen in Berlin.

The residents of Black Court were, in fact, black workers and their families who were among the most poverty-stricken in the Maritime region.[174] Standing in the desolate courtyard are a group of children who look out at the spectator in a mute and haunted fashion. In no other urban painting do figures make psychological contact with the observer, and it is one of the rare instances in which a particularized, personal comment appears in Harris' art. An ink drawing published in the July 1925 edition of the *Canadian Forum*, entitled *Glace Bay* (fig. no. 11) is the artist's sole social-realist image. An emaciated woman and her two children are pressed up to the picture plane, dominating the design. The stark, black-white contrast and the sharp angular forms reveal Harris' reliance on German Expressionist graphics and it is his only example of direct social comment.

In the Halifax canvases, a "bitter note"[175] was evident to a number of visitors to the 1922 Group of Seven exhibition in which they were first publicly displayed. They "angered a banker, because the spirit of them cries out for change. . . ."[176] But the paintings transcend reality, avoiding the immediacy of the particular by the generalized presentation of the facts of poverty. They are expressive works of art, not detailed condemnations of capitalism. The artist's poem "A Question" reveals that his reaction to the Halifax and Toronto slums was essentially aesthetic:

> Are you sad like that?
> Are you sad walking down streets,
> Streets hard as steel; cold, repellent; cruel?
> Are you sad seeing people there,
> Outcast from beauty,
> Even afraid of beauty,
> Not knowing?[177]

Barker Fairley, writing in 1921, had noted that Harris' housing subjects dealt primarily with the slum dwellings but not their inhabitants:

> It is human nature and human society that contradicts itself and this we think is Mr. Harris' great and peculiar field. Irony is never far to seek in a modern city and Mr. Harris has a unique gift for seizing on it. Some of his recent "shack" pictures . . . set down the sinister and impressive aspects of poverty with a truly Heinesque power. . . . One recalls his sensitiveness to the beauty of the city as well as to its ugliness

> [and] one cannot but think that he will go furthest in this field and find it best suited to his strangely compounded temperament. Perhaps as time goes on he will shift the emphasis somewhat from the buildings people inhabit to the people themselves.[178]

Harris' "strangely compounded temperament," however, was precisely the factor which would resist focusing on the human element. His social class and personal wealth, along with his interest in esoteric thought, militated against the politicization of his artistic vision. One reviewer, commenting on the four house pictures in the 1922 Group of Seven exhibition, noted that "as a rule [Harris' urban scenes] are bits of spotless town. . . . He has no eye for the details of squalor. His snow-capped roofs and his pied and painted rough-cast walls are all clear."[179] The artist partly transcended the image of poverty by refusing to depict the particular facts. *Morning* (cat. no. 92) is a cleansed view of the slums and does not contain the details that he described in his poems:

> Lanes littered with ashes, boxes,
> cans, old rags;
> Dirty, musty, garbage-reeking lanes
> Behind the soot dripped backs of
> blunt houses,
> Sour yards and slack-sagging
> fences. . . .[180]

Contemporary with his sombre views of the slums are colourful, light-hearted house pictures. *A Street in Barrie, c.* 1920 (St. Michael's College, University of Toronto) and *A House in Barrie, c.* 1921 (fig. no. 13) are scenes near Harris' summer home. The latter is based on the small 1918 sketch *Lake Simcoe, Summer* (cat. no. 98) and coincides with his literary conception of rural homes in "Little Houses:"

Fig. 12 A Street in Barrie, *c. 1920*
oil on canvas
36 × 44", 91.4 × 111.8 cm
St. Michael's College, University of Toronto

Fig. 13 A House in Barrie, *c. 1921*
oil on canvas
32 × 38", 81.2 × 96.5 cm
Unlocated

98. Lake Simcoe, Summer, *1918*
oil on board
10 1/4 × 12 1/4 in.; 26 × 31.1 cm
Collection of The Winnipeg Art Gallery
From The Arnold O. Brigden Estate

96. Billboard, *1921*
oil on canvas
42 1/2 × 50 1/4 in.; 108 × 127.6 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

87. Red House and Yellow Sleigh, *1919*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 in.; 27 × 33 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from Friends of Canadian Art Fund, 1938

> Little houses tucked in little yards
> Behind low white fences or bushy
> green hedges
> . . .
> Plump, well fed, clean little houses
> A big, round rain barrel by the side
> door
> Old-lady-like front porches, and fat
> rear porches
> And full woodsheds — [181]

Another marked "contrast" is Harris' *Billboard*, 1921 (cat. no. 96). One of his most experimental pictures, it is a complex arrangement of angles and planes focusing on a city billboard whose surface is encrusted with layers of peeling advertisements. The rich reds, yellows and blues and the aggressive, expressionist brushwork add a visual life to the painting that is unparalleled in his art. There is little of the alienated impersonality of *Morning* or the Halifax slum scenes painted the same year: *Billboard* seethes with energy and is Harris' most joyous and raucous city scene. When it was originally exhibited in the 1922 Group of Seven show it was titled *Jazz*.[182] No doubt the brilliantly coloured surface and the spontaneous brushstrokes seemed to embody the spirit of that music.

In only two instances did Harris paint city homes belonging to his own social class: *Red Sleigh — House*, 1919 (McGill University) and *Red House and Yellow Sleigh, c.* 1920 (cat. no. 88). The latter is based on the small 1919 sketch of the same title (cat. no. 87) and both paintings are clearly decorative in nature. It is not surprising that the artist turned to such architectural subjects so rarely: their symmetrical shapes and regularized architectural features lack the variety and contrast that he sought in the Ward and Toronto suburbs. Since he was familiar with the lives and values of those who inhabited such buildings, he could not invest the pictures with the sort of poetic associations he projected into his depictions of slum houses.

After 1921, Harris' production of house pictures dropped off dramatically as he increasingly turned his interest toward wilderness landscapes based on sketches painted along the North Shore of Lake Superior. In 1922, the artist exhibited eleven urban subjects in a variety of exhibitions but the following year the number was reduced to only two works. *Houses, St. Patrick Street* (cat. no. 99) and *Grey Day in Town* date from 1923 but no others are known to have been painted at that time. It was not until 1925-26 that Harris returned to the theme of houses, creating a series of disparate works that bear a closer relationship to the pictorial issues of the landscapes painted during that period than the city scenes of 1918-23.

88. Red House and Yellow Sleigh, c. *1919-20*
oil on canvas
36 1/2 × 50 in.; 92.7 × 127 cm
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery

91. Snow Fall, *1920*
oil on canvas
36 × 43 3/4 in.; 91.4 × 111.1 cm
Private collection

99. Houses, St. Patrick Street, *1923*
oil on canvas
31 1/2 × 40 in.; 80 × 101.6 cm
From the C.S. Band Collection

102. Above Lake Superior, *c. 1922*
oil on canvas
48 × 60 in.; 122 × 152.4 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from the Reuben and Kate Leonard Canadian Fund, 1929

Lake Superior Landscapes, 1921-28

At the end of the fall trip to Algoma in 1921, Harris and Jackson decided to travel west along the shore of Lake Superior.[183] At the railway junction of Franz, Ontario they boarded a C.P.R. freight and watched as the panorama of the North Shore unfolded before them. Near Schreiber they disembarked and walked to Rossport, their final destination.[184] They remained there only a few days before returning to Toronto, but it was sufficient time for Harris to realize that the landscape was the most truly impressive he had encountered. The barren, glaciated shoreline and the smooth rocky islands were set against the vast expanse of the world's largest fresh water lake. The scale appeared infinite. MacDonald, during the 1918 Algoma trip, had witnessed the lake from the Canyon area:

> I have never seen anything so impressive as the half-revealed extensiveness of the lake. . . . It certainly was superior in all ways. There was a haziness in the air which merged the horizon with the sky, and that smooth glimmering infinity of waters was like a glimpse of God himself. A few large islands could be seen and great rocky shores stooping grandly to the water. One of the islands was twelve miles long. . .but it looked like a crumb on the table. I have not quite assimilated this experience yet. It is something to be quiet about and think over.[185]

Forest fires had stripped the area of nearly all natural growth, making the spectacle even more austere and bleak. In Jackson's opinion, there was "a sublime order to . . . the long curves of the beaches, the sweeping ranges of hills, and headlands that push out into the lake."[186] Reduced to essential forms by successive ice ages, the landscape differed strongly from the variegated scenery of Algoma. All transient effects seemed to have been eliminated. Harris was captivated by this sense of timelessness and his Lake Superior paintings of 1922 to 1928 directly embody this quality. Jackson's cousin, Isa Erichsen Brown, wrote the artist that D. H. Lawrence's description of the coast of Cornwall corresponded to Harris' pictures and Jackson concurred:

> The Shore is absolutely primeval: the heavy, black rocks, like solid darkness, and the heavy water like a sort of first twilight breaking against them and not changing them. . . . It

Fig. 14 Above Lake Superior, *1921*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 3/4", 26.7 × 35 cm
Private collection

> is really like the first craggy breaking of dawn on the world, a sense of primeval darkness just behind, before, the Creation. . . . This cold light of the sea is really the eternal light washing against the eternal darkness, a terrific abstraction, far beyond all life, which is merely of the sun, warm. And it does one's soul good to escape from the ugly triviality of life into this clash of two infinities one upon the other, cold and eternal.[187]

Harris painted at least two small oil studies on that trip: *Algoma Panorama* (cat. no. 101) and *Above Lake Superior* (fig. no. 14). These were the basis for two large compositions painted in the winter of 1921-22 that were shown in the Group of Seven exhibition in May of 1922: *Grey Day, North Shore, Lake Superior, c.* 1922 (fig. no. 15) and *Above Lake Superior, c.* 1922 (cat. no. 102). They are the artist's first Lake Superior subjects. The former depicts the sombre hills and shoreline of the lake under an overcast sky. There are no impeding barriers erected in the foreground and the eye penetrates the picture with ease, ranging over the abstracted contours of the distant forms. In no previous work has Harris incorporated so much space. The elevated vantage point of *Algoma Country* (cat. no. 72) overlooked an expansive vista but in *Grey Day, North Shore, Lake Superior* Harris' angle of vision is far more encompassing. The sky itself comprises one half of the composition. There is no need to employ *repoussoirs* to imply the panoramic scope of the picture. Deep space is implicit.

Above Lake Superior is Harris' pivotal work. No earlier picture prepares us for the clarity of its conception; it marks a new dispensation in his art. The variety, contrast and flux that characterize his previous paintings are majestically resolved. The classical sense of order and unity to the composition is comparable to the constructional basis of both music and architecture, and it is a vision of universal harmony seen with the inner eye. A lofty, transcendent image of the wilderness, it is released from the bonds of time and space. Lonely, remote and austere in tone, the work is a distillation of Harris' experience and its pervasive peacefulness is the result of a new and powerful spiritual conviction that animates all his future creations — both representational and non-objective.

Like *Grey Day, North Shore, Lake Superior*, the painting is closely based on the small study but Harris has made several important changes that eliminate specific, topographical detail to create an idealized conception. The horizon has been lowered and the islands and distant shoreline seen in the sketch have disappeared. In consequence, the central hill assumes a more massive character. Over its surface Harris has added the details of a forest rising to its distant crown. The forms of the trees are those he had developed in his Algoma landscapes: rounded volumes in cool greens and warmer tones. But the trees in the foreground are represented in a new, sculptural manner that signifies an advance over the tubular shape found in *Algoma Country*. Seared by forest fires, stripped bare by winter ice and bleached by the elements, they stand like mute witnesses in the face of universal experience. The irregular shapes of the clouds in the study have been refashioned into stratified patterns of horizontal lines that recede rhythmically to the far horizon. Harris also restructured the complex configuration of forms in the foreground by eliminating the curved branch of the fallen tree that cuts vertically across the face of the mountain in the sketch. The lessons of compositional design he learned in the decorative landscapes have been applied to

Above Lake Superior. The trees reach the full height of the canvas and their upright accents are balanced by the cloud formations. The composition itself develops in space through a series of planes. But while Harris achieved a remarkable degree of stasis in the picture, the design is in no way static. The curvilinear shapes of the trees and mountain contours add a gentle movement to the complex arrangement of forms.

In contrast to much of his earlier work, the surface of *Above Lake Superior* is smooth and evenly painted. The colours are reduced in range and intensity and with the elimination of a variegated texture there is little sensuality to the experience of the picture. Harris has withdrawn from a direct, emotional engagement with the subject and from the act of creation itself. The canvas, austere and impersonal, was conceived and executed from a spiritual vantage point far from direct human concerns. There was little with which the public could identify closely: the artist represents natural forms but in the light of mystical insight they are transformed into symbol. "There is that in it which lifts it out of the moulds of art *qua* art into the realm of rare experience, a mystical experience which few who have seen the canvas will have shared."[188] Apparently the picture excited considerable criticism because of its extra-aesthetic spiritual content. This factor explained, in F. B. Housser's view, "the baffled confusion and extraordinary dislike which art lovers of no little discernment have felt before it, and also the fact that the informed art critic sees there the ignorement of the laws he knows. . . ."[189] One such critic, the conservative reviewer of *Saturday Night* magazine, Hector Charlesworth wrote that "*Above Lake Superior* has the morbid, sinister qualities one finds in the drawings of William Blake, with its uncanny arrangements of

101. Algoma Panorama, *1921*
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 5/8 in.; 26.3 × 35.3 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario

Fig. 15 Grey Day, North Shore, Lake Superior, *c. 1922*
oil on canvas
40 × 48", 101.6 × 122.1 cm
Private collection
Photo, Brigden's Winnipeg

stripped dead trees set against a sullen background."[190] Yet, as Housser noted, it was the mystical nature of the painting that was its essence:

> Harris is a modern mystic who has attempted to express through painting, moods reached through mystical experience as William Blake did. The nature of this experience must have been the product of his humanitarianism which caused him to go out and to feel in a new way with and for humanity as is shown in his Halifax canvases. It is from this base that mystical experience occurs and in a flash of that misunderstood word "illumination," peace comes through a vision which makes it plain that "every moment of life is filled with eternity" and that the uglinesses of Time are ways to a realization of untemporal beauty. The uglinesses of "Above Lake Superior" are beautiful and its lonely austerity, peace.[191]

The reviewer for the *Mail & Empire* found Harris' picture "among the most striking on view" at the 1922 O.S.A. exhibition:

> It is one of those paintings in which the work of Mr. Harris makes one think of Rockwell Kent on account of the simplicity of the design and the use of colours. There is a mountain in the background against a bleak sky, and in the foreground gnarled, dead trees with snow. The use of light in this picture, especially on the snow-covered tree trunks, is extraordinarily effective. It is the sort of painting that only a master of the brush like Mr. Harris could achieve. In it you can feel the vital north country air. It is one of the finest efforts shown by Lawren Harris in recent years.[192]

Lismer considered *Above Lake Superior* "one of the striking masterpieces of modern Canadian landscape painting. . .compelling in its mood."[193] Housser felt that the picture challenged the observer: "it judges us as individuals and as a people. If we feel its bleakness and hate it, it is our own inner bleakness that hates, the finite part of us that dares not meet the infinite unfathomable thing — the wilderness."[194] With a new fixedness of purpose and method, Harris confronted the "unfathomable," concentrating on the properties of space and light in his increasingly abstracted compositions, attempting to penetrate the outward form of nature and embody in pictorial language the spiritual essence of the universe.

The paintings of the North Shore, the Rocky Mountains and the Arctic exhibit an organic unity previously lacking in the artist's work. After 1922, Harris rejects a multiform approach to creativity and commits himself to a single and unique vision. The language of form and that of the spirit increasingly coincide so that Harris' pictures "become a highway between a particular thing and a universal feeling."[195] The dramatic change seen in *Above Lake Superior* and the landscapes that follow can be attributed to Harris' deeper involvement with Theosophy and mysticism. Housser was also a member of the Toronto Theosophical Society and his interpretations of Harris' pictures and artistic intentions provide us with insights into the artist's own philosophic values.

During the summer of 1922 Harris sketched at Lake Simcoe and in Algonquin Park, a pattern repeated from 1921 through 1925, and in October returned to the North Shore with Jackson. They remained in the area of Coldwell

for a week. In the fall of the following year, Harris, Jackson and apparently Lismer were at Coldwell for almost a month, and Harris made numerous studies of the imposing ice house on Coldwell Bay with its long wharf jutting out into the lake. In 1924, after some two years' absence, Harris, Jackson, Lismer and MacCallum travelled to Algoma and at the conclusion of the trip Harris and Jackson pushed on to the North Shore. The latter was to write about their camping experiences on Lake Superior, adding an anecdotal dimension that is absent in Harris' theoretical writings and the transcendental paintings themselves.

> There were few places to stay in this country, so we took with us a tent and camping equipment. We chose our campsites with care, always near water, protected from the wind. . . . In poor painting weather we built a big stone fireplace where we could sit and gossip until it was time to turn in. . . . When we camped near a sand beach we went swimming although the water was very cold. Harris, who liked to have a system for everything, worked one out for bathing in cold water. We would start off far up on the beach, then run at the lake, waving our arms like wild Indians. This procedure was supposed to distract our attention from the cold.[196]

The monumental canvases of stark, wilderness landscapes made from sketches along the North Shore between 1922 and 1924 are among Harris' most powerful compositions. *First Snow, North Shore of Lake Superior*, 1923 (cat. no. 104) was based on the small study *Lake Superior Country, c.* 1922 (cat. no. 103). In contradistinction to *Above Lake Superior*, this painting contains a relatively greater amount of realism, the stylization and abstraction of its forms notwithstanding. The artist's vantage point is likely to the north, away from the lake, and the picture is comprised of rolling rhythms of rock that lead the eye to the far horizon. The strong, architectonic character of *Above Lake Superior* is rejected as the artist allows forms to develop in space to a considerable degree. None of the tree forms rise from the immediate foreground to the top of the picture and the small, random cloud formations dispel any classicizing structural arrangement. The work was exhibited in the March 1923 O.S.A. show entitled simply *Landscape*, and aroused the ire of the Russian artist Leon Bakst who saw it there. The latter derisively remarked that it "was sculpture rather than painting," and the reviewer who noted Bakst's comment attempted an explanation: "he doubtless referred to the fact that everything in the picture seems as hard as granite, even the snow and fir trees. It suggests H. G. Wells' description of the end of the world, [but] even persons who quarrel with the futuristic effect will admit the powerful suggestion it contains."[197]

Another work from 1923 that also stresses a deeper spatial ambience is *Lake Superior Painting IX* (cat. no. 105). Receding ridges of rounded rock and two groups of bleached tree trunks lead the observer's eye from the immediate foreground across a bleak landscape to distant blue-toned hills. It is a picture filled with the spirit of austere desolation. This painting is the most dramatically coloured of all Harris' North Shore compositions. The orange hues of the autumn ground cover between the rocks are contrasted with complementary blue shadows and the colour of the hills themselves. A warm yellow light further heightens the chromatic intensity. After the pervasive calm and structural stasis of *Above Lake Superior*, *Lake Superior Painting IX* is a disturbing scene. The

104. First Snow, North Shore, Lake Superior,
1923
oil on canvas
48 × 60 in.; 122 × 152.4 cm
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery

105. Lake Superior Painting IX, *1923*
oil on canvas
48 1/8 × 50 1/4 in.; 102 × 127.6 cm
William I. M. Turner, Jr.

106. Ice Houses, Coldwell Bay, *c. 1923*
oil on board
12 1/4 × 15 1/4 in.; 31.1 × 38.7 cm
Mr. and Mrs. H. Reuben Cohen, Moncton, N.B.

108. Ice House, Coldwell (Sketch XXIV), *c. 1923*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Private collection

asymmetrical placement of the gaunt, stylized trees and the intensified colours create an uneasy mood.

Harris' most imposing Lake Superior canvas of the 1922-25 period is *Ice House, Coldwell, Lake Superior* (cat. no. 109). It was painted in late 1923 and is directly based on a small oil sketch in McMichael Canadian Collection, but other studies (cat. nos. 106, 107, 108) reveal that the artist considered the motif from a variety of angles before settling on the most austere vantage point. There is a remarkable clarity to the contours of the building, the shoreline, beach, waves and clouds, the result of a raking light that etches the outlines of the forms into sharp, cutting edges. The painting was shown in the fifth Group of Seven exhibition in May 1928, and along with the artist's fourteen other works prompted one writer to note that "Lawren Harris continues his search for ultimate values. His results are not 'Canadian', they are beyond Canada and today."[198] Another stated that "his work, though nationally inspired, transcends nationality at every point. At times he frankly leaves the map altogether in his search for reality."[199] *Ice House, Coldwell, Lake Superior* was considered

> purely mystical . . . and an excellent introduction to Lawren Harris' rarefied atmosphere. Here the shock of contrast between our expectation of sentimental associations and the wisdom of a stark solitude is in no way relieved. At first we seem to encounter death itself. But it is not death in tragic guise; for a tragedy over which we may weep is but another form of sentimental expression. It is death as it would appear to eyes that have passed beyond death. Here is a world in

109. Ice House, Coldwell, Lake Superior, *c. 1923*
oil on canvas
37 × 45 in.;
94 × 114.2 cm
Collection of the Art Gallery of Hamilton,
H. S. Southam Bequest, 1966

which all things are potential or have been already expressed, a world in which no single form of life triumphs over other forms, in which there are no idle dreams. Here is a vision of a single, shouting reality in which life and death as we know them have appeared to God during countless ages before the various forms of life had evolved, each with its private and shifting scale of values; the world as it was and as it will be, as it must be even today, regarded in the light of eternity. Here the soul of a man may become one with the Everlasting, beyond sentiment, beyond good and evil, beyond victory and defeat, beyond death itself. . . . His works should be contemplated in silence and immobility: only thus do they become comprehensible.[200]

Reviews such as this exposed the true character of Harris' Lake Superior canvases to a baffled public who, unfamiliar with the mystical nature of the artist's vision, found such works moving but repellent in their cold, remote severity. Augustus Bridle examined the canvases in the 1928 Group of Seven exhibition and noted "the almost complete dehumanization of painting" among the works contributed by the Group members. He found *Ice House, Coldwell, Lake Superior* to be "a gabled ghost" and went on to comment that "space and time to Harris are the mother of colour and form. He might explain this religiously. I might call it transcendentalism; others — bunk. But it is all despairingly beautiful and inhuman."[201]

In March 1923, after an indeterminate period as a member-at-large of the International Theosophical Society, Harris joined the movement's Toronto Lodge. Although he supported the Society financially and firmly believed in its beneficial influence, he did not participate in the regular meetings or classes held at the Theosophical Hall on Isabella Street.[202] Nonetheless, Harris' association with the sect and its teachings is of inestimable importance in comprehending the nature of his art after *c.* 1922. A number of the artist's friends, among them Roy Mitchell, director of the Hart House theatre, and F. B. Housser and his wife Bess, were members of the Toronto Lodge by 1922.[203] Lismer had been associated with the movement, [204] and other artists in the Group of Seven were conversant with its teachings.

The International Theosophical Society was founded in New York on November 17, 1875 by the Russian emigré Mme Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, the American, Colonel Henry Steele Olcott, and the Irish lawyer William Q. Judge.[205] The Objects of the Society were threefold:

1. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity.
2. To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.
3. To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature, and the powers latent in man.[206]

Theosophy's occult religious philosophy was a unique blend of oriental and western mysticism. Perhaps one of its most significant contributions was the large scale introduction of eastern thought into certain European and North American circles. Mme Blavatsky, the moving force behind the Society, claimed to have been taught the wisdom of the ages by Tibetan Mahatmas. She synthesized the Brahmanic and Buddistic doctrine of Karma with the occult traditions of Europe, drawing on the writings of such occidental mystics as Meister Eckhart, Jacob Boehme, Emanuel Swedenborg and the Cambridge neo-Platonists. The arcane principles of the Theosophical Society were set forth in two of Mme Blavatsky's books, *Isis Unveiled* (1877) and *The Secret Doctrine* (1888).

Theosophy was an anti-materialistic religious philosophy that challenged the dogmas of both modern science and orthodox Christianity. It taught that there was one eternal truth which had been given to man at the beginning of his existence but that materialism had succeeded in separating him from that ancient wisdom. Mme Blavatsky explained this through the image of the white ray of pure truth (Theosophy) which, over the ages, had been refracted into the different colours of the spectrum (various religions and philosophies). It was the task of Theosophy to reunite the varying and contending colours (each claiming to be a white ray) into the original white light of truth. She felt that this would be accomplished during the twentieth century and humankind would regain the clairvoyance it once possessed.[207]

The Theosophists adopted the concept of "the One life" from eastern thought. Understood in a transcendental fashion, it signified "the necessary interdependence of all that is: The ultimate *Oneness* which underlies and sustains all phenomenal diversity."[208] The idea of Karma and the concept of Nirvana or enlightenment, toward which the individual consciousness evolved along a "Path" which stretched over several reincarnations, were also adapted from various oriental religions. A basic tenet of Theosophy held that physical matter did not exist, and Theosophists were ecstatic when the atom was split, seeing in it a

demonstration of their beliefs. For them, only spirit was present in the universe and they interpreted this spiritual "matter" as the occult life-essence which was manifested in light. Behind earthly illumination was the spirit-life emanating from the sun:

> The Sun is the heart of the Solar World [System] and its brain is hidden behind the [visible] Sun. Thence, sensation is radiated into every nerve-centre of the great body, and the waves of life-essence flow into every artery and vein. . . .[209]

Cosmic reality was separated into seven graduated supersensory planes: the lowest, or physical level, in which material objects were perceptible through the senses; the Astral, Mental and Buddhic planes, accessible only to clairvoyants with highly evolved supersensible faculties of vision; the fifth, or Nirvanic level, reached only after strenuous cycles of spiritual evolution; and finally the sixth and seventh planes, about which even the Theosophists claimed to have no knowledge other than that they existed.[210]

The sect's doctrine of colour was based on these seven strata of consciousness, each characterized by spirit-matter of increasing fineness. All known, and many unknown, colours were present on each level, but as one ascended the hues became more delicate and luminous. Each one had a symbolic meaning which was outlined in detail by two of Mme Blavatsky's most ardent disciples, Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, in their book *Thought-Forms* (1901). The frontispiece of this work contained a chart of twenty-five colours, each with its appropriate Theosophical meaning. The red shades denoted emotion and sensuality, but the blue tones were spiritual in nature: "they indicate religious feeling, and range from the dark brown-blue of selfish devotion, or the pallid grey-blue of fetish-worship tinged with fear, up to the rich, deep clear colour of heartfelt adoration and the beautiful pale azure of that highest form which implies self-renunciation and union with the divine."[211]

The concept of the thought-form was also a special feature of Theosophy. Each individual, as he thinks, projects a radiating vibration and this so-called aura, which can only be seen by a clairvoyant, takes on a colour appropriate to the character and quality of the thought itself. A black shape signified malice and hatred, but crimson and rose indicated thoughts of love.[212] The vibration, through resonance, created a corresponding movement in the higher or astral bodies of persons nearby, effecting a spiritual form of communication. This vibrating action not only animated the coloured aura but, analogous to oscillation, produced a distinctive configuration that was the emblem of the thought. For example, a blue-toned projectile symbolized "an upward rush of devotion."[213] In many respects, a work of art was a materialized thought-form of the artist,[214] containing a spiritual significance and adhering to the three general principles underlying all thought-forms:

1. Quality of thought determines colour.
2. Nature of thought determines form.
3. Definiteness of thought determines clearness of outline.[215]

The colours and forms in paintings by those familiar with and adopting Theosophical beliefs were apt not only to reflect the spiritual life of the subject depicted (representational or non-objective) but also to manifest the inner nature and experience of the artist himself. In this instance, Theosophy is close to western Romanticism which also stressed the

significance of the inner life of the spirit rather than the outward form of the subject. In the words of the German romantic landscape painter Caspar David Friedrich, "You should close your corporeal eye so that you first see your picture with your spiritual eye."[216] In the period *c.* 1922-34 Harris, like Friedrich, turned to natural forms to embody his inner perceptions of mystical reality.

During his student years in Berlin, 1904-07, Harris was exposed to unorthodox religious ideas that conflicted strongly with his fundamentalist Christian background. "His first introduction to . . . eastern thought was through Ralph Waldo Emerson, whose writing he avidly read during the time he studied painting in Germany. William James also interested him enormously at that time."[217] Many of Harris' friends at this period were music students from the United States, [218] and it may well have been through them that he was encouraged to investigate Emerson's Transcendentalism. Emerson's New England Puritan qualities of self-reliance, virtue, sincerity and sobriety, all to be found among his essays and lectures, must have struck a responsive chord in Harris whose own roots were not dissimilar. Emerson's basic philosophic proposition was encapsulated in a passage in his diary, in 1832:

> There is a correspondence between the human soul and everything that exists in the world; more properly, everything that is known to man. Instead of studying things without, the principles of them all may be penetrated into within him. . . . The purpose of life seems to be to acquaint man with himself. . . . The highest revelation is that God is in every man.[219]

The Transcendental experience — the spiritual union with the "universal over-soul" — was one that Harris would later value highly. William James, the leading American philosopher of the nineteenth century and founder of the movement known as Pragmatism, was also a psychologist and turned his attention to the empirical study of religion and the nature of the Creator. Harris, in his reading of James, no doubt turned to such works as *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902). As we have already noted, the young Canadian student had met Paul Thiem during his summer excursion to Bavaria in 1907. The German landscape painter was a likely adherent to the principles of Theosophy and his unorthodox spiritual ideas were "shocking and stirring" to Harris. A Theosophical art was proposed in Germany at this time, and at a convention of the occult movement in Munich during 1907 an exhibition of cosmic art was mounted.[220]

Theosophy was particularly popular in the early years of the twentieth century; it is difficult today to realize just how widespread was the influence of its ideas. "The anti-materialistic concepts of the . . . movement attracted a good many artists and writers yearning for a new religious spirit. . . ."[221] Among the latter group, William Butler Yeats is an outstanding example. Piet Mondrian and Wassily Kandinsky were two of the most consequential of modern painters whose work was to be influenced strongly by Theosophical concepts. Kandinsky's abstract compositions of *c.* 1911-13 were directly related to his perception of the mystical forces at work in the universe. His reading and analysis of such Theosophical texts as *Thought-Forms* and other occult literature lead him to the firm belief that the world was entering the "Epoch of the Great Spiritual."[222] In his essay, *Concerning the*

Spiritual in Art (1912), Kandinsky outlined his basic proposition that in order to seek the spirit of his time, the artist must look within himself and not to the art of earlier periods. Nor should he turn to the physical world for inspiration, since matter was of negative consequence to the spiritualists and on the point of dissolving due to modern scientific investigation. Kandinsky concluded dramatically that it was futile to depict nature, and went as far as even to question the validity of employing artists' materials. The idea of an immaterial art went far beyond the speculations of the Symbolists and paralleled the advanced thinking of mystics concerning thought-transference and transcendental photography.

In Mondrian's work before 1911, the adoption of the mystical iconography of the triangle (either single or combined to form a hexagram) and the circle, along with the colour symbolism of blue (pure religious feeling) and yellow (highest intellect) in his esoteric figure compositions is based on his Theosophical interests.[223] He was a member of the Dutch section of the movement from 1909 to *c.* 1917, and "the early intrusion of Theosophic beliefs in [his] art was of profound meaning to his development of a fully abstract style."[224] The characteristic grid of vertical and horizontal lines in Mondrian's paintings of 1912-17 is founded on the "philosophic cross" that Mme Blavatsky described as the "master key which opens the door to every science, physical as well as spiritual. It symbolizes our human existence . . . and IMMORTALITY."[225] In his "An Essay on Abstract Painting" of 1949,[226] which has been described as "the outstanding Canadian theoretical document on modern art,"[227] Harris reveals a clear understanding of Kandinsky's *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*. Yet, unlike both Mondrian and Kandinsky, his occult beliefs did not lead him to abandon representational imagery until about 1936, relatively late in his career.

After his return from Europe and the Middle East in 1908, Harris joined the Arts and Letters Club and met Roy Mitchell. At some point, possibly not until *c.* 1918-19, Mitchell introduced him to a serious study of eastern and other mystical writings. According to Harris' wife Bess, this "opened up a vast expanse of new ideas and of Literature. He read Plato, the Upanishads, W. B. Yeats, [J. M.] Synge and of course A. E. [George Russell], W. Q. Judge and many, many others. Madame Blavatsky — [P. D.] Ouspensky and [Oswald] Spengler — Bertrand Russell — and sampled [A. N.] Whitehead."[228] During the period following his nervous breakdown in 1918, Harris turned to such authors in search of lasting spiritual values and, as Jackson noted, their works were often the subject for intensive discussion on the 1919 Algoma painting trip.[229]

Harris' literary interests of the period are further revealed through several book reviews he contributed to the monthly periodical *The Canadian Bookman* in 1923 and 1924. In "The Greatest Book by a Canadian and Another,"[230] he discussed *Cosmic Consciousness* (1901) by Dr. Richard Maurice Bucke and P. D. Ouspensky's *Tertium Organum*. Bucke had been director of an insane asylum in Hamilton, Ontario in the late nineteenth century and was deeply interested in the supernormal as well as the abnormal mind. After tracing the development from animal to cosmic consciousness, Bucke discussed the characteristic traits of the latter phenomenon in some fifty-three individuals, beginning with Buddha, Confucius and Christ. Harris was greatly taken with the work: it was "illumined by the light of a radiant understanding."[231] Although written in an era of social and cultural restriction:

> Think of this book written in the Ontario of forty years ago and written with such a glorious, sweeping gesture. Consider what life in this province was then, the people submerged in the severest orthodoxy, divided and blinded and sustained by sectarian views, comfortably warped by provincialism and remote from all cultural centres. Such occurrences convince one that vision is paramount in life — and that there is a rhythm of majesty swinging around this globe and illuminating all great souls.[232]

The environment that Harris described was the very one in which he himself had been born.

Ouspensky's work quoted from *Cosmic Consciousness* and made several corrections which led Harris to conclude that "These two books belong to each other and should be read one after the other, the older one first,"[233] for

> They can evoke an amazing awareness of all that is profound and high and glorious, they can inspire a soaring, breathtaking wonderment that overrides all quibbling, all littleness, all doubts. Ouspensky concludes that . . . to strive after the wondrous is the way of life, and that all art is a search for the wondrous, and that art is the beginning of vision. . . . If anyone is not satisfied with the usual statement that art is merely an adornment of life, or is concerned with the creation of entirely fictitious, happy and remote worlds. . . . let him read *Tertium Organum*. For here at last, we have given us a reasoned, spiritual basis for our conviction that art is the beginning of wisdom into the realm of eternal life.[234]

A year earlier, Harris had first publicly stated his own transcendental view of the nature and function of art in a review of Merrill Denison's *The Unheroic North, Four Canadian Plays:*

> It is surely the conception of all art to externalize all that in us lies hidden. For art is the living body of life made majestic only by expression. It is the vehicle of the great, imperious, mysterious creator in man that moves down through the ages leaving a vast heritage in its wake.[235]

No other Canadian artist of 1923, and none of Harris' close companions, was committed to such a mystical vision of art. Harris, in an increasing number of statements both published and private, reiterated his ideas on the subject: "Art at its highest is a non-sectarian search for the life of spiritual values — an adventure toward an illusive yet insistent reality."[236] In another instance, he wrote

> *Art is a realm of life* between our mundane world and the world of the spirit, between the infinite diversity of manifested life and the unity or harmony of the spirit, or between the temporal world and the realm of enduring and incorruptible ideation. Art reflects the enduring laws of the realm of the spirit.[237]

For Harris, creativity was a Platonic exercise and the artist should "move slowly but surely through many transitions toward a deeper and more universal expression. From his particular love, and from his process of creating from it,

he is led inevitably to universal qualities and toward a universal vision and understanding."[238] A painting was a "bridge" between the finite, physical world and the infinite realm of the spirit; it was "a highway between a particular thing and a universal feeling."[239] Yet the work of art had "a life of its own" and did not, like a symbolic object, "refer to anything outside of itself. . . ."[240] It was autonomous, self-dependent: "a living thing."[241]

The single most important documentation of Harris' cosmology is his article, "Revelation of Art in Canada," published in the July 15, 1926 edition of *The Canadian Theosophist*.[242] It is the key which unlocks the mystical nature and function of his painting of the period *c*. 1922-36. While incorporating many of the tenets of Theosophy, it is not a sectarian tract but a personal synthesis of the traditions of the occult with which he was familiar. Harris was one of the foremost cultural nationalists of his time, yet his concepts of "culture" and "nationality" were in no way limiting or restrictive; they were universal and transcendent.

In a foreword to the article, the editor noted that "Mr. Harris is leader of the Group of Seven . . . in fact as well as in name. . . . His views of the underlying principles of the movement which the Group represents are therefore of first importance to those who discern in it a National momentum."[243] Harris began by stating that painting was the only art that had so far

> achieved a clear, native expression and so the forming distinctive attitude, the creative genius of our people and their higher aspirations are to be detected in it. Indeed a new vision is coming into art in Canada. It is a direct interplay of capacity and environment and moves into manipulation straight through the muddle of perishable imported notions.[244]

In his view, and in that of other members of the Group of Seven, European and especially English cultural ideas were stifling the development of a cultural self-determination. Earlier, he had written that

> If we imitate the style and mood of the creators of other lands, if we bow to traditions and creeds and taboos imported across the great seas, if we mumble outworn shibboleths and accept the works of other days, other lands in lieu of what we ourselves should create, we permit our powers to wither. We experience no collective purpose. There is no life in us. . . . People from other lands come to us already sustained by rich, stable backgrounds thinking that these can also sustain us. It is not so. We are about the business of becoming a nation and must create our own background.[245]

One of the strongest influences on those writers and artists seeking to create a uniquely Canadian "background" for their culture was the American poet Walt Whitman who sang "the united hopes and aspirations, the courage and strength, of a youthful people."[246] All the members of the Group of Seven, but especially Harris and MacDonald, were enthusiastic readers of *Leaves of Grass*. In the minds of many Canadians of the period, Canada was like Whitman's mid-nineteenth century America,

> awakening to a sense of unlimited power and wealth, proud in her

> youth, and needing only her confidence to succeed. . . . many of us are beginning to experience as he did, the spell of the great unclaimed areas of rock and tree wilderness that border our civilization. We are aware of something vast, unsentimental, challenging, and spiritual in our land. The wilderness is becoming part of us. We are drawn out to meet it in spirit.
>
> We are making the journey that Whitman did, discovering the essential unity of East and West, thrilling to the opulence of the country, its immensity, its sweeping variety of natural forms, its restfulness and wide-ranging aspirations.[247]

Of a similar importance was the influence of the Irish literary renaissance: "a movement which holds great interest and promise to us as we look forward toward our own future as a creative nation."[248] Such writers as A. E. [George Russell], Lady Gregory, Yeats and the playwright Synge were "all inspired by a common vision and an enthusiasm for a land and a people with which they felt a spiritual 'oneness'."[249]

The creative activity of the Group of Seven, in fashioning a national art based on the informing spirit of the northern wilderness, was creating in Harris' esoteric view "a home-made vortex that steadily grows and intensifies and ascends, and is destined to draw into itself the creative and responsive growing power of many of our people."[250] Their landscapes, while "somewhat perturbing to those . . . brought up on imported painting" were appreciated:

> our younger folk who seem to live in a swifter rhythm than older generations, a rhythm too swift for sentimentality, and some of our older folk who are supple of soul, take to it naturally. They accept it as naturally as they do the charged air, the clarity and spaciousness of our north country.[251]

The concept of the North was the keystone in Harris' mystical ideology of a national art; it was the ever-replenishing source of psychic strength for Canadians. The "north country," wherein was located the in-dwelling spirit of the land, issued a "call" that resounded "in the greater, freer depths of the soul. . . . Indeed, at its best it participates in a rhythm of light, a swift ecstasy, a blessed severity, that leaves behind the heavy drag of alien possessions and thus attains moments of release from transitory earthly bonds."[252] The closer a people were to this "spiritual flow"[253] the more pure they were:

> We in Canada are in different circumstances than the people of the United States. Our population is sparse, the psychic atmosphere comparatively clean, whereas the States fill up and the masses crowd a heavy psychic blanket over nearly all the land. We are in the fringe of the great North and its living whiteness, its loneliness and replenishment, its resignations and release, its call and its answer — its cleansing rhythms. It seems that the top of the continent is a source of spiritual flow that will ever shed clarity into the growing race of America, and we Canadians being closest to this source seem destined to produce an art somewhat different from our Southern fellows — an art more spacious, of a greater living quiet, perhaps of a more certain

> conviction of eternal values. We were not placed between the Southern teeming of men and the ample replenishing North for nothing.[254]

In Harris' view, Canadians had a special Manifest Destiny: not politically to possess the continent like the American jingoists of the nineteenth century, but spiritually to regenerate their southern neighbours. A continentalist, Harris considered North Americans a "race," and Canadians a "people," a distinctive sub-section of that unit.[255] There was no difference in kind, only in degree. The determining factor of that distinction was closer proximity to the North whose "replenishing power," he later wrote,

> passes through us to the teeming people to the south of us. . . . Indeed the continuous movement of Canadians to the States — teachers, doctors, nurses, writers and the like — may have a far greater significance than that of mere economic determinism. They may be one of the means of the infiltration of a certain clarity and unpretentious devotion, certain intangible elements in the quiet side of the Canadian character that is born of the spirit of the North and reflects it.[256]

The artist, Harris felt, is better equipped through his discipline of expression and habit of awareness to interpret the North to Canadians. Once he has become one with its spirit, he can create living works of art in which to make "a harmonious home for the imaginative and spiritual meanings it has evoked for him."[257] The occurrence of "a living art in every age, with every people . . . is a tremendous factor in the evolution of the soul. It is a sign that the human can achieve . . . [a] directness that goes straight through all erudite deviousness . . . to the exacting light of spiritual realms."[258] To reach those transcendent levels, however, a "life-giving" art must have its roots "in the very soil a people tread upon, as well as in their emotional and imaginative life; and then its bloom may open to spiritual awareness."[259]

In Harris' philosophic opinion, the nirvanic path of a people parallels that of an individual's growth to cosmic enlightenment and ultimate union with the pervasive principle of Oneness. The nation's ascent to "the spirit that informs all forms" must pass through

> the particular forms, experience, life of our day, country and people. . . . It must . . . [commence] its unfolding from within outwards, through the stimulus of its day, through the evolving power of its place on earth, through the forming of its own perishable but essential bodies before it can attain any degree of universal vision.
>
> It is just so that our people may find understanding of eternal values here and now. The long slow transfiguration coiled in the drowse of the ages is thus disclosed and awakened, and our faculties, which are the servants of this transfiguration, are brought to worthy functioning, and we commence to seek beauty and truth, the meaning of life.[260]

The birth of a national spiritual identity is difficult, seeming to run counter to accepted notions and values:

> The guided centring of force to a living growth here and now has to meet the insistent, distracting

> superficial emanations from older growths, from Europe particularly. This should induce us to delve deeper into our souls through the interminable hells of pleasure and pain, and find conviction, find our own song of life. Until we do so more fully the dross of the ages will affect us much more than their gold. . . . At times . . . we seem like a low receptive reservoir into which pours the chaos of ages, the mixed concord and discord of many varied peoples; and until we clean this reservoir by inducing the upwelling of the hidden waters of life through our own positive endeavours, we will remain a confused people.[261]

The "positive endeavours" to which Harris referred were partly the creative activities represented by the new landscape movement which he and his companions had largely shaped and guided. By responding to his own highest intimations and "echoes from higher realms"[262] the artist "summarizes, clarifies, gives precision to [his audience's] hidden . . . longings, however unconsciously. So they may see made clear what was vague, nebulous, almost distrusted, and come closer thereby to a recognition of their greater selves and are rewarded by a greater sense of the fullness of life. . . ."[263] Harris firmly believed that he and his associates in the Group of Seven were to assist in the birth of the nation's self-reliant and self-determined soul. The artists were to be Canada's spiritual teachers, initiating the inhabitants into the mysteries of the ages. But only Harris, with his gift for intuitional thought and his deep commitment to a mystical perception of art and life, could properly assume that role. As history has proved, he was only partially successful.

The influence of Harris' esoteric beliefs on his art becomes increasingly apparent in the North Shore, Lake Superior canvases painted after 1922. In order to more fully comprehend these pictures, they must be seen against the background of his association with the Theosophical movement and his abiding interest in the occult tradition. Harris himself had written that "You cannot sever the philosophy of the artist from his work. . . . Without the philosophy, or in other words the man, . . . you have nothing."[264]

The highly abstracted Lake Superior landscapes bear little resemblance to the actual topography. In them, Harris moved beyond the outer shell of the physical world to spiritual realms seen only with the inner eye. In his view, the artist should "infiltrate" spirit and cosmic harmony into the "chaos of appearances"[265] and reveal the "plastic unity of existence"[266] behind the incoherence of material reality. It was the task of the artist to evoke the eternal order of the cosmos through the pictorial organization of his composition.

> Art is concerned primarily with relationships. The harmony, the order of art, its organization as a living power that can work within us, depends on its inner relationships. It is the epitome of the cosmic order. . . .[267]

The design of the painting, in Harris' opinion, should correspond to the mystical arrangement of the spiritual universe and evoke in the observer insights into the nature of the Divine. Standing in front of such canvases as *Ice House, Coldwell, Lake Superior*, the viewer was not to ask "What does it mean?" but

> 'what experience does it contain?' For a real work of art exists to engender a certain kind of life within us. Its

114. Clouds, Lake Superior, *1923*
oil on canvas
40 1/4 × 40 in.; 102.2 × 127 cm
Collection of the Winnipeg Art Gallery
Donated by John A. MacAulay, Q.C.

Fig. 16 Morning, Lake Superior
oil on canvas
34 × 40", 86.4 × 101.6 cm
Montreal Museum of Fine Art, Purchase 1939, W.G. Cheyney Bequest

> power is to evoke, to enhance, to develop depths and heights of experience we have not had, or to develop those experiences we have already had to greater depths of understanding. Its function is to enlarge our consciousness, to sharpen, intensify, and deepen our awareness, and to increase our range of experience.[268]

The "experience" was mystical in nature:

> Every work of art which really moves us is in some way a revelation — it changes us. Experiences, much more than instruction, are a seeing with the inner eye — finding a channel into our essential inner life, a door to our deepest understanding wherein we have the capacity for universal experience.[269]

In Harris' Lake Superior canvases painted after 1922, two pictorial features forcefully emerge: a new sense of infinite spaciousness and a supernatural light. Both of these elements are directly related to his occult vision of reality. Metaphorically, space is synonymous with consciousness. In his review, "The Greatest Book by a Canadian and Another," Harris had quoted at some length from the dust-jacket introduction of Ouspensky's *Tertium Organum* written by one of the book's translators, Claude Bragdon:

> According to Ouspensky the dimension of space corresponds to the development of consciousness. He would define the fourth dimension as the fourth form of the manifestation of consciousness — the intuitional. This higher, or 'cosmic' consciousness at the threshold of which humanity now stands, demands a new logic, something beyond that of Aristotle or Bacon. Hence the title, 'Tertium Organum.'[270]

In a series of canvases that includes *Clouds, Lake Superior*, 1923 (cat. no. 114), *Morning, Lake Superior*, 1923 (fig. no. 16), *From the North Shore, Lake Superior, c.* 1924 (cat. no. 115) and *Pic Island, c.* 1924 (cat. no. 118), Harris introduces an infinite expanse of space over the burnished waters of the lake. None of his earlier pictures prepare us for the openness of these compositions. There are no elaborate foreground configurations to act as *repoussoirs*, and no framing devices to keep the observer's eye fixed within the limits the actual picture. The decorative character of the two-dimensional designs of the earlier house pictures and many of the Algoma landscapes has completely disappeared. The subject of these works is spiritual in nature: "His concern

115. From the North Shore, Lake Superior, *1923*
oil on canvas
48 × 60 in.; 122 × 152.4 cm
Collection of the London Art Gallery
Gift of H.S. Southam, Ottawa, 1940

seems to be to project and convey flashes of eternal mood like milestones in a journey. There is a strange quality of rest in the light-bathed forms and vibrant skies. . . ."[271] Such paintings, F. B. Housser wrote, reveal

> the essence or overtone of a landscape rather than its outer shell. The likeness of the shell with its associational environment of time and place are still present but there is now suggested the life behind and within the forms and the painter's conception and apprehension of it.[272]

For Harris, and indeed for all religious mystics, light symbolized spirit. The Theosophists regarded it as the occult life-essence that emanates from the sun, the "heart" of the universe, and animates the consciousness of the soul. A number of Harris' poems published in *Contrasts* focus on the image of light and exhibit his knowledge of Theosophical concepts. In "Darkness and Light," illumination

> . . . smoothes the soul
> In a glittering, loved exaltation,
> Leaving reflections of beauty,
> Leaving warm memories of ecstasy,
> Stirring to love-longing the great
> freedom —
> And yet light has no weight,
> Yet one is lifted on its flood,
> Swept high,
> Running up white-golden light
> shafts,
> As if one were as weightless as light
> itself —
> All gold and white and light.[273]

Light is equated with spiritual truth in the poem "The World Doubts:"

> Now and then
> Some lover of light,
> With a living vision,
> Pierces a way
> Through the smudgy, weaving
> womb —
> Loosening,
> Letting down
> Long shafts of golden ecstasy
> On millions of mire-bowed
> heads —[274]

In "No Music," a "gold-singing flame" banishes darkness

> Leaving the soul
> Transparent,
> Full-receptive
> To all radiance.[275]

Harris, in his 1929 article, "Creative Art and Canada," states further that "The creative faculty being spiritual . . . [is] the active channel for the infiltration of the light of the spiritual realm [truth] into the darkness of earth life. . . ."[276] and that it "manifests the monetary fusion of pure earth resonance and the light of the spirit. . . ."[277]

Northrop Frye has indicated three distinct phases in the myth of light: one beginning with God, another with man, and the third with nature.[278] In the Judeo-Christian tradition, creation begins with the Divine command "Let there be light," and later religion inferred that God Himself was a light shining in darkness. Light as truth, the condition of all visibility, is also, in Frye's words, "the central symbol for all knowledge and understanding."[279]

In *From the North Shore, Lake Superior*, the brooding character of the previous North Shore subjects is supplanted by a burst of illumination that gilds the edges of the rhythmic cloud shapes in the upper section of the picture. There is an ecstatic quality to this

117. Pic Island, *c. 1922*
oil on board
10 5/8 × 13 3/4 in.; 27 × 35 cm
Private collection

119. Pic Island, *c. 1923*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift of Mrs. Doris Huestis Mills Speirs, 1971

Fig. 17 Pic Island, *1923*
oil on board
11 1/2 × 14 1/4″, 29.2 × 36.2 cm
McMichael Canadian Collection

Fig. 18 Pic Island,
Lake Superior, *c. 1924*
oil on panel
11 7/8 × 15″, 20.2 × 38.1 cm
National Gallery of Canada,
Gift from the Douglas M. Duncan
Collection, Toronto, 1970

composition, as the sun breaks out from behind a cloud cover like the light of revelation. Harris, during his second excursion to the region in the fall of 1922, appears to have first sketched one of his most popular subjects: Pic Island. He returned to the motif many times in both sketches and canvases, and it is the only topographical site to which he devoted a series of large compositions.[280]

The oil sketch *Pic Island, c.* 1922 (cat. no. 117) is a relatively naturalistic study of the hump-backed island lying off the rocky North Shore seen from an angle that exhibits its full length. The small scale of the island and the large foreground contrasts strongly with a sketch made the following year, *Pic Island, c.* 1923 (cat. no. 119), in which the rock-bound form is developed in a far more spacious setting and the foreground virtually eliminated. A series of broken cloud shapes is arranged in the sky above the island to create a kind of celestial diadem, similar to that in *From the North Shore, Lake Superior*. Three other Pic Island studies also appear to date from 1923 (cat. nos. 120, 121; fig. no. 17) and all oil sketches of this year examine the island from a point of view which considerably foreshortens its form.

The small study in the National Gallery of Canada (fig. no. 18) was the basis for one of Harris' most monumental and austere canvases, *Pic Island* of *c.* 1924 (cat. no. 118). The great abstracted shape seems to float above the brightly illumined waters of the lake in a timeless spiritual continuum, evoking a sense of eternal being, remote and pristine. It is not a painting of the actual island as much as it is of the Platonic ideal of "islandness," mystically perceived and experienced by the artist. Harris has moved beyond the outer shell of the material form to the inner life of the landscape itself that participates in the larger existence of the cosmos. He has "infiltrated" the light of the spiritual realm into the earthly existence of the island.

During 1925, Harris returned to the same subject in another large composition: *Pic Island* (private collection).[281] It is an emphatically horizontal picture of the island seen from the side, stressing the bipartite character of dual rising mounds.

The North Shore paintings discussed thus far are characterized by a concentrated interest in deep space: in none of these works is the panoramic view over Lake Superior obstructed by any prominent foreground configurations. But at the same time as he was employing this open composition, Harris was developing a pictorial design in which foreground tree and rock forms played a central role. The first of these, *Afternoon Sun, North Shore, Lake Superior*, 1924 (cat. no. 123), is related to *Algoma Country* and *Above Lake Superior* in that the artist's physical vantage point is raised high above the distant landscape and contains tubular tree shapes that reach the full height of the picture. The spaciousness of the composition, however, is developed to a far greater degree. In contradistinction to such scenes as *Clouds, Lake Superior* (cat. no. 114), the light that floods the left-hand side of the painting is far more naturalistic. The afternoon sun creates a sparkling field of reflected light on the surface of the lake.

This feature attracted the attention of a number of reviewers when the painting was first shown in the 1925 Group of Seven exhibition.[282] One writer concluded that the artist's work was "gaining in atmospheric quality."[283] The conservative critic Hector Charlesworth felt that Harris' pictorial "perversity" which, like that of the other members of the Group, "dealt out death to the nuances of nature" was somewhat ameliorated, for "In at least one of his pictures, *Afternoon Sun, North Shore, Lake Superior*,

118. Pic Island, *c. 1924*
oil on canvas
48 × 60 in.; 122 × 152.4 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection,
Kleinburg, Ontario

123. Afternoon Sun, North Shore, Lake Superior, *1924*
oil on canvas
40 1/2 × 50 1/4 in.; 102.9 × 127.6 cm
Collection of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

141. Northern Lake, *1926*
oil on canvas
36 × 35 in.; 91.4 × 90 cm
Private collection

142. Lake Superior Hill XV, *n.d.*
oil on canvas
48 × 60 1/2 in.; 122 × 153 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

Fig. 19 Lake Superior Sketch IV, *c. 1923*
oil on board
12 × 15″, 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Private collection

Fig. 20 High Country, Lake Superior, *n.d.*
oil on board
12 × 15″, 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Unlocated. Photo, National Gallery of Canada

Lawren Harris gets away from the calcium effect and gives us real sunlight. . . .″[284] In contrast to the severe mountain compositions that the artist contributed to the exhibition, another critic wrote that

> Mr. Harris has . . . thought of the weaker brethren [who found his work difficult to appreciate] and provided something easier. It is called 'Afternoon Sun, North Shore, Lake Superior.' It is a beautiful picture, or rather, as Mr. Harris would object to having any of his pictures called beautiful, there is a beauty spot in it. You can find it on the left hand side about six inches from the bald rock in the foreground. It is a strip of water sparkling in the rays of the setting sun. This is a kind of technical achievement that the connoisseur is greedy for, and also a crumb of colour comfort that the common man will pick up thankfully from Mr. Harris' Spartan feast. Here he gives light as well as leading to his followers.[285]

In the right foreground rise three tree forms that are closely related to those in *Algoma Country*. Reaching the full height of the picture, they provide a structural foil to the visual shimmer of light and create the impression of a flat plane. To the left of these bare trees is an old stump whose roots obstinately grip the rock-bound promontory.

In 1926, Harris painted the most remarkable picture of his career: *North Shore, Lake Superior* (cat. no. 130). It is a religious icon embodying the enlightenment of cosmic consciousness, and an image of radiant spirituality corresponding to Emerson's experience of transcendental illumination:

Fig. 21 Lake Superior Sketch LVI
oil on cardboard
12 × 15", 30.5 × 38.1 cm
unlocated

113. North Shore, Lake Superior, *n.d.*
oil on board
11 7/8 × 14 7/8 in.;
30.2 × 37.8 cm
Collection of the Winnipeg Art Gallery
From the Arnold O. Brigden Estate

Fig. 22 Lake Superior Sketch IV, *c. 1922*
oil on board
11 7/8 × 14 3/4", 30.2 × 37.5 cm
Private collection

125. North Shore, Lake Superior, Sketch II, *n.d.*
oil on board
11 3/4 × 14 3/4 in.;
29.8 × 37.5 cm
University College, Toronto

124. Lake Superior, *c. 1924*
oil on canvas
40 1/8 × 50 1/8 in.; 102 × 127.3 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Bequest of Charles S. Band, 1970

129. The Old Tree Stump, Lake Superior, *1926*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
From the C. S. Band Collection

> Standing on the bare ground — my head bathed in the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space — all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or parcel of God.[286]

High on the rocky shore above the lake a monumental tree stump rises serenely, silhouetted against the sky and transfigured by bands of yellow light representing the occult life-essence. The work demands a mystical interpretation, and to deny it such renders it inert and banal. Jackson, never one to ascend imaginatively above the plane of material reality, wrote with some pleasure that among the artists the picture was known as "The Grand Trunk."[287] But within the context of the artist's Theosophical cosmology and his mystic conception of the North, the image becomes a living embodiment of an experience on the nirvanic plane.

In the fall of 1925, Harris and Jackson travelled to the Coldwell area[288] and it was presumably on this trip that Harris discovered the stump. Jackson later recalled:

> I was with him when he found the stump which was almost lost in the bush; from its position we could not see Lake Superior at all. Harris isolated the trunk and created a nobler background for it.[289]

The oil study on which the painting is based, *The Old Tree Stump, c.* 1926 (cat. no. 129) is the result of what was doubtless a long process of refinement. Reality has been transcended and in its stead an ideal form has been realized. As Harris himself wrote, "creatively one can only move from and through the particular to the universal, and to achieve universal expression one must give oneself fully to the particular."[290] An unlocated sketch (fig. no. 20) may well be a step in the discovery of the essential statement. In it three broken tree trunks are set on a rocky ledge in the immediate foreground; the one furthest to the left is surprisingly similar in shape to that in the final painting. The transformation from the original inspiration of the actual stump in the bush to the noble form in *North Shore, Lake Superior* has resulted in an image of transcendent peace. In this respect, it contrasts strongly with the expressionistic configuration of the dead spruce isolated against the sky in *Rocky Cliffs, Algoma*, evoking a mood of earthly anguish. There is no emotion or personal expression in *North Shore, Lake Superior*: the exigencies of the temporal world have been eliminated and the picture exists in "the realm of enduring and incorruptible ideation."[291]

It is unlikely that *North Shore, Lake Superior*

130. North Shore, Lake Superior, *1926*
oil on canvas
40 × 50 in.; 101.6 × 127 cm
Collection of The National Gallery of Canada

has a precise meaning; nor it is likely to have an exact symbolic significance. In the language of occult ideas there is no Cartesian logic, and Harris had little interest in the concepts of the rational mind. Nonetheless, the work can be broadly interpreted as a symbol of the great North with its implicit "loneliness and replenishment, its resignations and release, its call and answer — its cleansing rhythms,"[292] reflecting the "enduring laws of the spiritual realm."[293]

Yellow, the colour of the radiating bands of light that flood the scene with illumination, had a mystical meaning. For the Theosophists, and many gnostics, it signified "Highest Intellect."[294] An earlier instance of Harris' use of a yellow-toned light can be found in *Elevator Court, Halifax*. But in this work the hue has an expressive, not an esoteric value. Presumably, the Theosophical "life-essence" that streams from the spiritual world onto the earthly reality of the Lake Superior shore is divine intelligence. The sculpted cloud formations draw back from the source of illumination, emphasizing the streaming bands of colour and the direction from which they come.

The picture was entered in the Pan-American exhibition of contemporary painting held in January-February 1931 at the Baltimore Museum of Art.[295] Of the one hundred and twenty works on view, twelve came from Canada, the rest from Latin America and the United States.[296] It was a juried exhibition and the Toronto Telegram reported that

> Lawren Harris' stark stricken tree standing "bloodied but unbowed" before the illimitable vastness of the Lake Superior shore won the Canadian artist the $500 Museum of Art prize at the . . . exhibition opened by Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson. . . .
>
> Mr. Harris' cold, sheer indomitable expression of the northern country aside from the facts of its having won the prize for the best work among sixty odd works by artists from Canada and Latin America took the eye of hundreds who were present at the opening.[297]

Harris travelled to the North Shore annually each fall from 1921 through 1928 and it is "generally agreed that Lake Superior was Harris' country. For his steady devotion to its bleak autumn moods over an eight year period, he was repaid with a deep awareness of the primal order in that simple, vast landscape."[298] The number of canvases based on scenes in that region, however, decreases after 1926 as he turned more frequently to Rocky Mountain subjects after 1924. The later Lake Superior paintings become more transcendental in character as natural shapes and colours are increasingly abstracted. Tree forms become more attenuated and spectral, rhythmically rising toward the light of the spirit.

The small oil studies *North Shore, Lake Superior* (cat. no. 131), *Lake Superior Sketch LXIII* (cat. no. 132), *Lake Superior Sketch XXXIX* (cat. no. 133) and *Sketch for Lake Superior III* (cat. no. 134) were the bases for large compositions and indicate Harris' expressive striving for a more intense spirituality. The painting *Lake Superior III* (cat. no. 135) is perhaps his last subject derived from that region, and he employs a pale azure blue of startling quality to signify "self-renunciation and union with the divine."[299] In these works, Harris seemed "to transcend art" in the opinion of one writer, but the artist

> knows exactly what he is doing and why he is doing it. His aim is not to be obscure but crystal clear, to bring not a revolution, but a

131. North Shore, Lake Superior, *n.d.*
oil on board
11 3/4 × 14 3/4 in.;
29.9 × 37.5 cm
Mr. and Mrs. F. Schaeffer

132. Lake Superior Sketch LXIII, *n.d.*
oil on board
11 3/4 × 14 7/8 in.;
29.9 × 37.8 cm
Collection of The National Gallery of Canada

135. Lake Superior III, *c. 1928*
oil on canvas
34 1/2 × 40 1/4 in.; 87.6 × 102.2 cm
Collection of The National Gallery of Canada

133. Lake Superior Sketch XXXIX, *n.d.*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.;
30.5 × 38.1 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from Friends of Canadian Art Fund, 1938

> revelation, to enlarge and not restrict the scope of art.[300]

The author of this statement, Marcus Adney, wrote an interpretive article on Harris for *The Canadian Bookman* in 1928.[301] From his remarks, he was a Theosophist, and his comments on the artist help to illumine the essential nature of the paintings of the 1920s. As is true for F. B. Housser and Bess Housser,there is a natural bias on his part for Harris' art, containing as it does such a high degree of Theosophical and mystical content. The reviews and statements of these critics reveal the inner consistency of Harris' philosophic values and their manifestation in his paintings which provide telling insights into the artist's work. In retrospect, their remarks should be accorded greater significance than those of other contemporary commentators.

136. Miners' Houses, Glace Bay, *c. 1925*
oil on canvas
42 1/4 × 50 in.; 107.3 × 127 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Bequest of Charles S. Band, 1970

Urban Scenes, 1925-26

Harris returned to the subject of houses briefly in 1925-26, painting a series of at least six canvases. There is little consistency among these works, though the evident interest in light effects and smooth surfaces relate them to his Lake Superior and early Rocky Mountain landscapes of the same period. *Miners' Houses, Glace Bay* (cat. no. 136) has traditionally been dated 1921 on the basis of its Maritime content. However, there is no resemblance between this picture and the Halifax slum scenes painted that year. More appropriately, the picture should be dated *c.* 1925. Harris uses a diluted pigment which allows the white ground to occasionally show through the almost monochromatic blue tonality. A basic reason for positing a date of 1925 is that the stylized houses in the canvas appear in the background of the previously cited ink drawing *Glace Bay* published in the *Canadian Forum* that year.

Miners' Houses, Glace Bay was first shown in the 1926 Group of Seven exhibition and, according to one commentator,

> Mention of [Harris'] solemnity would not be complete without reference to his study of the horrors of Glace Bay. It might properly be called "Dies Irae," and looks like a scene from Dante's Inferno. Two rows of thin, starved houses stand like sepulchral monuments along the Appian way, or like crucifixes on the skyline of a place of skulls. The street between these rows of cottage cadavers is like a stream of lava.
>
> The greenish-indigo sky is cleft with a shaft of vengeful light as if signifying the impending wrath of Heaven. It is a powerful satire on industrial peonage.[302]

The picture is the most theatrical of all Harris' house pictures and resembles a set for a German Expressionist film rather than any real scene. It is a purely imaginary composition and contains almost none of the sentiment of the Halifax pictures.

If *Miners' Houses, Glace Bay* is melodramatic, *Red House in Winter*, 1925 (cat. no. 137) is the quintessence of serenity. It restores, though in a different fashion, the charm of the 1919 Toronto house paintings. The single dwelling set parallel to the picture plane is flooded with an intense light that burnishes the surface of the composition. The crystalline illumination is comparable to the light that appeared in the Lake Superior landscapes, though there is less mystical basis to its appearance in *Red House in Winter*. It does, however, impart a spiritual presence to the building, sharpening the brilliance of the red exterior and the reflected glow of the snow. In 1925, the printing firm of Rous and Mann published a portfolio of graphics by members of the Group of Seven. One of these, based on an ink drawing of *Red House in Winter* that Harris prepared especially for the publication, further substantiates that the undated picture was painted in 1925.

Summer Houses, Grimsby Park, c. 1926 (cat. no. 139) is a view of the backs of several cottages clustered on the shore of that recreational area on the western end of Lake Ontario. In contrast to *Red House in Winter*, the design is less decorative and the structures more stylized. Rising high above the buildings are abstracted and attenuated trees that pull the eye upward. The light-toned colour scheme of pale greens, yellows and white creates an ethereal quality that contrasts with the often harsh character of the Lake Superior and Rocky Mountain canvases with their monumental forms and deeper colouration. When the

139. Summer Houses, Grimsby Park, Ontario,
c. 1926
oil on canvas
36 × 40 in.; 91.4 × 101.6 cm
Private collection

painting was exhibited in the seventh Group of Seven show in 1930, the reviewer for *Saturday Night* found that after the "determined sombreness of Lawren Harris' later landscapes" it was "with relief . . . that we see some of [his] really glorious houses again." He added that *Summer Houses, Grimsby Park* and *Lighthouse, Father Point* (cat. no. 161) were "perhaps the finest pictures in the exhibit."[303]

Another work from 1926, *Ontario Hill Town* (cat. no. 138) is, by contrast, a stern picture, dark and foreboding. Two box-like stores are placed on a sloping ground plane, their fronts in deep shadow. Above, a melodramatic light breaks irregularly out along seams in a pattern of thick clouds like a crackling electrical impulse. A single stark figure on the sidewalk points up the spiritual emptiness of the scene. The unnatural illumination and the rigid geometry of the forms recalls, in part, the effects of *Morning, c.* 1921. *Ontario Hill Town*, exhibited in the Canadian section of the 1926 Sesquicentennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, was awarded a gold medal.[304] Another picture which appears to date from *c.* 1926 is *Eight Red Houses* (cat. no. 140). As in *Ontario Hill Town*, the building shapes are severe in both design and colour. The scene is taken from a suburban neighbourhood but the stiff and emphatically serial character of the houses, each with its small fenced yard, contrasts sharply with the open setting, adding a sardonic note to the picture.

In varying degrees, the late house pictures are concerned with effects of light, but in only *Red House in Winter* does that aspect approximate the spiritual character of the North Shore landscapes. The pictures represent a secondary interest for the artist whose deep philosophic commitment to the wilderness of the North was unshakeable. Behind the creations of man, he perceived no astral planes of higher spiritual value.

138. Ontario Hill Town, *1926*
oil on canvas
33 1/2 × 39 11/16 in.; 85 × 100.8 cm
University College, Toronto

Rocky Mountain Landscapes, 1924-30

During August and September 1924, Harris took his family on a two-month holiday to Jasper Park.[305] It was his first trip to the mountains and a memorable one, as the Rockies were to stimulate him to reach new heights of pictorial power and spiritual insight. Jackson joined him and the two artists planned to do some sketching for the Canadian National Railway.[306] According to Jackson

> We did not find the landscapes in the neighbourhood of Jasper Lodge or along the railroad very interesting, and we wanted to get into the big country. . . .[307]

They walked in to Maligne Lake where they stayed for a week in "a weird and ancient country of crumbling mountains and big glaciers."[308] From here, they travelled eastwards on borrowed horses to the Colin Range, "a kind of cubists' paradise full of geometric formations, all waiting for the abstract painter."[309] From this point they climbed to the eight-thousand-foot level, and made their way through Shovel Pass to the Tonquin Valley. In the Tonquin they stayed with a taciturn ranger by the name of Goodair who was at first unsociable until he and Harris realized that they had a mutual interest in Theosophy. Due to almost continual rain, the artists did little sketching in the area. In September they returned to Maligne Lake where they were deeply impressed by the scenery. Jackson wrote that "Round about were vast piles of crumbling mountains that crowded in the cold green, silt-coloured water of the lake."[310] Though Jackson was not attracted to the "ancient Chaldean-looking ruins"[311] as a subject for sketching, Harris found the scene aesthetically pleasing and produced a small study, *Maligne Lake* (cat. no. 144) which was to be the basis for one of his imposing canvases.

Harris had not been among mountains since his summers in Bavaria and the Tyrol during his student years in Germany, and he returned to the Rockies each summer from 1925 through 1928. During these excursions he worked alone; Jackson never returned to the region to sketch. Harris wrote that

> When I first saw the mountains, travelled through them, I was most discouraged. Nowhere did they measure up to the advertising folders, or to the conceptions these had formed in my mind's eye. But, after I became better acquainted with the mountains, camped and tramped and lived among them, I found a power and majesty and a wealth of experience at nature's summit which no travel poster ever expressed.[312]

The two artists were not the only members of the Group of Seven to visit the west that year. Varley went to Winnipeg in January 1924 to execute a portrait commission, and then travelled to Edmonton to paint another. On a short excursion to Calgary and possibly Banff in early April he saw the distant Rockies: "All I did in Calgary was to drive out to high land & look at [the mountains]. The nearest was 80 miles away and looked about 10 miles off."[313] After he moved to Vancouver in 1926, Varley spent considerable time in the coastal range near the city, deeply moved by the spiritual quality of the experience. MacDonald spent nineteen days in the area of Lake O'Hara near Banff and was also moved by the scenery, returning to the Rockies to sketch every summer until 1931. Lismer sketched in the area of Lake O'Hara and Moraine Lake in the

summer of 1928, but like Jackson, did not find the mountains attractive subjects from a pictorial point of view and never returned.

In the fall of 1924, after returning from the west, Harris sketched along the North Shore of Lake Superior in the company of Frank Carmichael, and in the winter worked on his first Rocky Mountain canvases in the Studio Building. The following year, he exhibited five of them in the 1925 Group of Seven exhibition: *Maligne Lake* (cat. no. 145), *Brazeau Snowfield* (cat. no. 146) and three unlocated Tonquin Valley subjects.[314] The exhibition that year was the first Group show since 1922, and aroused considerable interest. Each of the Toronto newspapers sent reporters to review the show and their stories ran the gamut from incredulity and slap-stick comedy to outpourings of sentimental patriotism.[315] The writer for the *Toronto Star*, for example, considered the experience a revelation:

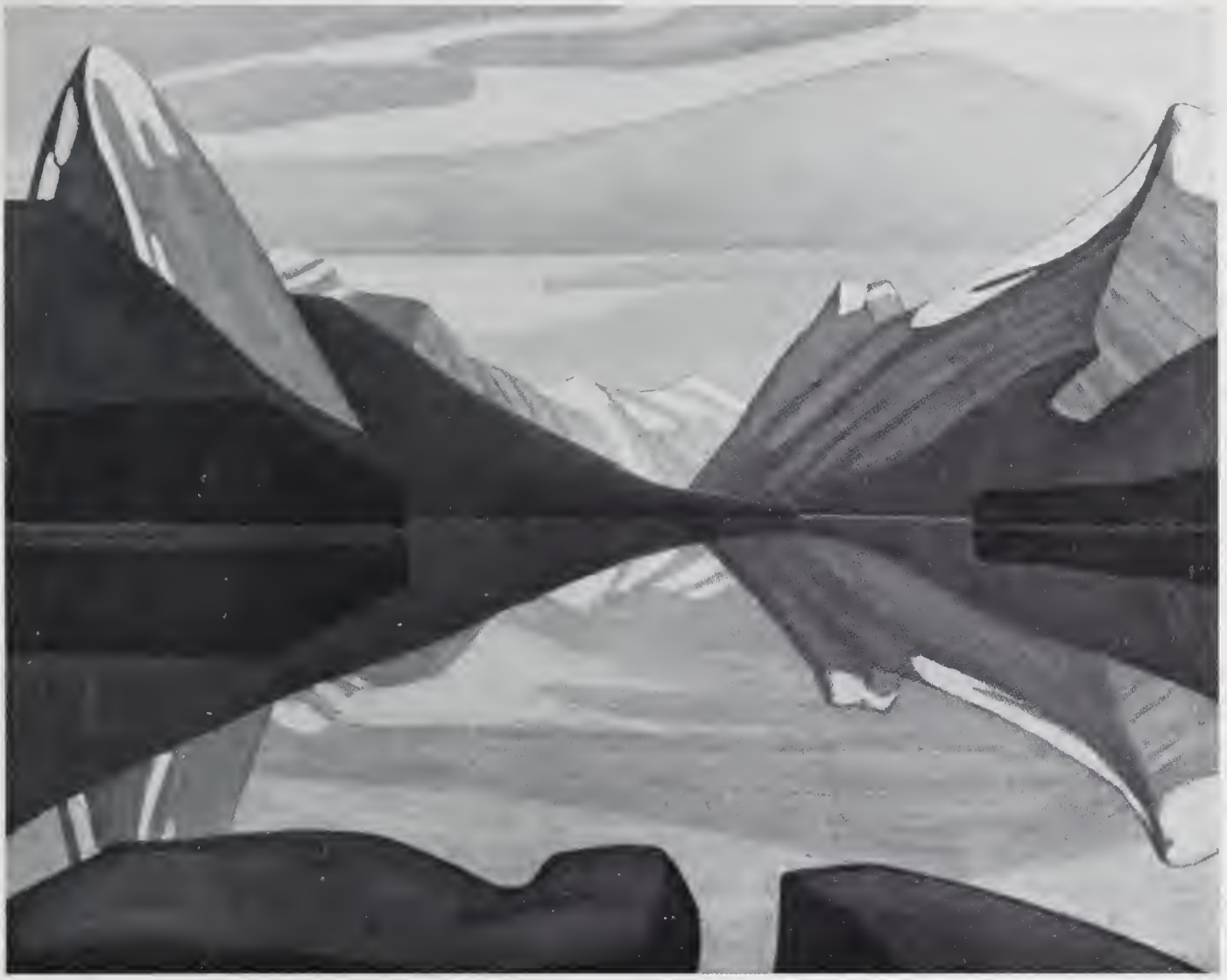
> I felt as if the Canadian soul were unveiling to me something secret and high and beautiful which I had never guessed — a strength and self-reliance and depth and a mysticism I had not suspected. I saw as I had never seen before the part the wilderness was to play in moulding the Canadian spirit.[316]

One can well imagine Harris' delight with such comments. The *Toronto Star Weekly* remarked on the domineering presence of Harris' Rocky Mountain canvases:

> One might say that the whole show is an expanse of lakes and foothills between one Mount Harris and another Mount Harris. At one end of the gallery stand his "Poboktan Mountains, Jasper Park," at the other end twin mountains, in the same gallery and the same park. He has put these piles of granite into a powerful metal press and squeezed out of them every common ocular property of mountains, leaving only their cold austere sublimity. He does not give you a mountain, but the platonic idea of a mountain, a mathematical infinite series of mountain impressions, something gigantically geometrical and impressively pyramidal, if not veridical, a real brainstorm among mountains.
>
> His fancy is bred in the head and not the heart, and the average man who wants his mountains as pretty as Christmas cards or frosted wedding cakes will complain that Mr. Harris is too mental and temperamental. In his latest phase he is not a house decorator with an appeal to young brides, but an Einstein who demands an audience of post-graduates in mathematics. He has gone in not for reform, but for pure form. . . . [Harris] has flung not a pot of paint, but whole mountains in the faces of the critics, and any audacities the rest of the seven may venture upon seem in comparison quite playful and almost conventional.[317]

In this review, the writer addressed himself to a "lowbrow" audience and was unashamedly provocative in his report on the exhibition: "this long, strong, and some say wrong Tong war of colour,"[318] but his comments on Harris' work are very apt. The mountain pictures are among his most cerebral and remote in expression.

Maligne Lake, Jasper Park, 1924 (cat. no. 145), like *Lake Superior* (cat. no. 124) painted the



145. Maligne Lake, Jasper Park, *1924*
oil on canvas
48 × 60 in.; 122 × 152.4 cm
Collection of The National Gallery of Canada

same year, stresses surface pattern and interlocking flat shapes. The simplified planes and angles of the mountains surrounding the lake are reflected in its still waters, fixing the forms in a timeless, almost classical design. Nothing moves or has the possibility for movement; each component is eternally mirrored in the glassy grey-green surface of the lake. Comparing it to the small oil sketch painted on the spot, it is immediately apparent that the artist has altered the proportions of the scene and further abstracted the mountains. In the large painting, Harris has decreased the size and significance of the range of the Rockies seen at the end of the lake in the centre of the composition. As a result the design is essentially reduced to two irregularly-shaped triangular units whose apexes meet toward the middle of the composition, thereby making the painting far more monumental and striking than the original study. The colours have also been changed; the rather delicate pale tones are transformed into deeper hues of green, grey, and purple-grey.

Brazeau Snowfield, also dated 1924, was based on an oil sketch painted in Jasper Park. The degree of formal abstraction is even greater in this work than in *Maligne Lake, Jasper Park*. The subject of the picture is not immediately recognizable. The two-dimensional character of the other painting is also a singular feature of *Brazeau Snowfield, Jasper Park;* the illusion of space between the foreground snow and the white cloud form is minimal. Bess Housser, writing in *The Canadian Bookman*, found that the 1925 exhibition contained "That out-pouring vigour, that will and flowing power, [which] is the essence of the Canadian spirit;"[319]

> Canada is an entity with a spiritual form drawn from the significant character of her environment. Every individual within her works either for or against the law of her spirit.[320]

The work of Lawren Harris, one of the most tireless workers within the "law" of the Canadian spirit, expressed "an inner attitude, mood [and] posture."[321] The "locality" of *Brazeau Snowfield*

> has been almost entirely discarded to accentuate the sense of peace of that place, which is beyond the whirling rhythms of activity. Here the onlooker and participator is left curiously free. There seems no intrigue of line or colour to draw him into the work itself. There are no accented spots into which he needs must travel. It is a gesture, a salutation. Peace is held in the folds that are almost sculptured over the dark rock forms and in the poised vibrancy of the sky.[322]

The spiritual content of the picture, its "peace," was partly the result of the simplicity of the forms and their abstract spatial relationships rather than of any associations suggested by the actual site.

The reviewer for the *Mail & Empire* noted that Harris' work on view in the exhibition reminded him strongly of the work of Rockwell Kent: "You cannot help seeing [his] influence in the almost stark simplicity of these canvases . . . but this new style of Mr. Harris is strongly marked with his own individuality."[323] Earlier, when the critic for the same newspaper had visited the 1924 O.S.A. exhibition, he had commented on the similarity of *Above Lake Superior* to that American artist's work.[324]

Rockwell Kent (1882-1971) was best known for the superlative woodblock engravings that illustrated his travel books, *Wilderness, A Journal of Quiet Adventure in Alaska* (1920), *Voyaging Southward from the Strait of Magellan* (1924) and *N by E* (1931), as well as those of others.[325] In these works, well known to Harris and his friends, there is a dependence on the

146. Brazeau Snowfield, Jasper, *1924*
oil on canvas
48 1/2 × 59 3/4 in.; 123.1 × 151.8 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

figurative tradition of William Blake but the monumental, simplified forms are set against the backdrop of mystical perceptions of northern lands. The scenes included in *Voyaging Southward from the Strait of Magellan* were "pictures of country whose utter solitude, whose freedom, whose grand austerities have thrilled me. . . . Man can but recreate in human measure that portion of the infinite which he perceives."[326]

Like Harris, Kent sought to embody spiritual values in his paintings: "There is a mystic strain in him — in these moods in which the world and all its ways fade into nothingness in the presence of intuitions of cosmic significance . . . [and] he attempted to translate some of these intuitions into art."[327] The austerity of tone, simplicity of form and dominant blue and white colour schemes of his northern winter landscapes are often remarkably close in spirit to Harris' North Shore, Rocky Mountain and Arctic canvases. The two artists, who had been informed of the similarity of each other's work by a mutual friend as early as 1924,[328] finally met in 1931 when an exhibition of Kent's work was held at the Art Gallery of Toronto.

In 1926 Harris exhibited, in the Group of Seven show, his most abstract mountain composition to date. Titled simply *Mountain Forms* (fig. no. 23), it startled the viewing public and newspaper reporters. The *Mail & Empire* commented that

> Undoubtedly, Lawren Harris is the man who will cause the greatest gnashing of teeth in the present exhibition. He marches steadily ahead with his process of simplification, so that his pictures are more and more hard sheets of colour.[329]

The intellectual values of the compositions of the two Rocky Mountain subjects in the exhibition caused one writer to note that

> His mountains rise like great teeth of cosmic lime out of calm lake pedestals and are as sculptural, as enigmatically mathematical as Epstein. He achieves a remarkable structural synthesis and presents landscape purged of its grossness of detail in quintessential symbolism.[330]

Augustus Bridle, reviewing the artist's contributions, remarked that the mountains looked like "inverted stalactites" with skies of "ineffable luminosity." The extraordinary remoteness of Harris' pictures — which also included *North Shore, Lake Superior* and *Miners' Houses, Glace Bay* — caused him to write that

> In most of these Harris bids farewell to mankind and goes into a world sometimes as obviously simple as the fourth dimension to a man on the twentieth plane. What does he mean? Who knows? What matters?[331]

One of the major reasons *Mountain Forms* caused such "gnashing of teeth" was its complete lack of realism. F. B. Housser perceptively noted that its "daring composition" was a union of the principles of painting, music and sculpture.[332] In a letter to *The Canadian Bookman*, a subscriber defended the "much maligned" *Mountain Forms* and reiterated Housser's point about the abstract basis of its organization and the relevance of the musical analogy:

> Representation is no more indispensable in painting than in music. All truly great art has tended to depart from it. . . . the concert-

goer is no longer educated to expect the sounds of the barnyard from the Pastoral Symphony . . . . Surely the high function of both music and painting is to convey an emotion rather than an outward appearance. . . . A true painting of a mountain is a more or less perfect record of what transpires in the soul. . . .

Consequently, if one elects to feel in Lawren Harris' *Mountain Forms* some profound analogy to these momentary glimpses of that many-coloured land [the Theosophist's seven-layered occult universe] which, in all ages, out of the stillness of meditation, has lifted its celestial peaks against the sombre background of the earth-life, it is not because Mr. Harris has set out to preach us this particular sermon, but because . . . every natural object has its inevitable spiritual correspondence. One may get a Bach fugue out of this same picture with equal satisfaction. Conversely, one may get a similar vision out of a Bach fugue.[333]

The author of this statement was clearly a Theosophist, reiterating the principle stated by Besant and Leadbeater in *Thought-Forms*; ". . . sound produces form as well as colour, and . . . every piece of music leaves an impression of this nature . . . [which is] clearly visible and intelligible to those who have eyes to see."[334] Bertram Brooker, one of Canada's earliest abstract painters and a friend of Harris at this time, was interested in mysticism and the spiritual in art and strongly attracted to music. One of his early non-objective pictures stimulated one viewer, a musician, to exclaim

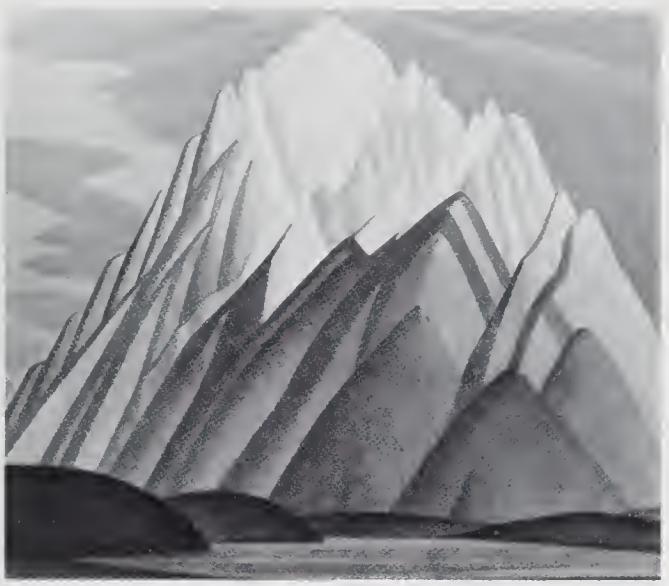
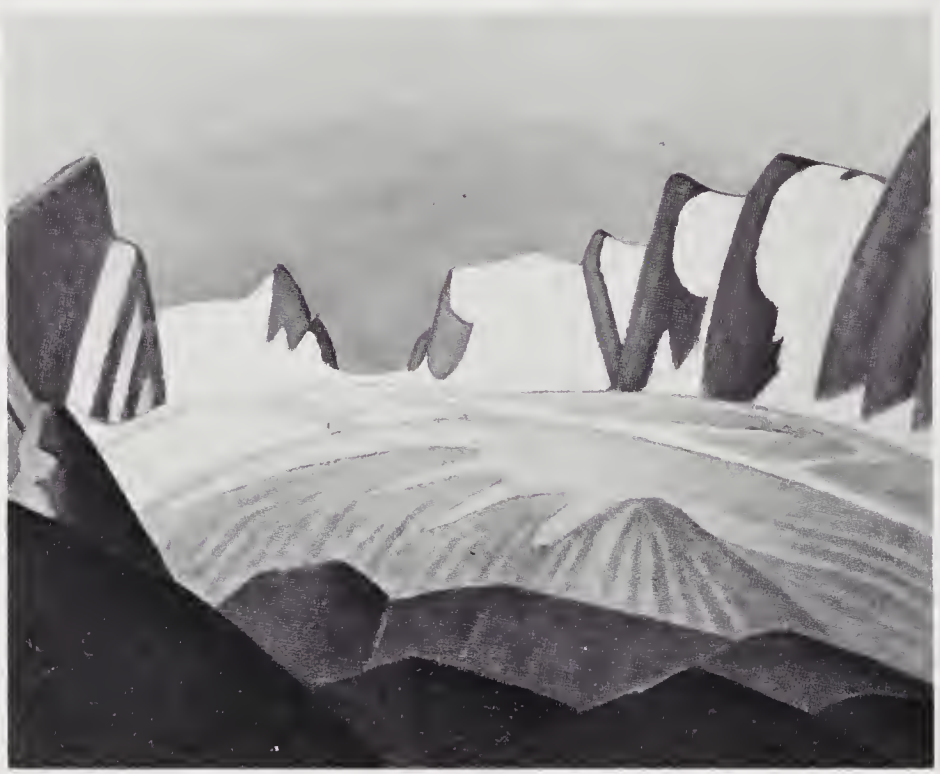


Fig. 23 Mountain Forms, *1928*
oil on canvas
60 × 70", 152.4 × 177.8 cm
unlocated

"It's music by Brooker!"[335] Carl Schaefer recalled that Brooker and Harris discussed Bach and the manner in which music might be depicted in visual terms.[336] As early as 1928, in his large composition *Sounds Assembling* (Winnipeg Art Gallery), Brooker made a serious attempt at synesthesia. In *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, a book with which both Brooker and Harris were familiar, Kandinsky had written that music was the most "non-material" of the arts, and that colour had a "psychic" as well as a physical effect.[337]

Harris' interest in abstract form was deepening at this time and his Rocky Mountain landscapes reflect his concern for more essential pictorial statements. In 1927, he

148. Mount Robson from Berg Lake, *n.d.*
oil on board
11 7/8 × 15 in.;
30.2 × 38.1 cm
Private collection



149. Glacier, Mt. Robson Area, *n.d.*
oil on board
12 × 14 3/4 in.;
30.5 × 37.5 cm
Private collection

152. Mount Temple, *c. 1925*
oil on canvas
48 × 53 in.; 122 × 134.6 cm
The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
Horsley & Annie Townsend Bequest

153. Lake and Mountains, *1927-28*
oil on canvas
42 1/2 × 63 1/2 in.; 105.4 × 160.6 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from the Fund of the T. Eaton Co. Ltd.
for Canadian Works of Art, 1948

helped sponsor an exhibition of modern art by members of the *Société Anonyme*, a New York group under the aegis of Katherine Dreier.[338] The outcry against the show, which was the Toronto public's first exposure to abstract art, was considerable and Harris defended the artists' intentions in an essay published in the May issue of the *Canadian Forum*.[339]

The complex configuration of *Mountain Forms* contrasts with the essential simplicity of *Mount Temple* (cat. no. 152). The unified shape of that mountain in the Banff area rises weightlessly, bathed in a suffused light. There is a sense of immateriality to this picture that is partly achieved by its pale, cool hues. The obdurate form of the mountain is softened considerably by the tonality of the colour scheme. *Lake and Mountains, c.* 1927-28 (cat. no. 153), based on a small study in the McMichael Canadian Collection, is a far more space-filled composition. The rising strata of cloud formations that reach expressively high above the central forms provide a sense of spatial sublimity that is unique among the mountain compositions. The blues and greens are especially sharp and crystalline, but there is a subtle delicacy in the pink tones of the sculpted shapes of the clouds. The lake waters in the foreground are illumined by a stream of intense white light that floods the lower section of the painting from behind the dark headlands. The crisply defined waves are reminiscent of those in *Ice House, Coldwell, Lake Superior* of 1923, and, as in that work, there is a haunting spiritual quality to the picture.

Between 1929 and 1930, Harris produced several of his most significant paintings of the Rockies. *Mount Robson, c.* 1929, (fig. no. 24) is a large, monumentally designed composition containing a strong sense of plasticity. The smooth, rounded snow-forms balance the sharp, angular character of the rock formations. *Mount Lefroy, c.* 1930 (cat. no. 158), on the other hand, is a more simplified composition: the single peak thrusts emphatically into the sky. The configuration is the most acutely pointed of Harris' Rocky Mountain subjects, startling in its thrust. The artist has edited the oil study on which it is based (cat. no. 159), underscoring the vertical nature of the shape by emphasizing the upward linear direction of the snow formations that clothe its right-hand side. As well, he has provided a point of visual focus at the very tip of the mountain by placing a rounded cloud configuration behind the peak.

Fig. 24 Mount Robson
oil on canvas
50 1/2 × 60", 128.3 × 152.4 cm
Estate of Howard K. Harris; photo Williams Brothers

Mountains have always held a special place in romantic iconography. They are the point of earthly contact with the celestial sphere: physically, one can reach no higher point and figuratively, the mountain peak represents spiritual heights. The overt triangular form of

158. Mt. Lefroy, *1930*
oil on canvas
52 1/4 × 60 3/8 in.; 132.7 × 153.4 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection,
Kleinburg, Ontario

Mount Lefroy is mystically emblematic. Mme Blavatsky wrote, in *Isis Unveiled*, that

> The triangle played a prominent part in the religious symbolism of every great nation; for everywhere it represented the three great principles — spirit, force and matter; or the active (male), passive (female), and the dual or correlative principle which partakes of both and binds the two together.[340]

Both Mondrian and Kandinsky were fully aware of its spiritual significance. For the latter

> The life of the spirit may be graphically represented as a large acute-angled triangle, divided horizontally into unequal parts, with the narrowest segment uppermost. . . . The whole triangle moves slowly . . . forward and upward. . . . At the apex of the highest segment often stands one man. His joyful vision is the measure of his inner sorrow. Even those who are nearest him in sympathy do not understand. Angrily they abuse him as a charlatan or madman. . . . There are artists in each segment of the triangle. He who can see beyond the limits of his own segment is a prophet and helps the advance.[341]

As well, the pointed shape of a projectile signified for the Theosophists the thought-form of "an upward rush of devotion."[342] No doubt the acutely angled peak of *Mount Lefroy* represents, perhaps unconsciously, such a thought-form, and Harris may have considered himself one of those lonely individuals psychically located at or near the apex of the triangle of cosmic spirituality.

159. Rocky Mountain Sketch, Mt. Lefroy, *c. 1930*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario

In 1930, the artist exhibited *Mountains in Snow* (fig. no. 25)[343] which is related to the oil study *Rocky Mountain Sketch LXV* (cat. no. 157). The proportions in the large composition have been increased to give the unidentified mountain an even more "ascending" character. The tiny peak at the very top of the configuration is strongly lighted — possibly by the "white ray" of spiritual truth. It almost physically lifts off the plane of earthly reality to become one with the realm of the spirit. It is an idealized form that bears little resemblance to actual experience, embodying Harris' view that "Real art never seeks factual truth. It seeks to express the character and spirit of a scene in its own plastic language. . . ."[334] The contours of the mountain form in the small oil sketch are outlined in bands of blue tones lighter than the colour of the sky. Doubtless they represent the

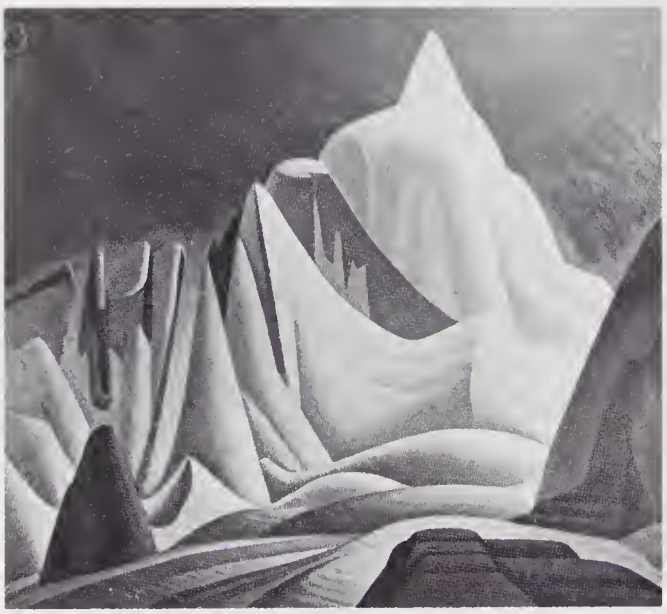
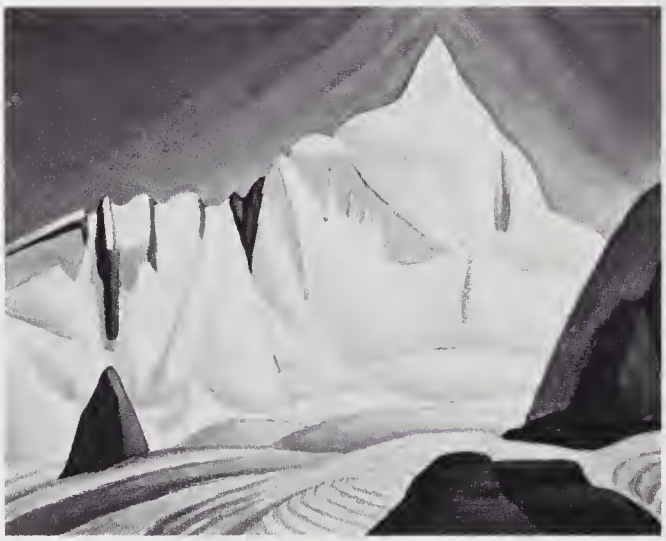


Fig. 25 Mountains in Snow, *c. 1929*
52 × 58", 132.1 × 147.3 cm
Private collection



157. Mountain Sketch LXV, *c. 1929*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Private collection

aura of the Theosophical thought-form produced by the spiritual idea clothed in the material shape of the mystical triangle found pre-existing in nature.

Isolation Peak, c. 1930 (cat. no. 156) is Harris' quintessential mountain composition and the *summa* of his spiritual ideas related to both life and art. It is the mystical triangle incarnate in earthly form. From extant drawings and oil sketches one can follow the artist's path from the particular through the creation of a universal ideal. A drawing (private collection)[345] executed probably in 1928 — the last time Harris travelled to the west before the work was painted — introduces the characteristic shape of the peak, seen far in the distance, situated among a whole range of mountain forms. From this factual study Harris painted a small oil sketch (London Public Art Gallery) that is closely based on the original. A later drawing, with a colour key indicating the various hues and tones (fig. no. 28), formed the basis for another oil study (private collection).[346] In this composition, the vital motif has been isolated and brought forward, assuming a larger and more prominent position. The radiating bands of light seen in *Mountain Sketch LXV* reappear as a corona around the contours of the form. The foreground, however, proved too complex a design and in a second oil sketch (cat. no. 157) Harris eliminated the rock striations and smoothed the surface in front of the mountain into a flowing series of rhythms that lead the eye in a sweeping fashion into the middle distance. The rocky peak, partly covered with snow, has become even more triangular. The final canvas is based on the final design, the Platonic ideal, far removed from the earthly world of its material existence. From the original experience, recorded in the first drawing, to the canvas itself, the overall process accords with Harris' view that

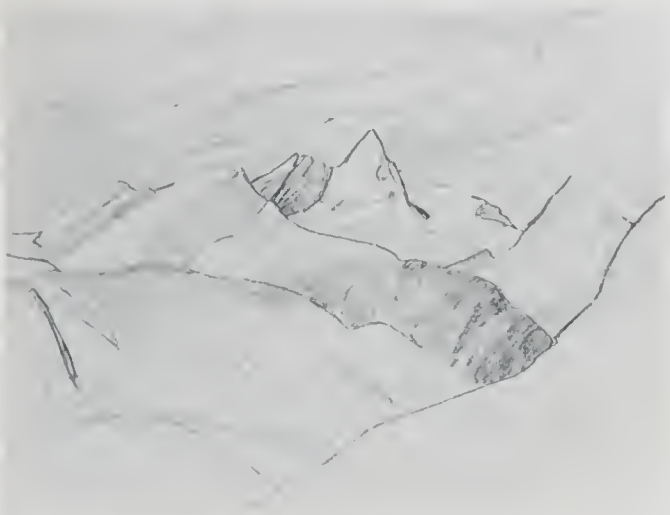


Fig. 26 Isolation Peak
pencil on paper
9 1/2 × 6 3/4″, 24.1 × 17.1 cm (sight)
Private collection

Fig. 28 Isolation Peak, *colour key study*
pencil on paper
9 1/2 × 6 3/4″, 24.1 × 17.1 cm
Yaneff International Gallery

Fig. 27 Glaciers, Rocky Mountains, *n.d.*
oil on card
12 × 15″, 30.5 × 38.1 cm
London Public Library and Art Museum
F. D. Housser Memorial Collection

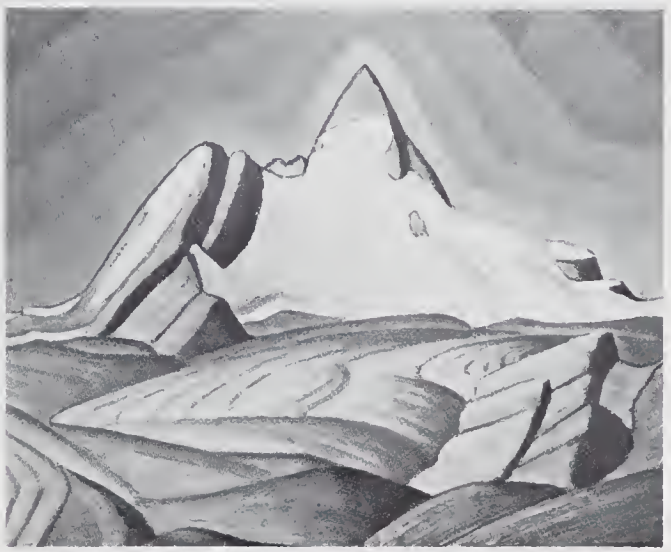


Fig. 29 Isolation Peak, *c. 1929*
oil on board
11 3/4 × 14 3/4″, 29.8 × 37.5 cm
Private collection

156. Isolation Peak, *c. 1930*
oil on canvas
42 × 50 in.; 106.7 × 127 cm
On loan from the Hart House Permanent Collection

155. Isolation Peak, *c. 1929*
oil on board
11 3/4 × 14 3/4 in.;
29.9 × 37.5 cm
James and Mary Boughton

"creatively one can only move from and through the particular to the universal, and to achieve universal expression one must give oneself fully to the particular.". . .

> The artist moves slowly but surely through many transitions toward a deeper and universal expression. From his particular love, and from his process of creating from it, he is led inevitably to universal qualities and toward a universal vision and understanding. These are the fruits of a natural growth having its roots deep in the soil of the land, its life in the pervading and replenishing spirit of the North, and its heart-beat one with the life of its people.[347]

In the process of the material growth of the pictorial idea, from the first drawing to the final composition, we can see the spiritual unfolding of the artist's consciousness as it reaches toward a cosmic goal. The development of *Isolation Peak* is the only instance in which we can closely follow the artist's spiritual ascent, watching him reach "the peak of his expressive, communicative vision and [participate] in the enduring motion of universal life and order. . . ."[348] *Isolation Peak* is the climax of Harris' spiritual search for enduring values, and a living embodiment of his illuminative experience, his seeing with the inner eye:

> If we view a great mountain soaring into the sky, it may excite us, evoke

> an uplifted feeling within us. There is an interplay of something we see outside of us with our inner response.
>
> The artist takes that response and its feelings and shapes it on canvas with paint so that when it is finished it contains that experience.[349]

In a commentary on F. B. Housser's *A Canadian Art Movement*, a writer stated that

> There is a gigantic romance in the making of mountains which appeals to the poet within us. The antiquities of men are small before the sacred antiquity of mountains. . . . The artist comes first in an account of the mountains, and there is nothing more worthy of the devotion of Canadian art than the Rocky Mountains of Canada — not to build themes of design upon them, but to interpret their actual appearance, so that others can see the scene the artist saw.[350]

Lighthouse, Father Point, 1930

Harris' movements during 1929 are not clearly documented. He did not travel to the Rockies in the summer, nor did he sketch along the North Shore. At some point, he collaborated with Lismer on a decorative scheme for the Lecture Hall of the Theosophical Lodge, and he may well have remained in Toronto for most of the year. However, in the fall of 1929, Harris travelled by car with Jackson to Metis Beach on the South Shore of the St. Lawrence River east of the town of Rimouski. It was Harris' first trip to that Quebec region but for Jackson it was familiar territory. A Montrealer by birth, Jackson was the only member of the original Group of Seven to paint Quebec scenery on a regular basis. By 1925, he had established a pattern of sketching tours in the late winter and early spring to such villages as St. Tite des Caps, Urbainville and La Malbaie. His canvases of the rolling farm lands of the St. Lawrence Valley and the small communities are among his finest and most sensitive works.

Harris' Metis Beach oil studies contain little formal interest in relation to his late sketches of the North Shore of Lake Superior. Most of them depict small cottages and houses set against the green background of the river shore. There are no dramatic vistas, nor any foreground motifs to stimulate transcendental ideas. However, at the harbour village of Father Point, west of Metis Beach, he discovered a subject that deeply attracted him: a concrete lighthouse of modern design.

There were no poetic associations attached to the structure. Its ideal, man-made form was the product of the contemporary spirit of engineering whose principles were self-reliant. Like the grain elevator and the skyscraper, it was a manifestation of the creative forces at work in North America. Form was dictated by function, not by imported architectural values. Harris made a detailed pencil drawing of the lighthouse whose central supporting column was buttressed by a series of attached shafts. At the top, a red-painted metal casing housed the electric beam.[351] From colour notes inscribed on the study, the day was dark and cloudy, the colour of the atmosphere almost the same as the concrete itself. At the base of the lighthouse the keeper's house and adjoining sheds were painted a "silver-grey," enlivened by red roofs.

From the drawing, Harris painted a small oil study (cat. no. 160). The design has been simplified and contains a visual power that is equal to many of the Lake Superior sketches. The work is almost monochromatic; a blue-grey tonality pervades the entire scene. Though the artificial beam had not been activated, Harris arranged light blue bands of light in the sky behind the top of the shaft that appear to radiate from that source.

In 1930, Harris painted the large canvas *Lighthouse, Father Point* (cat. no. 161) which is closely based on his earlier study. The tall structure rises majestically above the rocky shoreline and the stretch of river beyond and is silhouetted against a wide expanse of sky. Though there are no cloud formations in this area of the picture, the work recalls the composition of *North Shore, Lake Superior* of 1926. Like that earlier painting, and others such as *Lake Superior III, c.* 1928, *Isolation Peak, c.* 1930 and *North Shore, Baffin Island, c.* 1930, *Lighthouse, Father Point* belongs to that transcendental classification of the artist's work that embodies a cosmic consciousness, a mystical insight.

The canvas contains an ineffable spatial envelope. The subtly graduated blue-grey tones of the sky seem to pulsate with a luminous life. As in the sky of *Isolation Peak,*

160. Lighthouse, Father Point, *1929*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Private collection

no physical distance is represented. It is a manifestation of the fourth dimension, the plane of consciousness which Harris had noted in his 1924 review of Ouspensky's *Tertium Organum*. The scene is not spiritually illuminated by the radiant light that streams from the realm of the spirit in *North Shore, Lake Superior*. There is no action, either depicted or implied. Behind the upper section of the lighthouse, the sky glows with a delicate, expanding gradation of tone. This is the only life that pervades the silence and supernatural calm of the painting.

The Father Point lighthouse was a beacon, a guiding light for mariners on the St. Lawrence during darkness and fog. For Harris, it was a symbol, a material correspondence for spiritual guidance along the ascending path of life toward cosmic consciousness. It was an emblem for the source of mystical illumination which shed light or truth onto the darkness of humankind's uninformed inner vision. There is, however, no electric beam issuing from the top of the structure, implying, perhaps, that insight was as yet unrealized.

In Harris' view, it was the task of the artist to effect that illumination through his art. Within the context of his esoteric system of ideas, the experience of such pictures as *Lighthouse, Father Point* provided a "channel," a "door to our deepest understanding wherein we have the capacity for universal experience."[352] For Harris, "Art is one of the ways in which man endeavours to find himself in the universe,"[353] just as the beacon of light allows the passing ship to locate its true position in time and space.

161. Lighthouse, Father Point, *1930*
oil on canvas
42 × 50 in.; 106.7 × 127 cm
Collection of The National Gallery of Canada

163. Fog and Ice, Kane Basin, *1930*
oil on board
11 15/16 × 14 15/16 in.; 30.3 × 37.9 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Bequest of Sir Frederick G. Banting, 1941

Arctic Landscapes, 1930

In the summer of 1930, Harris and Jackson were invited to accompany the Canadian government supply ship *Beothic* on its annual voyage to the Arctic. It was Jackson's second trip to the far north as he and Dr. Frederick Banting, his friend and sketching companion, had joined the ship's crew on its summer excursion in 1927. His interest in the polar region as a subject for art had been stimulated years before: "Mr. Jackson said he first got the idea of going to the Arctic to paint in conversations he had with the late Tom Thomson."[354] In an interview before their departure in 1927, Jackson stated that

> There is a country to the north of us which is unique and distinctly Canadian. Let our artists turn explorers; let them go up into this territory and interpret it for Canadians. Much has already been done. We have heroic landscapes of Hudson's Bay and the Labrador coast. Thomson's *West Wind* will serve to explain what I mean by "heroic landscape." Canada's great background for heroes has been treated too often as a stage for a mere Punch and Judy show.[355]

On his return the press had reported that the artist was "more Canadian, more virile than ever."[356] Jackson commented that he would never paint in Europe again and that artists should put themselves "at the head of the big adventure of discovering Canada's vast northern empire."[357] His pictures painted on his return capture the bold lines and rhythms of the rugged Arctic mountains and coast line enlivened by the drama of weather effects and the subtle effects of the northern light playing over the snow and ice fields.

L. S. Harris, A. Y. Jackson, and Captain Falke of the Beothic, *1930. Photo courtesy National Gallery of Canada*

Harris and Jackson embarked at Sydney, Nova Scotia on August 1, 1930 with the *Beothic* laden with supplies for the Arctic communities. The voyage would take nearly two months and was the most extensive expedition undertaken in one season into the Arctic region.[358]

> The ship went directly north to Godhaven on the Greenland coast, and then up the coast to Etah where Commander Peary used to winter, and then into the Kane Basin. From this point we went south along the coast of Ellesmere Island into Lancaster Sound where we were held up by ice for days. For four hours on the way out the ship was in danger of being crushed by the immense weight of the huge moving ice-floes. We then went around the top of Baffin's Island, down the coast to Hudson's Straits, through the straits and across the northern waters of

Hudson Bay to Chesterfield Inlet. Later we returned through the straits and proceeded southward along the Labrador coast to Nova Scotia.[359]

The party returned on September 27, 1930 after an often uncomfortable trip. Captain Falke remarked that the storm that they had encounted in Baffin Bay was the worst he had ever experienced in the area.[360]

During the trip the artists were often frustrated in their attempts to sketch the more interesting views: "we usually saw the most exciting subjects while steaming through channels or while being bumped by pack ice. On many occasions we had time only to take rapid notes."[361] These "notes" were pencil sketches which the artists worked up into oil studies, "crowded in our small cabin, seated on the edge of our respective bunks with only a port-hole to let in the light."[362] Nonetheless, from the drawings and painted studies they were able to make on board and during the several shore excursions made when the ship off-loaded supplies, the artists produced a considerable body of work. Harris apparently returned with some fifty oil sketches.[363] As well, he recorded on film the passing scene from the *Beothic* deck and the visits ashore; at the insistence of his daughter he had brought along a movie camera.[364]

Harris' small Arctic scenes are more closely related to his North Shore sketches than to his Rocky Mountain studies. The distant mountains, shorelines and islands are seen across the surface of the polar sea — though the latter is often filled with icebergs and floes. There are no foreground configurations to those produced on ship; and with a treeless environment on land, his works done ashore contain no emblematic configurations. In effect, the whole setting is the essential symbol. It was the epicentre of the "spiritual replenishment" of the North as he conceived it. He had reached the top of the continent, the very source of the cosmic "flow" and the locus of the soul's "simple vision of high things."[365]

The Kane Basin, between Ellesmere Island and the north coast of Greenland, was the nearest the party reached the magnetic pole and *Fog and Ice, Kane Basin* (cat. no. 163) is among the artist's most significant Arctic pictures. Few of his small compositions are as space-filled or as simplified in design. Far in the distance, rising above the deep blue horizon is a yellow-toned fog bank seen across an expanse of ice floes and open water. Above the fog formation are luminous bands of greyed light. Few of Harris' pictorial designs are as elemental as this; light and space are the only significant features. Within the artist's cosmology they represented spiritual illumination and the ambience in which such illumination took place: consciousness.

The basic colour contrast between the yellow fog and the blue sea had a mystical significance for Theosophists and gnostics in general. For Mme Blavatsky and her followers, the one represented intelligence and the other religious feeling. But the yellow-blue polarity also had a wider esoteric symbolism. The German nineteenth century poet Goethe developed an esoteric theory of colour which was of great importance to a wide variety of individuals seeking mystical truth in the "Epoch of the Great Spiritual." Rudolf Steiner, a leading Goethe specialist, introduced the poet's chromatic symbolism into his own interpretation of Theosophical principles.[366] Whether Harris was directly familiar with these ideas or not, they played a part in the larger context of a family of occult concepts which were known to many individuals interested in anti-materialist thought. Kandinsky, for one, adopted Goethe's yellow-blue polarity for his theories on colour in *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*.

162. Morning, Robertson Bay, Greenland, *1930*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
From the C. S. Band Collection

164. Fog and Ice, Smith Sound, *1930*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
From the C. S. Band Collection

165. Rice Strait, Ellesmere Island, *1930*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
From the C. S. Band Collection

166. Ellesmere Island, *1930*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1
The McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario

For him, yellow represented, not divine intelligence, but material reality; it was *"the typically earthly colour"* which contrasted with blue, *"the typically heavenly colour."*[367] Appearing together, they "have an active effect corresponding to man's participation in continuous and perhaps eternal cosmic motion. . . ."[368] White, the "living" colour of the North for Harris, was in Kandinsky's view a symbol of

> a world from which all colours as material attributes have disappeared. . . . There comes a great silence which materially represented is like a cold, indestructible wall going on into the infinite. White, therefore, acts upon our psyche as a great, absolute silence. . . . It is not a dead silence, but one pregnant with possibilities. White has the appeal of nothingness that is before birth, of the world in the ice age.[369]

Harris certainly knew Kandinsky's work, as examples had been included in the *International Exhibition of Modern Art* by members of the *Société Anonyme* held at the Art Gallery of Toronto. In his discussions with Brooker in the late 1920s, Kandinsky's theories would certainly have been a prominent topic as Brooker was deeply interested in the subject.[370] *Fog and Ice, Kane Basin* may well have symbolized the spiritual union between earth-life and the celestial realm that was effected at the very top of the planet in the silent white world of the North "pregnant with possibility."

In other Arctic sketches, Harris employed the motif of bands of light that radiate the life of the spirit onto the scene below: *Fog and Ice, Smith Sound* (cat. no. 164) and *Ellesmere Island* (cat. no. 166) conform to the configuration of yellow rays in *Lake Superior Sketch XXXIX*, one of his most mystical North Shore sketches. In *Rice Strait, Ellesmere Island* (cat. no. 165) a spectral illumination flooding the surface of the ice-filled sea from behind a headland is similar to the light in his large canvas *Lake and Mountains*.

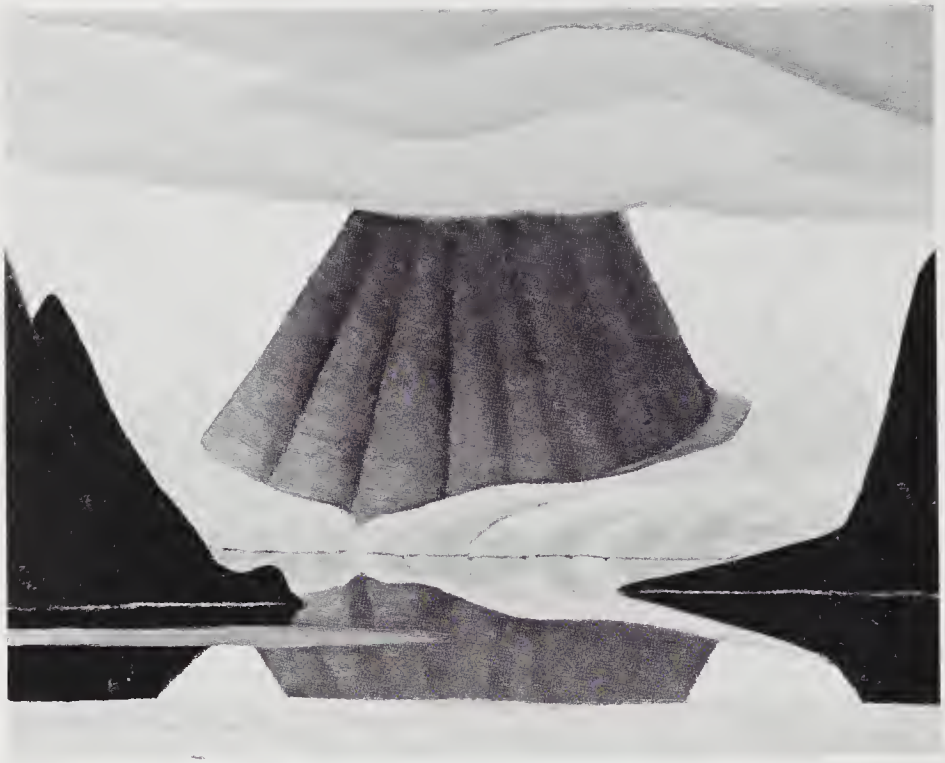
Several of the studies are almost topographical in nature: among them are *Morning, Robertson Bay, Greenland* (cat. no. 168) and *Mountains, Baffin Island* (cat. no. 168). Their realism, however, is only relative. Such works as *Arctic Sketch XIII* (cat. no. 167) are more characteristic in their abstracted idealization. The latter, with the dark, conical mountain girdled at its base by an encircling glacier and with its top shrouded from sight by a cloud layer, is a close-up view of the central motif in *Ellesmere Island* and one of the most Wagnerian of Harris' northern scenes.

On his return, Harris wrote to Emily Carr: "I am just back from the arctic. Jackson and I had an eventful, varied, thrilling (at times), monotonous (at times) trip."[371] Later, he reported to her that

> The arctic was an experience. I know that if it were possible for one to go up there and take one's time and go where one liked it would yield some fine things. But it is not possible. You'd have to charter a real ship.[372]

During the period that he was working up large scale paintings of the far north, Harris implied that he was not fully confident in his creative powers:

> I'm painting some of the Arctic things — not bad — but nothing to usher the soul into eternal bliss. I am striving but also not realizing and aware most moments that I'll come to the usual disillusionment of [not]



167. Arctic Sketch XIII, *1930*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.;
30.5 × 38.1 cm
Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen's University, Kingston
Gift of Mrs. Etherington, c. 1944

168. Mountains, Baffin Island, *1930*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.;
30.5 × 38.1 cm
From the C. S. Band Collection

> accomplishing anything unusual. I'm trying to get to the summit of my soul and work from there — there where the universe sings.[373]

Six of the Arctic canvases and thirty-two oil sketches were shown along with an equal number of works by Jackson in an exhibition entitled *Arctic Paintings and Sketches by Lawren Harris and A. Y. Jackson, R.C.A.*, held at the Art Gallery of Toronto in May 1931. Among the paintings was *Bylot Island, South Shore* (fig. no. 30) and a large composition worked up from the small study *Fog and Ice, Smith Sound*. The first of these is a monumental and simplified design of the island placed in the centre of the picture and flanked by two smaller island forms in the distance. Rhythmic waves, their troughs placed perpendicular to the picture plane, lead the eye into the centre of the symmetrical configuration of pictorial components.

The well-known *Bylot Island* (fig. no. 31) is an equally strong composition full of subtle light and colouration. The great snow-covered dome of the mountain glows with a supernatural force against the foil of the grey-toned sky. In the foreground, blues and purples gleam softly, adding to the expressive power of the picture. The intensity of colour in *North Shore, Baffin Island I* (cat. no. 174) is startling in comparison. The blue hills of the distant shoreline have a luminous life of their own. In such works as this Harris achieves the union between the world of nature and the realms of the spirit that he sought in his art after 1922: discovering the ultimate "oneness" that is the underlying foundation of all phenomena, and embodying his inner vision in a materialized thought-form whose physical and spiritual clarity is defined by that transcendent idea. It is a timeless picture; silent, and remote from the life of individuals, if not from their spirit. Out of the North, as depicted here, flowed

Fig. 30 Bylot Island, South Shore, *c. 1930*
oil on canvas
unlocated
Photo, National Gallery of Canada

Fig. 31 Bylot Island, *c. 1930*
oil on canvas
47 1/2 × 50 1/2", 108 × 128.3 cm
National Gallery of Canada

172. Icebergs and Mountains, Greenland,
c. 1930
oil on canvas
36 × 45 in.; 91.4 × 114.3 cm
Collection of the Art Gallery of Hamilton
Gift of H.S. Southam, ESQ., C.M.G., LL.D., 1953

173. Icebergs, Davis Strait, *1930*
oil on canvas
48 × 60 in.; 121.9 × 152.4 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection,
Kleinburg, Ontario

171. North Labrador, *1930*
oil on board
12 × 15 in.;
30.5 × 38.1 cm
Private collection

> a clarity, a white sanity, a right sense of values — a discrimination, and a willingness to live cleanly and create nobly beyond our present general attitude.[374]

Icebergs, Davis Strait (cat. no. 173) is another work from 1930, which, like the Rocky Mountain pictures, attempts to create an ideal form — in this case the archetype of icebergs. Once again, the artist reaches beyond the particular form to the universal idea. The infinite variety of colours to be found in such ice formations — hues covering the whole spectrum of light — is reduced to elemental hues of green and blue. The shape, like the white dome in *Bylot Island*, is placed against the resonating grey-blue space of the sky like that in *Lighthouse, Father Point*, and stands out in sharp contrast. The spaciousness of such sketches as *Fog and Ice, Kane Basin*, resulting from the light-toned cloud shapes set in the expansive sky, is rejected for an almost claustrophobic spatial envelope that pushes the ice formation forward into a shallow space. In the words of one reviewer

> His icebergs are strange monuments with a symbol embodied in their form and their colours. They do not freeze you when you look at them, for they are not of ice, they are what Lawren Harris feels and thinks after he has contemplated them.[375]

The awesome simplicity of *Icebergs, Davis Strait* was not matched in any other of Harris' Arctic scenes of ice formations. *Grounded*

174. North Shore, Baffin Island I, *c. 1930*
oil on canvas
32 × 42 in.; 81.3 × 106.7 cm
Collection of The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

Fig. 32 In Buchanan Bay, Ellesmere Island, *1930*
oil on board
12 × 15″, 30.5 × 38.1 cm
C. S. Band Collection

Fig. 33 Grounded Icebergs, *c. 1931*
oil on canvas
31 1/2 × 40″, 80 × 101.6 cm
Private collection
Photo, National Gallery of Canada

Icebergs (fig. no. 33) and *Icebergs and Mountains, Greenland* (cat. no. 172) are more complex pictorial designs whose visual impact is less concentrated. The ice shapes of the latter are similar in many respects to those in the sketch *Morning, Robertson Bay*, though in the painting the more conceptual blue forms resemble rock crystals with their multifaceted planes. Small in proportion, they are set in a spacious environment with a large sky area in which an irregular cloud formation tends to distract the observer's attention. An undated work, *Bylot Island I* (cat. no. 175), may have been painted later than 1930-31; the sharp angles of the shoreline recall Harris' earlier *Mountain Forms*.

The Arctic excursion in the summer of 1930 was the artist's last trip into the northern wilderness in search of absolute values represented in the outward appearance of nature. During the summers of 1932 and 1933, Harris sketched at Point au Baril on Georgian Bay,[376] but by this date he had reached a crisis in his personal life and had almost entirely stopped painting. The great adventure which had begun in the fall of 1908 with his sketching tour of the Laurentians with Fergus Kyle had come to a close. The Canadian landscape no longer held a magnetic attraction. The stern canvases of the polar region are his last important series of representational works. They mark a denouement in the drama of the first section of his creative life. The next phase, beginning in the mid-1930s, led him beyond nature into the realm of pure form.

175. Bylot Island I, *n.d.*
oil on canvas
32 × 45 in.; 81.3 × 114.3 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

Epilogue

After his return from the Arctic, Harris entered a spiritually unsettled period which affected his creative momentum. His letters to Emily Carr after 1930 communicate a sense of deepening unease.

> Sometimes I feel as if my shell were creeping around me shutting me off from zest and light and pure form. I don't know a thing and yet I feel as if I'd been through enough. . . . I need to get to work and disregard all the silly vagaries of personal feelings. Always somehow if one keeps working something comes through.[377]

The Arctic canvases had not satisfied him, and he felt he had been "dull" for a long time. He informed Carr that "I feel like painting, want to paint, [but] for a few years I've been making myself do it in a effort to stir the inner fire."[378]

The 1930 Group of Seven exhibition was reviewed by Bertram Brooker and he realized the hiatus that all the artists had reached at this point:

> The present show at Toronto rings the deathknell of the Group of Seven as a unified and dominant influence in Canadian painting. . . They have themselves ceased to experiment. Moreover, they are much less productive. . . . Jackson and Harris, the only two of the Group who have much time for painting, are represented mostly by smaller paintings than usual, all landscapes, and of a type that one has come to expect. The experimentation is over, the old aggressiveness has declined.[379]

The following year, Harris began to return to compositions he had painted a decade earlier and refashion them anew:

> I have taken a thing done ten years ago and repainted it on another canvas. It is surprising what happens. I often think to work a subject out over three or four canvases would be well worth while.
>
> Recently . . . I feel the need to [play?] back and forth over a lifetime of work. That is to take up a subject done years back and press forward with it. Study it off and on for a week or so until something more definite, more developed emerges and then go to it on a new canvas.[380]

Repainting earlier designs he found gave him a "new perspective on my present attempts. I find it somewhat reassuring in that I go to present work with added conviction and a little greater freedom."[381] Harris, when this was written in December of 1931, was forty-six years old. The creative adventure of seeking to paint Canada in her own terms in the company of like-minded artists had been going on since 1914. The Group of Seven had accomplished what it originally set out to do: to revolutionize the vision of art in Canada. Their paintings were widely accepted by the public and now other artists were adopting their pictorial formulas.

The 1931 Group of Seven exhibition was the last they held together. At a party held at Harris' home after the opening, Jackson stated that

> The interest in a freer form of art expression in Canada has become so general that we believe the time has

> arrived when the Group of Seven should expand, and the original members become the members of a larger group of artists, with no officials or constitution, but held together by the common intention of doing original and sincere work.[382]

The new "larger group" was to be the Canadian Group of Painters which was founded in February 1933 with twenty-eight members. Harris was elected President and F. B. Housser, Secretary. The first exhibition was held at the Art Gallery of Toronto in November 1933, and the foreword to the catalogue revealed new directions:

> Hitherto it has been a landscape art . . . but here and there figures and portraits have been slowly added to the subject matter, strengthening and occupying the background of landscape. Here also more modern ideas of technique and subject have been brought into the scope of Canadian painting. . . .[383]

By this year, Harris' production had almost ceased. In June 1933, he wrote to Emily Carr: "About work. I potter along. Have done a few passable canvases — arctic subjects."[384] Later, he wrote at greater length:

> Haven't painted for ages it seems and feel as if my painting days are over. . . . Occasionally I get a flicker of an idea then it fades or sufficient enthusiasm is lacking and there we are. Nothing to do about it.
>
> I am at a crossroads really and have as yet no vision to know what to do; what road to take. But my O my, I am anxious to be on my way — and that is trying when one doesn't know the way.[385]

During 1933, Harris turned with greater concentration to his Theosophical studies, delivering lectures and writing articles for the *Canadian Theosophist*.[386] In doing so he hoped to find the guidance which would lead him forward from the impasse he had reached. His deeper concern for occult values with which to reshape his life caused severe marital problems: Mrs. Harris was disinterested in such issues. The personal pressures that built up finally climaxed when, in the fall of 1934, to the shock of the artistic community in Toronto, Harris and Bess Housser obtained divorces in the United States and married. They had known each other since 1920 when Harris had painted her portrait. Both were artists and Theosophists and had developed a strong, if secret, affection for each other. It caused strain with many of their intimate friends, and late that year they left Toronto for Hanover, New Hampshire, where Lawren's uncle, with whom he had lived in Berlin in 1904, was head of the German Department of Dartmouth College.

The departure was a break with the past and freed Harris for a new creative adventure. In 1934, he painted his first non-objective picture.[387] As Kandinsky and Mondrian, under the direct influence of Theosophical and gnostic ideas, had earlier replaced the world of nature with the transcendental realm of pure form, so Harris abandoned his once-beloved North. Yet the triangles, lines and spheres to be found in such paintings as *Abstract*, 1943 (Hart House Permanent Collection) are dependent in part on the transcendental landscapes of the North Shore, Rocky Mountains and Arctic. In these canvases he

had attempted to depict the formal organization and ordered harmony of the spiritual realm which he perceived with his inner eye beyond the outward appearance of nature.

From the early Berlin scenes of 1907 through the Toronto house pictures, decorative snow compositions, Algoma landscapes and the increasingly abstracted wilderness paintings of the 1920s and Arctic canvases, Harris' creative life had been a continual "pursuit of form."[388] In reviewing the artist's work shown in the 1948 retrospective exhibition held at the Art Gallery of Toronto, Northrop Frye concluded that

> It is the peculiar quality of Lawren Harris' painting that it is partly an act of will. He does not surrender to nature and let it grow organically through his mind into art; he has a strongly intellectual mind which imposes pictorial form on nature. He explores and abandons one genre after another in a drive to articulate, not the pictoral genius of a subject, but the pictorial forms of his own mind which are projected on the subject. He is the type of painter who grows through states of metamorphosis, breaking his life into periods of experiment: the type represented by Turner and Picasso. This is the revolutionary type, and Harris is Canada's only important revolutionary painter.[389]

Notes

The Early Years

1. Information concerning Harris' early life and family history is to be found in two basic sources: answers supplied by the artist in a *Biographical Questionnaire* sent to him by Martin Baldwin, Director of the Art Gallery of Toronto, on 19 September 1947 (Archives, Art Gallery of Ontario); and a letter from Bess Harris, Vancouver to J. Russell Harper, Curator of Canadian Art, The National Gallery of Canada, 14 July 1962 (Research Library, The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa). The first was in connection with the exhibition *Lawren Harris, Paintings, 1910–1948*, organized by the Art Gallery of Toronto and shown in Toronto 16 October–19 November, 1948; the second was in relation to the preparation of the Lawren Harris Retrospective Exhibition 1963, organized by The National Gallery of Canada, 7 June–27 October, 1963 and subsequently at the Vancouver Art Gallery. Both exhibitions were retrospectives. The Toronto show contained one hundred and eighteen works; the Ottawa and Vancouver show included eighty pictures.
2. Bess Harris to J. Russell Harper.
3. In his replies to Baldwin's *Biographical Questionnaire*, Harris stated he was in Berlin three years — 1905, 1906, 1907. In a letter from the artist to Martin Baldwin, 9 May 1948 (Archives, Art Gallery of Ontario) Harris stated that he was in Europe while aged 19, 20 and 21. This would put the dates back a year to 1904, 1905 and 1906. In her letter to J. Russell Harper, Bess Harris commented that "Lawren does not remember exactly when he went to Germany to study but he thinks that he was about 18 years of age — and that it was likely in the early autumn of 1904 (Note: this date may have been 1903). He returned to Canada for the summer of 1905 (04) but went back to Germany again in the autumn and remained there until the summer of 1908 (07). He worked in Germany for four winters." He apparently returned to Canada after the summer of 1907 before going to Palestine and Arabia with Norman Duncan in November 1907.
4. Lawren Harris to Sydney Key, 9 May 1948 (Archives, Art Gallery of Ontario).
5. Bess Harris to J. Russell Harper.
6. Identification is made on the basis of the "Herr Wille" mentioned by Bess Harris, *ibid*. Fritz von Wille was a largely self-taught landscape painter who had trained in the Dusseldorf Academy's drawing classes 1879-82. He painted almost exclusively scenes in the near-wilderness Eifel district. No mention is made of his working or teaching in Berlin between 1904-07 by either U. Thieme and F. Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon der Bildenden Kunstler*, or E. Bénézit, *Dictionnaire . . . des Peintres, Sculpteurs, Dessinateurs et Graveurs*. There is no reason to believe that, thoroughly trained as an academic draughtsman, he did not teach private classes in Berlin. No other known "Wille" is recorded whose dates or interests accord with Harris' student years.
7. Adolf Schlabitz was a graduate of the Berlin Fine Arts Academy and studied at the Julian Academy in Paris during 1883-84. A. Y. Jackson, Harris' sketching companion between 1919-30, attended the Julian Academy in the fall of 1907. Schlabitz was a respected teacher in Berlin during Harris' student years.
8. Franz Skarbina had also studied at the Berlin Fine Arts Academy and was a well known eclectic painter and teacher in Berlin at the time. He was a member of the Group of XI founded in that city in 1892, and in 1899-1901 a member of The Berlin Secession. See U. Thieme and F. Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon des Bildenden Kunstler*, XXXI, 110.
9. See A. Y. Jackson, *A Painter's Country: The Autobiography of A. Y. Jackson*, Toronto; 1958, 7-9 for his account of the private classes at the Julian Academy he attended in 1907. See also William Rothenstein, *Men and Memories. A History of the Arts 1872-1922*, New York; n.d. (1951?), 36-50 for his review of student life at Julian's and academic art circles in Paris. Conditions in Berlin were similiar to those in Paris. See also Atlanta, Georgia, The High Museum of Art: *The Dusseldorf Academy and the Americans* (exhibition catalogue), 1972 for an account of the Dusseldorf Academy, one of Germany's most important nineteenth century art schools. See also Richard Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, 3 vols, London; 1896, for a general account of German art toward the end of the nineteenth century.
10. Bess Harris to J. Russell Harper.
11. *Ibid*.
12. "Studio Talk. Berlin," *The Studio*, XLII (November 1907), 321.
13. Not only German landscapists but Scandinavian and Russian painters were approaching the northern landscape in a romantic fashion, seeking to capture the spirit of the wilderness scenes. Harris could have seen their work illustrated in the pages of *The Studio*, the most popular international art magazine in Canada in the early years of the twentieth century.
14. See "Studio Talk. Berlin." Harris did browse through the dealers' galleries and saw a variety of works including

pictures by Gauguin, van Gogh and Cézanne. See letter from Lawren Harris to Sydney Key, *op. cit.*
15. See Sixten Ringbom, "The Sounding Cosmos. A Study in the Spiritualism of Kandinsky and the Genesis of Abstract Painting," *Acta Academiae Aboensis*, Series A, XXXVIII, 2, 1970, 58.
16. Lawren Harris to Sydney Key, June 3 [1948]. Archives, Art Gallery of Ontario. Quoted in Sydney Key, "The Paintings," in *Lawren Harris, Paintings, 1910-1948*, (exhibition catalogue) Toronto: Art Gallery of Toronto, 1948, 29.
17. Norman Duncan, "Higgins — A Man's Christian," *Harper's Magazine*, CXIX, 710 (July 1909), 165-79.
18. F. B. Housser, in *A Canadian Art Movement, The Story of the Group of Seven*, Toronto; 1926, reported that the lumber camp experience "finished off his education" as he saw "life as it is lived in the raw." 35.
19. Only one picture, *The Return from Town*, 1911 (unlocated) contains a strongly anecdotal subject. It was exhibited at the April 1911 O.S.A. show, no. 87. In *Notes on Pictures at the O.S.A. Exhibition* (Toronto) 1911, Harris states that the canvas "with its four drunken figures was painted to show the careless hilarity of man amid the silence and dignity of nature."
20. Bess Harris to J. Russell Harper.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Housser, *A Canadian Art Movement*, 37.
23. William J. Covington, ed., *The Torontonian Society Blue Book and Club List*, Toronto, 1930, 100. Harris is last mentioned in that publication in 1934.
24. See "Charter Members: 1908-09," in *The Name of the Club Shall be Arts and Letters*, Toronto: Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, 1958. Pamphlet published on the occasion of the Club's fiftieth anniversary. For a history of the formation of the Arts and Letters Club, see Augustus Bridle, "How the Club Came to Be," *The Lamps*, Toronto (December 1919), 8-12.
25 Dennis Reid, *The Group of Seven* (exhibition catalogue) Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada, 1970, 28.

Urban Scenes, c. 1909-13

26. The members of the Toronto Art Students League, formed in 1886, made pencil and ink studies in the vicinity of Toronto but their architectural subjects are usually picturesque buildings along the lakeshore or in rural villages. No known Canadian artist had sketched in the slums before Harris.
27. See Austin Seton Thompson, *Spadina: A Story of Old Toronto*, Toronto; 1975, 199-213 for a discussion of the history of the residences built on the hilltop 1909-12.
28. 39th O.S.A. Exhibition, 31 March-29 April 1911. The works exhibited were no. 85 *A Load of Fence Posts* (private collection), no. 86 *Along Melinda Street* (unlocated), no. 87 *The Return form Town* (unlocated; illustrated), and no. 88 *A Row of Houses, Wellington St. West*.
29, 31. *Notes on Pictures at the O.S.A. Exhibition* [1911].
30. In only one other winter scene, *The Drive*, 1912, did Harris employ an irregular illumination to add a romantic note to the composition.
32. This is the only known instance in Harris' work in which he employs an impressionistic facture to such an emphatic degree. The painting was apparently not exhibited after its appearance in the 40th O.S.A. Exhibition 9-30 March, 1912, no. 86, titled *Eaton Mfg. Bldg. from the Ward*.
33. In 1912 the City of Toronto was divided into nine political wards, all named after Christian saints. St. John's ward was bounded by College (now University) Avenue on the west, Queen Street to the south, Yonge Street on the east and to the north by Bloor Street. See Eric Arthur, *Toronto, No Mean City*, Toronto; 1964, 176-77 for a map of the Toronto ward system published in 1878. Colloquially, the "Ward" referred to a smaller area bounded on the north by College Street. During the early 1900s it became the city's Jewish district though many Italian immigrants had settled there as well. Anglo-Saxon Toronto regarded the "Ward" as a slum.
34. "Cabbagetown" was basically an Anglo-Canadian working class district. The Toronto Housing Company, philanthropically supported by many wealthy citizens, constructed row housing at the turn of the century that was of substantially higher quality than the older buildings in the "Ward" offered.
35. Augustus Bridle, "The Drama of the Ward," *Canadian Magazine*, XXXIV, 1 (November 1909), 6.
36. See Dennis Reid, *A Concise History of Canadian Painting*, Toronto; 1973, chapter 9, "The Canadian Art Club," 118-134.
37. Lawren Harris, "The Canadian Art Club," in *The Yearbook of Canadian Art*, 1913, compiled by the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, Toronto and London; [1913], 213-216.
38. *Ibid.*, 213.
39. *Ibid.*, 216.
40. Fergus Kyle, "The Ontario Society of Artists," in *The Yearbook of Canadian Art*, 1913, 187.
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*, 183.

Landscapes, 1908-13

43. See *Biographical Questionnaire*, 4. Information concerning Harris' early sketching excursions can be found in this source. See also Peter Larisey, "Nationalist Aspects

of Lawren S. Harris' Aesthetics," in *Bulletin*, 23/174, Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada, 3-9.
44. The form of the signature appears on Harris' extant student works, the illustrations in *Harper's Magazine* and such urban scenes as *Little House, c.* 1909, *Old Houses, Wellington Street*, 1910. *Houses, Richmond Street*, 1911, however, employs the characteristic signature LAWREN/HARRIS. *The Gas Works*, 1911-12 is signed both ways. In no known instance after *c.* 1911 does the early signature reappear. Thus *Near St. Jovite* and *Laurentian Landscape with Barn* date from the 1908 trip to the Laurentians with Fergus Kyle, not the later excursion of 1913 in the company of J. E. H. MacDonald.
45. The length of time spent in Minnesota is given by Harris in *Biographical Questionnaire*, 3.
46. Two small works in the McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario, *Rocky Brook*, oil on board, $5^3/_8'' \times 8^3/_4''$, and *Laurentians*, oil on board, $5^1/_2'' \times 8^5/_8''$, however, may date from this 1909 trip.The snow that appears in both these works is not to be found in the 1908 or 1913 Laurentian sketches.
47. The identification of *A Load of Fence Posts* as a Minnesota rather than a Canadian subject is based on the *Harper's Magazine* illustrations of 1909 that depict activities in the vicinity of the lumber camp.
48. C. W. Jefferys, "MacDonald's Sketches," *The Lamps*, Toronto (December 1911), 12.
49. *40th O.S.A. Exhibition*, 9-30 March, 1912. Harris' contributions were *Deserted Barn, Laurentians*, no. 82; *The Drive*, no. 83; *In the Ward*, no. 84; *Eaton Mfg. Bldg. from the Ward*, no. 85; *Houses, Richmond Street*, no. 86; and *Pencil Sketches About Town*, no. 87.
50. *39th O.S.A. Exhibition*, 31 March–29 April 1911, no. 127, *By the River (Early Spring)*.
51. *Notes on Pictures in the O.S.A. Exhibition*, [1911].
52. C. W. Jefferys, "MacDonald's Sketches," 12.
53. Harris' sketch is remarkably close in design and feeling to MacDonald's *Fine Weather, Georgian Bay*, 1913 (private collection). The latter is illustrated in Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 62.
54. Aside from the work cited above, MacDonald painted *The Lonely North*, 1913 (collection Mr. David R. Stratford) and *Log Pickers*, 1913 (London Public Art Gallery). See *J. E. H. MacDonald, R.C.A. 1873–1932* (exhibition catalogue) Toronto: Art Gallery of Toronto, 13 November-December, 1965, nos. 12 and 13, p. 21.
55. American-Scandinavian Society. *Exhibition of Contemporary Scandinavian Art*, Buffalo: Albright Art Gallery, 4-26 January 1913. Introduction and biographical notes by Christian Brinton. The exhibition was reviewed by Elizabeth Luther Cary, "Scandinavian Art," *Art and Progress*, IV, 4 (February 1913), 851-57.
56. Lawren Harris, "The Group of Seven." Talk delivered in the Vancouver Art Gallery, April 1954, and broadcast from CBU, Vancouver, September 15, 1954. Quoted in Peter Mellen, *The Group of Seven*, Toronto; 1970, 23. See also Lawren Harris, "The Group of Seven in Canadian History," *The Canadian Historical Association: Report of the Annual Meeting held at Victoria and Vancouver June 16-19, 1948*, Toronto, 1948, 31. The statement is virtually the same and is repeated verbatim in Lawren Harris, *The Story of the Group of Seven*, Toronto; 1964, 14-15.
57. The artists were attracted mostly to the landscapes or to those figurative works that included a landscape background or depicted rugged Nordic types.
58. J. E. H. MacDonald, "Scandinavian Art," Public Lecture, Art Gallery of Toronto, April 17, 1931, 1-2. Typescript, Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario. Original manuscript in the possession of Thoreau MacDonald, Thornhill, Ontario.
59. *Ibid.*, 2.
60. *Ibid.* Both MacDonald's and Harris' remarks were made long after the Buffalo visit and their emphasis on the importance of the experience must be seen in the light of their later aggressive propagandistic campaign to isolate the essentially northern and nationalistic character of the landscape art of the Group of Seven and its importance to all Canadians.
61. MacDonald's annotated copy of the exhibition catalogue, in the possession of Thoreau MacDonald, indicates specific interest in Gustav Fjaestad's *Ripples* (no. 15) and Hârâld Sohlberg's *Mountains, Winter Landscape* (no. 156), among other landscapes. Fjaestad's *Hoarfrost* (no. 12) was illustrated in the catalogue, p. 130, and his *Winter Morning* appears in Cary's review, "Scandinavian Art," 854. Fjaestad's tapestry *Below the Falls* (no. 21) was reproduced in "Modern Swedish Tapestry," *The Studio*, LVII, 240 (March 1913), 108. Mellen, *The Group of Seven*, reproduces Fjaestad's *Hoarfrost*, Sohlberg's *Mountains, Winter Landscape*, p. 23. The exhibition, Harris and MacDonald's selective statements notwithstanding, represented a gamut of art styles fashionable in Europe at the time. Of the 165 works only some 69 items appear to have been pure landscapes or landscape and genre subjects.
62. J. E. H. MacDonald, *Mattawa*, 1913, oil on board, $8^1/_2'' \times 10^1/_2''$ (Mrs. James R. Hubbard). Réproduced in *J. E. H. MacDonald, R.C.A., 1873-1932*, 48, no. 60.
63. Stylistically it compares closely to MacDonald's oil study *Mattawa*. Several other Mattawa area sketches by Harris are to be found in private collections in Toronto and Vancouver.
64. See *Biographical Questionnaire*, 4. Nancy Robertson, in her Chronology in *J. E. H. MacDonald, R.C.A., 1873-1932*,

does not record MacDonald's 1913 trip with Harris. Peter Mellen's chronology in his *The Group of Seven* places the trip in October of that year, (208). MacDonald returned the following year to the St. Jovite area.
65. *Biographical Questionnaire*, 9.
66. *Ibid.*
67. See Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 47, 63.
68. A. Y. Jackson, "Lawren Harris, A Biographical Sketch," in *Lawren Harris, Paintings, 1910-1948*, 9.
69. *Ibid.*, 8-9.
70. *Ibid.*, 9.
71. Dennis Reid, *Tom Thomson, The Jack Pine*, Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada, 1975, 7.
72. H. F. Gadsby, "The Hot Mush School," *Toronto Star*, 12 December 1913. See Mellen, *The Group of Seven*, 36; and Dennis Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 38.
73. J. E. H. MacD[onald], "The Hot Mush School, in rebuttal of H. F. G.," *Toronto Star*, 18 December 1913.
74. A. Y. Jackson, "J. E. H. MacDonald," *The Canadian Forum*, XIII, 148 (January 1933), 138. Quoted in Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 66.
75. F. H. Varley to Ethel Varley, 16 May 1914. In possession of Peter Varley, Vancouver. Quoted in Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 66.
76. Lawren Harris, "The Story of the Group of Seven," in *Group of Seven*, (exhibition catalogue) Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, 29 March-25 April 1954.
77. Lawren Harris to Sydney Key, 9 May 1948.
78. *42nd O.S.A. Exhibition*, 14 March-11 April 1914, no. 74. It was titled *A Laurentian Hillside*.

Winter Landscapes, 1914-16

79. J. E. H. MacDonald, "Scandinavian Art," 11.
80. Reproduced in Cary, "Scandinavian Art," 854.
81. Reproduced in Mellen, *The Group of Seven*, 23.
82. J. E. H. MacDonald, "Scandinavian Art," 11.
83. Cary, "Scandinavian Art," 857.
84. Christian Brinton, "Gustav Fjaestad," in *Exhibition of Contemporary Scandinavian Art*, 58.
85. Between 1914 and 1919 Harris exhibited the following decorative snow scenes in *O.S.A.*, *R.C.A.* and *C.N.E* exhibitions: *Morning Sun, Winter* (cat. no. 34) *42nd O.S.A. Exhibition*, 14 March-11 April, 1914, no. 77 (illustrated); *Winter Twilight* (unidentified) and *Snow Pattern* (unidentified) in *43rd O.S.A. Exhibition*, (March) 1915, nos. 58 and 60; again at *C.N.E., Department of Fine Arts*, 28 August-13 September, 1915, nos. 176 and 177; *Snow I* and *Snow II* (cat. no. 42) in *44th O.S.A. Exhibition* [March] 1916, nos. 47 and 48; *Snow in the Bush, C.N.E. Department of Fine Arts*, 26 August-11 September 1916, no. 370; *Snow V* and *Snow VI* in *51st O.S.A. Exhibition*, [March] 1919, nos. 84 and 85; *Snow VI* in *C.N.E. Department of Fine Arts*, 23 August-6 September, 1919, no. 82; and *Snow VII* in *41st R.C.A.* 20 November-20 December, 1919, no. 76.
86. See A. Y. Jackson, "Foreword," *Catalogue to an Exhibition of Paintings by the Late Tom Thomson*, Montreal: The Montreal Arts Club, 1919. See also A. Y. Jackson, 28. Letter from A. Y. Jackson, Mowat P.O. to J. E. H. MacDonald, 14 February 1914. In possession of Thoreau MacDonald.
87. *Ibid.* Quoted in Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 123, note 7.
88. The sketch (cat. no. 33) is in the possession of Mrs. Doris Huestis Speirs, a friend of the artist, who presented it to him for signature in 1964. Bess Harris at that time questioned whether it was by Harris. He replied affirmatively, stating that it was a fine work and painted on the type of thin composition board he brought back with him from Europe. From notes made by Peter Larisey in conversation with the owner and made available to the author.
89. Harris obviously made excursions which are not documented by known letters or recorded comments made either by himself or others. He could easily have made a trip north by train of only several days duration.
90. Russell Harper in "1913-1921: The Development," *Lawren Harris Retrospective Exhibition 1963*, 19 states that the snow canvases were based on scenes in "High Park and the Toronto Ravine." However, *Winter Woods*, 1914 appears to be the only one likely painted within the city limits. Only one small oil study of a decorative winter landscape, *Winter Sunset with Snow Covered Trees* (Estate of Howard K. Harris) is located. Painted out of doors, it depicts a large scale landscape with distant rolling hills. Its location is unknown, but it appears to be a site far to the north of Toronto.
91. See note 85 above.
92. *Ibid.*
93. J. E. H. MacDonald, "Scandinavian Art," 11.
94. The *terminus ante* is established by the appearance of the first purely decorative winter landscapes in the March 1915 *O.S.A. Exhibition* while the latter date is determined by the inclusion of *Snow in the Bush* in the 1916 C.N.E. show. Harris had already enlisted in the army by August 1916 and did not exhibit any further snow scenes until the March 1919 *O.S.A. Exhibition*.
95. The photograph, along with many of other Harris paintings, is located in the *Phototeque*, National Gallery of Canada.
96. The proposed basis for the present chronology of decorative winter compositions is founded on the artist's increasing interest, to be seen in other landscapes and urban scenes, in developing forms in deeper space.
97. Eric Brown, "Landscape Art in Canada," *Art of the*

British Empire Overseas, London, Paris and New York: *The Studio* Limited, 1917, 7. The picture is reproduced in colour on p. 19.
98. The precise date is difficult to determine. Dennis Reid places it at the end of April. See Reid, *Tom Thomson, The Jack Pine*, 18. The various members of the party are recorded in a letter from Dr. MacCallum to Mrs. A. C. Beatty, 14 May 1937 (Archives, Art Gallery of Ontario).
99. Lawren Harris, "The Group of Seven," CBU broadcast, Vancouver. Also included in Lawren Harris, *The Story of the Group of Seven*, 19.
100. Dr. MacCallum to Mrs. A. C. Beatty. Quoted in Reid, *Tom Thomson, The Jack Pine*, 18-19.
101. *Ibid.*, 23.
102. Quoted in *ibid.*, 29.
103. Reproduced in colour on cover of the sale catalogue *Important Canadian Paintings, Drawings, Watercolours, Books and Prints*, Toronto: Sotheby & Co. (Canada) Limited, 20-21 October, 1975; lot. no. 67. The picture is related to Harris' *Pines* (unlocated) exhibited in *43rd O.S.A. Exhibition*, 13 March-10 April, 1915, no. 57 (illustrated).
104. Reproduced in colour in J. Russell Harper, *Painting in Canada, A History*, Toronto; 1966, 270.
105. For an account of that important excursion see Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 76.

Landscapes and Urban Scenes, 1916-18

106. Though it is difficult to determine, on the basis of recorded titles alone, just how many of the paintings were winter landscapes, only the O.S.A. and C.N.E. exhibitions of 1914 contained an equal or greater number of works other than decorative snow compositions.
107. Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 126.
108. A. Y. Jackson, "Lawren Harris, A Biographical Sketch," 10.
109. *Biographical Questionnaire*, 10.
110. *Ibid.*
111. The sketch is reproduced in colour in Bess Harris and R.G.P. Colgrove, *Lawren Harris*, Toronto; 1969, 25.
112. The date of 1912 was first given to the sketch in the exhibition *Lawren Harris, Paintings, 1910-1948*, no. 100. Reid in *The Group of Seven*, cat. no. 27, also places it in that year but in his *Tom Thomson, The Jack Pine* (p. 23) he states that "it is believed that [Harris] painted *Building the Ice House, Hamilton* before 1914."
113. Housser, *A Canadian Art Movement*, Toronto, 1926, p. 136.
114. See Larisey "Chronology: 1917," p. 14.
115. A. Y. Jackson to Arthur Lismer, 4 August 1917. (Archives, McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario).
116. In *Biographical Questionnaire*, 9, Harris states the date was "late spring 1917." But Canadian Armed Forces Records from the First World War, Public Archives, Ottawa, reveal the proper date. See Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 126 and note 13. Housser in *A Canadian Art Movement*, 137 misdates the artist's discharge 1917 as does Harper, *Painting in Canada: A History*, 283.
117. See Larisey, "Chronology: 1917," p. 14.
118. See "A Group of Modern Pictures," *The American Magazine of Art*, IX; 3 (January 1918), 108.
119. "Contemporary Art at the Academy," *ibid.*, 143. It is likely that during his lifetime Harris made a number of trips to New York that remain undocumented. He may also have made more than one excursion to the Albright Art Gallery in Buffalo. This latter museum carried on a vigorous exhibition program. In March-April 1909, a large showing of the popular Spanish painter Joaquin Sorolla was held there. When the same exhibition had been shown in New York in February 1909 it had drawn an incredible 159,831 visitors in one month and was reviewed in *The International Studio*, XXXVII, 145 (March 1909), III-XII. Sorolla's art was intensely coloured and painted in a bravura fashion related to J. S. Sargent's painting style. It might well represent an alternate tradition of bright hues other than the Fauves from which Harris and the others could have drawn upon for their heightened colours. From 1910 on, Harris could have seen the annual exhibitions of American painting at the Albright Art Gallery showing the work of such artists as Childe Hassam, Willard Metcalfe, Edward Redfield, Elmer Schofield, Edmund Tarbell and J. Alden Weir whose works were often illustrated in *The Studio* magazine between *c.* 1910-20. In early 1918 Harris might well have seen the work of expatriate French artists who had made their home in New York in such dealers' galleries as Daniel, Montross, and Steiglitz's 291. Here, too, he could have seen the work of John Marin, Marsden Hartley, and Maurice Prendergast. All the artists of the Group of Seven in their published pronouncements, however, stressed the importance of their isolation in creating their art. It is likely that such statements cannot be taken at complete face value. Harris, by the mid 1920s, was quite conversant with modern art and was to be represented in the collection of the *Société Anonyme*.
120. Hector Charlesworth, "Good Pictures at O.S.A. Exhibition," *Saturday Night*, XXX, 24 (24 March 1917), 2. While *Decorative Landscape* is unidentified, it may well have been the exhibition title for *Kempenfelt Bay* (cat. no. 52). In a photograph of the Arts and Letters Club (see Harry Hunkin, *There is no finality. . .*, Toronto; 1971, reproduced p. 31) *Kempenfelt Bay* is hanging on the wall to the right of the fireplace. An unidentified Harris decorative snow canvas is on the left.

121. See Lewis W. Clemens, "O.S.A. Exhibition a Brilliant Show," Toronto *Sunday World* [1919] (undated newspaper clipping, Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario) and Diana, "In the Gallery and at the Station," (?) *The Weekly Sun*, 26 March 1919 (newspaper clipping, Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario)
122. *Ibid*.
123. Lewis W. Clemens, "O.S.A. Exhibition."

Algoma Landscapes, 1918-22

124. Undated letter from Lawren Harris, Allandale, Ontario, to J. E. H. MacDonald, Toronto [1918]. In Archives, McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario. Quoted in Mellen, *The Group of Seven*, 80.
125. Undated letter from Lawren Harris, Allandale, Ontario to J. E. H. MacDonald [1918]. See also Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 128.
126. Undated letter from Lawren Harris, Allandale, Ontario to J. E. H. MacDonald [1918]. See also Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 128.
127. *Ibid*.
128. Undated letter from J. E. H. MacDonald to Mrs. MacDonald [September 1918]. Quoted in E. R. Hunter, *J. E. H. MacDonald: A Biography and Catalogue of his Work*, Toronto; 1940, 21.
129. "[Works Rejected] Action Criticized," *Toronto Star*, 26 March 1919.
130. *Algoma Sketches and Pictures by J. E. H. MacDonald, A.R.C.A.; Lawren Harris, Frank H. Johnston*, (exhibition catalogue) Toronto: Art Gallery of Toronto, 26 April-19 May, 1919, p. 8.
131. *Ibid*.
132. J. E. H. MacDonald, "A.C.R. 10557," *The Lamps*, Toronto (December 1919), pp. 33-39. Hunter, *J. E. H. MacDonald: A Biography and Catalogue of His Work*, confuses that 1919 trip MacDonald described in *The Lamps* with the excursion of the previous year.
133. *Ibid*., 35.
134. *Ibid*.
135. *Ibid*., 36.
136. A. Y. Jackson, 46.
137. *Ibid*. Harris was at this moment becoming deeply involved with the tradition of the occult, partly as a result of his nervous breakdown and his friendship with Roy Mitchell who introduced him to a wide range of mystical literature. In an undated letter to J. E. H. MacDonald [Summer 1918], Archives, McMichael Canadian Collection, Harris wrote that he was reading esoteric material.
138. MacDonald, "A.C.R. 10557," 37.
139. A. Y. Jackson, 46.
140. A. Y. Jackson, "Sketching in Algoma," *The Canadian Forum*, I, 6 (March 1921), 175.
141. The party reached Batchewana on October 7, 1919. See Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 138, note 4. Jackson wrote Dr. MacCallum on October 9, 1919 inviting him to join them. See letter from A. Y. Jackson to Dr. MacCallum; in National Gallery of Canada. Cited in *ibid*., 138, note 5.
142. J. E. H. MacDonald, "A.C.R. 10557," 39.
143. See Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 159.
144. *Ibid*. There were only two boxcar excursions to Algoma; and it was only on the second, in the fall of 1919, that the artists secured A.C.R. 10557. Mellen, *The Group of Seven*, confuses that 1918 trip with the one the following year, in regards to the boxcar that MacDonald described in his 1919 article in *The Lamps*. Harper, in "1913-21: The Development," 12, states that all the Algoma tours employed the boxcar.
145. Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 159-60. It was this fall 1920 trip that was described in Jackson's article, "Sketching in Algoma" of March 1921.
146. Lawren Harris, "The Group of Seven in Canadian History," 34.
147. A. Y. Jackson, 45.
148. Lawren Harris, "The Group of Seven in Canadian History," 34.
149. The identification of *Autumn, Algoma* with *Decorative Landscape* was made by Dennis Reid in *The Group of Seven*, cat. no. 103, p. 144. It is corroborated by the review cited in note 150 below.
150. Augustus Bridle, "Are these New Canadian Painters Crazy?" *Canadian Courier*, XXV, (22 May 1920), 6.
151. *Ibid*.
152. The sketch is illustrated in Dennis Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 161, cat. no. 124. It compares with such small panoramic studies as Jackson's *Wartz Lake* and MacDonald's *Autumn Colour* (Reid, *ibid*., cat. nos. 123, 120).
153. MacDonald, "A.C.R. 10557," 39.
154. Housser, *A Canadian Art Movement*, 151.

Urban Scenes, 1919-1922

155. Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 148 cat. no. 106 has identified *Shacks* as the original *Shacks, Lambton*. As there were two "shack" pictures among Harris' canvases in the *47th O.S.A. Exhibition* [March] 1919, and as no other known suburban subjects are among his 1918-19 compositions, *Outskirts of Toronto* is here identified as *Shacks, Earlscourt*. From contemporary exhibition reviews, *Houses, Chestnut Street* and *Return from Church* were originally titled *In the Ward II* and *Sunday Morning* respectively. *In the Ward III* was illustrated in the O.S.A. catalogue and is the same picture as *Old Houses, Toronto. Winter*. A photograph of *In the Ward I* is located in the Reference Library,

Art Gallery of Ontario.
156. "Noisy Chaos of Colour in O.S.A. Exhibition," Toronto *Telegram*, 8 March 1919.
157. Lawren Harris, Vancouver, to Sydney Key, Toronto, 20 July 1948 (Archives, Art Gallery of Ontario).
158. The canvas is reproduced in colour in Bess Harris and R. G. P. Colgrove, *Lawren Harris*, 134. Reid has identified this work as *Sunday Morning*. However, contemporary press descriptions of works in the *47th O.S.A. Exhibition* [March] 1919 reveal that the latter was in fact *Return from Church*. The highly decorative character of *Winter Afternoon, City Street* relates the picture to such contemporary works as *Hurdy Gurdy* (cat. no. 80), *Winter Landscape with Pink House* (cat. no. 56) and *Winter in the Northern Woods* (cat. no. 54). With the exception of *Hurdy Gurdy*, all these canvases employ an *art nouveau* linear design in the foreground shadows.
159. "Noisy Chaos of Colour at O.S.A. Exhibition," *op. cit.*
160. Augustus Bridle, "A Shack-town Christmas," *Canadian Magazine*, XXXIV, 2 (December 1909), 129-34.
161. *Ibid.*, 133.
162. *Ibid.*
163. Lawren Harris, *Contrasts, A Book of Verse*, Toronto; 1922.
164. *The Canadian Bookman*, V, 1 (January 1923) 19.
165. B. F[airley], "*Contrasts* by Lawren Harris," *The Canadian Forum*, III, 28 (January 1923), 120, 122.
166. Lawren Harris, "The Age," in *Contrasts, A Book of Verse*, 36.
167. Lawren Harris, "The Earth Winds," *ibid.*, 123.
168. B. F[airley], "*Contrasts* by Lawren Harris," 122.
169. Lawren Harris, "A Note of Colour," in *Contrasts, A Book of Verse*, II. The description ends, however, on a light-hearted note: "But the street door smiles, and even laughs, when the/hazy sunlight falls on it/someone had painted it a bright gay red."
170. "Ontario Society of Artists Constantly Adding Recruits," Toronto *Globe* (?) 21 March 1922. Newspaper clipping, Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario.
171. "Fiftieth Show of O.S.A.," Toronto *Telegram*, 6 April 1922.
172. "Group of Seven Not So Extreme," Toronto *Mail & Empire*, 13 May 1922.
173. Housser, *A Canadian Art Movement*, 185.
174. Barry Lord, *The History of Painting in Canada: Toward a People's Art*, Toronto: NC Press, 1974, 141.
175. Housser, *A Canadian Art Movement*, 185.
176. *Ibid.*
177. Lawren Harris, "A Question," in *Contrasts, A Book of Verse*, 57.
178. Barker Fairley, "Some Canadian Painters: Lawren Harris," *The Canadian Forum*, I, 9 (June 1921), 278.
179. Augustus Bridle, "Pictures of the Group of Seven Show 'Art Must Take the Road'," Toronto *Star*, 20 May 1922.
180. Lawren Harris, "A Question," in *Contrasts, A Book of Verse*, 57.
181. Lawren Harris, "Little Houses," in *Contrasts, A Book of Verse*, 19.
182. *3rd Group of Seven Exhibition*, 5-19 May 1922, no. 71. I am grateful to Mr. Peter Larisey for bringing this to my attention.

Lake Superior Landscapes, 1921-28

183. Lawren Harris, "The Group of Seven in Canadian History," 24. The date of the first trip to Lake Superior was incorrectly cited as 1920 by Housser, *A Canadian Art Movement*, 197; Paul Duval, "1921-1931. From Nature to Abstraction," in *Lawren Harris Retrospective Exhibition 1963*, 24; Naomi Groves Jackson, *A. Y.'s Canada*, Toronto and Vancouver; 1968, 124. Harper, "1913-21. The Development," in *Lawren Harris Retrospective Exhibition 1963*, 12, 21 correctly dates the excursion as does Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 180.
184. William G. Harris, "The Group of Seven & Lake Superior," in *The Group of Seven and Lake Superior* (exhibition catalogue), Port Arthur: Lakehead College, 19 November-12 December, 1904.
185. Undated letter from J. E. H. MacDonald to Mrs. MacDonald [September 1918]. Quoted in Hunter, *J. E. H. MacDonald: A Biography and Catalogue of his Work*, 21.
186. A. Y. Jackson, p. 44.
187. Quoted in Groves, *A. Y's Canada*, 124.
188. Housser, *A Canadian Art Movement*, 190-91.
189. *Ibid.*, 191.
190. Hector Charlesworth, "O.S.A. Annual Exhibition", *Saturday Night*, XXXIX, 19 (29 March 1924). Unpaginated clipping in Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario.
191. Housser, *A Canadian Art Movement*, 191.
192. "Ontario Painters Doing Vital Work," Toronto *Mail & Empire*, 17 March 1924. The reference to the American landscape painter Rockwell Kent is the earliest known instance of such a comparison publicly made. For discussion of the connection between Harris and Kent, see pp. 170-172.
193. Arthur Lismer, *Canadian Picture Study*, Toronto: Art Gallery of Toronto, 1940, 23.
194. Housser, *A Canadian Art Movement*, 190. Housser develops the idea of a picture judging the observer from Arthur Lismer. See Arthur Lismer, "Canadian Art," *The Canadian Theosophist*, V, 3 (15 May 1924), 147-49.
195. Quoted in Bess Harris and R. G. P. Colgrove, 78.

196. A. Y. Jackson, 46-47.
197. "Ontario Painters Doing Striking Work," [unknown source]. Newspaper clipping, Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario. Housser also mentions Bakst's comment in *A Canadian Art Movement*, 189.
198. F. B. Housser, "The Group of Seven Exhibition," *The Canadian Bookman*, X, 2 (February 1928), 43.
199. Marcus Adney, "Lawren Harris: An Interpretation," *The Canadian Bookman*, X, 2 (February 1928) 43.
200. *Ibid.*
201. Augustus Bridle, "The Group of Seven Display their Annual Symbolisms," Toronto *Star*, 8 February 1928.
202. See Dennis Reid, "Lawren Harris," *Artscanada*, XXV, 2 (June 1968), 16.
203. See Larisey, "Chronology: 1922," 16.
204. In 1922 Lismer served with Harris and Roy Mitchell on the Decoration Committee of the Toronto Lodge. See Peter Larisey, "Chronology: 1922," 16 and "Canadian Art," *The Canadian Theosophist*, V, 3 (15 May 1924), 46. Lismer had first been exposed to the Theosophical Society as a youth in Sheffield, England. See John A. B. McLeish, *September Gale. A Study of Arthur Lismer of the Group of Seven*, Toronto and Vancouver: 1955, 9. Lismer also wrote an article entitled "Canadian Art," for *The Canadian Theosophist*. See note 194.
205. Elizabeth Preston and Christmas Humphreys, *An Abridgement of The Secret Doctrine* [by] *H. P. Blavatsky*, Madras; 1966, XV.
206. *Ibid.*
207. H. P. Blavatsky *The Key to Theosophy*, London, 1910, 40. Cited in Ringbom, 57.
208. Quoted in Reid "Lawren Harris," *Artscanada*, XXV, 2, 10.
209. Elizabeth Preston and Christmas Humphreys, 134.
210. Cited in Ringbom, 80. See also C. W. Leadbeater, *Man Visible and Invisible*, Adyar, 1959, plate II "Planes of Nature," reproduced in Ringbom, pl. 15.
211. Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, *Thought-Forms*, Madras; 1957, 21.
212. *Ibid.*, 21.
213. *Ibid.*, 20-21.
214. *Ibid.*, 31.
215. Sixten Ringbom, 128.
216. Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, 19.
217. Quoted in Ringbom, 209. The connection between Friedrich's nationalist ideals founded on northern German landscapes and the mystical ideas of Phillip Otto Runge and other early nineteenth century nature painters and Harris needs much further examination. There is a rich body of occult ideas that runs through North European and particularly German thought that appears to have some bearing on Harris' ideals. He had an opportunity to see Friedrich's work in the *Ausstellung Deutschen Kunst aus der zeit 1775–1875* in Berlin in 1906. See Larisey "Chronology; 1906," 13. For a study of the nineteenth century northern mystical tradition in art and its influence in the twentieth century see Robert Rosenblum, *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko*, New York; 1975.
218. Bess Harris, quoted in Reid, "Lawren Harris," 13.
219. Bess Harris to J. Russell Harper (see note 1).
220. Quoted in Henry Van Dyke, "Ralph Waldo Emerson," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1946 Edition, VIII, 392.
221. Ringbom, 51.
222. Peter Selz, "The Aesthetic Theories of Wassily Kandinsky and their Relationship to the Origin of Non-objective Painting," *Art Bulletin*, XXXIX, 2 (June 1957), 132.
223. Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (1912), New York; 1972, 77.
224. See Robert P. Welsh, "Mondrian and Theosophy," in *Piet Mondrian, 1872-1944 Centennial Exhibition* (exhibition catalogue), New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1971, 47.
225. *Ibid.*, 51.
226. H. P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, New York, 1877; I, 508. Quoted in R. P. Welsh, "Mondrian and Theosophy," 49.
227. Lawren Harris, "An Essay on Abstract Painting," *Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada*, 26, 1 (January 1949), 3-8. Reprinted in *Canadian Art*, VI, 3 (Spring 1949), 103-07. Issued as a separate pamphlet entitled *A Disquisition on Abstract Painting*, Toronto; 1954.
228. William S. Hart, "1932-48. Theory and Practice of Abstract Art," in *Lawren Harris Retrospective Exhibition 1963*, 27.
229. Bess Harris to J. Russell Harper.
230. See A. Y. Jackson, 46.
231. Lawren Harris, "The Greatest Book by a Canadian and Another," *The Canadian Bookman*, VI, 2 (February 1924), 38.
232. *Ibid.*
233. *Ibid.*
234. *Ibid.*
235. *Ibid.*
236. Lawren Harris, "Winning A Canadian Background," *The Canadian Bookman*, V, 2 (February 1923), 37.
237. Quoted in Bess Harris and R. G. P. Colgrove, 107.
The quotations in this book were taken from various published articles, lectures and essays written by the artist. The editors, both Theosophists, also selected statements from Harris' unpublished notebooks. From as early as 1908, Harris compiled philosophic statements, reworking them over the years until the language was perfected. During the mid-1930s he began to gather a number of them

together for publication. Most of the quotations date from c. 1920-50. A version of the manuscript for the book as well as several early notebooks are among the Lawren Harris Papers, Public Archives of Canada.
238. *Ibid.*
239. *Ibid.*, 39.
240. *Ibid.*, 78.
241. *Ibid.*, 100.
242. Lawren Harris, "Revelation of Art in Canada," *The Canadian Theosophist*, VII, 5 (15 July 1926), 85-88. The importance of this document cannot be overemphasized.
243. *Ibid.*
244. *Ibid.*, 85.
245. Lawren Harris, "Winning a Canadian Background," 37.
246. Herman A. Voaden, ed., *Six Canadian Plays*, Toronto; 1930, XVII. Voaden's "Introduction" was strongly influenced by Harris' "Creative Art and Canada," in Bertram Brooker, ed. *Yearbook of the Arts in Canada*, [Toronto]; 1929, 179-86, and the national landscape movement. He felt a number of Canadian playwrights were moving in a similar direction.
247. *Ibid.*
248. *Ibid.*
249. *Ibid.*, xvi.
250. Lawren Harris, "Revelation of Art in Canada," 37.
251. *Ibid.*
252. *Ibid.*
253. *Ibid.*
254. *Ibid.*
255. See Peter Larisey, "Nationalist Aspects of Lawren S. Harris' Aesthetics," *Bulletin*, 23/1974, Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada, 1974.
256. *Ibid.*
257. Lawren Harris, "Creative Art and Canada," 182.
258. Lawren Harris, "Revelation of Art in Canada," 86.
259. *Ibid.*
260. *Ibid.*
261. *Ibid.*, 86-87.
262. *Ibid.* 87.
263. Lawren Harris, "Artist and Audience," *The Canadian Bookman* VIII, 12 (December 1925), 197.
264. Quoted in Bess Harris and R. G. P. Colgrove, 10.
265. *Ibid.*
266. *Ibid.*, 21.
267. *Ibid.*, 103.
268. *Ibid.*, 14.
269. *Ibid.*, 18.
270. Lawren Harris, "The Greatest Book by a Canadian and Another," 38.
271. Bess Housser, "In the Realm of Art," *The Canadian Bookman*, VII, 2 (February 1925), 22. In 1925 *The Canadian Bookman* introduced a column on art; it was "conducted" by Bess Housser during 1925-26.
272. F. B. Housser, "The Group of Seven Exhibition," 179.
273. Lawren Harris, "Darkness and Light," in *Contrasts, A Book of Verse*, 90.
274. Lawren Harris, "The World Doubts", in *Contrasts, A Book of Verse*, 117.
275. Lawren Harris, "No Music," in *Contrasts, A Book of Verse*, 119.
276. Lawren Harris, "Creative Art and Canada," 179.
277. *Ibid.*, 180.
278. Northrop Frye, "The Myth of Light," *Artscanada*, XXV, 2 (June 1968), 8.
279. *Ibid.*
280. In 1922, Harris had painted two canvases of the castle-like rock formation near Mitchell Lake, Batchewana. But beyond these instances there are no other examples of treating the same motif from practically the same angle more than once.
281. The painting is reproduced in colour in Bess Harris and R. G. P. Colgrove, 57.
282. *(4th) Group of Seven Exhibition of Paintings*, 9 January-2 February 1925, no. 12.
283. "In the Galleries," Toronto *Mail & Empire* [January 1925]. Undated newspaper clipping, Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario.
284. Hector Charlesworth, "The Group System in Art," *Saturday Night*, XL, 10 (24 January 1925), 4.
285. "'School of Seven' Exhibition is Riot of Impressions," Toronto *Star Weekly* [January 1925]. Undated newspaper clipping, Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario.
286. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature* (1836). Quoted in Barbara Novak, *American Painting of the Nineteenth Century*, New York; 1969, 110.
287. A. Y. Jackson, 48.
288. Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 218.
289. A. Y. Jackson, 48.
290. Quoted in Bess Harris and R. G. P. Colgrove, 24.
291. *Ibid.*
292. Lawren Harris, "Revelation of Art in Canada," 86.
293. Quoted in Bess Harris and R. G. P. Colgrove, 107.
294. Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, *Thought-Forms*, frontispiece.
295. *First Baltimore Pan-American Exhibition of Contemporary Painting*. (exhibition catalogue) Baltimore: Baltimore Museum of Art, 15 January-28 February, 1931, no. 35, illustrated p. 18.
296. "Lawren Harris wins Museum of Art Prize," Toronto *Telegram*, 15 January 1931, 31.
297. *Ibid.*
298. Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 218.
299. Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, 21.

300. Marcus Adney, "Lawren Harris: An Interpretation."
301. *Ibid.*

Urban Scenes, 1925-26

302. "Disdainful of Prettiness New Art Aims at Sublimity," Toronto *Star*, 6 May 1926.
303. C. C. McKay "Group of Seven," *Saturday Night*, XLV, 22 (12 April 1931), 15.
304. *Biographical Questionnaire*, 19. *The Paintings, Sculpture and Prints in the Department of Fine Arts, Sesquicentennial International Exposition*, Philadelphia, 1926. no. 1561. There were thirty-three paintings in the Canadian Section, twenty-six by members of the Group of Seven. Harris' *Northern Lake* (cat. no. 141) was no. 1564 and was reproduced in the illustrated checklist of the exhibition. It has been wrongly cited in the past as the gold medal winner. See Alice MacKay "The Second Annual Exhibition of Canadian Art," *Canadian Houses and Gardens*, IV, 4, (April 1927), 32.

Rocky Mountain Landscapes, 1924-30

305. Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 191.
306. A. Y. Jackson, 86. In the early spring of 1914, after returning from his trip to Algonquin Park, Jackson and J. W. Beatty went west to the Rockies, painting in the construction camps of the C.N.R.
307. *Ibid.*
308. *Ibid.*
309. *Ibid.*
310. A. Y. Jackson, "Artists in the Mountains," *The Canadian Forum*, V, 52 (January 1925), 112.
311. *Ibid.*
312. Quoted in Bess Harris and R. G. P. Colgrove, 62.
313. F. H. Varley to Maud Varley, 13 April 1924. Quoted in Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 190.
314. *(4th) Group of Seven Exhibition of Paintings*, 9 January-2 February, 1925; no. 19 and no. 18 respectively.
315. See Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 197-201.
316. "The Observer," "The Group of Seven and the Canadian Soul," *Toronto Star*, 13 January 1925. Quoted in Reid, *The Group of Seven*, 198.
317. " 'School of Seven' Exhibition is Riot of Impressions."
318. *Ibid.*
319. Bess Housser, "In the Realm of Art. Impressions of the Group of Seven," *The Canadian Bookman*, VII, 2 February 1925), 33.
320. *Ibid.*
321. *Ibid.*
322. *Ibid.*
323. "In the Art Galleries," Toronto, *Mail & Empire* [1925]. Undated newspaper clipping, Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario.
324. See note 192.
325. See Rockwell Kent, *Rockwell Kentiana*, New York; 1933. Bibliography and list of prints by Carl Zigrosser, 43-64.
326. *Ibid*, 8.
327. Carl Zigrosser, "Rockwell Kent," *Print Collector's Quarterly*, 25, 2 (April 1925), 142-43.
328. Mrs. Doris Heustis Mills had visited Kent in his New York studio in 1924 and had talked with him about Harris' art. Notes made in conversation with Mrs. Doris Huestis Speirs, 24 November 1977.
329. "New Member is Added to Group of Seven," Toronto *Mail & Empire*, 8 May 1926.
330. "Disdainful of Prettiness New Art Aims at Sublimity," *op. cit.*
331. Augustus Bridle, "Group of Seven Betray no Signs of Repentance," Toronto *Star Weekly*, 8 May 1926.
332. F. B. Housser, "The Group of Seven Exhibition," *The Canadian Bookman*, VIII, 6 (June 1926), 179.
333. W. G. M., "A Subscriber Writes of the Group Show," *The Canadian Bookman*, VIII, 6 (June 1926), 180.
334. Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, 58.
335. Quoted in Joyce Zemans, "The Art and Weltanschauung of Bertram Brooker," *Artscanada*, XXX, 1 (February-March 1973), 66.
336. *Ibid*, 66.
337. Cited in Ringbom, 92.
338. *International Exhibition of Modern Art, Assembled by the Société Anonyme* (exhibition catalogue) Toronto: Art Gallery of Toronto, 1-24 April 1927. See Harris' correspondence concerning the exhibition with Martin Baldwin, Director of the Art Gallery of Toronto (Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario). See also Reid, *A Concise History of Canadian Painting*, 183-84, and Reid, *Bertram Brooker*, Canadian Artists Monographs, No. 1, Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada, 1973, 13-14. Harris was the only Canadian to be represented in that collection, though his work was not included in the 1927 show.
339. Lawren Harris, "Modern Art and Aesthetic Reactions, An Appreciation," *The Canadian Forum*, VIII, 80 (May 1927), 239-41. In the same issue (pp. 241-42) was a highly critical article by Franz Johnston, "Modern Art and Aesthetic Reactions, An Objection." Another conservative painter also attacked the exhibition; see Owen Staples, "Coarse Conceits in a Realm of Nonsense. International Exhibition of Modern 'Art'," Toronto *Telegram*, 22 April 1927.
340. Quoted in Ringbom, 47.
341. Kandinsky, "Concerning the Spiritual in Art," 27.
342. Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, 31.
343. Toronto, The Art Gallery of Toronto, April 1930, *An Exhibition of The Group of Seven*, no. 49.

344. Quoted in Bess Harris and R. G. P. Colgrove, 14.
345. Reproduced in *ibid*.
346. The sketch is reproduced in colour in *ibid*., 71.
347. Quoted in *ibid*., 39.
348. Quoted in *ibid*., 21.
349. Quoted in *ibid*., 76.
350. W. A. Langton, "A Canadian Art Movement," *Willisons Monthly*, I, 6. (July 1927). Unpaginated press clipping, Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario.

Lighthouse, Father Point, 1930

351. The drawing is reproduced in Bess Harris and R. G. P. Colgrove, 78.
352. Quoted in *ibid*., 14.
353. Quoted in *ibid*., 107.

Arctic Landscapes, 1930

354. "Artist-Explorer," *The Canadian Bookman*, IX, 6 (July 1927), 216.
355. *Ibid*.
356. Quoted in Mellen, *The Group of Seven*, 176.
357. *Ibid*.
358. Lawren Harris, "The Group of Seven in Canadian History," 36.
359. *Ibid*.
360. A. Y. Jackson, 106.
361. Lawren Harris, "The Group of Seven in Canadian History," 36.
362. *Ibid*.
363. Paul Duval, "1921-31. From Nature to Abstraction," in *Lawren Harris Retrospective Exhibition, 1963*, 25.
364. The unedited film is in the Collection of the National Film Archives, Ottawa.
365. Lawren Harris, "Creative Art and Canada," 184.
366. Ringbom, 79.
367. Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, 58.
368. *Ibid*., 59.
369. *Ibid*., 59-60.
370. See Reid, *Bertram Brooker*, 12.
371. Lawren Harris to Emily Carr, 13 October 1930. Emily Carr Papers, Public Archives of Canada. Harris had met Carr on 17 November 1927 when the latter travelled east during the exhibition of West Coast Indian Art organized by The National Gallery of Canada in which many of her paintings were included. Of all the Group of Seven members she met at that time, she found Harris the most intriguing. In his many letters to her, Harris encourages and advises her to keep struggling in the face of personal insecurity and public apathy. In many of them, he is remarkably revealing about his own state of mind.
372. Undated letter from Lawren Harris to Emily Carr [1930]. Emily Carr Papers.
373. Lawren Harris to Emily Carr, 26 December [1930]. Emily Carr Papers.
374. Lawren Harris, "Art National," an undated essay in manuscript form. Lawren Harris Papers.
375. Jehanne Biétry Salinger, "Far North is Pictured by Two Artists," Regina, Saskatchewan *Leader-Post*, 1 May 1931. Quoted in Peter Mellen, *The Group of Seven*, 179.
376. *Biographical Questionnaire*, 7.

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377. Undated letter from Lawren Harris to Emily Carr [1930]. Emily Carr Papers.
378. Undated letters from Lawren Harris to Emily Carr [1930? 1931?]. Emily Carr Papers.
379. Bertram Brooker, "The Seven Arts," Ottawa, *The Citizen*, 19 April 1930. Quoted in Charles Hill, *Canadian Painting in the Thirties* (exhibition catalogue), Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada, 1975, 21.
380. Lawren Harris to Emily Carr, 6 December [1931]. Emily Carr Papers.
381. Lawren Harris to Emily Carr, 20 December 1931. Emily Carr Papers.
382. Jehanne Biétry Salinger, "Group of Seven Begins Expansion," Toronto *Mail & Empire*, 7 December 1931. Quoted in Charles Hill, *Canadian Painting in the Thirties*, 21.
383. Toronto. Art Gallery of Toronto. *Catalogue of an Exhibition by Canadian Group of Painters*, 1933 (Foreword).
384. Lawren Harris to Emily Carr, 24 June 1933. Emily Carr Papers.
385. Undated letter from Lawren Harris, Canoe Lake P.O., to Emily Carr. Emily Carr Papers.
386. See Selected Bibliography.
387. J. Russell Harper, *Painting in Canada: A History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966, 359.
388. Northrop Frye, "The Pursuit of Form," *Canadian Art*, VI, 2 (Winter 1948), 54.
389. *Ibid*.

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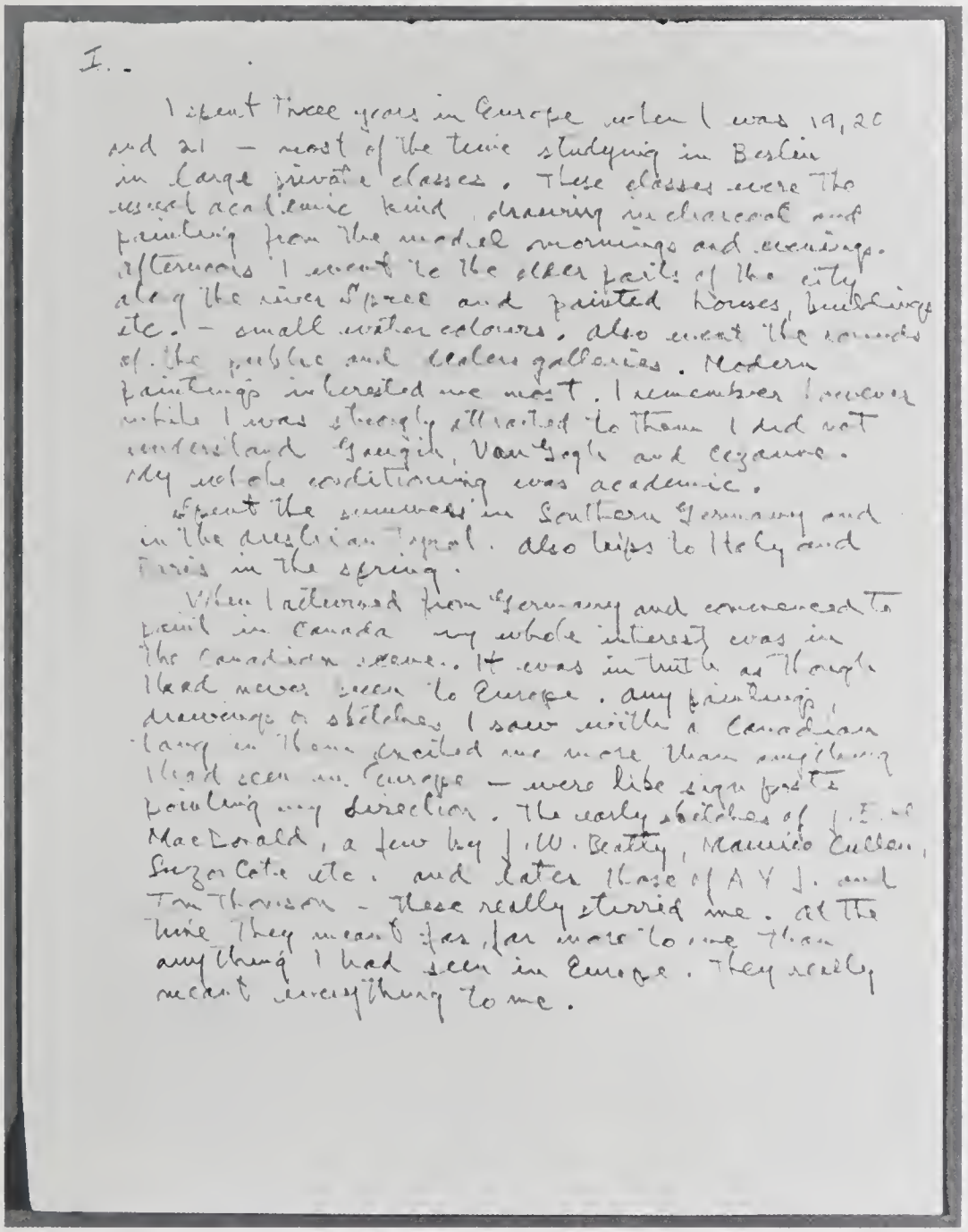
Appendix

Excerpt from a letter from Lawren Harris, Vancouver to Sydney Key, Art Gallery of Toronto, 9 May 1948.



I. -

I spent three years in Europe when I was 19, 20 and 21 – most of the time studying in Berlin in large private classes. These classes were the usual academic kind, drawing in charcoal and painting from the model mornings and evenings. Afternoons I went to the older parts of the city along the river Spree and painted houses, buildings etc. – small water colours. Also went the rounds of the public and dealers galleries. Modern paintings interested me most. I remember however while I was strongly attracted to them I did not understand Gauguin, Van Gogh and Cezanne. My whole conditioning was academic.

I spent the summers in Southern Germany and in the Austrian Tyrol. Also trips to Italy and Paris in the spring.

When I returned from Germany and commenced to paint in Canada my whole interest was in the Canadian scene. It was in this way as though I had never been to Europe. Any paintings, drawings or sketches I saw with a Canadian slant in them excited me more than anything I had seen in Europe – were like signposts pointing my direction. The early sketches of J.E.H. MacDonald, a few by J.W. Beatty, Maurice Cullen, Suzor Cote etc. and later those of A.Y.J. and Tom Thomson – these really stirred me. At the time they meant far, far more to me than anything I had seen in Europe. They really meant everything to me.

Catalogue of the Exhibition

1. **Interior of a Clothes Closet,** 1906
   water colour
   $12^{3}/_{16} \times 9^{3}/_{4}$ in.; 31 × 24.8 cm
   Private Collection

2. **Buildings on the River Spree, Berlin,** 1907
   water colour
   $23^{1}/_{2} \times 18$ in.; 59.7 × 45.7 cm
   Lent by the Art Gallery of Windsor
   Gift of Mr. & Mrs. E. D. Fraser,
   Willowdale, Ontario, November 1971

3. **Street in Berlin,** 1907
   pencil on cardboard
   $13 \times 6^{1}/_{8}$ in.; 33 × 15.6 cm
   Private Collection

4. **Col's Grocery,** *c.* 1909-10
   pencil on paper
   $6^{3}/_{4} \times 8^{1}/_{2}$ in.; 17.1 × 21.6 cm
   Private Collection

5. **Peter Street Below King,** *c.* 1909-10
   pencil on paper
   $5^{1}/_{2} \times 6^{1}/_{2}$ in.; 14 × 16.5 cm
   Private Collection

6. **Rear of Adelaide and Simcoe Streets,**
   c. 1909-10
   pencil on paper
   $6^{5}/_{8} \times 7^{1}/_{2}$ in.; 16.8 × 19 cm
   Private Collection

7. **Rear of Roxborough and Yonge Streets,**
   c. 1909-10
   pencil on paper
   $6^{5}/_{8} \times 8$ in.; 16.5 × 20 cm
   Private Collection

8. **Frances Street Near King,** *c.* 1909-10
   pencil on paper
   $8^{5}/_{8} \times 6^{3}/_{8}$ in.; 22 × 16.2 cm
   Private Collection

9. **Adelaide Street Near Simcoe,** *c.* 1909-10
   pencil on paper
   $7^{1}/_{8} \times 10^{5}/_{8}$ in.; 18.1 × 27 cm
   Private Collection

10. **Laurentian Village,** 1908
    oil on panel
    $8^{1}/_{2} \times 5^{7}/_{8}$ in.; 21.6 × 15 cm
    Collection of Doris Huestis Speirs

11. **Autumn Trees,** 1908
    oil on board
    $5^{9}/_{16} \times 8^{5}/_{8}$ in.; 14.1 × 22 cm
    Private Collection

12. **Laurentians, Near St. Jovite,** 1908
    oil on board
    $6 \times 8^{1}/_{2}$ in.; 15.2 × 21.6 cm
    Private Collection

13. **Laurentian Landscape with Barn,** 1908
    oil on board
    8 × 10 in.; 20.3 × 25.4 cm
    Rita and Max Merkur, Toronto

14. **Near St. Jovite,** 1908
    oil on board
    $5^{1}/_{2} \times 8^{1}/_{4}$ in.; 14 × 21 cm
    The Ontario Heritage Foundation
    Firestone Art Collection, Ottawa

15. **Top of the Hill, Spadina Avenue,** 1909-11
    oil on canvas
    $14^{1}/_{2} \times 16$ in.; 36.8 × 40.6 cm
    Mr. Austin Seton Thompson, Toronto

16. **Little House,** *c.* 1910
oil on board
$7^{3}/_{8} \times 5^{1}/_{8}$ in.; 19.9 × 14.2 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario

17. **Old Houses, Wellington Street,** 1910
oil on canvas
25 × 30 in.; 63.5 × 76.2 cm
Laing Galleries, Toronto

18. **Winter Twilight,** 1911
oil on canvas
12 × 16 in.; 31 × 41 cm
Collection of the Art Gallery of Hamilton

19. **Houses, Richmond Street,** 1911
oil on canvas
30 × 32 in.; 76.2 × 81.2 cm
Arts and Letters Club Collection, Toronto

20. **The Eaton Manufacturing Building,** 1911
oil on canvas
30 × $29^{1}/_{2}$ in.; 76.2 × 75 cm
Frederik S. Eaton

21. **The Gas Works,** 1911-12
oil on canvas
$23^{1}/_{16} \times 22^{3}/_{16}$ in.; 58.6 × 56.4 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from the McLean Foundation, 1959

22. **Houses, Gerrard Street, Toronto,** 1912
oil on canvas
35 × 30 in.; 89 × 76.2 cm
George E. Bridle

23. **The Corner Store,** 1912
oil on canvas
35 × 26 in.; 89 × 66 cm
Private Collection

24. **The Drive,** 1912
oil on canvas
$35^{1}/_{2} \times 53^{3}/_{4}$ in.; 90.1 × 136.5 cm
The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

25. **Outskirts of Haliburton,** 1912
oil on board
$10^{1}/_{2} \times 14$ in.; 26.7 × 35.6 cm
Private Collection

26. **Birches,** 1912
oil on board
$13^{1}/_{2} \times 10^{5}/_{8}$ in.; 34.3 × 27 cm
Private Collection

27. **Houses,** 1913
oil on canvas
$30^{1}/_{4} \times 32^{1}/_{4}$ in.; 76.8 × 82 cm
Private Collection

28. **Farm Houses,** 1913
oil on board
8 × 10 in.; 20.3 × 25.4 cm
Private Collection

29. **Laurentian Hills,** 1913
oil on board
8 × 10 in.; 20.3 × 25.4 cm
Private Collection

30. **Laurentian Monadnock,** 1913
oil on board
8 × 10 in.; 20.3 × 25.4 cm
Collection of Doris Huestis Speirs

31. **Laurentian Farm,** 1913
oil on board
8 × 10 in.; 20.3 × 25.4 cm
Private Collection

32. **Laurentian Landscape,** 1913-14
oil on canvas
30 × 34¾ in.; 76.2 × 88.3 cm
Private Collection

33. **Sunburst, Algonquin Park, Winter,** *c.* 1914
oil on panel
8 × 9 in.; 20.3 × 22.9 cm
Collection of Doris Huestis Speirs

34. **Morning Sun, Winter,** 1914
oil on canvas
40¼ × 45¼ in.; 102.3 × 115 cm
Private Collection

35. **Spring Woods Scene,** *c.* 1914
oil on board
14 × 10½ in.; 35.6 × 26.7 cm
Private Collection

36. **Northern Landscape,** *c.* 1914
oil on board
10½ × 12 in.; 26.7 × 30.5 cm
Private Collection

37. **Red Sumachs, Haliburton,** *c.* 1915
oil on board
10⅝ × 12 in.; 27 × 30.5 cm
Private Collection

38. **Winter Woodland,** *c.* 1915
oil on canvas
40⅛ × 45 in.; 102 × 114.3 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

39. **Winter Sunrise,** *c.* 1915
oil on canvas
50 × 47½ in.; 127 × 120.7 cm
Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery,
University of Regina

40. **Snow,** *c.* 1915
oil on canvas
27 × 42 in.; 71.2 × 110.5 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection,
Kleinburg, Ontario

41. **Spruce and Snow, Northern Ontario,** 1916
oil on canvas
40 × 45 in.; 101.6 × 114.3 cm
Private Collection

42. **Snow II,** *c.* 1916
oil on canvas
46¾ × 49¾ in.; 118.7 × 126.4 cm
The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

43. **Building the Ice House, Hamilton,** *c.* 1916
oil on board
10½ × 12¾ in.; 26.7 × 32.4 cm
Private Collection

44. **Houses Under Construction,** *c.* 1916
oil on board
10½ × 13¾ in.; 26.7 × 35 cm
Mr. Austin Seton Thompson, Toronto

45. **Houses, Sketch XIX,** n.d.
oil on board
10½ × 13¾ in.; 26.7 × 35 cm
Private Collection

46. **Birch Tree,** *c.* 1916
oil on board
10½ × 14 in.; 26.7 × 35.6 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from Friends of Canadian Art Fund,
1938

47. **Laurie Lake, Algonquin Park,** 1916
oil on board
10 1/2 × 14 in.; 26.7 × 35.6 cm
Private Collection

48. **Landscape, Algonquin Park,** 1916
oil on board
10 5/8 × 10 3/4 in.; 27 × 27.3 cm
Private Collection

49. **Log Shack, Algonquin Park,** 1916
oil on board
14 × 10 11/16 in.; 35.3 × 27.1 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection,
Kleinburg, Ontario

50. **Winter Landscape,** *c.* 1916-17
oil on canvas
47 1/2 × 50 in.; 120.7 × 127 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

51. **In the Ward,** 1917
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 1/2 in.; 26.7 × 34.3 cm
Private Collection

52. **Kempenfelt Bay,** *c.* 1917
oil on canvas
46 1/2 × 53 in.; 118.1 × 134.6 cm
Private Collecion

53. **Two Trees,** n.d.
oil on board
14 × 9 1/2 in.; 35.6 × 24.1 cm
Collection of the Art Gallery of Hamilton,
Gift of Mr. M. F. Feheley, 1971

54. **Winter in the Northern Woods,** *c.* 1918
oil on canvas
55 × 72 in.; 139.7 × 182.9 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

55. **Woodland Snow, Family Outing,** *c.* 1918
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 3/8 in.; 27 × 34 cm
Private Collection

56. **Winter Landscape with Pink House,** 1918
oil on canvas
47 1/2 × 49 1/2 in.; 120.7 × 125.7 cm
From the Toronto Dominion Bank's
Collection of Canadian Art

57. **Bend of the River,** *c.* 1918
oil on board
10 5/8 × 13 3/4 in.; 27 × 35 cm
Private Collection

58. **Algoma Woods I,** 1918
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 5/8 in.; 27 × 35 cm
Private Collection

59. **Algoma Woodland,** 1919
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 5/8 in.; 27 × 35 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection,
Kleinburg, Ontario

60. **Waterfall, Algoma Canyon,** 1919
oil on board
10 1/2 × 14 in.; 27 × 36 cm
Private Collection

61. **Algoma Sketch CIX,** 1919
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 5/8 in.; 27 × 35 cm
Private Collection

62. **Mitchell Lake, Batchewana,** 1919
oil on board
10 3/4 × 13 3/4 in.; 27.3 × 35 cm
Mr. P. Roth, Toronto

63. **Evening Solitude,** 1919
oil on canvas
32 × 38 in.; 81.3 × 96.5 cm
Private Collection

64. **Waterfall, Algoma,** *c.* 1920
oil on canvas
47¼ × 55 in.; 120 × 139.7 cm
Collection of the Art Gallery of Hamilton
Gift of the Women's Committee, 1957

65. **Autumn, Algoma,** 1920
oil on canvas
40 × 50 in.; 101.6 × 127 cm
Victoria College, University of Toronto

66. **Beaver Country,** *c.* 1920
oil on panel
10⅝ × 13⅞ in.; 27 × 35.2 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from the Fund of the T. Eaton Co. Ltd.
for Canadian Works of Art, 1951

67. **Trees and Pool,** *c.* 1920
oil on panel
10½ × 14 in.; 27 × 36 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from Friends of Canadian Art Fund,
1938

68. **Algoma Lake,** *c.* 1920
oil on panel
10½ × 14 in.; 27 × 36 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from Friends of Canadian Art Fund,
1938

69. **Sand Lake, Algoma,** *c.* 1920
oil on panel
10½ × 13¾ in.; 27 × 35 cm
Jennings Young Collection

70. **Northern Lake,** *c.* 1920-21
oil on board
10⅝ × 13⅝ in.; 27 × 35 cm
Private Collection

71. **Pines and Clouds, Algoma,** n.d.
oil on board
21¾ × 26¾ in.; 55.2 × 93.3 cm
J. Blair MacAulay, Oakville

72. **Algoma Country,** *c.* 1920-21
oil on canvas
40½ × 50³⁄₁₆ in.; 108 × 127.4 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from the Fund of the T. Eaton Co. Ltd.
for Canadian Works of Art, 1948

73. **Algoma Landscape,** 1922
oil on canvas
46 × 54 in.; 117 × 137.1 cm
Private Collection

74. **Tamarack Swamp,** *c.* 1922
oil on canvas
42½ × 50¼ in.; 108 × 128 cm
Private Collection

75. **Rocky Cliffs, Algoma,** 1922
oil on canvas
48¼ × 60¼ in.; 122.6 × 153 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Bequest of Charles S. Band, 1970

76. **Algoma Country II,** 1923
oil on canvas
40½ × 50 in.; 102.9 × 127 cm
The Ontario Heritage Foundation
Firestone Art Collection

77. **Beaver Made Lake, Algoma,** *c.* 1923
oil on canvas
32 × 40 in.; 81.3 × 101.6 cm
Private Collection

78. **Algoma Waterfall,** *c.* 1925
oil on canvas
34 1/2 × 40 1/2 in.; 87.6 × 102.9 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

79. **Beaver Swamp, Algoma,** 1920
oil on canvas
47 1/2 × 55 1/2 in.; 120 × 140.3 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift of Ruth Massey Tovell in memory of Harold Murchison Tovell, 1953

80. **Hurdy Gurdy,** *c.* 1918
oil on canvas
18 × 18 in.; 45.7 × 45.7 cm
Private Collection

81. **Outskirts of Toronto,** 1918
oil on canvas
32 × 37 in.; 81.2 × 94 cm
Rita and Max Merkur

82. **Houses, Chestnut Street,** 1919
oil on canvas
32 × 36 in.; 81.2 × 91.4
Private Collection

83. **Return from Church,** 1919
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 3/4 in.; 27 × 35 cm
Private Collection

84. **Old Houses, Toronto, Winter,** 1919
oil on canvas
32 1/2 × 38 5/8 in.; 82.5 × 98.1 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift of the Canadian National Exhibition Association, 1965

85. **Toronto Houses,** *c.* 1919
oil on panel
10 5/8 × 12 3/4 in.; 27 × 32.4 cm
The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

86. **A Side Street,** 1919
oil on canvas
36 × 44 in.; 91.4 × 111.8 cm
Lent by the Art Gallery of Windsor
Gift of the Detroit Institute of Arts, November 1956

87. **Red House and Yellow Sleigh,** 1919
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 in.; 27 × 33 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from Friends of Canadian Art Fund, 1938

88. **Red House and Yellow Sleigh,** *c.* 1919-20
oil on canvas
36 1/2 × 50 in.; 92.7 × 127 cm
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery

89. **White Houses,** *c.* 1920
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 in.; 27 × 33 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from Friends of Canadian Art Fund, 1938

90. **A House in the Slums,** 1920
oil on canvas
32 × 38 in.; 81.3 × 96.5 cm
Private Collection

91. **Snow Fall,** 1920
oil on canvas
36 × 43 3/4 in.; 91.4 × 111.1 cm
Private Collection

92. **Morning,** *c.* 1921
oil on canvas
38 1/4 × 44 1/4 in.; 97.1 × 112.4 cm
Gift of The W. Garfield Weston Foundation, Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, N.B.

93. **January Thaw, Edge of Town,** 1921
oil on canvas
42 × 50 in.; 106.7 × 127 cm
The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

94. **Elevator Court, Halifax,** 1921
oil on canvas
38 × 44 1/8 in.; 96.5 × 112 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from the Albert H. Robson Memorial Subscription Fund, 1941

95. **Newfoundland Sketch,** 1921
oil on panel
11 × 14 in.; 27.9 × 35.6 cm
On loan from the Hart House Permanent Collection

96. **Billboard,** 1921
oil on canvas
42 1/2 × 50 1/4 in.; 108 × 127.6 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

97. **Shacks, Earlscourt,** *c.* 1922
oil on board
11 1/4 × 14 1/4 in.; 28.6 × 36.1 cm
Mr. and Mrs. H. Reuben Cohen, Moncton, N.B.

98. **Lake Simcoe Summer,** *c.* 1918
oil on board
10 1/4 × 12 1/4 in.; 26 × 31.1 cm
Collection of The Winnipeg Art Gallery
From the Arnold O. Brigden Estate

99. **Houses, St. Patrick Street,** 1923
oil on canvas
31 1/2 × 40 in.; 80 × 101.6 cm
From the C. S. Band Collection

100. **High Water, Joe Lake, Algonquin Park,** n.d.
oil on board
11 1/4 × 14 5/8 in.; 28.6 × 37.2 cm
J. Blair MacAulay, Oakville

101. **Algoma Panorama,** 1921
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 5/8 in.; 26.3 × 35.3 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario

102. **Above Lake Superior,** *c.* 1922
oil on canvas
48 × 60 in.; 122 × 152.4 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from the Reuben and Kate Leonard Canadian Fund, 1929

103. **Lake Superior Country,** *c.* 1922
oil on board
10 5/8 × 13 7/8 in.; 27.6 × 35.2 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario

104. **First Snow, North Shore, Lake Superior,** 1923
oil on canvas
48 × 60 in.; 122 × 152.4 cm
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery

105. **Lake Superior Painting IX,** 1923
oil on canvas
48 1/8 × 50 1/4 in.; 102 × 127.6 cm
William I. M. Turner, Jr.

106. **Ice Houses, Coldwell Bay,** *c.* 1923
oil on board
12 1/4 × 15 1/4 in.; 31.1 × 38.7 cm
Mr. and Mrs. H. Reuben Cohen, Moncton, N.B.

107. **Coldwell, Lake Superior,** *c.* 1923
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Private Collection

108. **Ice House, Coldwell (Sketch XXIV),** *c.* 1923
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Private Collection

109. **Ice House, Coldwell, Lake Superior,** *c.* 1923
oil on canvas
37 × 45 in.; 94 × 114.2 cm
Collection of the Art Gallery of Hamilton,
H. S. Southam Bequest, 1966

110. **Distant View Over Lake Superior,** n.d.
oil on board
10⅝ × 13¾ in.; 27 × 35 cm
Private Collection

111. **Grey Day, Lake Superior,** n.d.
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from Friends of Canadian Art Fund,
1938

112. **Country North of Lake Superior,** n.d.
oil on board
10¾ × 13¾ in.; 27.3 × 35 cm
Private Collection

113. **North Shore, Lake Superior,** n.d.
oil on board
11⅞ × 14⅞ in.; 30.2 × 37.8 cm
Collection of the Winnipeg Art Gallery
From the Arnold O. Brigden Estate

114. **Clouds, Lake Superior,** 1923
oil on canvas
40¼ × 40 in.; 102.2 × 127 cm
Collection of the Winnipeg Art Gallery
Donated by John A. MacAulay, Q.C.

115. **From the North Shore, Lake Superior,** 1923
oil on canvas
48 × 60 in.; 122 × 152.4 cm
Collection of the London Art Gallery
Gift of H. S. Southam, Ottawa, 1940

116. **North Shore, Lake Superior,** n.d.
oil on canvas
40 × 52 in.; 101.6 × 132 cm
Victoria College, University of Toronto

117. **Pic Island,** *c.* 1922
oil on board
10⅝ × 13¾ in.; 27 × 35 cm
Private Collection

118. **Pic Island,** *c.* 1924
oil on canvas
48 × 60 in.; 122 × 152.4 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection,
Kleinburg, Ontario

119. **Pic Island,** *c.* 1923
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift of Mrs. Doris Huestis Mills Speirs,
1971

120. **Pic Island,** *c.* 1923
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Private Collection

121. **North Shore, Lake Superior, Pic Island,** n.d.
oil on board
10 3/4 × 13 7/8 in.; 27.3 × 35.2 cm
Dr. Edgar Davidson

122. **Pic Island,** n.d.
oil on canvas
38 × 44 in.; 96.5 × 111.8 cm
Jennings Young Collection

123. **Afternoon Sun, North Shore, Lake Superior,** 1924
oil on canvas
40 1/2 × 50 1/4 in.; 102.9 × 127.6 cm
Collection of The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

124. **Lake Superior,** *c.* 1924
oil on canvas
40 1/8 × 50 1/8 in.; 102 × 127.3 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Bequest of Charles S. Band, 1970

125. **North Shore, Lake Superior, Sketch II,** n.d.
oil on board
11 3/4 × 14 3/4 in.; 29.8 × 37.5 cm
University College, Toronto

126. **Lake Superior,** n.d.
oil on board
14 3/4 × 12 in.; 37.5 × 30.5 cm
Private Collection

127. **Lake Superior Sketch LI,** n.d.
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Lent by the Art Gallery of Windsor
Gift from the Douglas M. Duncan Collection, May 1970

128. **Lake Superior Sketch LXXIII,** *c.* 1923
oil on board
10 3/4 × 14 in.; 27.3 × 35.5 cm
Mr. and Mrs. Walter H. Klinkhoff

129. **The Old Tree Stump, Lake Superior,** 1926
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
From the C. S. Band Collection

130. **North Shore, Lake Superior,** 1926
oil on canvas
40 × 50 in.; 101.6 × 127 cm
Collection of The National Gallery of Canada

131. **North Shore, Lake Superior,** n.d.
oil on board
11 3/4 × 14 3/4 in.; 29.9 × 37.5 cm
Mr. and Mrs. F. Schaeffer

132. **Lake Superior Sketch LXIII,** n.d.
oil on board
11 3/4 × 14 7/8 in.; 29.9 × 37.8 cm
Collection of The National Gallery of Canada

133. **Lake Superior Sketch XXXIX,** n.d.
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from Friends of Canadian Art Fund, 1938

134. **Sketch for "Lake Superior III",** n.d.
oil on panel
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Collection of the Edmonton Art Gallery

135. **Lake Superior III,** *c.* 1928
oil on canvas
34 1/2 × 40 1/4 in.; 87.6 × 102.2 cm
Collection of The National Gallery of Canada

136. **Miners' Houses, Glace Bay,** *c.* 1925
oil on canvas
42 1/4 × 50 in.; 107.3 × 127 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Bequest of Charles S. Band, 1970

137. **Red House in Winter,** *c.* 1925
oil on canvas
35 × 41 in.; 88.9 × 104.1 cm
On loan from the Hart House Permanent Collection

138. **Ontario Hill Town,** 1926
oil on canvas
33 1/2 × 38 11/16 in.; 85 × 100.8 cm
University College, Toronto

139. **Summer Houses, Grimsby Park, Ontario,** *c.* 1926
oil on canvas
36 × 40 in.; 91.4 × 101.6 cm
Private Collection

140. **Eight Red Houses,** *c.* 1926
oil on canvas
40 × 48 in.; 101.6 × 122 cm
On loan from R. Fraser Elliott, Toronto

141. **Northern Lake,** 1926
oil on canvas
36 × 35 in.; 91.4 × 90 cm
Private Collection

142. **Lake Superior Hill XV,** n.d.
oil on canvas
48 × 60 1/2 in.; 122 × 153 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

143. **Athabaska Valley, Jasper Park,** 1924
oil on board
10 1/2 × 13 7/8 in.; 26.7 × 35.2 cm
The Edmonton Art Gallery
Ernest E. Poole Foundation Collection

144. **Maligne Lake,** 1924
oil on board
10 3/4 × 13 3/4 in.; 27.3 × 35 cm
Private Collection

145. **Maligne Lake, Jasper Park,** 1924
oil on canvas
48 × 60 in.; 122 × 152.4 cm
Collection of The National Gallery of Canada

146. **Brazeau Snowfield, Jasper,** 1924
oil on canvas
48 1/2 × 59 3/4 in.; 123.1 × 151.8 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

147. **Colin Range, Rocky Mountains, Sketch CXII,** n.d.
oil on panel
10 3/8 × 13 5/8 in.; 26.4 × 34.6 cm
On loan from R. Fraser Elliott, Toronto

148. **Mount Robson from Berg Lake,** n.d.
oil on board
11 7/8 × 15 in.; 30.2 × 38.1 cm
Private Collection

149. **Glacier, Mt. Robson Area,** n.d.
oil on board
12 × 14 3/4 in.; 30.5 × 37.5 cm
Private Collection

150. **Lake MacArthur, B.C.,** n.d.
oil on board
12 × 14¾ in.; 30.5 × 37.5 cm
Owens Art Gallery, Mount Allison University

151. **Mount Temple,** n.d.
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from Friends of Canadian Art Fund, 1938

152. **Mount Temple,** *c.* 1925
oil on canvas
48 × 53 in.; 122 × 134.6 cm
The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
Horsley & Annie Townsend Bequest

153. **Lake and Mountains,** 1927-28
oil on canvas
42½ × 63½ in.; 105.4 × 160.6 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Gift from the Fund of the T. Eaton Co. Ltd. for Canadian Works of Art, 1948

154. **North from Mt. Munn, Mt. Robson Park,** *c.* 1928
oil on board
11⅞ × 14 in.; 30.2 × 35.6 cm
Private Collection

155. **Isolation Peak,** *c.* 1929
oil on board
11¾ × 14¾ in.; 29.9 × 37.5 cm
James and Mary Boughton

156. **Isolation Peak,** *c.* 1930
oil on canvas
42 × 50 in.; 106.7 × 127 cm
On loan from the Hart House Permanent Collection

157. **Mountain Sketch LXV,** *c.* 1929
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Private Collection

158. **Mt. Lefroy,** 1930
oil on canvas
52¼ × 60⅜ in.; 132.7 × 153.4 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario

159. **Rocky Mountain Sketch, Mt. Lefroy,** *c.* 1930
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario

160. **Lighthouse, Father Point,** 1929
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Private Collection

161. **Lighthouse, Father Point,** 1930
oil on canvas
42 × 50 in.; 106.7 × 127 cm
Collection of The National Gallery of Canada

162. **Morning, Robertson Bay, Greenland,** 1930
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
From the C. S. Band Collection

163. **Fog and Ice, Kane Basin,** 1930
oil on board
$11^{15}/_{16} \times 14^{15}/_{16}$ in.; 30.3 × 37.9 cm
Collection Art Gallery of Ontario
Bequest of Sir Frederick G. Banting, 1941

164. **Fog and Ice, Smith Sound,** 1930
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
From the C. S. Band Collection

165. **Rice Strait, Ellesmere Island,** 1930
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
From the C. S. Band Collection

166. **Ellesmere Island,** 1930
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1
The McMichael Canadian Collection,
Kleinburg, Ontario

167. **Arctic Sketch XIII,** 1930
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Agnes Etherington Art Centre,
Queen's University, Kingston
Gift of Mrs. Etherington, *c.* 1944

168. **Mountains, Baffin Island,** 1930
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
From the C. S. Band Collection

169. **Iceberg, Baffin Bay North,** 1930
oil on board
$12 \times 14^{3}/_{4}$ in.; 30.5 × 37.5 cm
From the C. S. Band Collection

170. **Eclipse Sound and Bylot Island,** 1930
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection,
Kleinburg, Ontario

171. **North Labrador,** 1930
oil on board
12 × 15 in.; 30.5 × 38.1 cm
Private Collection

172. **Icebergs and Mountains, Greenland,**
c. 1930
oil on canvas
36 × 45 in.; 91.4 × 114.3 cm
Collection of the Art Gallery of Hamilton
Gift of H. S. Southam, Esq., C.M.G.,
LL.D., 1953

173. **Icebergs, Davis Strait,** 1930
oil on canvas
40 × 60 in.; 121.9 × 152.4 cm
The McMichael Canadian Collection,
Kleinburg, Ontario

174. **North Shore, Baffin Island I,** *c.* 1930
oil on canvas
32 × 42 in.; 81.3 × 106.7 cm
Collection of The National Gallery
of Canada, Ottawa

175. **Bylot Island I,** n.d.
oil on canvas
32 × 45 in.; 81.3 × 114.3 cm
LSH Holdings, Ltd.

Jeremy Adamson was born in Toronto and received his B.A. and M.A. in Art History from the University of Toronto. He was Keeper of the Permanent Collection at Hart House during his undergraduate and graduate years, producing the catalogue *Canadian Paintings in Hart House* in 1969. Mr. Adamson was a museum intern at The National Gallery of Canada and did his doctoral studies in the History of Art at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He was Visiting Assistant Professor at The John Hopkins University in 1972-73 and has lectured in the Fine Art Department, University of Toronto. Curator of Canadian Historical Art at the Art Gallery of Ontario since September 1975, Mr. Adamson has been appointed a Smithsonian Fellow at the National Collection of Fine Arts, Washington, D.C. for 1978.