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The Force of Culture: Vincent Massey and Canadian Sovereignty

by

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A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department of History in Art

We accept this dissertation as conforming to the required standard

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Abstract

In Canada, a country defined by a certain cultural reticence, Vincent Massey (1887-1967) was that remarkable entity, a champion of culture. Through a wide range of initiatives in the arts and education, he expressed his determination to frame a cultural model of Canada. Earlier conceptions of the country’s make-up had tended to be narratives about the march from colony to self-government, or were predicated on environmental and economic factors. On the contrary, Massey held that its spiritual foundations, traditions, values, and aspirations rendered Canada a community and a nation. True Canadian sovereignty meant developing a "fully-rounded national life". He argued for the force of culture over what he called the force of geography.

The cultural model that Massey advanced had particular features. Its bedrock was a faith in education, specifically, a liberal arts education, as distinct from a strictly technical or professional training. Culture and education were virtual synonyms in early twentieth century Canada. It was widely understood that the beneficiary of a liberal arts training exhibited independence of mind, served excellence over self-interest, displayed flexibility and tolerance, and, in turn, contributed to societal harmony. Culture, in this sense, was the source of community.

Virtually inseparable from culture was citizenship; the idea of character, the goal of a liberal arts education, was central to both. Individual character, which was esteemed for its allegiance to the greater good, and, perhaps paradoxically, its resistance to conformity and standardization, was analogized with "national character and citizenship", a refrain of the 1920s. To speak of national character was not only to affirm the moral nature of Canada's citizenry, but to prize its uniqueness and diversity in the face of the forces of cultural homogenization seen to be
emanating from the United States. Culture was the cultivation of citizenship, and, as such, the foundation of national sovereignty.

The fine arts, slow to gain acceptance in Canada generally, only belatedly secured a foothold in this scheme. Steeped in Methodism, Massey never adopted an art-for-arts-sake doctrine. He came to understand, however, that the arts, without being moralizing, could serve a moral agenda: the constructing of national community. In this, they, too, were agents of culture.

Influenced by British models of state-supported art, Massey increasingly aligned culture with the federal government, but distinguished firmly between state control and state intervention. The substitution of excellence and diversity as new moral imperatives in the construction of the state, in place of authority and political exigency, was the key to his recommendation of government-supported culture and art (Massey Report, 1951). The principle he sought to honour, pertaining deeply to the nature of humanism in Canada, was community without uniformity.

Examiners:

Dr. Mavor Moore, Co-supervisor (Faculty of Fine Arts)

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGOA</td>
<td>Art Gallery of Ontario Archives, Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALC</td>
<td>Arts &amp; Letters Club, Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALCA</td>
<td>Arts &amp; Letters Club, Toronto, Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCP</td>
<td>British Council Papers, PRO, BW20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHIA</td>
<td>Chautauqua Institution Archives, Chautauqua, N. Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHA</td>
<td>Hart House Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHP</td>
<td>Hart House Papers, UTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MF</td>
<td>Massey Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFamP</td>
<td>Massey Family Papers, NAC MG32 AI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFG</td>
<td>NGC, Gift of the Massey Foundation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFP</td>
<td>Massey Foundation Papers, NAC MG28 I136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAC</td>
<td>National Archives of Canada, Ottawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGC</td>
<td>National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGCA</td>
<td>National Gallery of Canada Archives, Ottawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFRBL</td>
<td>Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, UT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TGA</td>
<td>Tate Gallery Archive, London, U. K.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCC/VUA</td>
<td>United Church of Canada/Victoria University Archives, Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UT</td>
<td>University of Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTA</td>
<td>University of Toronto Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VMB</td>
<td>NGC, Vincent Massey Bequest, 1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VMP</td>
<td>Vincent Massey Papers, UTA B87-0082</td>
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Preface and Acknowledgments

My investigation of Vincent Massey's role in Canadian cultural history began when I was a junior curator in the European Department of the Art Gallery of Ontario during the 1980s. A routine part of my work was selecting paintings for the Gallery's members' lounge. I was able to draw upon an assortment of paintings that languished in the Gallery's vaults. Among them was a sizeable group of British pictures from the first half of the 20th century. They had largely entered the collection in the period immediately following World War II and seemed an anomaly in an institution long captivated by the New York School. My curiosity yielded a small exhibition and catalogue that attempted to situate in a wider context the Gallery's close relation with Henry Moore, the one modern British artist whose work was a featured part of the collection. Research for the exhibition awakened my appreciation of a British bias in Canadian art collecting after the War, and Massey's part in that vogue.¹

My exploration of Canadian-British relations during the 1940s and 1950s led to a full-blown preoccupation with Canadian cultural history of the period, the terrain of my doctoral work at the University of Victoria. While my home discipline has continued to be art history, I have ventured into the apparently more nebulous and certainly more fragmentary area of cultural studies. The interdisciplinary enterprise is fraught with worries beyond standard academic paranoia, especially concerning audience. Will, for example, the art historian and the historian of religion and education find common ground? In the course of my research, I have become convinced of the inseparability of Massey's ideas about

culture, religion, education, the arts, citizenship, and Canadian sovereignty. Essentially, this study is about persuading others of this interconnectedness.

Throughout the course of my doctorate, I have been most fortunate to benefit from the knowledge and experience of Dr. Mavor Moore, my senior supervisor, whose perspectives on Canadian cultural history and policy have been invaluable. I would also like to acknowledge the support of art historian Dr. Christopher Thomas as co-supervisor, whose inquiry, especially into late 19th century Canadian intellectual and cultural history, has further enriched my path, and whose editorial direction has been most helpful. Instrumental in the success of my interdisciplinary program has been the guidance of Dr. Gordana Lazarevich, Dean of Graduate Studies, of whose administrative resourcefulness and academic counsel I have been the extremely appreciative recipient.

Drs. Moore and Lazarevich are among a small number of faculty who have been defining cultural studies at the University of Victoria. Among others in this group with whom I have had the pleasure to be associated are Dr. Joan Backus, Dr. Anthony Welch, and, in my teaching duties, Lynda Gammon. Cultural studies at UVIC are not unlike cultural studies in this country generally, emergent and struggling, and I have been most grateful to have interacted with these individuals in their commitment to the arts and culture of Canada. I am also indebted to other members of the History in Art Department, in particular, Dr. Elizabeth Tumasonis and Professor Martin Segger, as well as departmental secretary, Darlene Pouliot. Finally, Dr. Patricia Roy of the Department of History has helped me to navigate a path through the historiography of Canadian nationalism, and has been a most rigorous and instructive editor.

The research for this study has been largely archival and I would like to thank, first, Massey College for permission to access the Vincent Massey Papers. This collection (now housed
at the University of Toronto Archives) and the Massey Family Papers (National Archives of Canada) constitute the primary resources for this investigation, and I would like to record my appreciation of the assistance that I have received at both depositories, at the former, from Garron Wells and Harold Averil, and, at the latter, from Sarah Montgomery and Andrée Lavoie. I have also gratefully received cooperation and assistance from the National Gallery of Canada Archives (Cyndie Campbell), the Art Gallery of Ontario Archives (Karen McKenzie and Larry Pfaff), the Victoria University Archives and United Church Archives (Ruth Dyck Wilson and Ken Wilson), the Tate Gallery Archive (Jennifer Booth and Adrian Glew), the National Gallery (London) Archives (Jackie McCormish), The British Council Archives (Victorine F.-Martineau), The British Council Visual Arts Department (Andrea Rose and Veronica Burtt), the Public Records Office, Kew, and the Chautauqua Institution (Alfreda L. Irwin, Historian). Welcome assistance has also come from the Massey College Librarian (Marie Korey); Hart House Theatre Manager (Janet M. Bessey); the Hart House Warden’s Office (Myra Emsley); the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library; Art Gallery of Ontario Registrar Barry Simpson; National Gallery of Canada registration staff member Greg Spurgeon; Royal Ontario Museum registration and curatorial staff; Scott James, Archivist, the Arts and Letters Club; and Bob Stewart, United Church of Canada Archives, Vancouver. To those who have taken time to be interviewed or have corresponded with me about Vincent Massey, I am extremely grateful, in particular, the late Hart Massey, Vincent Tovell, Freeman Tovell, Rosita Tovell, Rosemarie L. Tovell, Claude Bissell, Robert Fulford, and David Silcox. The interlibrary loan staff at the University of Victoria, for securing both secondary and primary source material with endless goodwill, has been invaluable.

A doctoral fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (1994-96), as well as
University of Victoria President's Research Scholarships (1994-96), and the Ord and Linda Anderson Interdisciplinary Graduate Scholarship (1996-97) have appreciably facilitated my doctoral work, for which I am most grateful.

To my husband, John Finlay, my thanks for his vigour, candour, humour, curiosity, deep sense of ethics, and generous spirit. To the rest of my family, especially my parents and children, I am always indebted.
Introduction

Vincent Massey's "Other Canada"

In Canada, a country defined by a certain cultural reticence, Vincent Massey (1887-1967) was that remarkable entity, a champion of culture. Best-known as Canada's first native-born Governor-General (1952-59) and an heir to the Massey-Harris (later Massey-Ferguson) farm-implement manufacturing empire, he figured prominently in a wide range of educational and artistic endeavors.

Among them, he chaired a Methodist commission bent on educational reform between 1919 and 1921. He masterminded the building of Hart House at the University of Toronto during the 1910s, an innovative and widely-emulated undergraduate student centre (for males only until after his death), which made painting, music, and theatre a centrepiece of its activities. From 1923 to 1926, he was president of the National Council of Education, an organization created to foster national dialogue in a country where, constitutionally, education is a provincial preserve. He supported and instrumentally influenced the successful bid for national public broadcasting in the 1930s and was first chair of the Dominion Drama Festival, founded in 1932 by the Earl of Bessborough (Governor General, 1931-35) with intensive counsel from Massey.

In addition, Massey tirelessly promoted Canadian art abroad as Canada's first minister in Washington (1927-30) and High Commissioner in Britain (1935-46), viewing culture as integral to foreign affairs. He and his wife, Alice, were enthusiastic and discriminating collectors of contemporary Canadian and British art. Massey sat on the boards of the National Gallery of Canada, the Art Gallery of Toronto (now the Art Gallery of Ontario), and the National and Tate Galleries, London. He also headed a committee charged with defining the mandates of the national art collections of Britain, and subsequently, in Canada, chaired the Royal
Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, which produced a landmark report on the state of Canadian culture in 1951.

Despite these and countless other initiatives, Massey often adopted an apologetic tone when he spoke about the arts, especially to business audiences. He referred with modesty, or perhaps false modesty, to his and his wife's "little" art collection, which, in the early 1930s, was the largest private collection of contemporary Canadian art in the country. While he later valued the fine arts highly, early in his career, he viewed them as peripheral to the liberal arts. He recommended, for example, excising music programs from the curricula of some of the Methodist colleges he was commissioned to examine in 1919, and he worried about the unmanly character of the arts. Throughout his career he used the word "culture" with discomfort, referring to it as "degraded", and even "loathsome". \(^1\) He wrote about "the word 'culture' floating like a menacing cloud" over the Massey Commission proceedings. \(^2\)

Massey's views on culture reflect both ambivalence and transformation, while speaking broadly to the place of culture in Canadian notions of the public good. Drawing upon a host of often conflicting assumptions, Massey was, nevertheless, at the forefront of an effort to frame a cultural model of Canada, which he referred in the 1930s as "the other Canada". Early conceptions of the make-up of Canada had tended to be narratives about the march from colony to self-government, or

\(^1\) As early as 1910, he referred to "that loathsome word 'culture'"; Massey, Diary, 23 June 1910; VMP, 301.

\(^2\) Massey, "Postscript" (Draft of an uncompleted book, 1966-67); MFamP, V. 42.
were predicated on environmental and economic factors. On the contrary, Massey held that it was Canada's spiritual foundations, traditions, values, and aspirations that rendered it a community and a nation. He argued for the force of culture over what he called the "force(s) of geography". Only by taking its culture seriously might Canada overcome its sectionalism and thwart the forces of colonialism, past and future. Of the prominent business and government figures of his generation, he was clearly the most literate in the cultural sphere, promoting the cause of culture through a wide variety of projects and a succession of public addresses and written statements.

The cultural model that Massey advanced, deeply indebted to Canada's turn of the century intellectual milieu, held education as its bedrock, specifically a liberal arts education, as distinct from a technical or professional training. The beneficiary of such a training, it was widely understood, exhibited independence of mind, was capable of serving excellence rather than self-interest, displayed flexibility and tolerance, and, in turn, contributed to societal harmony. Culture, in this sense, was the source of community.

Virtually inseparable from culture was citizenship. The idea of character was central to both. The building of character, the goal of a liberal arts education, entailed engaging the "whole" person, the moral as well as intellectual faculties. Character was esteemed both for its allegiance to the greater good and, perhaps paradoxically, for its

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3 Most notably, these are the Staples Theory of Harold Innis (The Fur Trade in Canada, 1930) and the Laurentian Thesis advanced, in particular, by Donald Creighton (The Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence, 1937).

4 Characteristically, while receiving assistance from speech writers, he was intimately involved in framing and crafting his own prose.
resistance to conformity and standardization. National character and citizenship became refrains of the 1920s. To speak of "national character" was not only to affirm the upstanding and enterprising nature of Canada's citizenry, but to prize its uniqueness and diversity in the face of the forces of cultural homogenization and materialism seen to be emanating particularly from the United States.

While Massey viewed education as the chief means of sustaining and developing a Canadian value system and, ultimately, its sovereignty, he understood it as a deeply humanistic project that was aimed at enablement, not indoctrination. He recognized the power of education to mould a nation, but he sought specifically a system that fostered well-informed, independently-minded members, not a proletarianized workforce in the service of industrial capitalism or a passive citizenry in the sway of state propaganda. Culture was the cultivation of active citizenship in the Canadian democracy.

The fine arts, slow to gain acceptance in Canada generally, only belatedly secured a foothold in this scheme. Massey's own early involvement in the arts had the air of a clandestine pastime. Steeped in Methodism, he never adopted an art-for-art's-sake doctrine. He came to understand, however, that the arts, without being moralizing, could serve a moral and cultural purpose: the constructing of national community. Under the influence of the Group of Seven, in particular his close friend Lawren Harris, he awakened to the nationalizing function of the arts. They, too, served as agents of culture.

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5 An indication of the wide use of the expression, for example, was a 1931 Canadian Pacific Railway brochure promoting the Chateau Frontenac, Quebec, which read: "Canadian Pacific: The Expression of a Nation's Character", and continued: "worldwide in scope, international in activities, the Canadian Pacific is pre-eminently the expression of a progressive nation's character"; CPR Archives.
Deeply influenced by British models of state-supported art while Canada's High Commissioner in London, Massey increasingly aligned Canada's cultural well-being with the federal government, but always distinguished firmly between state intervention and state control. The substitution of excellence and diversity as moral imperatives in the construction of the state, in place of authority and political exigency, was the key to his recommendation of state-supported culture and art for Canada (Massey Report, 1951). The principle he sought to honour, pertaining deeply to the collective and moral nature of humanism in Canada, was community without uniformity.

Massey's views on education, art, and citizenship are symptomatic of wider ambivalences and transformations in Canadian attitudes towards culture. In a country where culture is both elusive and pervasive -- one might say sublimated, many regard it with suspicion, uneasy that it is shrouded with a lingering elitism. Some never tire of calling it a "frill". Nonetheless, it is arguable that Canadians have developed a sense of culture as somehow integrally related to the country's nationhood. Outcries over the countless rounds of cutbacks to the nation's public broadcaster, the CBC, during the 1980s and 1990s have been most commonly expressed as a concern for its diminished role in "holding the country together", at a time when people have identified few other forums for national dialogue.

Attempting to discern the 'contours of Canadian culture' while fascinating, is fraught with difficulties.

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6 The phrase is borrowed from A. B. McKillop, Contours of Canadian Thought (Toronto/Buffalo/London, 1987).
Despite voluminous writing, which testifies to culture's deep and sustained hold on Canadian thought, and a wealth of archival material, the historiography of culture is extremely fragmented and rudimentary. This is more surprising given its vastness. From broadcasting and telecommunications to cultural policy and support systems for culture, from issues of national and regional identity to multiculturalism and the cultural implications of globalization, from the fine arts to popular culture, the field is nothing if not daunting. In Ioan Davies' words: "everything in Canada can be defined as cultural." As David Chaney has argued, culture has become "the dominant topic and most productive intellectual resource in...our understanding of life in the modern world". Nonetheless, there remains in Canada a great distance, even divide, between culture's significance and its recognition.

Douglas Owram has suggested that historians ignored Canadian culture until well after World War II, "perhaps taking to heart the lament made by many...that there was none." Only in the past decade or so have Canadian history textbooks (surely one of the most telling measures of a subject's validation) routinely included a chapter or even a section on culture. The most sweeping statement of the place of culture in Canada has perhaps been provided by Carl Berger. He has tracked schematically the rising concern with culture in the period immediately after World War II, when Canadian

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7 One bibliography boasts over 10,000 items; Stuart McFadyen et al., eds., Cultural Development in Canada: Bibliography (Edmonton, 1993).

8 Ioan Davies, Cultural Studies and Beyond: Fragments of Empire (London and New York, 1995), 164.


historians began to admit the significance of beliefs, values, and ideas into the make-up of Canada. As evidence, he cited the publication of J. B. Brebner's *Scholarship for Canada* (1946), the Massey Commission on culture, and the writings of Harold Innis on communications systems and culture. But despite Berger's recognition of what has elsewhere been called magisterially the international "cultural turn" over the past 50 years, he confined his consideration of Canadian culture to religion, higher education, and science, reflecting, as he noted, the limited view of Canada's cultural history taken by historians generally. He did not include as cultural the rich discourse on national identity, which in Canada is culture's rallying cry (or whimper). This, itself, underlines the need to assess more clearly and fully culture's cogency as a concept in Canada, both historically and contemporarily.

In the early 1990s, Will Straw surveyed the progress of cultural studies, including cultural history, in Canada, and pointed to its fragmentation. He divided Canadian culturalists into two camps: those influenced by British cultural studies dating from the 1970s, and those he confined to English-speaking academia, who have generated a diverse assortment of writings on Canadian culture that either predated the British infusion or remained untouched by it. Dating from the late 1950s and early 1960s and driven by the New Left, British cultural studies initially addressed two areas that radically altered the boundaries of cultural


12 David Chaney, *The Cultural Turn*.

analysis, working class and youth culture. Both preoccupations were vitalized by Britain's shifting social matrix after the War, that is, the breaking down of its class system and the massive influx of American pop culture. Canadians, of course, have struggled with the latter phenomenon since at least the late 19th century.

Whether one concurs with Straw's placement of the theoretical faultline or accepts the relevance of the British school in Canada, it is easy to agree that there is little consensus about the parameters and nature of cultural studies in Canada. Employing as standard a tripartite approach to research -- documentation, contextualization, and theorization -- Canadian cultural history remains generally unattended by all three. Even Canada's strong documentary (one might say self-effacing) tradition in, for example, literature, film, and broadcasting, has not served its cultural history-writing well, and rich archival repositories await.

In addition to the traditional neglect of culture is the more recent trend to transnationalism. Efforts to theorize (more often to politicize) cultural studies have given expression to a body of thought and experience that is often quite unrelated to the Canadian experiment, that trashes nationalism in principle, and hence disavows the practice of Canadian cultural historiography. This denial, of course, may well be symptomatic of Canada's renewing colonialization. Despite this, there have been some recent attempts to recover/uncover some semblance of a national perspective on culture in Canada. Whether these efforts will build towards any kind of consensus (theoretical or historiographical) or even sustained debate remains to be seen.14

14 See, for example, Michael Dorland, "A Thoroughly Hidden Country: Ressentiment, Canadian Nationalism, Canadian Culture", Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory/Revue canadienne de théorie politique et sociale,
While Massey's initiatives in the cultural field were far-ranging and his influence defining, his efforts have also invited a surprising lack of acknowledgment and examination. One historian has even dismissed him as lazy, dull, and preoccupied with trivialities. He has been maligned, as much by innuendo as by outright criticism, as an elitist and an anglophile; both accusations, while not without some validity, do Massey a major disservice.

His own autobiography, *What's Past Is Prologue*, curiously downplayed the cultural side of his career, dwelling upon his political, diplomatic, and business activities. His role as a trustee of the National Gallery of Canada for over twenty-five years, for instance, earned only a couple of paragraphs, perhaps another symptom of his continuing unease over culture. Massey's biographer, Claude Bissell, partially redressed this imbalance in a fruitful and moderate two-volume account based on then exclusive access to Massey's voluminous papers at the University of Toronto.

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16 Claude Bissell, *The Young Vincent Massey* (Toronto/Buffalo/London, 1981) and *The Imperial Canadian: Vincent Massey in Office* (Toronto/Buffalo/London, 1986); for Massey family history, see Merrill Denison, *Harvest Triumphant: The Story of Massey-Harris* (Toronto, 1948); and
Various authors have tackled the complex intellectual and cultural milieu surrounding the Massey Commission (1949-51). Most notable is Paul Litt's treatment which, despite its thorough examination of sources and much suggestive analysis, seems fundamentally unresolved, combining relentless charges of elitism with apparently reluctant admissions of commendable intentions on the part of the Commissioners and the intellectual elite they purportedly represented.\(^{17}\)

Otherwise, only snatches of Massey's activity in the cultural field have been assessed, in sources ranging from Catherine Siddall's exhibition catalogue on Hart House and the Group of Seven to David Silcox's recent book on David Milne, which examines the artist's troubling relationship with Alice and Vincent Massey as patrons.\(^{18}\)

Generally Massey's fortune as a subject of cultural study by historians and others rather echoes the fate of a book he conceived of but never realized, which languishes as a schematic outline among his diaries at the University of Toronto Archives. In it he mapped out the arts in Canada as he had come to know them. Indicative of their unrecognized,  


perhaps even covert place, he referred to them as "the other Canada", which tellingly describes the ambiguous, often hidden face of culture that survives in Canada today.
Chapter 1

From Conversion to Culture: A Methodist Education

Culture is surely one of the most complex concepts in current discourse.\(^1\) The bearer of multiple meanings, sometimes in conflict, it seems to defy easy or precise definition. To explore Vincent Massey's notion of culture is to enter a rich storehouse of accreted belief, value, and association in the history of English-speaking Canada. Far removed from the view of culture found in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), where it is treated as a basket of commodities that can be placed on or off the bargaining table, for Massey, culture was nothing short of the intellectual, moral, aesthetic, and spiritual foundations of the country.

His early ideas about culture and the arts accommodated assumptions embedded in turn-of-the-century Canadian intellectual history: culture rivalled religion as the antidote to materialism; culture had a moral foundation; and culture was virtually synonymous with education, that is, a liberal arts education.

As early as the late nineteenth century the notion of culture was problematic. Like democracy, culture is largely a modern concept.\(^2\) Before the sixteenth century, it was a term whose reference was confined invariably to plants and animals, hence horticulture and agriculture. Only gradually did it become meaningful to speak of human culture, for example, the tending or culture of the mind. In the wake of

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1 Raymond Williams has referred to culture as "one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language"; **Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society**, rev. ed. (London, 1983, rept. 1988), 87.

2 Raymond Williams, **Culture and Society, 1780-1950** (London, 1958), xiii.
the Enlightenment, and the growing conviction that humankind could better itself independent of divine intervention, the idea of culture became firmly predicated on a belief in the human capacity for self-improvement and progress.

The foundation of the modern notion of culture is located in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in German Historicism. Reacting against the primacy given the physical sciences by Cartesianism, Herder and others validated the study of history and language and, in turn, the whole realm of the humanities or human sciences. Culture came to designate the very process of human cultivation and actualization. It married human capability with the goal of infinite perfection, previously the domain of the mystic at his or her god's behest. Culture began to signify the collective fruits and achievements of this process of cultivation. The outcome was the abstract noun "culture", meaning a body of accrued wisdom and shared practice uniting a society over time. In response to the anxiety that the Industrial Revolution generated about the ills of an unrestrained quest for material improvement, culture, in this later sense, came to be seen as the primary antidote to materialism. There would be various debates about the sources of culture in the century that followed, whether poetry, criticism, history or the fine arts, as well as about the arbiters of culture, whether theologians, intellectuals, critics or artists. But there was a growing consensus that culture, rather than religion, was materialism's polar opposite.

It was Herder who reflected upon the collective nature of culture in another sense. He used the word "culture" in the plural, referring to the growth of particular societies and

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eras as distinct from one another, and none as absolute. Here lay an important root of the connection between culture and nationalism, and the notion that specific circumstances of time and place gave rise to unique national characters. Here, too, presumably lay one root of the formidable alliance between citizenship and culture, wherein culture actually signified the cultivation of membership in a particular national group. Moreover, culture, which increasingly defined the non-material realm, empowered nationalism as a spiritual quest.

Culture became a highly topical subject in the English-speaking world as a result of the writing and lectures of English poet, critic, and educator Matthew Arnold. His book *Culture and Anarchy*, published in 1869, made culture a virtual battlecry. He asserted that culture was "the great help out of our present difficulties", by which he meant the increasingly "mechanical and external" nature of the modern world. Acutely concerned about the great wealth flowing to British coal barons, the poverty of the urban working classes, and other excesses of industrialization, he viewed society as being on the brink of anarchy. He was one of those who attempted to position culture as the counterweight to extreme liberalism, unbridled individualism, consumerism, and over-dependence on science and technology.

Fuelled by Arnold, Protestant theologians, educators, and the popular press in Canada hotly debated the relative merits and significance of culture and religion. Some greeted the demotion of religion with stiff resistance; others welcomed a co-mingling of religion and culture to the task of countering

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4 Williams, *Keywords*, 89.


6 Finlay, "Early Notions of Culture in Canada", publication pending.
materialism. The fact remained that culture was gradually supplanting its rival.

One site of transformation was located within the Methodist Church of Canada, where a defining concern with conversion gave way increasingly to a defining concern with culture. While the Methodist embrace of culture was neither swift nor unwavering, as early as the 1840s, the Methodist Church acknowledged culture's place in securing converts, as the following excerpt from its primary Canadian literary organ, the Christian Guardian, indicated: "Twenty, thirty, perhaps forty or fifty [people] have been brought out of darkness during the meeting; but owing to the omission of an immediate and constant culture of the plants of piety, before the year rolled round, few have remained to need culture".  

On the other hand, reliance on culture engendered palpable disquiet. As late as 1907 in a letter to Nathanael Burwash, president of Victoria College, the Methodist College of the University of Toronto, S. T. Bartlett wrote worriedly about a trend away from converting Sunday School children. "'Culture' is taking the place of conversion", he stated with some alarm. Conversion, particularly sudden revelation, had long been the focus of Methodist religious practice. However, it was increasingly paired with culture, in the sense of cultivation or education, as a complement to the process of achieving salvation. By the early 20th century, culture was the predominant route to grace. Meanwhile, Methodism was instrumental in the policy-making and institutionalization of


education in Canada.

The childhood home of Vincent Massey was devoutly Methodist. The assortment of Methodist churches, educational institutions, missions, committees, and projects with which the family was affiliated was breath-taking, especially in view of the variety of other Christian groups and programs they supported, from the Ontario Sunday School Association to the World's Student Christian Federation to the Ontario Lord's Day Alliance to the Chautauqua Institution.

Vincent Massey, whom his nephew, philosopher George Grant, referred to as an "ambitious Methodist,"\(^9\) inherited his Methodist faith from both sides of the family. His grandfather, Hart Massey, was one of the so-called "Methodist millionaires" who dramatically improved the denomination's financial fortunes in the late nineteenth century. On his mother's side was the prominent Methodist Bishop John Heyl Vincent, co-founder of the Chautauqua summer school in New York State, an educational mecca for Methodism as for other denominations. It became the model for "chautauquas" across North America and around the world.

According to Bissell, however, Massey rejected much of his Methodist upbringing.\(^10\) He converted to Anglicanism in 1926\(^11\), perhaps not coincidently shortly after his father's death earlier in the year and not long after the unification of the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational Churches as

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10 Bissell, The Young Vincent Massey, 4 and 43-47.

the United Church of Canada (1925). He was not buried with his forebears in the Methodist family tomb in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery in Toronto. From his university days, his diary recorded periodic stabs at the foibles of the Methodist Church and its practices. On 22 February 1910, Massey complained that "intellectuality is not a strong point of the Methodist Church." On another occasion, he expressed contempt for those who attended Chautauqua.

Certainly Massey parted company with his austere father on the subjects of abstaining from alcohol and attending professional theatre, two contentious issues for Canadian Methodism. Massey commented frequently upon the stultifying effects of Puritanism, which he equated with Methodism. Nonetheless, he acknowledged that "the Puritan tradition, when it is honestly observed, is something for which I have very great respect." Both as Puritanism's child and in his reactions against his family's faith, Massey's relationship with Methodism invites further examination. Particularly in the area of education, Methodism's blend of moralism and liberalism bred in him a zealous reformer. Massey always viewed education as tantamount to salvation. He adopted a democratizing, inclusive, and ecumenical (although largely Christian) approach to learning; and saturated with Methodist

12 Alice Massey was an Anglican, although she made a concerted effort to support her husband’s Methodist affiliation, especially while the couple were associated with Victoria College during the 1910s. Their son Hart Massey was confirmed in an Anglican church in Toronto, and while he recalls that he and his brother were brought up in the context of Christian morality and that, especially for his mother, religion was important, institutional religion was not overly emphasized in his upbringing; Hart Massey to the author, 29 Jan. 1997.

13 Massey, Diary, 22 February 1910.

14 Massey, Diary, 11 Aug. 1911.

15 Massey, "Postscript".
nationalism, he strongly identified culture with Canadian citizenship.

Principally founded by John Wesley in the early eighteenth century, Methodism began as an effort to revive the Church of England and make it more ethical and more spiritual. A reaction against doctrinal esoterism and empty ceremonial, Methodism sought to imbue Anglicanism with new rigour and vigour. Wesley emphasized self-discipline and the methodical, first-hand study of scripture, seeking, in turn, to foster a more lived sense of salvation.

Methodism came to Canada in the later eighteenth century, securing a foothold first on the East Coast during pre-Loyalist days and in Upper Canada with the arrival of the United Empire Loyalists. Methodism's system of circuit riders/preachers had a particular relevance for rural and frontier society. So did its practice of holding revivals, which typically took the form of camp meetings -- large, open-air gatherings aimed at inducing conversions. In a sparsely populated land where churches were scarce, these revivals, invariably lasting several days, fostered a sense of community. By 1884, when the various branches of Canadian Methodism amalgamated, it was the largest Protestant

16 Canadian Methodism has been the subject of two valuable, recent studies by Airhart, Serving the Present Age, and Neil Semple, The Lord's Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism (Montreal & Kingston/London/Buffalo, 1996). However, much remains to be illuminated about Methodist attitudes towards education and the arts, and the relationship of Methodism to its benefactors, such as the Masseys. Two existing studies of prominent Canadian Methodists are: Michael Bliss, A Canadian Millionaire: The Life and Business Times of Sir Joseph Flavelle, Bart., 1858-1939 (Toronto, 1978; 1st paperback ed., 1992) and Margaret Prang, N. W. Rowell: Ontario Nationalist (Toronto/Buffalo, 1975).
denomination in the country.\textsuperscript{17}

While Protestantism in Canada displayed a certain cohesiveness,\textsuperscript{18} Methodism exhibited distinctive features. Premised upon a high degree of free will, it taught that everyone, not just the elect, could be saved.\textsuperscript{19} It placed particular store in the moral foundation of Christianity, which offered the promise of regeneration to all. The sect was suffused with the optimism both of inclusiveness and of belief in the perfectibility of existence on earth through self-improvement and service to community. In this sense, Methodism was very much a faith born of Modernism and the idea of progress. Yet, conditioned by the climate of religious revival between 1780 and 1860 known as evangelicalism, Methodism was also anti-Modernist. Markedly in Canada, more so than in the United States in Gauvreau's account, Methodism expressed a constraint on the Enlightenment's unbridled faith in the intellect and affirmed other sources of knowledge, such as emotion and revelation.\textsuperscript{20}

There are seemingly conflicting accounts of the place of education in the Methodist faith. Gauvreau claimed that "the early Methodists set little store by a college-educated ministry..., intellectual refinement and the liberal arts", adding that until the 1870s the Methodist ministry was itinerant. Yet his study has emphasized "the early and highly visible role" of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches in

\textsuperscript{17} William H. Magney, "The Methodist Church and the National Gospel, 1884-1914", The Bulletin of the Committee on Archives, the United Church of Canada, no. 20 (1968), 6.


\textsuperscript{19} Airhart, Serving the Present Age, 27.

\textsuperscript{20} Michael Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century: College and Creed in English Canada from the Great Revival to the Great Depression (Montreal & Kingston/London/Buffalo, 1991), 17.
In 1882, Canadian Methodist Magazine countered the charge that Methodism had neglected literature and culture by noting its record as a prolific book and periodical publisher and its enterprising creation of schools, which now included two Universities, three Theological Colleges, and three other educational institutions in Canada.

According to Neil Semple, education was absolutely central to the Methodist evangelical mission. The words of a Methodist church report in 1897 were unequivocal on this point: "the genius of Christianity is educational".

The story of Methodism's changing ideas about education during the nineteenth and early twentieth century is the subject of another study. For the purposes of examining Massey's commitment to culture and education and its roots in his Methodist background, the history of Canadian Methodist educational landmarks can be swiftly sketched.

From Methodism's inception, John Wesley had emphasized the importance of an educated clergy and laity. Wesley and his brother, a celebrated hymnist, encouraged adherents to sing: "Unite the pair so long disjoined -- /Knowledge and vital piety;/Learning and holiness, combined/With truth and love, let all men see!" The emphasis on personal study and knowledge of scripture rather than a reliance on priestly

21 Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century, 8 and 47.
22 It also reported: "In bound volumes, the New York Book Concern alone has published over six and a half million volumes, and over 19,000,000 tracts in the last twelve years"; Canadian Methodist Magazine, V. XV, no. 5 (May 1882), 480.
23 Semple, The Lord's Dominion, 239-75.
24 Educational Society of the Methodist Church, Annual Report, 1896-97, 4; UCC/VUA, Yrbk Bx 8251, A10B43.
25 "Methodism and Education", Canadian Methodist Magazine, V. II, no. 3 (March 1880), 277.
authority was a leitmotif running throughout Canadian Methodism and its heir, the United Church of Canada.

Methodists led the way in contesting the Church of England’s position as Upper Canada’s state religion and sole beneficiary of the funds allocated for higher learning. The debate achieved closure in 1849 when university control was removed by government from church hands.26 With pride, the Methodists claimed that they had "never asked anything for themselves or their own community except upon the principles of equal justice and rights to all religious denominations and classes, and...made the first and most persevering exertions by voluntary efforts to promote academical education in the country."27 Methodism was also instrumental in securing universal, compulsory education in Canada. Methodist minister Egerton Ryerson is considered the primary founder of Ontario’s system of public education, its cornerstone legislation the School Act of 1871.

Despite their unswerving support for public education, the Methodists saw a place for denominational schools, as long as state funds, if available, were equally accessible to all. As early as 1836 in Cobourg, Ontario, the Methodists founded Upper Canada Academy. Five years later, it became Victoria College, the flagship of Methodist education, now Victoria University, part of the University of Toronto.28 In arguing for its creation, Ryerson declared that it would not compete with any provincial college or university, but would "be a

26 Wilson, "The Pre-Ryerson Years"; see also Westfall, Two Worlds, 84-86.


28 Victoria College began to offer university level courses in 1842, and within three years granted its first degree; C. B. Sissons, A History of Victoria University (Toronto, 1952), v and 71.
tributary to it...by imparting to youth and children the elements of a classical education." Adding that "scholars of every religious creed will meet with equal attention and encouragment" and the terms made as "moderate and easy" as possible, he stated that it was, above all, intended "to be a place of learning where the stream of educational instruction shall not be mingled with the polluted waters of corrupt example...."\(^29\) In what would be a recurrent refrain, the \textit{Christian Guardian} reiterated: "Education without moral principle is a curse rather than a blessing".\(^30\)

Nathanael Burwash, who entered Victoria as a student in 1852\(^31\) and later became its President, added that it was created so Methodists might provide "for their children and for their rising ministry an adequate higher education free from all objectionable influences of Americanism on the one hand, and Churchism [i.e. Anglicanism] on the other."\(^32\)


\(^30\) \textit{Christian Guardian}, 11 April 1832, 85; quoted in Semple, \textit{The Lord's Dominion}, 239.

\(^31\) A. Brian McKillop, "The Founders of Victoria", \textit{From Cobourg to Toronto: Victoria University in Retrospect} (The Sesquicentennial Lectures, 1986), (Toronto, 1989), 25.

\(^32\) According to Burwash, Ryerson had been governed by the principle of separating Canadian Methodism from American Methodism and bringing union with the British Wesleyans; \textit{The History of Victoria College}, 5 and 21. See also Semple, \textit{The Lord's Dominion}, 87f. From as early as 1799, Upper Canada school acts encouraged allegiance to Britain by censoring the hiring of American teachers; J. Donald Wilson, "The Pre-Ryerson Years"; in Neil McDonald and Alf Chaiton, eds., \textit{Egerton Ryerson and His Times}, Toronto, 1978, 24. The Anglicans accused the Methodists of being too American, when, in fact, they were largely United Empire Loyalists whose allegiance to the British crown had been affirmed by their move from the United States to British North America. Conversely, their first-hand experience of American-style democracy left its imprint. For the complex story of how early Canadian Methodism came together out of a variety of
A pro-British and anti-American bias, indeed, ran throughout Canadian Methodist thought. The editor of the *Methodist Magazine and Review*, Dr. W. H. Withrow, encouraged Canadian business leaders to follow the moral model of British industrialists rather than the more materialistic American example.\(^{33}\) S. D. Chown, who was to become secretary of the Methodist Church’s Committee on Sociological Questions in 1902, stated: "We may regard the United States as typical of that kind of civilization [i.e. a materialistic one] to-day. ...What a change has come over the Republic! At the beginning of the last century there were four million people who loved freedom; now it is said there are 75 million people who love money....It is evident that material wealth does not exalt a nation."\(^{34}\)

These, then, were among the priorities that shaped the Methodist system of schools and colleges: a concern that education be centred on the liberal arts, a determination to establish a moral foundation for learning, a commitment to the universal application of education, an ecumenical attitude towards other (at least Protestant) creeds, and a pro-British and anti-American bias.

Canadian Methodism’s commitment to education deepened and its initiatives in the educational field grew infinitely more complex as the 19th century drew to a close. In 1883 the uniting General Conference of the various branches of Methodism created a Committee on Education to work out the

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factions, see Semple, 27-52. For the creation of denominational schools as a reaction against the Anglican affiliation of the state and the exclusivity of early state-funded schools in Upper Canada, see Wilson, 16.


34 S. D. Chown, 1902; quoted in Magney, "The Methodist Church and the National Gospel", 59.
relationships among the colleges of the sects that came together to form the Methodist Church of Canada the following year. One of the responsibilities of this committee was the establishment of an Educational Society to raise money to help maintain the schools of the Methodist Church. The Society's second annual report opened with an urgent appeal concerning the Church's educational duties: "Never in the history of Canadian Methodism was our educational work more important than at the present time. The consolidation of our churches in all parts of the land has given us greater relative prominence and influence in the community, and calls more loudly than ever for trained men in all departments of church work."  

By the mid-1890s, the Society received its first bequests, that of Vincent Massey's grandfather, Hart Massey, leading the way. At the General Conference in 1910 the Church colleges were reported to be flourishing. The Society's income was on the increase, and many significant financial ventures were undertaken. For example, the Society committed itself to raising $400,000 for the founding of a Methodist college in Regina. In 1918 at the 10th General Conference it was recommended that a Department of Education be established under the Board of Education's administration bringing all facets of the Methodist Church's educational programs into a unified whole including the Sunday Schools and the Young People's Societies. By this time, Canadian Methodists had built an impressive network of secondary schools and colleges across Canada, from Mount Allison Academy (later University) in Sackville, New Brunswick (f. 1843), to Columbian College (f. 1892) in New Westminster, British Columbia; from Stanstead Wesleyan College, Québec (f. 1873), to Albert College (f. 1857), Belleville, Ontario, to Mount Royal College (f. 1910),

35 Educational Society of the Methodist Church, Annual Report, 1885-86.
The creation of a denominational system, despite Methodism's firm commitment to state-run education, was driven in significant measure by the belief that Christian moral precepts were not adequately protected in the public system (despite the efforts of Ryerson and others to the contrary). By the late 1890s, an Educational Society report expressed concern, for example, that the Bible no longer figured as a text in the public schools.\(^{36}\) While the Methodist school system was a complex enterprise, and, in many respects, inconsistent, a couple of priorities can be consistently discerned in its educational policy, both of which referenced Methodist moral objectives: a concern with character and a concern with community.

"Education," stated Reverend Samuel Nelles in 1857, "is the broad & symmetrical culture of the whole mind, and this embraces the conscience, the affections, the imagination, & the will, as well as the mere intellect."\(^{37}\) Gauvreau has described Nelles, who became president of Victoria College in 1854, as "a principal architect of the Methodist balance of faith and learning". It was Nelles who proposed using the term "character", which acknowledged both the moral and intellectual development of an individual, to describe the desired end result of a college education.\(^{38}\)

The theme of developing the "whole" person was reiterated

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36 Educational Society of the Methodist Church of Canada, Annual Report, 1898-99.

37 Samuel Nelles, "Religion and Learning" (college address, 1857; UCC/VUA, Nelles Papers; quoted in Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century, 48.

38 Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century, 48.
on countless occasions. The 1897 annual report of the Educational Society stated that Christianity "is not content with the heartless performance of a ceremonial, or with the perfunctory profession of a creed. She asks that men worship God and serve Him with the intelligent assent of their intellect and the glad consent of their will, that the whole manhood, in the wide range of its faculties, be consecrated to Him who loved us and gave himself for us. An intelligent piety is the true ideal...." Another author wrote that "all one-side culture" was to be avoided.

This emphasis on cultivating 'the wide range of faculties', and not allowing the intellect to overshadow or preclude the moral, was encoded in the word 'character'. Character was the raison d'être of a liberal arts education. One indication of the value that Methodism put on the liberal arts is their place at Victoria College. Upper Canada Academy, its predecessor, was originally constituted as a liberal arts school and sustained its theological and liberal arts programs side by side. This distinguished it from, for example, Knox College (Presbyterian) and Wycliffe College (Anglican), two of the other colleges that eventually

39 The problems attendant upon the presumption of wholeness are, of course, numerous; there cannot fail to be exclusions, however complete an educational system purports to be, and, in turn, the creation of hierarchies of accepted subject matter. A system that prizes wholeness may also fail to honour uniqueness. Nonetheless, those who argued for a liberal arts education on the grounds of wholeness tended to make a simple and valid distinction between it and one whose goal was mercenary.

40 Educational Society of the Methodist Church, Annual Report, 1896-97, 4.

41 Benjamin Gregory, Canadian Methodist Magazine, V. II, no. 3 (Mar. 1880), 276.

42 John Webster Grant, "Theological Education at Victoria"; in From Cobourg to Toronto, 87.
federated with the University of Toronto, and gave up their arts program to the state to focus on theology. Among the fruits of Victoria’s orientation was a long list of literary luminaries from Charles N. Cochrane, to Lorne Pierce, to E. J. Pratt, to Northop Frye, to Margaret Avison, to Margaret Atwood.43

The emphasis on character development was directly related to Methodism’s preoccupation with citizenship. Good character became inseparable from good citizenship. Methodism had long been concerned with community, or what on a personal level might be called “fellowship”. Achieving community was a sacred quest; indeed, as Vincent Massey said on numerous occasions, it was the common life that elevated existence above the material and even the sordid. Arguably, underpinning all religions is a quest for unity, understood as either a sublimation of the self into a larger oneness, or more cynically, the extension of personal sovereignty to embrace a greater autonomy. In the case of Methodism, at the turn of the twentieth century, the commitment to oneness was very much expressed as constructing a broad-based earthly community, in which education and social equity, and, in turn, the widespread dissemination of knowledge played increasingly important roles.

Perhaps as a result of its rural roots, Canadian Methodism had a particularly acute sense of the fragmentary nature of community in Canada, and, in turn, the accommodation required to find a common life therein.44 Here, too, the

43 Alvin A. Lee, "Victoria’s Contribution to Canadian Literary Culture", From Cobourg to Toronto, 69-85.

44 This is presumably indebted, in part, to the type of mission work practiced by the early Methodist church, the obstacles it faced in securing its presence, and how information collected at the mission sites was shared; for an account of the process by which Methodism made inroads into British North America, see Semple, The Lord’s Dominion, 27-52.
Methodist's egalitarian and totalizing approach to education was pivotal. Methodist schools and colleges were less in the nature of cloistered sanctuaries for like-minded adherents, than a stronghold from which to promulgate their vision of a morally-based education. Methodists were very committed to what might now be called 'outreach'. They founded a host of supporting organizations to embrace individuals at various stages in their lives and in various venues, from the Epworth League to the Young Men's Christian Association. Invariably, education was a key element in their initiatives. At the Fred Victor Mission in Toronto, created largely from funds made available by Hart Massey, the poor were not only nourished physically and ministered to spiritually, they were taught to read and write. What made Methodist outreach through education successful was that, while it was Christian, it was relatively non-sectarian. At Upper Canada Academy, for instance, faculty and students were not required to be practising Methodists, although it was expected that they be faithful Christians.

The final goal of a Methodist education became the creation of good citizens. For many, citizenship long referred to membership in the kingdom of heaven. But, according to Nathanael Burwash, as early as the 1820s, "Methodists...had already very decided convictions as to their rights and duties as [earthly] citizens." He did not elucidate their ideas about citizenship except in one key respect; he praised their readiness to sever connections with American Methodism "in order to vindicate their loyal British citizenship".45

By the late nineteenth century, in appealing for funds for the Methodist schools, John Potts argued that a church-

45 He linked the Methodist sense of citizenship directly to the repudiation of connections with American Methodism in the early 19th century; Burwash, A History of Victoria College, 4.
guided education was critical to the development of Canada’s state leaders and citizens, who "will mould the future of our youthful nation....The thorough harmony in a Christian spirit and effort of home and school, of conference and college, of preacher’s pulpit and professor’s chair, will ensure a bright succession of intelligent, faithful and godly ministers and laymen to carry on the highest work of Church and State."  

Methodism took this sweeping view of its place in society to the ballot box. The 1902 General Conference recommended:

> We urge our people to do all they can, as citizens, to free their own political parties from any suspicion of guilt in regard to violations of the sanctity of the ballot. We recommend that at least once a year the duties of Christian citizenship be made the subject of lessons in Sabbath Schools. We recommend that in the Epworth League more attention be given to the good citizenship work. We recommend that letters be sent to the educational authorities in all the Provinces of the Dominion, asking that in the Public Schools on Empire Day some part of the programme be devoted to the sacredness of the ballot and the duties connected therewith.

The Church went further in 1905 and came out unequivocally against separate schools on the grounds that they were not mandated as the state was to teach Canadian citizenship to immigrants and that their sectarianism undermined national unity. Not uncommonly Methodist leaders took their message outside church and school. At Canadian Clubs and Empire Clubs, they addressed subjects such as "the Duties of Citizenship" and "Nation-building in

46 John Potts, Educational Society of the Methodist Church, Annual Report, 1896-97, 5.

47 Methodist Church General Conference, Temperance Committee Report, 1902; quoted in Magney, "The Methodist Church and the National Gospel", 50-51.

48 Magney, "The Methodist Church and the National Gospel", 70.
Historians agree that the Methodist Church was a major voice of Canadian nationalism between 1884 and 1925; "of all the Canadian denominations, they were the most nationalist, the most anxious to settle Canadian problems in Canadian terms and the most willing to envisage the parallel expansions of Canada and the Methodist Church". In 1902, Rev. James Woodsworth asked: "What shall be the characteristics of the nation -- intellectual, moral, spiritual whose foundations are now being laid? The Methodist Church cannot escape its share of responsibility in determining the answer to this question. Should we not rejoice in so glorious an opportunity?"

The motivations that propelled the seizing of this "glorious opportunity" were many, the thrill of expansionism promised by western settlement, the commitment to an equitable society, and rivalries with other religious/value systems among them. But certain qualities suited Methodism, characterized by Goldwin French as "mediating", flexible", "pragmatic", and "tolerant", to the task of forging national community. Methodism was adaptable to "a rapidly changing intellectual and social scene" and "found it easy to visualize

49 Magney, "The Methodist Church and the National Gospel", 82.

50 Goldwin French, "The People Called Methodists in Canada"; in John Webster Grant, ed., The Churches and the Canadian Experience: A Faith and Order Study of the Christian Tradition (Toronto, 1963), 76. Magney has concurred: "The most impressive aspect of the Canadian Methodist mind of these years is its overwhelmingly nationalistic cast". He warned further: "Historians of national sentiment in Canada who ignore the writings of Church journals, and the declarations of the institutional churches, do so at their peril, for they overlook one of the most fertile sources of nationalistic writing in existence"; "The Methodist Church and the Nationalist Gospel", 5.

one common form of Christianity for Canada".52

The Methodists led the church unification movement that culminated in the creation of the United Church of Canada in 1925. The Presbyterians and Congregationalists, while joining forces with Methodism, were more divided about union. Some of their congregations retained their former denominational name and identity, while Methodism dissolved itself virtually entirely into the new organism. Methodism, in particular, seems to have recognized the need for ecumenism among Canada's diverse parts. Salem Bland, among Methodism's most progressive leaders, referred to the United Church of Canada as one of "two most original and distinctively Canadian things Canada has so far produced", the other being the Group of Seven.53

Methodist nationalism advanced hand in glove with the increasing radicalization of the denomination's social mission. Described by Michael Bliss "as the most radical religious denomination in North America" by 1918,54 Methodism positioned itself at the forefront of the social gospel movement. Running its course between the 1890s and 1930s, the movement sought to extend Christian ethics beyond the Church in a concerted effort to redress the large-scale social ills of industrialization. This expressed itself, for example, in the creation of urban missions for the poor and, as early as 1902, endorsement of the right of workers to organize.55 What is perhaps less recognized for its part in disseminating

52 French, "The People Called Methodists in Canada", 81.


54 Michael Bliss, "The Methodist Church and World War I", The Canadian Historical Review, V. XLIX, no. 3 (Sept. 1968), 213.

55 Magney, "The Methodist Church and the National Gospel", 61.
Methodist values is what might be called the "education gospel", the mantle of which the Massey family and Vincent Massey, in particular, adopted as their own.

Until the late nineteenth century Canadian Methodism, historically a faith of the rural working class, had counted few wealthy parishioners among its ranks. This changed in the 1890s, to the point where there was considerable anxiety about Methodism betraying its roots and becoming a voice for business. The Massey family had made a donation to a Methodist Church as early as the 1840s, but in the 1890s their giving escalated dramatically. In memory of his youngest son, Fred Victor Massey, who died in his early twenties, Hart Massey built the Fred Victor Methodist Mission, which opened in downtown Toronto in 1894.

The Massey family, however, made its defining mark as benefactor in the field of Methodist education. Hart Massey, who attended Upper Canada Academy in the 1840s, became one of its staunchest supporters. Vincent Massey recounted with pride how his grandfather, despite having lobbied vigorously against Victoria College's move from Cobourg, promptly gave $40,000 to endow a chair of the English Bible for the College in its new Toronto home in 1892. Hart Massey became an active member of the Methodist Church's Building and Executive Committees and worked for Victoria College's new building project, including spearheading negotiations for an enlarged plot of land to accommodate future expansion.

C. B. Sissons has credited the Massey family with placing

56 Magney, "The Methodist Church and the National Gospel", 19.
57 Sissons, A History of Victoria University, 72, and Burwash, The History of Victoria College, 116 and 129.
58 Massey, "The Masseys in Canada" (1928?); VMP, 119/06.
59 Burwash, The History of Victoria College, 452.
the College "on its feet" during the 1890s and largely creating the modern Victoria University. Hart Massey, who died in 1896, left $200,000 to Victoria College in his will, $50,000 of it for the building of a women's residence and the rest for an endowment fund. As well as sizeable bequests to Mount Allison University and Wesley College, Winnipeg, among others, he also left approximately two million dollars to be distributed in the areas of religion and education at the discretion of his executors, his three surviving children (Lillian, Walter, and Chester, Vincent Massey's father).

Walter Massey, who became a member of Victoria College's Board of Regents after his father's death, endowed a chair in Greek philosophy, and was instrumental in securing land and raising money for the creation of the College's campus. With her mother and two sisters-in-law, Lillian Massey took up the cause of a women's residence, Annesley Hall, which opened in 1903, the first in a series of Massey benefactions aimed at creating and enhancing the residential and collegial life of the student. In her will, Lillian Massey (d. 1915) left $300,000 as a general endowment for Canadian Methodist

60 Sissons, A History of Victoria University, 217.

61 Burwash, A History of Victoria College, 453.

62 With Anna Vincent Massey (Chester Massey's wife), Eliza Phelps Massey (Hart Massey's wife), and Susan Denton Massey (Walter Massey's wife), and others, Lillian Massey formed the Women's Education Association in support of the building project; Burwash, The History of Victoria College, 453. Lillian Massey also presented a fully equipped Domestic Science Building to the University of Toronto, on the condition that it grant degrees in Domestic Science, and a building to Mount Allison's Ladies College at Sackville, New Brunswick, the future Home Economics Department of Mount Allison University; Gillen, The Masseys: Founding Family, 137. Like her brother Walter, she was very supportive of the Deaconess movement; its school in Toronto trained deaconesses, Sunday School teachers, and home workers; Magney, "The Methodist Church and the National Gospel", 40.
Theological Colleges and named Victoria College the residuary legatee. Much of the estate was in Massey-Harris stock, which eventually yielded the College over $1,350,000.  

After Walter Massey's death in 1901, his brother Chester, Vincent's father, replaced him on the Board of Regents of Victoria College (1902) and directed a succession of benefactions to the school. In 1909 Chester wrote to the Board as chair of his father's estate: "we will be pleased to erect and furnish for the College a men's residence [to become Burwash Hall] to accommodate one hundred students". At the time of the proposal, residences were virtually non-existent at the University of Toronto. In Sissons's words, "again Victoria had pioneered; there was nothing comparable to Burwash Hall in any Canadian university." By 1914-1915, gifts from Hart Massey and his estate for building and endowments had reached $960,000.

Vincent Massey, in his turn, became deeply involved in Methodist education, as an executor of the Hart Massey Estate from 1908 (on his 21st birthday), as first Dean of Residence of Victoria College from 1913, and as chair of the Massey Foundation Commission on the Secondary Schools and Colleges of

63 Sissons, A History of Victoria University, 270.

64 The Hart Massey Estate gave $100,000 as an endowment to the College, and a further $140,000 at this time; Burwash, The History of Victoria College, 447-48.


67 Sissons, A History of Victoria University, 259.

68 At least one further benefaction to the College from the Estate, of $75,000 was made in 1918 in response to a special appeal to reduce the School's deficit during the War. On the same occasion, Chester Massey gave a further $25,000; Sissons, A History of Victoria University, 269.
the Methodist Church of Canada from 1919 to 1921.

His own early education, primary and secondary, was public, until the period 1903 to 1906, when, in the absence of a Methodist secondary school in Toronto, he attended St. Andrew's College, a Presbyterian school near his family home. His involvement with Methodism's educational outreach began modestly as a Sunday School teacher. The Methodist Church had the largest Sunday School program of any denomination in Canada. His diaries record not only his assorted other commitments to Methodist functions but, as late as 1910, his regular teaching at Metropolitan Methodist Church, Toronto, on Sunday afternoons.

One of the events that most excited his anticipation as a young man was the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910, the year he graduated from the University of Toronto. He attended the Conference as a delegate of the Methodist Church of Canada. His diary entry, worth quoting at some length, reveals that he was swept up in a spirit of ecumenism:

The Conference has been intensely interesting. Missions are now in the hands and under the influence of really sane men. The absurd fanaticism which once was prevalent in this dept. of life seems to be giving place to a more sober enthusiasm. Efficiency, a tolerant & intelligent attitude towards heathen religions, sympathetic views as to the actions of gov'ts and above all a most wonderful spirit of co-operation between the churches. High Church bishops have fraternized with Methodist local preachers. And what is most remarkable -- in place of there being a sort of artificial glossing over of differences there has been a frank admission of points of diffece and a tolerant spirit of sympathy for these points all of which have been frankly expressed. By the next Confce in 1920 it may be that the Greek and Roman Churches may come in with us. Again the speeches in this Confce have shown a feeling of respect for native governments and it is at last realized that the Church in China and India & everywhere must not be an alien church but must develop

along national lines.\footnote{Massey, Diary, 23 June 1910.}

In early 1911, he gave a paper at Victoria College on "Missions and Education", based on the Edinburgh Conference.\footnote{Massey, Diary, 14 Feb. 1911.} Education constituted, in his view, the most promising avenue to international collegiality. It is notable that his expression "coming in with us" did not preclude a keen respect for difference. It was his firmly held belief, as he would later state, that: "It is not hatred which divides nations but rather ignorance."\footnote{Massey, "The University and the International Mind" (address on the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the University of California, Berkeley, 23 Mar. 1928), \textit{Good Neighbourhood and Other Addresses in the United States} (New York, 1930, Essay Index Reprint Series, 1969), 141.} The tolerance ostensibly bred by a liberal arts education was the path, not only to societal harmony, but world peace.

Some of Massey's earliest recorded comments on education date from this trip. He visited various universities in Scotland and England with a view to studying models that might be relevant for two Hart Massey Estate building projects at the University of Toronto: Burwash Hall, the men's residence at Victoria College, and Hart House, the main recreational facility for male undergraduates at the University.

He was much more favourably impressed by the English than the Scottish example. With reference to Edinburgh, he wrote disapprovingly: "Man there is taught thru' books and books alone;...living in a solitary boarding-house room and grinding at lectures & writing exams & doing nothing else is not an education." He acknowledged that: "The medical faculty is better & patronizes the Residential Halls & also the Union as it does in Glasgow but the [liberal] arts man in both places is a pitiful grubbing creature. At Oxford & Cambridge they..."
have got far enough to realize that second class honours often indicate a more symmetrical, more able man than do first. May Canada reach this goal rather than that of Scotland.”

Meanwhile, he expressed a commitment to address Methodist standards of education. Following a meeting about the proposed Methodist college in Regina, he wrote: "The Methodist Church at present is an apotheosis of mediocrity -- especially in what we are pleased to call education. Someday if I [live?], it will be improved, in the little area that I can infce [influence] if not more."  

Before heading for study at Oxford in September, 1911, Massey made a journey through western Canada visiting Methodist colleges on the way. In Regina, at a meeting with the Board of Trustees of Regina College (opened 1910), convened because Massey was in town, he was asked to speak on the subject of the ideals of the College. He used the opportunity to rail at length about the "evils of co­education", which he regarded as the principal fault at Regina College. In Calgary, after a visit with Rev. G. W. Kerby of Mount Royal College, he wrote that he did not think much of his ideas on education, although he conceded that "his conception of the meaning of education is not so vague as that of others in the Methodist Church."  

On September 1 he was in Vancouver. The local press reported that Massey was making a tour of Methodist schools to assess their progress and conditions, and generally better acquaint himself with his family’s extensive benefactions in

73 Massey, Diary, 24 June 1910.  
74 Massey, Diary, 4 Mar. 1910.  
75 Massey, Diary, 19 Aug. 1911.  
76 Massey, Diary, Aug. 1911 [day not given].
the educational field. In a letter to his father about the trip, he wrote: "In Vancouver I have again become deeply involved in Methodist education. I have carefully inspected Columbian College in Westminster & was shown the site of the new University of B. C. and the new Meth. divinity school." He met many of the board members of both Methodist institutions, and a special meeting of the board of the Theological College was called for his benefit. Again he expressed his concern for reform, but did not explain what he had in mind. He wrote: "On my way back I want to see Dr. Sparling of Winnipeg & learn a little more about Wesley College. Seeing these Meth. schools & colleges is teaching me a great deal about our educl. problems & when I get home I want to tell you a good deal about the decisions I have come to in this matter. I am satisfied that there should be a complete reversal of policy on the part of the [Hart Massey] Estate -- But I can go deeper than that in my reconstructive ideas. However I shall wait till I see you." Shortly before he left for Oxford, Massey lunched with N. W. Rowell, a prominent Methodist and Liberal, also involved in the Metropolitan Church Sunday School. They discussed a commission on Methodist Secondary Education in Canada, a subject to which Massey would return.

Upon completing his studies at Oxford in 1913, Massey returned to Toronto and became closely affiliated with Victoria College. He had not studied there as an undergraduate, contrary to family tradition and his father's

77 Unidentified newspaper clipping in Massey’s diary, 1911.
78 Massey, Diary, 4 Sept. 1911.
79 Massey to Chester Massey, 4 Sept. 1911; MFamP, V. 21.
80 Prang, N. W. Rowell, 238.
81 Massey, Diary, 23 Sept. 1911.
express wishes. He chose instead the non-sectarian University College. However, he became active in the affairs of Victoria College upon graduation; in 1910 he was made a member of its Board of Regents. His diary records meetings during 1911 with Chancellor Burwash of Victoria College regarding the School's library and physical plant. As early as September 1911 he appears to have been on the Executive Committee at Victoria.

Vincent Massey and his father were members of a committee responsible for the planning and realization of the men's residence, Burwash Hall. The facility was to include a dining hall for 250 students, as well as five separate houses, a junior and senior common-room, and a Dean's residence. It was designed by architect Henry Sproatt in a collegiate Gothic style. Completed while Massey was at Oxford, he was, nevertheless, intimately involved in its planning.

In 1913, Massey resigned his position on the College's Board of Regents to become Dean of Residence of Burwash Hall, a position he retained until 1919. Alice Parkin Massey,

82 Massey later wrote: "My father was very insistent that I should become an undergraduate of Victoria College.... I was equally insistent that I should go to University College where most of my friends were going to be, and I won the battle"; "Postscript".

83 Chester Massey to Nathanael Burwash. 16 Sept. 1910; MFamP, V. 21.

84 Massey, Diary, 25 Sept. 1911.

85 Massey, Diary, 4 Mar. 1911; and Vincent Massey, What's Past Is Prologue, 42.

86 His resignation to become dean was noted by the Board of Regents, 8 May 1914; UCC/VUA, Board of Regents Meeting Minutes, 87.125V Mfm 2. Massey, however, spent much of 1918 and 1919 in Ottawa in connection with his military duties, according to Bissell, The Young Vincent Massey, 62 and 102. Walter Bowles was made Acting Dean of Residence while Massey was in Ottawa; Montagnes, An Uncommon Fellowship, 32. From 1919 to 1924, Massey shared the title of Dean with George
whom he married in 1915, assumed the position of Dean of Women at Victoria College. According to Sissons, the Masseys were very active in the life of the College.

Massey explained in his memoirs: "I was asked to become dean of residence of Victoria College...and 'break in' the building that I had played an active role in planning". In a diary entry in 1914, Massey wrote that "the residence work is interesting -- an eminently constructive task...." Elsewhere he commented: "I think I have been able to convince people that the introduction of Gothic architecture and collegiate life is not a conspiracy to rob the Canadian of his birthright, nor is it an attempt to superimpose 'Oxford customs' on the freedom-loving Toronto student....I am working as far as possible through the House Committees and I find them understanding and sympathetic. Civilization is a slow process but I am satisfied that we are making some progress". Above all, "a 'college' is essentially a community...", he wrote, and he was pleased with the role played by the dining hall and common rooms in helping to achieve this end.

In 1919 Massey proposed a further innovation to strengthen the collegial nature of Victoria College, the building of professors' residences. A board meeting in February authorized the allocation of $75,000 for the purpose.

Malcolm Smith and, from 1924 to 1936, he was Honorary Dean of Residence of Victoria College.

87 Vincent Tovell, Interview, 8 Nov. 1995.

88 Sissons, A History of Victoria University, 277.

89 Massey, What's Past Is Prologue, 42.


Vincent and Alice Massey were commended for their "foresight, unselfishness and hospitality" in wishing to share with the College's faculty "the magnificent lot to the south of the College" (71 Queen's Park Crescent), which was presently the site of their home, and owned by Chester Massey. Reverend R. P. Bowles wrote to Chester about the plan: "Vincent has put his finger on the weak spot in Victoria. Living down here by Victoria College, he was the only member of the Staff closely in touch with the life of the College all the time. Our professors, owing to the great cost of land near the College, have had to go far out and they are now living at altogether too great distances from Queen's Park. We are trying to cultivate the English ideal of a college, in which the social life of the students is so important a factor."  

Despite Chester's blessing and his stated willingness to transfer the title of the property to Victoria College, the scheme was not realized. But another building project at the University of Toronto supplanted Vincent and Alice Massey's attentions. In Ian Montagnes' words: "The residence [Burwash Hall] was a rehearsal for the larger experiment of Hart House."  

In 1910 Vincent Massey proposed to his father that the Hart Massey Estate provide a student centre for male


93 Chester Massey to R. P. Bowles, 22 Apr. 1919; NAC, MFamP, V. 22. The letter includes considerable detail on the nature and conditions of the transfer. The plan did not go ahead for reasons that are unclear. Seventy-one Queen's Park Crescent, including the Massey home, was purchased by Victoria University from Vincent Massey around 1928 for $50,000; Victoria University, Property Committee Meeting Minutes, 15 Oct. 1928, and 19 Dec. 1929; UCC/VUA, Board of Regents fonds, Records of the Finance and Property Committee, Property Committee Minutes, 1928-29, fonds 2000/4, 87.127V Bx 1, file 5.

94 Montagnes, An Uncommon Fellowship, 17.
undergraduates at the University of Toronto. As a student at the University himself from 1906-10, he was acutely aware of the fragmented nature of the campus and the lack of facilities for social activity among undergraduates. The old gymnasium south of Wycliffe College was grossly insufficient for its task. Hart House was intended to redress such inadequacies. Building began before World War I, and the facility opened for student use in 1919.

Shortly before the opening, the Hart Massey Estate had been reconstituted as the Massey Foundation, on Vincent Massey's urging. Its assets at that time were roughly $3,000,000. Soon after, the trust's commitment to "the field of educational experiment" was reaffirmed, with an emphasis on supporting projects that would not otherwise have existed.

Massey's initiatives at the University of Toronto drew attention from the local press. Under the title "The New Civic Spirit", The Globe (Toronto) observed that he was "head and front of a movement for lessening the perils of the student, who leaves home influences behind when he comes to Toronto for his education, by the erection of a great group of buildings for Y. M. C. A. and social union purposes." Such words are reminiscent of an address by Hart Massey.

95 Bissell, The Young Vincent Massey, 52.

96 Massey to Burgon Bickersteth, draft letter, Nov. 1928; VMP, 376/12.

97 This served to extend the life of the Estate, which was originally intended to operate for only twenty years.

98 Massey to W. S. Learned (Carnegie Corporation, New York), 22 Mar. 1923; VMP, 384/04.

99 Massey to S. D. Chown, 6 July 1923; VMP, 384/04.

100 The Globe (Toronto), 6 June 1911 (clipping in Massey, Diary, 1911).
in 1892 to the Methodist Social Union of Toronto. He advised students of Victoria College to shun companions and places that might betray their high moral path and encouraged them to find a Christian church as a home away from home. Providing a homelife to students proved to be one of the greatest challenges the University faced, according to Nathanael Burwash, President (1887-1913) and Chancellor of Victoria College. Local pastors, whose congregations were enriched by student members, opposed a separate College church. The Young Men’s and Young Women’s Christian Associations (f.1892 and f.1895 respectively), although not able to take the place of the Church, had, in Burwash’s words, "done a great service and...formed a unifying bond in College Christian life and work...."  

While Hart House was not affiliated with Victoria College, beyond serving its students among those from all the University’s federated schools, it did concern itself with the religious well-being of the student population under an interdenominational mantle. At the time of Hart House’s conception, the Young Men’s Christian Association needed new facilities. Massey was intent that the organization join forces, but not compete, with Hart House. He later explained: "there was an imminent danger...of dividing the men students into two groups, one under the auspices of the Young Men’s Christian Association and the other enjoying the amenities of an ordinary social club. The result would have been obvious."  

The YMCA authorities were persuaded to take up residence within Hart House (with control over a group of offices on the

101 Burwash, The History of Victoria College, 472.
103 Massey to Burgon Bickersteth (draft letter), Nov. 1928; VMP, 376/12.
north side of the south wing) while relinquishing proprietorship of club rooms that might compete with the rest of the building. "This was a very important understanding to arrive at", Massey maintained, "and was incorporated in the original administrative plan of the building." 104 Not only did this avoid competition between the two, it integrated the spiritual and the social. This intermingling of purpose, or holism, was characteristic of Massey.

Massey was also supportive of a new religious organization, the Canadian Student Christian Association. Before World War I, student departments of the YMCA and YWCA were the primary vehicles of formal religious activity among students. However, at a national conference in Guelph in December 1920, the Canadian Student Christian Association was formed. 105 In early 1922 Massey endorsed this breakaway group. In a letter to Rev. George Kilpatrick, whom he, Robert Falconer, and Burgon Bickersteth, second warden of Hart House, hoped to entice into the position of general secretary of the new organization's operations at the University of Toronto, Massey wrote that the YMCA was "practically defunct" as far as the religious life of students at the University was concerned, and that half the student body was now within the influence of the Student Christian Movement (SCM). "The S.C.M., which is largely run by the students themselves, is a demonstration of the fact that they are only awaiting adequate

104 Massey to Burgon Bickersteth (draft letter), Nov. 1928; VMP, 376/12.

105 The Student Christian Movement (the Student Christian Association) was more willing to embrace political and social concerns as well as student issues than the YMCA and YWCA, and was "a seed-bed of political activism"; Catherine Gidney, "Poisoning the Student Mind?: The Student Christian Movement at the University of Toronto, 1920-1965", Journal of the Canadian Historical Association, New Series, V. 8 (1998), 148-49 and 163.
leadership to develop a very powerful spiritual movement."\(^{106}\)

In 1923 the YMCA and the SCM agreed to unify their operations in Hart House. The Massey Foundation paid half the salary of the new organization's secretary, who became in essence "chaplain of Hart House".\(^{107}\) As late as 1938 Alice and Vincent Massey felt strongly enough about the merit of the SCM's work at the University of Toronto that they arranged for a special donation of $2000.\(^{108}\)

The Masseys also ensured that a small interdenominational chapel was included in Hart House. This had particular significance in view of the hard-fought battle to convert the University into a secular institution earlier in its history.\(^{109}\) Warden Burgon Bickersteth commented on this feature: "The Chapel occupied a central place in Hart House, and purposely so. That in itself set us apart from any other centre I know of for undergraduate life."\(^{110}\)

Massey also insisted that Hart House, like Burwash Hall, incorporate a grand dining hall. He declared: "My own view is that the educational effect of a dining hall of noble proportions and beauty of detail is as real as it is subtle", he wrote. "Sordid habits are too often the result of unworthy surroundings...."\(^{111}\) By the time it was completed in 1919, Hart House also included common rooms, reading room, library,

\(^{106}\) Massey to Rev. George Kilpatrick, 8 Mar. 1922; VMP, 141/05.

\(^{107}\) Montagnes, An Uncommon Fellowship, 95.

\(^{108}\) Massey to Rev. W. C. Lockhart, 19 May 1938; VMP, 178/3


\(^{110}\) Burgon Bickersteth; quoted in Montagnes, An Uncommon Fellowship, 89.

\(^{111}\) Massey to Burgon Bickersteth (draft letter), Nov. 1928; VMP, 376/12.
music room, photographic dark-rooms, gymnasium, swimming pool, track, rifle range, billiard room, sketch room, and theatre.

At the building’s opening ceremonies, Massey summarized the role he envisaged for Hart House:

It is perhaps not incorrect to say that the House as it now stands is intended to represent the sum of those activities of the student, which lie outside the curriculum. These activities are not unimportant; indeed, I would submit,...that the truest education requires that the discipline of the class-room should be generously supplemented by the enjoyment, in the fullest measure, of a common life. A common life, of course, presupposes common ground.  

Hart House became an important model in the student union movement during the 1920s and 1930s around the world. It contrasted with the largely social, rather than cultural, nature of similar facilities in the United States. In response to inquiries some years later in connection with London House, a residence planned in London, England, for students from various points in the Commonwealth, Massey explained that Hart House was "an experiment in providing the men students of a large and rather scattered university population with some of the academic 'atmosphere' and equipment which, in universities like Oxford and Cambridge would normally be found in the colleges." While Hart House, unlike London House, had no provision for residential accommodation, he regarded their purposes as similar. "They both aim to encourage corporate social life and to provide an academic environment and an atmosphere of comfort and dignity for a large group of students who otherwise would be scattered and frequently living a solitary and generally inappropriate existence." He continued: "The danger which we faced in

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112 Massey, "Address" (on the occasion of the transfer of the key of Hart House from the Massey Foundation to the University of Toronto, Nov. 11, 1919); VMP, 376/12.

113 Porter Butts, College Unions around the World (1967); quoted in Montagnes, An Uncommon Fellowship, 5.
connection with Hart House was that the building might have become little more than a well-equipped club without academic quality or corporate life or educational significance." He felt that this danger had been averted by the activities and administration adopted and the "humanizing" influence of Warden Burgon Bickersteth. One indication of the educational significance assigned to Hart House was the fact that its warden was accorded the same academic status as a college principal or a faculty dean.

Massey's focus in Burwash Hall and even more with Hart House was to engage the "whole" student. Again this was premised on education as a means of developing character. Character was fostered first by a formal liberal arts training, but it was augmented by surrounding the student with an extracurricular environment that was morally, spiritually, socially, as well as intellectually rewarding. Massey understood education to be this totalizing enterprise; it became the unifying ethos that guided him in his quest for the common life. Above all, his faith in learning was predicated on the belief that education bred understanding and harmony, and, as such, was the primary route to community. The whole student and the total environment were inseparable.

While the focal point of Massey's activities at the University of Toronto shifted from Victoria College to Hart House at the end of the 1910s, he remained very involved in another area of Methodist educational endeavor. As World War I drew to a close, the spirit of reconstruction gripped the country and, within the Methodist community, expressed itself in a fervent progressivism aimed at social reform. At its 1918 General Conference, the Methodist Church went so far as
to reject capitalism. Where Vincent Massey stood in regard to this matter may only be surmised. While positioned on the progressive side of Methodism and of Liberalism, as future President of the National Liberal Federation (1932-1935), he would not be expected to reject the economic system outright. Indeed, until after World War II, his criticisms of Canadian society were not generally framed as a need for economic restructuring, except in the sense that economic concerns should not exclude the spiritual and moral. For the time being, he contented himself with seeking an ideological revamping of Canada's education systems.

In January 1919, Massey wrote to the Methodist Church on behalf of the Hart Massey Estate, offering to set up a commission to "enquire into the conditions and work of the educational institutions of the Methodist Church." The Board of Education of the Methodist Church, of which Massey was a member, approved the proposal at its annual general meeting later that month, and the Massey Foundation Commission on the Secondary Schools and Colleges of the Methodist Church of Canada was created. The Board appointed the Reverend James Smyth, LL.D., Principal of Wesleyan Theological College in Montreal, to serve on the Commission; its other members were George H. Locke, Chief Librarian of Toronto, and Professor J.

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116 Airhart, Serving the Present Age, 107.

117 In the summer of 1924, on behalf of Massey-Harris, Massey visited Communist Russia; for a brief analysis of Massey's views of the experience, which Bissell has described as having a "democratizing influence on the young executive", see Bissell, The Young Vincent Massey, 104-5.

118 It was only a few days earlier that it had been incorporated as the Massey Foundation.

119 Massey to J. W. Graham (a treasurer of the Dept. of Education of the Methodist Church of Canada), 5 Jan. 1921; VMP, 131/05; Educational Society of the Methodist Church of Canada, Annual Report, 1918-19.
C. Robertson of Victoria College, with Massey as chair.\textsuperscript{120}

The product of an educational fervour that seems to have escalated in the wake of World War I, the Massey Foundation Commission was intended to address a variety of concerns. It was asked to recommend an improved system of classification for the various types of colleges that were affiliated with the Methodist church, to assist in harmonizing academic goals, and to set minimum standards for physical plant, resources, and staffing in order for a school to be approved by the Methodist Board of Education.\textsuperscript{121}

Massey formally presented the Commission's 153-page report at the Board of Education annual meeting in March of 1921; the document was sent to all the members of the General Board and the principals and governing board members of each of the Methodist colleges. It claimed to be the first attempt to determine the functions of the Methodist schools and colleges and assess the degree to which they were fulfilling their task. As well, it argued that such a study was of great significance, given the wide extent of the educational work of the Methodist Church.

The Report began by addressing the most fundamental of questions:

What justification is there for the Methodist Church, through her educational institutions, undertaking what would seem to be the duty and concern of the State -- the provision of the education needed to fit young people for the duties of citizenship? This work is assigned by the B.N.A. Act to the several provinces of the Dominion; it

\textsuperscript{120} The Board of Education decided further to create a second commission of seven members to survey all the Connexional Institutions of the Methodist Church which, would, in turn, use the information and recommendations of the Massey Foundation Commission. This second commission appears to have remained moribund until the Massey Foundation Commission carried out its work (compare note 136).

\textsuperscript{121} Educational Society of the Methodist Church of Canada, \textit{Annual Report}, 1918-19, 4-5.
is elaborately organized and, on the whole, well done under the provincial departments; and for it the people in each province are heavily taxed. Why should the Church duplicate what the State should furnish, and in fact does furnish?  

The question is revealing, not least for its assumption that the purpose of formal education was to equip students for citizenship. The Commission provided several reasons for Methodist involvement in education. It pointed out that secondary education was still not available to large numbers of Canada's scattered population, and, in the West, this was also true of primary education. Many parents sought the "advantages generally recognized as coming from the common life and careful supervision of a good residential school." The Report also argued that the Methodist schools could "be made to serve as valuable laboratories of experiment in education".  

The Commissioners were dissatisfied with various aspects of the Methodist schools, and divided their report into two parts, "The General Problem", and "Individual Schools and Colleges", in which they tackled the particular weaknesses of the eleven schools they considered. Above all, they were discontented with the lack of control exercised by the Church; they regarded some of the schools as little different from an "independent commercial school in Halifax, or Kingston, or Saskatoon, whose principal may happen to be a Methodist". Greater financial involvement in these schools on the part of the Church would, they argued, put it in position to dictate standards and priorities.

The Commission made several recommendations regarding such priorities. One concerned the role of religious

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122 Methodist Church of Canada, Report of the Massey Foundation Commission on the Secondary Schools and Colleges of the Methodist Church of Canada (Toronto, 1921), v and 3.

123 Massey Foundation Commission Report, 3-5.
education. While bible study had a place in many of the colleges visited, they found that in few was religious education a recognized part of the curriculum and taught by qualified staff. "The existence of Church schools is chiefly justified by their ability to give education a Christian background. The importance of religious education can... scarcely be overstated....Only familiarity with the life and personality of the Founder of Christianity will give the student a sense of the positive element in religion and will teach him his obligation to the community, which is religion's finest expression."

The extent to which the emphasis on Christian content reflected Massey's thinking is difficult to assess. Certainly an "obligation to the community", stated as a sacred mission, was a recurrent theme in his writing. The significance of Christ, as a person, was consistent with the humanistic cult of personality evidenced elsewhere in the report: "Education...is served chiefly by the contact of mind with mind, by the influence on immature boys and girls of fine personalities". The report stated that "boys are hero worshippers", and urged that there be less concern with "extravagant buildings" and more with the quality and remuneration of teachers.

The Commissioners were also displeased that theological training was spread out over many schools, each with only a small enrolment. They urged that theological training be centralized and that it not be affiliated with a ladies' college or a boys' academy, but rather with a university. "To a university it can make a two-fold contribution, viz.: (a) a Christian influence that will counteract the secularization so often associated with state universities; (b) the provision of hostels in which Arts students may live in right surroundings and atmosphere."124

124 Massey Foundation Commission Report, 6, 12-13, 18, 25 and 27.
Central to the Report was its concern with the overall curriculum of the secondary schools. It noted that in addition to work in languages, mathematics, history, and science, which was in keeping with the provincial high school system, there was instruction in "music (vocal and instrumental), art (drawing, painting, modelling, china decoration, metal work, woodcarving), elocution, manual training, agriculture, household science, commercial education (including book-keeping, stenography and typewriting, and in one case also telegraphy)."

The schools justified offering this diversity of subjects by arguing that "not one of these varied subjects...might not be an element in the education desirable for some future enlightened and well-equipped member of society and of the Church...." The Commissioners acknowledged that the addition of one or possibly more of these subjects to a student’s curriculum was often useful in developing a young person’s special aptitudes, but they remained generally unconvinced of the virtue of such a diversity of subjects.

Especially worrisome, they claimed, was the schools’ other reason for offering this diversity of subjects: they simply attracted pupils and generated revenue. The statistics provided in the Report give a startling picture of the extent to which the Methodist school system provided training in the fine arts, especially music. At Alberta College North, Edmonton, for example, 1,050 students enrolled in the 1919-1920 session were taking what were listed as the art, expression, or music programs, including 550 taking the "full course" in music. This compared with 326 enrolled in the "academic or high school courses". Of Mount Royal College, Calgary, the Report stated: "There are 263 non-residents in attendance, all but 40 of whom take only such subjects as music and fine art." Virtually all the Methodist colleges had an active music program; at least eight offered a program in
"Expression", and at least six in "Art".\textsuperscript{125}

The Commissioners argued strenuously that such subjects were not among the Church's duty or concern to provide. "Our objection is not that this sort of work is undignified, but that it is fundamentally wasteful, dissipating the time and energy that the agents of the Church should be devoting to their proper calling, and diminishing thereby the due effect of that devotion."

The Report urged the Church to make up the financial loss resulting from the elimination of these subjects. Whether children were preparing for a return to farm or home life or for a career in business, "the greatest care should be taken that, through literature, history, the study of social ethics and of the principles of citizenship, they become conscious of their duties and their privileges as members of the State and inspired to realize their high calling and destiny as human beings."

The Report continued: "Music, art and book-keeping would then no longer be self-contained courses for those who desire to specialize in them merely to gratify some taste or to qualify as rapidly as possible for a salaried position; but they would become elements in carefully-thought-out and well-balanced schemes of education that would take due account of all the capacities that call for development if the pupil is to be prepared adequately to fill his place in the community."

This latter passage conceded some role for the fine arts in the Methodist secondary school system, and, in one place in the Report, music was referred to as "a most desirable element of culture", as long as it was an adjunct to a liberal arts education. Regardless of this concession, the fine arts were referred to throughout the Report with varying degrees of condescension. They were included among "alien activities" and "pot-boiler' subjects" and labelled "ornamental"; piano

\textsuperscript{125} Massey Foundation Commission Report, 7, 73, and 118-19.
practice along with shorthand and typing were described as "mechanical operations."  

In part two of the Report, where the Commissioners dealt with the curricula of specific schools, they reiterated their complaint about the inclusion of so-called non-essential subjects. With reference to Albert College, Belleville, the Report was explicit in its bias against the fine arts. "A large proportion of the work in music, art and expression, are [sic] of little intrinsic value in furthering those ends which the Church has in view in maintaining secondary schools and academies....There is no reason why they should be kept in their present form in any ideal scheme of reorganization, and if the Colleges can be put on a proper financial footing, the small amount of surplus revenue will not be missed...." In regard to Alma College, St. Thomas, Ont., it was recommended: "That pupils taking special courses in music and commercial work be required to supplement the narrowly technical instruction by a due proportion of cultural subjects".

It was noted, with respect to Ontario Ladies' College, Whitby:

The subject of music is given great prominence in this College, and a very extensive course of study has been organized in association with the Toronto Conservatory of Music. It is a rule of the College that 'students who are specialists in music will be expected to take one or more literary studies for the profitable employment of their time, unless they can show that their time is otherwise fully occupied'--we presume in piano-practice chiefly. This rule, admirable as far as it goes, would be much improved by the omission of the last clause, 'unless, etc.' We...would again reiterate our opinion that our secondary colleges should not be content with sending out "graduates" who have considerable technical proficiency, whether in music or art or commercial branches, but whose education in general culture has been neglected. Skill of hand will seldom go far with an ill-furnished head.

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126 The Massey Foundation Commission Report, 8, 11-12, 45, 66, 89, and 98.
The Commissioners were positively scornful of teachers of drawing, dramatic reading, domestic science, and commercial subjects: "Whether the number of the staff engaged in these subjects or the extent of the work covered can justify the somewhat pretentious titles of College of Fine Arts, School of Expression, College of Domestic Science and Art, and Commercial College seems very doubtful".\textsuperscript{127}

Again, with regard to Stanstead Wesleyan College, they reiterated: "We believe a greater proportion of cultural work should be combined with the technical training, even for those preparing for a professional career. These pupils are to be men and women and citizens, and not simply accountants and secretaries. If the opportunity is not seized now it will probably never recur...."

The Report was highly critical of Stanstead's Conservatory of Music. In its view, there was no place in the secondary school for such highly specialized training in music, although it was acknowledged that such a program "might with advantage be made less technical and the element of general culture which they now contain greatly increased". At Wesley College, Winnipeg, the Commission recommended "that the College cease to make provision for instruction in music", and pointed out that by eliminating the space used for music, "...the present buildings might serve for the needs of all genuine college work in Arts and Theology...."\textsuperscript{128}

The teaching of the fine arts at these schools begs further investigation within the larger history of art in Canada. It is intriguing that they were so developed and yet that the Massey Foundation Commissioners found them so worrisome. Whatever else, it is clear that the Commission sought to situate so-called cultural subjects, that is,

\textsuperscript{127} \textit{Massey Foundation Commission Report}, 42-43, 51, and 79.
\textsuperscript{128} \textit{Massey Foundation Commission Report}, 89, 97, 100, and 106-7.
literature, history, social ethics, and the principles of citizenship, at the core of all secondary school education. They viewed the fine arts as a drain on the more important focus of producing good citizens or, at best, and with particular regard to music, an acceptable part of the curriculum only when married to a cultural core program.

This suggests that Massey and his fellow commissioners endorsed the study of music as an amateur, but not professional activity, at least in the context of a church school. And, while it seems reasonable that a high school would aim to provide all its students with as balanced an education as possible, and not one exclusively vocational, technical, or artistic, the recommendations of the Massey Foundation Commissioners raise questions about how a pupil might be expected to embark on the study of painting, music, or drama, if these subjects had little or no place in the secondary school. Indeed, the high demand for fine art education to which the Methodist schools were obviously responding suggests a general absence of other educational venues for such subjects.

The Massey Foundation Report used the word "culture" quite clearly to refer to the liberal arts, not the fine arts. It was sometimes used apparently redundantly as in "general culture". It was invariably distinguished from scientific and business training, and "cultural studies" were juxtaposed with "technical instruction". "Culture" and "education" were rather ambiguously distinguished in the assertion that the school system should produce students who have "a good general education and some degree of culture, who have been trained to use their intelligence and are expert in more than the use of the typewriter." On occasion, the phrase "physical culture" was used to refer to what is now called physical education. In one instance, the Report wrote of the Methodist college's purpose as "a well-rounded life under the influence of
Christian culture". However, despite these variations, overwhelmingly "culture" was seen to be the product of learning within a particular group of core subjects, literature, history, social ethics and citizenship (the Commission also promoted the study of French). These were the subjects understood to engage the intellectual and moral capacities of the student and were juxtaposed with the technical, the scientific, and the artistic.

At the university level, too, the curriculum was expected to centre upon the liberal arts, with character development as the end product. Essential were English and history, especially modern history. Additionally, "in economics, the aspects that a Church college is chiefly interested in are sociology and the principles of citizenship; in philosophy, ethics rather than advanced history of philosophy or experimental psychology." These subjects, with a strong emphasis on morality and citizenship, were deemed to constitute the cultural domain at every level of formal education.

The Massey Foundation Commission Report also tackled the subject of co-education, a favourite hobby-horse of Vincent Massey. Noting that two-thirds of the secondary colleges operated under the auspices of the Methodist Church were co-educational, the Commission asked, in the context of the wide and increased interest in education, whether it would not be timely to reconsider this policy.

Co-education was seen to be especially problematic at the secondary school level:

The problems to which co-education in secondary colleges gives rise do not present themselves to the same extent in primary schools or in the universities...The matter for inquiry concerns the case of boys and girls at


the plastic age covered by the interval between the age of puberty and the entrance on university study or professional training. The question is whether the development of the whole individual, physical, intellectual, social is adequately attained in colleges where such boys and girls live under the same roof, mingle in the same dining-room and classrooms and meet more or less frequently in social intercourse; or whether more satisfactory results in the production of the highest type of young men and women are more readily secured in institutions devoted exclusively to the education of one or other of the sexes. It is important to state the matter in this way because the prevalent conception of what constitutes education has changed in recent years. The aim, it is now recognized, is not simply to impart information, however important that may be, but to insure the fullest and best development of character and personality.\textsuperscript{131}

The sexism of the Report continued: "Now there are qualities of personality which we aim at developing in boys quite different from those which a true education seeks to produce in girls. The femininity which is admirable in girls is contemptible in boys. It is scarcely to be expected, therefore, that a mixed school of boys and girls, living and being taught under the same conditions, will be able to do justice to the natural call for discrimination in ideals."\textsuperscript{132}

The Commissioners set out the arguments that they had been given in favour of co-education, while obviously remaining unpersuaded by them: the promotion of normalcy in relations between males and females in everyday life as compared with segregated schools; the exhibition among students of co-ed schools of "a mental alertness, an absence of listlessness and dulness[sic]" resulting from the competition that "some educationists trace to the interest

\textsuperscript{131} In fact, character development was not a recent concern, but rather the reaffirmation of a Methodist preoccupation from at least the 1820s.

\textsuperscript{132} Massey Foundation Commission Report, 16.
aroused by the presence of the two sexes"; a yielding of mutual respect and understanding; and a completeness which each sex on its own lacked.

Then, the arguments against co-education were paraded. First, the presence of both sexes in a classroom was deemed distracting. Second, there was the threat to masculinity: "One of the most desirable qualities to be developed in boys is 'masculinity', and it is argued that while in maturer years the companionship of young women is desirable and necessary, yet in boys of the adolescent age association with girls is liable to produce effeminacy. In other words the system we are discussing hinders boys in the development of distinctively 'manly' traits of character."

The Report also argued that male teachers were necessary for boys, and female teachers for girls. "It is usually found also that in such institutions one strongminded individual dominates the situation and that the influence of the place therefore tends to masculinity or femininity, as the case may be, but not to both." Moreover, the Report claimed that many parents were reluctant to send their children to co-educational schools for fear that they might form premature attachments. This section of the Report concluded by saying "the Commissioners were unanimous in their opinion that co-education is not the ideal system for secondary schools".133

Throughout his career, Vincent Massey strongly opposed co-education. As early as 1910 he attributed the mediocrity of Methodist schools to co-education. Hart House, and later Massey College, were mandated as male-only institutions. The Massey Foundation Commission report provides some insight into the basis for this bias. At some level it is about Massey's

133 Massey Foundation Commission Report, 14-18. On a final note, the report deplored the absence of a male-only boarding school among the Methodist colleges in Ontario and the West and proposed that Albert College, Belleville, be so transformed; 19-20.
sexual primness; with reference to existing co-educational campuses, Massey and his fellow commissioners recommended that the boys' and girls' residences and classrooms be located a more decorous distance apart.

It is also possible that, in the different missions assigned to men and women in Massey's view of society, men were called to the highest level of good citizenship. It is clear that women were being trained primarily to take up their roles in a domestic setting, with particular emphasis on domestic science. Men were being groomed for the public domain and had to be segregated, perhaps in order to concentrate their preparedness in this area.

The Report may also speak to the gendered nature of art training. It might be revealing to correlate the art education offered and enrollment by gender. A preponderance of painting courses appears to have been offered at the ladies' colleges (Alma College, St. Thomas, Ont.; Mount Allison Ladies' College, Sackville, N. B.; Ontario Ladies' College, Whitby). Is it coincidence that they are among the subjects most devalued by the Commissioners? In reference to Mount Allison Ladies' College, the Massey Report noted it offered "the usual list of subjects taught in similar institutions: music, art, expression, household science, etc." In other words, there was some alignment of these subjects with the education of women. With reference to Wesley College, Winnipeg, a co-educational school teaching both secondary school and university level courses, the Commissioners wrote: "The provision for instruction and practice in music (of which the calendar of the College makes little mention) demands a much greater amount of space than its importance in such an institution at all justifies...in a college established by the Church and endowed for the purposes that presumably Wesley exists to serve, finishing courses of meagre content for young ladies who are not serious university students should find no place, especially when it is at the expense of the genuine
Massey’s uneasiness around masculinity echoes a long-held bias against the fine arts, specifically pertaining to character. The Victorian archbishop Richard C. Trench asserted that painting, music, and sculpture were "the ornamental fringe of a people's life, [and] can never, without loss of all manliness of character, be its main texture and woof..."^35 Vestiges of this outlook can be discerned in the Massey's thinking, despite his later becoming a leading advocate of the fine arts in Canada.

With the Massey Foundation Commission Report tabled and published in early 1921, Vincent Massey’s commitment to Methodist education did not end. The 37th annual report of the Educational Society of the Methodist Church (1920-21) undertook to further the work of the Massey Report by announcing the appointment of a Commission of Nine.^36 One of the nine was Vincent Massey. Massey attended a meeting of the Commission of Nine on 4 November 1921, in which a set of principles was articulated for "any college to which the Church lends the prestige of its name, or gives direct financial support".^37 The principles were largely a reiteration of the points made in the Massey Report: first (moved by Massey), "that religious education constitute a recognized subject of the curriculum under a specially qualified instructor", and, second, that all courses have a

134 Massey Foundation Commission Report, 65 and 104-05.


136 This was an extension and enlargement of the Commission of Seven established in 1919 (see note 120); Methodist Church of Canada, Commission of Nine, Meeting Minutes, 30 May 1921; VMP, 140/16.

137 Methodist Church of Canada, Commission of Nine, "The Common Report" (an interim report, late 1921 or early 1922); VMP, 139/05.
liberal arts education as their foundation; "commercial, technical or artistic subjects should be taken only as a part of the broader course". 138

The Commission of Nine went on to produce an interim report in late 1921 or early 1922 entitled "The Common Problem", which laid out nine basic principles and affirmed the broad educational stance of the Methodist Church. Quoting from resolutions passed at the Church's Nova Scotia Conference in 1921, it stated the education gospel at its most unequivocal:

The Church exists to bring in the Kingdom of God....The last two thousand years have shown that this will not come around either of itself or through the agency of exterior forces, natural or supernatural. It is evidently through man's own effort that the better day will come. Religion has its greatest contribution to make through the process of education....The student must be led to realize the presence, the power and the joy of God in his own heart, to form good habits and build up solid Christian character to establish a right outlook on life and find his place in society....Not only must he be prepared for his own responsibilities as parent and citizen, but he must be encouraged to think things out for himself and to grapple with the vital social, political, economic and religious problems of the day. 139

On one point the "Common Problem" Report departed from the Massey Foundation recommendations; it reaffirmed the Methodist commitment to music in formal education. While agreeing that music should not be taught on its own, but rather in conjunction with liberal arts subjects, it stated: "Music should be an optional subject in all courses and credit should be given for it. In the High School course for the Province of Alberta music may be substituted for Geometry, for Algebra, and for some other subjects....Group singing

138 Methodist Church of Canada, Commission of Nine, Meeting Minutes, 4 Nov. 1921.

139 Methodist Church of Canada, Commission of Nine, "The Common Problem"; VMP, 139/05.
should be taught to all students, and made an outstanding feature of the College life."\(^{140}\) Given Massey's lesser role in this second commission, it may be concluded that this departure was not reflective of his views on music in formal education, or that his views had changed since the Massey Foundation Commission Report less than a year earlier.

Its penchant for creating commissions now established, the Methodist Church founded yet another commission on education, the Commission on Colleges and Higher Education. It was formed in 1925 to address the issues of upcoming church union as they pertained to the Church's educational institutions. While Vincent Massey was not a member, it yielded a report that was an obvious successor to the Massey Foundation Report, reiterating many key points, even phrasing. Further, it shed light on the rationale for Methodist involvement in the teaching of liberal arts at the university level: "the experience at Victoria College shows that by possessing an arts college the Church is able to exercise a real and effective influence on higher Education, such as it could not have wielded had it not a direct voice in the determination of the educational policy of the Province."\(^{141}\)

Massey made at least one further effort to put educational renewal on the Methodist agenda. Shortly before the Massey Foundation Commission reported, he urged A. E. Ames

\(^{140}\) "The Common Problem" report continued at some length about the employment of music teachers. Apparently, in many of the Methodist colleges, music teachers were paid on the basis of a percentage of their student's tuition, unlike the rest of the faculty. While the reasons given are not particularly relevant here, this is another indication of the lively and even disproportionate, if not fully legitimized, role music played in these schools.

\(^{141}\) Educational Society of the Methodist Church of Canada, "Report to the Commission on Colleges and Higher Education"; UCC/VUA, Records of the Commission on Colleges and Higher Education, United Church of Canada General Council Committees Collection.
of the Methodist National Executive Committee to include education on a proposed survey of the entire workings of the Methodist Church. Massey was elected an additional member of what became the Methodist Church Survey Commission\(^{142}\), but much to his disappointment, the Commission disbanded after issuing a couple of modest interim reports.\(^{143}\)

Massey referred to his work in connection with Methodist educational policy in his memoirs in 1963, and rather bitterly perhaps noted that "none of their [the Massey Foundation Commissioners'] recommendations bore fruit".\(^{144}\) Despite this failure to find concordance, his views were deeply indebted to the Methodist faith in education. As the Commission of Nine interim report had emphasized: "It is evidently through man's own effort that the better day will come. Religion has its greatest contribution to make through the process of education."\(^{145}\)

In his memoirs, he added: "The progressive educationist will tell you that 'the whole child' goes to school; the independent school, as we know it in Canada, ministers to the whole child in all aspects of his being".\(^{146}\) The whole child, the beneficiary of a liberal arts education, was one whose "character" was attended to and who was prepared to assume his or her civic duties. Especially in its

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142 Letter to Massey, 15 May 1920; VMP, 142/05.

143 The Methodist Church Survey Commission was established in 1920, was active from 1920 to 1921, and survived until 1922. It produced an interim report on 21 Dec. 1920 and what proved to be a final report on 27 May 1921; the termination of the Commission was discussed in correspondence between Massey and Rev. S. D. Chown, General Superintendent of the Methodist Church of Canada, 24 Oct. and 10 Nov. 1922; VMP, 140/16.

144 Massey, What's Past is Prologue, 54.

145 Methodist Church of Canada, Commission of Nine, "The Common Problem".

146 Massey, What's Past is Prologue, 15.
implications for character and citizenship was Methodism influential in Massey's view of culture. How completely culture had supplanted conversion, and how thoroughly Vincent Massey had become culture's advocate!
Chapter 2

National Council of Education

Intimations of a connection between education and citizenship existed in Canada from at least the early nineteenth century.\(^1\) Methodists, and others, increasingly turned their faith in education towards Canadian citizenship, despite the fact that, under the constitution, education was to be a provincial responsibility.\(^2\) By the late 1910s and early 1920s this faith reached climactic proportions. The education gospel promised to be nothing short of Canada's salvation as a nation. One of the primary expressions of this conviction was the National Council of Education, a private body created in 1920 to foster citizenship through education; Massey was Vice-President and then President between 1920 and 1926.

Massey's educational mission advanced on several fronts around 1920, from his intimate involvement in the newly-opened Hart House, to his plunge into Methodist secondary school and college reform (both considered in chapter 1), to an unsuccessful bid to venture into the realm of public primary and secondary educational renewal. He and his brother-in-law, William L. Grant, principal of Upper Canada College, met the

\(^1\) See, for example, McDonald and Chaiton, Egerton Ryerson and His Times; and Karen Stanworth, "Visual Culture and the Object(s) of Citizenship in the Education of 19th-Century Canadians", Universities Art Association of Canada Conference, 5-8 Nov. 1998, London, Ont.

\(^2\) See, for example, J. E. Wells, "Canadian Culture", The Canadian Monthly and National Review, V. 8, no. 6 (Dec. 1875). However, Robert M. Stamp has argued: "Canadian educational institutions have never served the interests of Canadian nationalism"; "Canadian Education and the National Identity", Canadian Schools and Canadian Identity, eds. Alf Chaiton and Neil McDonald (Toronto, 1977), 29.
Premier of Ontario, the Honourable E. C. Drury, in January 1920 to propose a Commission, sponsored by the Massey Foundation, to survey primary and secondary school education throughout Ontario. In a follow-up letter to Drury on 14 February 1920, Massey wrote: "I think I am right in saying that there has been no such 'stock-taking' of our educational system since the time of Egerton Ryerson." He hastened to add that if the provincial government established its own Commission the Massey Foundation proposal would, of course, be withdrawn. He put forward a complete roster of names as commissioners, including his own although not as chairman, and undertook that the Massey Foundation assume all expenses, including the salary of a secretary, clerical costs, travelling expenses, reimbursement of experts who might be called upon and the publication of a report.\(^3\)

After tentative acceptance, the proposal was declined. Massey attributed this failure to the "forces of darkness", to unnamed resistance within the Department of Education, and to suspicions about private interest. He took some satisfaction, though, from having drawn attention to the need for educational review, which he expected would "lead to a public inquiry into our educational system, and from having established "in the public mind, that the Foundation definitely exists for public service."\(^4\)

Meanwhile, another educational project appeared on the horizon and attracted his considerable vision, energy and resources: the National Council of Education. In a field where the federal government was conspicuously absent, this organization endeavoured to create a national forum on education. In part, the Council was an outgrowth of the desperate need to rebuild and renew society in the wake of the

\(^3\) Massey to the Hon. E. C. Drury, 14 Feb. 1920; MFamP, V. 23.

\(^4\) Massey to Chester Massey, 27 Feb. 1920; MFamP, V. 23.
"moral disaster" of World War I. Dr. Eber Crummy, a former principal of Wesley College in Winnipeg, blamed "the disruption of civilisation" on the "lack of character education among the nations". According to W. J. Bulman, one of the National Council of Education's originators, the organization was founded in the belief that "if every Canadian school child completely understood the ethics of Christ, we would have a nation that would be the moral force in this North American Continent....We believed...that the character of this country could be modelled in the public schools of this country."6

The Council's commitment to fostering good citizenship presumably served a host of agendas. Alf Chaiton has sitated its origins within the social unrest surrounding labour relations in the West in the late 1910s and a fear of socialism. It is true the Council's early support was rooted in a business agenda, suggested by its early Rotary Club backing. However, it became a forum for educators, theologians and lay people of various political and ideological stripes. Its steadfast commitment to a liberal arts education runs counter to Chaiton's assertion that it promoted vocational and technical training in schools in order to augment the ranks of skilled factory workers.7

Its creation, nonetheless, was driven by various apprehensions about disruption, among them a fear of the collapse of democracy after World War I, a fear of immigrants, a fear of socialism, and a fear of American take-over.

5 National Council of Education, Monthly Notes (Mar. 1922), 3; VMP, 139/01.

6 Report of the Proceedings of the National Conference on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship (Winnipeg, 1919), 126.

Character education, the leitmotif of the National Council of Education, not only emphasized the development of the "whole" person, it was discourse for the promotion of an organic or cohesive society. In the words of Lieutenant-Governor Sir James Aikins, an early sponsor of the Council: "No democratic nation can make headway or attain greatness which permits its people to grow apart from each other by being divided into classes distinct and mutually exclusive. No such nation can succeed and allow itself to be dominated by a class of wealth, a group of labour, a union of farmers, an assembly of athletes, a society of intellectuals, or a body of religionists...." Character education was understood to overcome social and regional division, as well as fragmentation of the person (that is, over-specialization).

For some of its advocates this plea for humanism undoubtedly offered a means simply to deflect worker discontent and quiet sectionalism; for others, it promised to foster understanding and tolerance and, thereby, strengthen democracy. Afterall, a liberal arts education did champion, as well as moral substance, critical thinking and breadth of vision, ostensibly the opposite of submissiveness. Certainly for Massey, character education entailed both moral development and intellectual empowerment, and he would steer the Council towards a vision of education as enablement.

The Council, itself, was a product of the National Conference on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship, held in Winnipeg from 20 to 22 October 1919. Drawing its membership from some 40 cities and towns across Canada, its delegates numbered over fifteen hundred and audience attendance rose to five thousand at one session. In the words of the accompanying report, interest in the Conference attested to "the large body of opinion favourable

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to the stressing of what may be called the National and Spiritual aspects of Canadian Education...." The Council later claimed: "That meeting displayed on a scale never before equalled in this country, the passionate desire felt by the people of Canada for Ideality in Education".

A centrepiece of the Conference's first day was an address, "The Education of National Character", delivered by the President of the University of Toronto, Sir Robert Falconer. An ordained Presbyterian minister, he was an active organizer of the early National Council of Education and a close associate of Vincent Massey. He began unequivocally:

The doctrine that the State is a non-moral institution is dead. That was the theory of the Prussian professors. The war has killed it....Men were found in our midst bold enough to argue that the State stands by itself in a position in which the distinctions of right and wrong do not apply; that expediency alone is to be taken into account....But that is not the principle of Democracy. ...It is a mischievous fiction that men can be unselfish in the home and honest in business, but when they vote or act for the State they may be dishonest or grasping.


10 National Council of Education, Retrospective/A Canadian Ideal in Education/Prospective, Winnipeg, n.d., 3; VMP, 139/01.

11 Falconer and Massey were associated in various contexts. They were on the executive of a Canadian Round Table group during the late 1910s; James G. Greenlee, Sir Robert Falconer: A Biography (Toronto/Buffalo/London, 1988), 231. Massey was appointed to the board of governors of the University of Toronto in 1920; he had contact with Falconer in the planning and realization of Hart House, which Falconer held in very high regard; Greenlee, 148-49. Falconer was one of two Ontario members elected to the Resolutions Committee of the Conference; Report of the Proceedings of the National Conference on Character Education, 1919, 28.

Falconer asked, in view of the diversity of moral standards, religions, and points of view within a citizenry, "is it possible that in such a state there should be common moral action?" He believed that it was, reverting to the argument that "[Anglo-Saxon Canadians] are a matter-of-fact people who work out our fortunes in an experimental way...; what we are is the result of a long process of education of the will rather than of the intellect...."\textsuperscript{13}

While he insisted that he was not recommending that "language or science...be taught primarily so as to inculcate morals", he stressed the importance of the character of the teacher in the formation of the student. He also argued that "men and women who think for themselves make the best members of our democracies, for they may be trusted to act according to our national character, and they will adopt a reasonable attitude towards life." The phrase "trusted to act" conveys the underlying fear of extremes and instability. But the passage is also significant for the presumed link it makes between independent thought and reasonableness, always a key point for Massey.

"Independent thought" had, of course, various applications; for Falconer, it meant not being vulnerable to the inculcation of undesirable views, such as those emanating from Communist Russia, which he specifically mentioned in his address, or from American consumer society. It should be added, however, that he was not merely a mouthpiece for, say, the business status quo. He stressed the need for social justice, greater labour influence in industry, and better wages. He acknowledged that there was no one moral law to follow; it was something being "constantly defined and clarified by the hard experience of humanity". However, "the moral law that has fashioned our national character is

\textsuperscript{13} Report of the Proceedings of the National Conference on Character Education, 1919, 19.
embodied in our literature, history and political institutions, and the education of our children is not complete unless they have some comprehension of our heritage." Hence the study of Canadian literature and history was understood to be an important transmitter of national character, values, and morality.

Falconer's address set the stage for the conference, and was responded to and enlarged upon by various speakers marshalled from Canada, the United States, and Britain. They spoke on such subjects as "Moral and Spiritual Lessons of the War for Canadian Education" (Major the Rev. C. W. Gordon); "The School and the Development of Moral Purpose" (Dr. Theodore Soares, University of Chicago); "The Function of the Public School in Character Formation" (J. F. White, Principal Normal School, Ottawa); "The Right of the State to Concern Itself with Character Education" (Dr. Milton Fairchild, National Institution for Moral Instruction, Washington, D. C.); and "The School and Newer Citizens of Canada" (Dr. J. T. M. Anderson, Director of Education among New Canadians, Regina, Sask.).

Among the themes touched on was the need to surround the child in a total educational environment. "All human society is itself an educational factor", one author stated, "all aspects of human life...solicitations to right rather than seductions to wrong". Another stated baldly: "The School should serve the Nation", and urged that Canada's schools be nationalized. An educator from the Ontario Board of Education, Dr. Helen MacMurchy, struck a rather isolated note, arguing that "the natural culture of many children is some form of artistic or creative work", as for others it is

science or literature.15

The Conference concluded with a resolution to form the National Council of Education. Although Massey did not attend the Conference,16 by January 1920, he was well apprised of its goals and had agreed to become a member.17 As early as 17 March 1920, on letterhead that still read "National Conference on Moral Education in the Schools in Relation to Canadian Citizenship", W. J. Bulman wrote to Massey about the absence of a person effectively in charge of the organization.18 Massey was soon chosen one of three Vice-Presidents19 and, by November 1921, was chair of the Conference Committee organizing the Council's next major event, the Toronto Conference in 1923.

The first initiative to which he turned his attention was lobbying for a national clearing-house for information about education, a "National Bureau of Education". In May 1921, Massey wrote optimistically to Major F. J. Ney, the Council's general secretary: "As to the National Bureau. I think this will probably be our most striking achievement....To get Government officials in Canada, to meet together is in itself an achievement, but to bring the various Provincial officials to the point of financial support of an agency for the co-ordination of their own efforts, is a truly remarkable


16 In a 1926 speech, Massey referred to knowing about the achievements of the first conference from those in attendance not from personal experience; "Speech" (National Conference on Education and Citizenship", Montreal, Apr. 1926); MPamP, V. 44, speech 25.

17 W. F. Osborne to Massey, 22 Jan. 1920; VMP, 139/01.

18 W. J. Bulman to Massey, 17 Mar. 1920; VMP, 139/02.

The subject of the National Bureau of Education was tabled at the Canadian Conference of Ministers of Education, which took place in Toronto on 30-31 October and 1 November 1922. Four members of the National Council of Education were present to advance the case for a national bureau: Vice-President Vincent Massey, Sir Robert Falconer, Rev. Canon Cody, and Major F. J. Ney. In his address to the assembled group, Massey observed: "There is no question that education, as a subject, important as it always has been, is pressing itself on public attention more strongly than ever before." He spoke of the increasing "dissolution of society". "It is almost overwhelming to conjecture what would happen if a nation's electorate could be brought, through the perfectly possible processes of education, to adopt a critical attitude towards what they see in print."  

Massey expressed the opinion that until recently education had lost its way but there was now "a ferment of experimentation in every field". He denigrated education that concerned itself only with the dessemination of information. As he had stated in the Massey Foundation Report, there was a new (he seems not to have realized that it was a renewed) concern with character education. He also acknowledged, in one of his first remarks of its kind, that this ferment included a concern for "the relation of art and the drama to education." Indeed, the growth and complexity in education, he argued, called urgently for cooperation and exchange among the provinces. An inter-provincial bureau of education would, in turn, strengthen the national spirit of the country: "We have a next-door neighbour twelve times as powerful as we.

20 Massey to Major W. J. Ney, 5 May 1921; VMP, 139/01.

21 Massey, "Address" (to Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Education of Canada", Toronto, Oct. 1922); MFamP, V. 43, speech 7.
There is much we can learn from her, and I hope much we can teach her, but the danger is that we should unthinkingly and unquestioningly assimilate ourselves to her ideas, forgetting that we have our own traditions, which I am arrogant enough to think are just a little superior." He concluded: "On the Continent of Europe, nationality is kept alive by armies and tariffs. In Canada, we can win our nationality by the use of a greater and more enduring weapon -- education."22

Massey and Falconer put forward a resolution that a Bureau of Education, representing both languages, be established by the provincial governments, which would collect and publish reports on educational problems and developments in the provinces, the Dominion, and throughout the British Empire.23 The Ministers agreed to give the matter consideration, but made no commitment.

The National Council of Education continued to lobby for and publicize the need for some sort of national clearing house for educational information. A Council bulletin declared:

Canada's problem of citizenship is a peculiar one, for her leaders are anxious that in its evolution she may be successful in those very aspects in which her neighbour to the South has failed. If her Citizenship is to be safeguarded against superficiality, then she must develop a standard of living and life which must make its appeal to all those who come to her from other lands, of first and foremost importance. Here must be no bludgeoning or dragooning -- the citizenship now being built must stand upon its own merits....In the development of this Citizenship, the Educational Ideal stands out as of vital

22 Massey, "Address" (to the Ministers of Education, 1922).

importance.24

Entitled "an inter-provincial bureau of educational enquiry and report", the bulletin pointed out that there had been efforts for thirty years to set up a national bureau of education similar to one in Washington. But because the Canadian constitution assigned responsibility for education to the provinces, the effort had failed. Canada did not have a federal department concerned with education, nor even a national educational journal. The Council reported with chagrin Canadian reliance on the American bureau, which had been established in 1867, and apparently in no way diminished state responsibility for education.

Meanwhile, interest in international educational exchange was mounting. For three years the Institute of International Education had been operating in the United States. Australia was in favour of a Commonwealth clearing-house for education. As further evidence of the pressing need for a mechanism of exchange within Canada were the countless inquiries the National Council of Education received for assistance from provincial boards of education and others. The Council was asked to recommend history texts and music readers, to provide information on curricula in various disciplines, and to send out copies of various reports on education.25

Nevertheless, in 1926, at the Third Triennial Conference of Education and Citizenship in Montreal, Massey, then outgoing president, conceded defeat.26 In his memoirs,

24 National Council of Education, Bulletin No. 1: An Inter-Provincial Bureau of Educational Enquiry and Report, n. d. (late 1922 or 1923), 6-7; VMP, 139/01.

25 National Council of Education, Bulletin No. 1 (late 1922 or 1923), 8 and 11-12.

What's Past Is Prologue, he reiterated his conviction that it had been feasible to create a bureau of education "on a national basis, non-governmental and unofficial...without an infringement of any provincial prerogatives", but the effort failed in part "because of a feeling of apprehension among certain provinces that the field of education might be confronted with federal intervention".27

Wrestling with this impasse gave Massey a deep appreciation of the forces working against a national system of education in Canada, or even national mechanisms in the educational field. It profoundly informed his understanding of the obstacles that stymied Canadian national unity, and enhanced his appreciation of the role of informal education, less clearly a provincial responsibility, in the affirmation of Canadian culture. Indeed, in the 1951 Massey Report, culture would be defined in the introduction as "general or adult education".28

As the National Council of Education's attempts to form a national bureau of education languished, the Council, itself, assumed some of the duties it had sought to have adopted by an inter-provincial body. In December 1923, it began to provide basic, reliable information on education to interested individuals and groups across Canada.29 Its music department, in particular, became an important source for data on school music of all sorts.30

As Vice-President of the National Council of Education, Massey was also active in organizing its next conference,


29 National Council of Education, Central Committee Meeting Minutes, Dec. 12, 1923; VMP, 29.

slated to take place in Toronto in 1923. The conference ran into a major stumbling block, however, in the summer of 1922. Massey had assumed that the Rotary Club was underwriting the conference’s anticipated costs of $25,000 to $30,000. When this turned out not to be the case, he recommended postponing the conference indefinitely and concentrating on the "popularization of education".\textsuperscript{31}

In early July, however, he had a change of heart. He wrote to Reverend E. Leslie Pigeon, Honorary Treasurer of the Council, in Winnipeg: "The National Council of Education must not be allowed to die, and I for one am willing to do everything in my power to keep it going. The conference may well be essential to the Council's continued existence...."\textsuperscript{32} He proposed holding a conference in April 1923, with a more modest budget somewhere in the five to ten thousand dollar range, and with between 1000 to 1200 delegates.\textsuperscript{33} He advised Ney that there would be three speakers for the 1923 conference: Sir Henry Newbolt, Sir Michael Sadler, and Albert Mansbridge.\textsuperscript{34} He had already committed Newbolt. "This smaller conference", he added, "would be quite as impressive as the educational three ring circus we have been planning. Personality, as a matter of fact, counts much more than

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{31} Massey to W. J. Bulman, 6 June 1922; VMP 139/01.
\item \textsuperscript{32} Massey to Rev. E. Leslie Pidgeon, 6 July 1922; VMP, 139/01.
\item \textsuperscript{33} Massey to Rev. E. Leslie Pigeon, 22 July 1922; VMP, 139/01.
\item \textsuperscript{34} Sadler was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds and a leading British spokesperson on education; Mansbridge was chair of the World Association for Adult Education, and Founder of the Workers' Educational Association; and Newbolt was the author of the Newbolt Committee Report to the British Board of Education on "The Teaching of English in England" (1921). \end{itemize}
Machinery and these men would be a splendid trio."\(^{35}\)

Massey set about placing the 1923 conference on a firm foundation. He wrote in October 1922 to R. Y. Eaton of the T. Eaton Co., Ltd., to solicit his support: "The purpose of the Conference is to awaken a wider interest in education in the fullest sense of the word, to bring the layman into touch with educational problems, and to assist, by the publicity of the Conference, the work of various educational organizations, both governmental and private"\(^{36}\). Eaton joined the organizing committee which already included Professor J. A. Dale, W. L. Grant, Canon Cody and Sir Robert Falconer.

In preparation for the Toronto conference, the National Council of Education published a series of booklets, intended for a wide audience.\(^{37}\) A 1922 booklet made the following plea:

'The corporate sense which moved Canada to federation, the spirit which moved her during the war, is now invoked to make her one in education' [quoting an unidentified source]-- not by centralization of authority, nor by uniformity of system but by co-operation of effort towards a common ideal....Materially we have progressed but the road along which we have marched forward has taken the Art out of life and made it a gloomy and uninteresting existence.\(^{38}\)

Through its publications, the Council also began to enunciate what it considered to be the first principles of education, among them: that "education is not a matter of 'school' years; it is a process of life"; that "in the vocation of teaching, personality must be counted of greater worth than mere access of learning"; and "a new humanism must
pervade and inform all study and all instruction".

The Council relied upon a recent British Board of Education report, the Newbolt Report, on the teaching of English. It argued that a renewed commitment to "an English humanism, including the study of literature, of history and of language...might go far not only to ennable the education of the industrial worker, but also to bridge the gulf between industry and culture".\(^{39}\)

Fourteen hundred delegates from across and outside Canada attended the Toronto conference,\(^{40}\) which was held in April 1923 in cooperation with the Ontario Educational Association. Massey ensured that Massey Music Hall (another benefaction of Hart Massey, dating from 1894) was booked for Easter week;\(^{41}\) it and Hart House were two of the main conference venues. The conference program included a morning and an afternoon session in French. A committee, chaired by Group of Seven member J. E. H. MacDonald and including artists F. H. Brigden and Arthur Lismer, the latter also an art educator, and Professor J. A. Dale of the University of Toronto, organized a public exhibition in the University Examination Hall adjoining Convocation Hall. What the exhibition consisted of is not made known in the program, but apparently catalogues were available. Copies of Council publications, the Newbolt Report on the teaching of English, and assorted other books were also provided.

As Chair of the Conference Committee, Massey welcomed delegates along with members of the Ontario Educational Association. He reaffirmed that "the business of Canadian education is, in spite of geographical barriers and


\(^{40}\) Chaiton, "History of the National Council of Education", 53.

\(^{41}\) Massey, 20 Nov. 1922,; VMP, 139/01.
differences in language, to produce good Canadians." He touched on the familiar theme that education was "a full preparation for life...; boys and girls with well-equipped minds and underdeveloped characters constitute not an asset in the State, but a liability and even a menace." He maintained that "education was a spiritual process" and that "education is everybody's business." 42

The topics of the conference were very much shaped by Massey, and focused on history, geography, and literature. Gone was the concern with music, art, and cinema planned at an earlier stage probably at the instigation of the Council's vigorous secretary, Fred Ney. 43 The Thursday program was devoted to "the essential place of the language and its literature in Education" and to geography and history, while that of Friday was given to the purpose of education as character development. 44

At the conclusion of the Conference, Massey was elected President. His ambitions for the Council expanded quickly, and he set about making organizational and policy changes. Effective January 1924, the Council hired Professor J. A. Dale, a member of the Social Service Department of the University of Toronto and a former professor of education at McGill University. 45 He was responsible for the strictly


44 The other two days of the conference were given to Council business and miscellany; National Council of Education, Program (National Conference on Education and Citizenship, 4-8 Apr. 1923); VMP, 376/02.

45 This was decided at a meeting of the Council's Central Committee, held in Sir Robert Falconer's offices, with W. L. Grant and George Locke (a member of the Massey Foundation Commission) in attendance; Massey to W. J. Bulman, 19 Dec. 1923; VMP, 138/03.
educational functions of the Council, while Ney, whom Massey reduced to part-time employment, handled the more administrative duties, such as arrangements for the lectureship scheme and the next conference.

Massey and his committee also set about putting the Council on a firm financial footing, mostly through private donations, corporate and individual. Prior to 1923, funding for the Council was almost entirely supplied by the Rotary Clubs of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. But as the financial difficulties of the 1923 Conference demonstrated, other sources were needed. The renewal of a grant from the Ontario government of $2400 was secured, and Massey worked at persuading the Quebec government to give the Council a similar amount. From 1926 to 1934, the Massey Foundation donated annually to the Council ($5000 in 1927, 1930 and 1931; $3000 in 1931, 1932 and 1933). According to Chaiton, it was only through Vincent Massey on behalf of the Massey Foundation, and one other individual, that the Council managed to survive financially during these years.

The Council’s national lectureship scheme was also launched in 1923. The idea for it had been tabled as early as 1921 by Ney, and Massey had immediately endorsed it with enthusiasm. The first speaker, Sir Henry Newbolt, toured Canada from January to April 1923, and was a featured speaker at the April Conference. Massey continued to be very involved

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46 National Council of Education (brochure, 1925-26?); UTA, VMP, 376/02.

47 Massey to Fred Ney, 29 Jan. 1924 and Massey to the Hon. Athanase David, 4 Mar. 1925; VMP; 29/06.

48 Memo listing donations of the Massey Foundation to the National Council of Education, n. d.; VMP, 028/01.

49 Chaiton, "History of the National Council of Education", 111.

50 Massey to Fred Ney, 5 May 1921; VMP, 139/01.
in the choice of speakers and their subject matter and was ever mindful of their nationality. He invited John Masefield to speak as a guest of the Council: "It is impossible to tell you, in a letter, the significance such a visit as yours would have, not only in the cause of education, in the real sense, but also in its bearing on the spiritual link between Great Britain and Canada. We are sadly out of touch here with the best English thought....The only way to offset the influence of American materialism is to keep in personal touch with Great Britain which is still the centre of freedom, and where education still respects the individual."^51

Under Massey's presidency, the Council also sponsored J. L. Paton, High Master, The Grammar School, Manchester, to tour Canada from October 1924 to June 1925 and report on the state of education in Canada. W. L. Grant wrote a letter to Paton introducing Massey as "one of the few men in Canadian 'big business' who has also a very urgent and enlightened sense of public duty". The sympathy between Grant's and Massey's ideas on education is striking. Grant explained to Paton that education was a provincial matter in Canada and that this had "prevented our educational systems from becoming as great a force for nationality as one could wish." He continued: "I do not wish to paint too dark a picture; much has been done;...if we wished to boast, we could fairly claim to be in many points superior to the United States; but an infinity still remains to do; especially in the way of developing a national spirit, and a spiritual nation." He said that education in Canada ran the danger of being regarded as a "'side-show', the affair of officials and pedants, while the practical business man goes on to build up our industrial civilization."^52

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51 Massey to John Masefield, 17 Dec. 1923; VMP, 138/03.
52 W. L. Grant to J. L. Paton, 3 March 1924; VMP, 138/03.
In preparing his "Report for the National Council of Education", Paton visited every province and a sampling of secondary schools and universities. He met with both members of business and fellow teachers. In all, he claimed to find few signs of the "Educational Awakening which has spread like a great tidal movement all over Europe, including Soviet Russia...." While he noted growth in the number of students, and some exciting initiatives within the Universities, he found the NCE to be one of the few symptoms of educational renewal.53

He expressed concern over the itinerancy and lack of training and experience of rural teachers, and the dismal, even unhealthy, physical conditions in country schools. In the sphere of adult education, he painted a bleak picture as well: "I visited the Y.M.C.A.'s. I had heard that in [the] U.S.A. there were educational activities on a large scale carried out in the Y.M.C.A. The same is true in a few of the largest towns of Canada but only a few. In the ordinary Y.M.C.A. there was Physical Culture, there was some music. But there were no reading circles and practically no books; the spirit of learning was not there." He praised the Chautauqua movement, on the other hand, for its educational initiatives, and the churches for their high quality organs and "excellent work in music in places where there is little cultured or aesthetic life." He remarked with apparent surprise, for example: "In Regina I found there were in addition to the Church Choirs several orchestras and a male voice choir -- the Normal School also was doing great work in music. I was not, therefore, surprised to find that a Harp recital by Albert Salvi filled literally every seat in the largest Church in the City, every seat being specially booked beforehand. This growth in the appreciation of music has been

immensely assisted by Broadcasting."54

While there was an abundance of British speakers, the NCE sometimes sponsored American visitors, but not without complaints. Apparently in regard to the prospective 1924 visit of Dr. John Finley, an editor of the *New York Times* and a former Commissioner of Education for New York State, whom Massey billed as "one of the most eminent educationists in the United States", the Deputy Minister of Saskatchewan wrote disapprovingly: "Personally I had hoped that the educational contact already established by the Council with English educators would be much further strengthened. The influence of American educationists whose higher training for many years was dominated by the German idea, has not been altogether a good thing for our Canadian educational institutions."55 Massey shared this latter view, noting with satisfaction that the Canadian university had "escaped the Teutonic influence which has perverted higher education in the United States".56

By 1933, over eighty men and women "distinguished in the Arts, in Science, in Education and in Public Affairs" had visited Canada under Council auspices.57 Massey was also insistent that the Council's lecture program join forces with the Association of Canadian Clubs, which needed "poking up". Partly to bring it closer to the "geographical centre of the Canadian Club movement," he moved the Council's headquarters from Winnipeg to Toronto.58 Although the first Canadian Club

54 Paton, "Report for the National Council of Education".

55 Deputy Minister of Education for the Province of Saskatchewan to Massey, Apr. 1924; VMP, 138/03.

56 Massey (unidentified speech, early to mid-1920s); MFamP, V. 43, speech no. 5.

57 National Council of Education (program listing, 1933-34); VMP, 29.

58 Massey to Fred Ney, 29 Jan. 1924; VMP, 29.
dated from 1893, the Association had been close to moribund during the War and early 1920s and was only revived in 1925 and 1926.\(^{59}\) Massey reported in an open letter to Council membership on 26 March 1924 that, following a resolution made at the Convention of Canadian Clubs in Victoria in 1923, a plan for co-operation between the two organizations was being developed, with Ney designated as the liaison.\(^ {60}\) Massey was persistent on this point. In a letter to Ney, well after his tenure as President was over but while he still, in a sense, held the purse strings of the organization, he continued to press for the realization of this plan: "One point I would bring up...is the importance of co-ordination with the Canadian Clubs in the arrangement of speakers in Canada. You know my views about this...."\(^ {61}\) Ney was able to report that the reorganization had just been effected; both Graham Spry, hired as the Association’s national secretary in 1926 and soon to be a key player in the lobby for public broadcasting, and Katherine Evans, assistant secretary, were now members of the Council’s committee on lectures.\(^ {62}\)

In addition to the lectureship program, the National Council of Education commenced a series of books on various educational matters. By hiring Professor J. A. Dale, the Council now had a general editor for all its publications. In an open letter to the National Council of Education membership, 26 March 1924, Massey explained that these books were an effort "to approach the subjects from a Canadian


\(^{60}\) Massey to the National Council of Education membership (open letter), 26 Mar. 1924; VMP, 138/03.

\(^{61}\) Massey to Fred Ney, 27 Sept. 1928; VMP, 30/08-09.

\(^{62}\) Fred Ney to Massey, 6 Dec. 1928; VMP, 138/03.
standpoint, and also to reflect, as far as possible, the point of view of the layman."\(^{63}\)

The first of the Council's book projects was *This Canada of Ours: An Introduction to Canadian Civics* (1926) by Charles Norris Cochrane and William Stewart Wallace of the University of Toronto. It followed on the heels of a report for the Council by the University of Toronto, *Observations on the Teaching of History and Civics in Primary and Secondary Schools in Canada*.\(^{64}\) The Council hoped that the text would be used in the school system as an aid to teaching citizenship.\(^{65}\) Other Council books were: *The School Theatre* by theatre director Roy Mitchell; *A Canadian Song Book* (1928) by Sir Ernest MacMillan, conductor, composer, and then newly-appointed principal of the Toronto Conservatory of Music; and *Canadian Folk Songs (Old and New)* (1927), selected and translated by J. Murray Gibbon, publicity manager for the CPR and noted folk art enthusiast. All were launched under Massey's tenure as President; the three latter books were a product of Massey's growing commitment to the promotion of Canadian art as the 1920s unfolded.\(^{66}\)

The last major Council initiative with which Massey was directly involved was the 1926 Conference in Montreal. Massey had strongly favoured Montreal as the conference site and had lobbied to secure greater representation from French-speaking Canada on the Council. He invited Monseigneur C. N. Gariépy

\(^{63}\) Massey to the National Council of Education membership (open letter), 26 Mar. 1926; VMP, 138/03

\(^{64}\) Chaiton, "History of the National Council of Education", 51.

\(^{65}\) National Council of Education, Central Committee Meeting Minutes (Toronto), 4 Feb. 1926; VMP, 029. Whether it was used in any school system remains to be determined.

\(^{66}\) Chaiton, "History of the National Council of Education", 59.
of the University of Laval, for example, to join the Council and help it "encourage closer relations between French-speaking Canada and English-speaking Canada."\(^{67}\)

In his presidential address to the Montreal National Conference on Education and Citizenship, 5-10 April 1926, Massey adopted diversity as his main theme. Pleased by the strong delegation from the West, he credited the prairies as "the cradle of this movement", noting that one of the great achievements of the 1919 Conference was the bringing together of representatives from East and West. He welcomed French Canadian delegates in French, and pointed out with obvious pride that the National Council of Education was the first body to organize a fully bilingual conference on a national scale.\(^{68}\)

He proceeded to speak with a certain eloquence on the subject of Canada's diversity:

We regard the two languages of this country, not as constituting a barrier between the peoples they represent, but rather as the enrichment of a common heritage. Canada is a diversified country possessing different races, religions, social cultures. One hears this diversity often spoken of as a regrettable fact. Could anything be more fundamentally wrong? Let us thank heaven for the diversities which save this country from a devastating uniformity, and in welcoming diversity let us remember that after all a nation is civilized in proportion to the sympathetic understanding with which it welcomes just such distinctions in language, customs, manners, frames of mind, that makes French and English-speaking Canada as different one from the other in one sense, as I believe they are united in fundamental things. The greatest peril in North America today is the menace of deadly uniformity and standardized commonplaceness. I rejoice to think that there is one part of the continent which is proof against these dangers.

The diversified colours of the pattern running through the national fabric have a splendid meaning if we choose to discover it, and I like to think...that the

\(^{67}\) Massey to C. N. Gariépy, 10 Apr. 1924; VMP, 138/03.

\(^{68}\) Massey, "Speech" (National Conference on Education and Citizenship, 1926).
National Council of Education, through such gatherings as this, help us to acquire a true understanding and tolerant respect for these precious contrasts in colours and differences in form with which our Dominion is endowed.\(^{69}\)

While Massey's idea of diversity had its limitations, his conviction on the subject was striking. His phrase "the menace of deadly uniformity and standardized commonplaceness" is especially illuminating. Such was a recurrent refrain among those who saw the rise of democracy as the rise of mediocrity. However, in Massey's case, he was arguing vigorously for strengthening democracy, and it was a democracy which allied difference. He argued that Canada's French-English polarity was a significant counterbalance to the threat of homogenization emanating from the United States. Massey was surely not alone in linking these two ideas in the mid-1920s; but he demonstrated a certain leadership in the promotion of pluralism, by giving an "absolutely equal place to the two national languages". Certainly by the mid-twenties he was a highly vocal advocate of French-English bilingualism for Canada.\(^{70}\)

And while he sought to find a unity within Canada's sectionalism, he clearly viewed its ethnic and regional diversity as assets in the articulation of Canadian national character. For him, diversity specifically contrasted with passivity and submissiveness, and spoke of vigorous independence.

While the Conference reaffirmed the Council's traditional preoccupation with citizenship, it also signalled some new


70 See, for example, Massey, "Some Canadian Problems" (address before the Canadian Club of Ottawa, 26 Jan. 1924); NAC, MFamP, V. 43, speech 10A. Bissell has traced Massey's commitment to French Canada to his friendship with the Wrong family, who included him in their holidays at Murray Bay on the St. Lawrence; The Young Vincent Massey, 38-39.
directions. Massey had set out some of his preliminary ideas for the conference in a letter to Fred Ney in June 1925: "There are several big subjects which should provide the threads on which the whole Conference can be strung. These, to my mind, are: (a) The relation of character to Canadian education. (b) the teaching of Canadian citizenship. (c) the drama as an educational force. (d) music as education. (e) the cinema as an educational force. (f) the teaching of geography." He considered (c), (d), and (f) as three "neglected or misused subjects of Canadian education" and (e) "a great and pressing social problem". In his address to the 1926 Conference delegates, he ventured to ask: "is it not possible that the moving picture theatre under wrong direction may be undoing much of what the school is striving to accomplish in the development of character?" To the traditional triumverate of "educational forces", school, church, and family, he now added film.

Massey's recognition of the role of the arts in the educational arsenal was a departure. He had long had an interest in the fine arts, but not until the mid-1920s did he begin to regard their cultural significance as comparable to that of the liberal arts (see chapters 3 and 4). This happened for a host of reasons, not least his awakening to the role of art in the service of nationalism. It also resulted from his acute and hard-earned knowledge at the helm of the National Council of Education of the resistance to formal education as a national forum. Increasingly Massey would pin his hopes on informal adult education, in which the fine arts were less reluctantly admitted.

At the 1926 Conference, Massey took his leave as president of the National Council of Education. There were

71 Massey to Fred Ney, 17 June 1925; UTA, VMP, 29.

many changes in his life at this time. He had resigned as President of the Massey-Harris farm equipment business in October 1925, a position he had held since December 1921. The death of his father, Chester Massey, in 1926, had led to the upheaval of disposing of his estate. The same year, Massey took the position of Canada's first minister to the United States, a post he held until 1930. Alice and Vincent Massey decided to relinquish their Toronto home at 71 Queen's Park Crescent, and, in 1927, they resolved to establish a permanent base on a property near Port Hope, known as Batterwood, which they had owned since 1918.\(^3\)

Massey continued to follow the National Council of Education's activities, corresponding with Ney regularly from Washington, and sustaining Massey Foundation financial support. The Council held a fourth triennial conference, in Victoria and Vancouver, in 1929, which was attended by 2900 delegates and 30,000 visitors. Ney wrote excitedly to Massey: "it is being talked about as far afield as Berlin, Heidelberg and Geneva."\(^4\)

Among other themes, the conference addressed the "great and pressing social problem" of film and the relation of film to education and leisure. Massey wrote supportively about the conference's program to the Council's new president, Henry Cockshutt.\(^5\) The conference focussed concern upon a variety of issues, including the need for limits on the freedom of children to attend commercial films and film's virtual monopoly of the adult education field. Alarm was also expressed over foreign, that is, American, control of film distribution outside the United States, a phenomenon which arose and came into sharp focus during the 1920s. In this,

\(^3\) Bissell, *The Young Vincent Massey*, 149.

\(^4\) Fred Ney to Massey, 5 Nov. 1929; VMP, 30/09.

\(^5\) Massey to Henry Cockshutt, 22 Mar. 1929; VMP, 30/08-09.
Canada was joined by many other countries, some of whom (not Canada) moved quickly to place restrictions on American film exhibition. In a statement which would have had Massey's wholehearted agreement, and displayed a striking prescience, Ney wrote: "It may be urged that the world is moving rapidly towards internationalism...but there is a world of difference between internationalism and the aggressive influence of any one nation....With over 20,000 theatres in that country [the United States] and 37,000 in foreign countries under this huge monopoly, it can and does ignore public sentiment and sets itself above all moral, intellectual and artistic standards." Among the outcomes of the conference were a Council pamphlet authored by Ney, Canada and the Foreign Film, and the introduction of a "Film Week" program to provide venues for "pictures of international interest and artistic worth" and to stimulate public "demand for a greater measure of [Canadian] control in this field of public education and entertainment."

While Vincent Massey did not attend the Victoria-Vancouver conference, he continued to support the Council until early 1934, when criticisms were received that it was supporting Fascist speakers through its "Film Week" on German and Italian films. The Massey Foundation also withdrew its financial support in 1934. In a letter informing Ney of his resignation, Massey wrote: "I still feel the National Council of Education has it in its power to make an important

76 National Council of Education, Canada and the Foreign Film, Winnipeg, n. d. (1929?), 5; VMP, 30/08-09.
77 National Council of Education, Canada and the Foreign Film.
78 Massey to Fred Ney, 23 Apr. 1934; VMP, 29.
79 Massey to H. Carl Goldenberg, 21 Apr. 1934, and Massey to James A. Richardson (President, National Council of Education), 21 Apr. 1934; VMP, 29.
contribution to the life of Canada. Perhaps some of the activities which we discussed long ago, and which were abandoned, may one day be assumed [sic, resumed?]. The Council, in the hands of Ney and subsequent presidents, had become more in the nature of a booking agency for films and theatrical events. Massey may still have been harking back to the days when the Council had been a clear voice for national character and issues of citizenship.

Massey carried his educational gospel with him throughout his career, to which his numerous public addresses attest. A short sampling of his remarks gives some indication of the scope, longevity, and cohesion of his convictions. His earliest public statement on the subject appears to date from 1922, and was followed by a number of closely-related speeches on the topic of the university and college.

Invariably he used them to rail against the university as a factory, churning out professionals with little regard for the person as a whole. "Mass production is highly desirable in factories but it plays havoc with education." In a familiar vein, he criticized "types of instruction which can only divert its [the university's] energies and thwart its real purpose", citing an American university which offered

80 Massey to Fred Ney, 23 Apr. 1934; VMP, 29.

81 Massey gave an address on education and character building on 17 Nov. 1922 at the King Edward Hotel, Toronto; William H. Walters to Massey, 18 Nov. 1922; VMP, 139/01.

82 Massey, "The Place of the Canadian University in the Community" (speech given at the Canadian Club of Montreal, Mar. 1923); MFamP, V. 43, speech 8. The speech was summarized in the April 1923 issue of The University of Toronto Monthly, according to the November 1924 issue of the same journal, V. XXV, no. 2. A similar speech, "The University and the College", was given on the occasion of the Charter Day Convocation at Victoria College, 10 Oct., 1924; MFamP, V. 43, speech 13; it was synopsized in The University of Toronto Monthly, XXV, no. 2, 71-73.
courses in "Buying for Home Furnishing", "Motion Picture Production", and "Wrestling". In his view, such subjects devalued education. Again, the goal of the university should be to provide a liberal arts education. "The value of a humanistic education, of course, does not rest on anything artificial or external, even upon those forbidding attributes that are expressed by that degraded word 'culture', he stated around 1923. What "those forbidding attributes" were remains unclear; presumably he was referring to the high-mindedness of culture. At the same time, Massey felt assured that culture, by being stretched to cover subjects beyond the liberal arts, was devalued. This tension in his thought would never dissipate.

The model that most fostered a humanistic education at the university level, in his view, was a system of colleges federated into a larger whole. He stated: "I should like to make a plea for the small collegiate residential unit, (either as a separate college or not) where men living in intimacy can learn from each other as well as from books." As he explained to the Association of American Colleges in 1929, such a model existed in Canada. Something that began as the jealously guarded denominational school grew, unforeseen by its authors, into a federated university system in Toronto, Winnipeg, and most recently Halifax. He commended such a

83 Massey, "The Place of the Canadian University in the Community".

84 Massey, "The Place of the University in the Community".

85 Massey, "The Place of the Canadian University in the Community".

86 Massey, "The Colleges of Canada" (address to the Association of American Colleges, Chattanooga, Tenn., 10 Jan. 1929; MFamP, V. 44, speech 45. This speech was reprinted in School and Society, V. XXIX, no. 743, 23 Mar. 1929. See also Massey's speech "The University and College", University of Toronto Monthly, V. XXV, no. 2 (Nov. 1924), 73.
system for giving "the undergraduate the intimacy of a smaller academic community, the closer association with teacher and fellow student, the participation in a tradition local enough to be realizable and natural. On the other hand the student is privileged to enjoy in full measure the life and facilities of a great university -- its libraries, its laboratories, its festivities, and sports." He valued the federated university for the same reason he prized Canada's federal system of government, and even the Commonwealth; they each accommodated a respect for the local within a larger unit. As he wrote around 1950: "We must recognize the fact that centralization is undemocratic, that it is contrary to the ancient Anglo-Saxon tradition of local government." On the other, in the same text, he asserted:

Our education must be nationalized. A pedantic interpretation of Section 93 of the British North America Act has given the provincial governments undisturbed possession of the educational sphere. Each province is a watertight compartment in so far as education is concerned....Even textbooks are locally produced. There is little correlation of effort between provinces and apparently little interchange of ideas....In a country as geographically scattered as Canada sectionalism is the greatest danger.

Aside from the fact that American influence soon replaced sectionalism in Massey's definition of Canada's "greatest danger", he was ever mindful of the tension between the local and the national and their need for mutual expression.

The collegial unit also facilitated a measure of personal contact between teacher and student and among students, which

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87 Vincent Massey, "The Colleges of Canada".


89 Section 93 referred only to denominational schooling; section 92 included education in its broadest sense.

90 Massey, "Some Notes on Education".
Massey valued highly. The drawing out of each child's "diversified qualities" could only be accomplished through the contact of one personality with another. He declared:

They knew something about this in Scotland. I am not Scotch, (sometimes I am made to feel that I am the only man in Toronto who is not), therefore I can suggest, with no breach of good taste, that in Scotland they had, in education something better than mass production, a system with the old dominie as its core, which turned out vigorous personalities possessing individual characteristics, sometimes forgivable eccentricities. We had something like the old Scotch schoolmaster here at one time, but through the years we have lost him; we have done something to dehumanize education and standardize it and effeminize it too, and we have let something go which somehow we must get back.\(^91\)

In such a passage, where Massey's humanism, his faith in personality, the whole person, the leader, and the teacher, comes through so clearly, it is noteworthy that he would align it with virility. The feminine is deemed to be less vigorously individualistic apparently, more anemic, less able to resist the tyranny of standardization.

This raises many questions about Massey's thinking about the individual. On the one hand, he vested tremendous faith in the individual, and feared loss of individuality. And yet he feared excessive individualism. Not trusting the individual alone (either offensively or defensively), he looked to the protection of the collegial unit. In this he was confronting one of the primary contradictions of North American democracy, perhaps any democracy: the promise of individual expression and the threat of anonymity, or, alternatively, the threat of individual expression and the promise of equality. He championed democracy but vilified standardization.\(^92\)

\(^91\) Massey, "Education and Nationality" (n. d., c. 1923-24); MFamP, V. 43, speech 9.

\(^92\) Massey, "Education and Nationality".
Massey promulgated what has become a veteran Canadian response to this dilemma, the view that the collegial unit is needed to protect the individual from excessive self-interest as well as from the effacement resulting from over-centralization. His uneasiness about feminization seems to have been entangled in this paradox. The collegial school unit was, at its most desirable, not coeducational, but male. As such, collegiality was animated, or countered, by virility.

In Massey's view, the Canadian university went a long way towards fostering the humanism that he championed. Among its distinguishing features, all of which compared favourably with the American university, were its thoroughness and greater degree of academic freedom and tolerance. "We have, I think, to thank the Scottish tradition for much of the relative vigour and thoroughness of the Canadian university, and the English colleges for the art of living and the humane attitude towards learning which they have transmitted".  

The university was especially significant for Canadian nationalism, in his opinion, because of its tolerance of difference: "The university, with its tradition of forebearance and tolerance, with its detached, dispassionate search for truth, its disregard of external differences, should provide a forum where east and west, French and English, Labour and Capital, town and country, can meet, on a common and neutral ground, and exchange ideas there and learn mutual toleration." Absolutely central to Massey's thinking was a belief in the possibility of fostering impartiality and, thereby, achieving concordance among diverse parts.

The holism of collegiate life and the humanism it nurtured, be it at the secondary school or university level,

93 Massey, "The Place of the Canadian University in the Community".

94 Massey, "Education and Nationality".
continued for Massey to have as its final goal the cultivation of character and citizenship. In a speech entitled "Education and Nationality", undoubtedly from the 1923-1926 period, at the height of his involvement with the National Council of Education, Massey stated plainly: "Education when one gets down to the bottom of it is a very simple thing, and its primary job is to make human beings responsible, sensitive and intelligent members of society. In other words good citizens. Education is training for citizenship." He added: "But it is well to remember that the principle of citizenship cannot be taught boys and girls by the addition of a subject called civics to an already over-crowded curriculum. The notion of citizenship must be in the very warp and woof of the school fabric; it must lie behind the teaching; it must permeate the curriculum and it must influence even the school sports." 95

Again in an address in 1929, he stated: "Education, we all agree, must concern itself with the training of character"[;]...[t]here is no subject more fascinating than the subtle relation existing between school years and the citizenship which lies beyond". 96 As late as the 1951 Massey Commission Report, he reiterated the fundamental link between education and citizenship.

For Massey, the notion of citizen spoke to both membership in the Canadian national unit and membership in a democracy. Democracy, like culture, a profoundly humanistic conception, prizes the worth of the individual above all. In practice, of course, this finds realization to various degrees and in manifold ways. And excessive individualism need not be the end product. Indeed, a humanistic education saved society from just such an outcome, because it helped to vest in each

95 Massey, "Education and Nationality".

96 Massey, "Address" (delivered on the occasion of the 100th birthday of Upper Canada College, Toronto, n. d. [1929]); VMP, 60.
individual a sense of responsibility for the common good. It purported to foster an awareness of alternatives, and moved the sense of the alien closer to the sense of self. The individual and the common were invariably poised as counterweights, as were the local and national, and the national and international: unity in diversity in ever-widening circles.

Massey commented with frequency on education and democracy. He took pride in the Canadian university as a democratic institution and as an agent in Canadian nationalism. Arguing that the universities were Canada's "most peculiarly Canadian possessions", because of their predominantly native faculty and student population, he pointed with satisfaction to their egaliatarian make-up:

Again, our universities are broadly Canadian in that their students represent the average native intelligence of the community. They are not necessarily picked men. ...The universities of Canada represent no class because the Dominion has no classes...The university therefore can but be representative of the nation as a whole, for the Canadian university is in a real sense the microcosm of the state.97

One might dispute his view of Canadian society as classless; however, his point is taken in relation to, say, the entrenched classism of England. He argued strenuously that education was everybody's business and, in this sense, it was a truly democratic enterprise: "Our education is one Government activity which touches every individual in Canada and what is more creates the Canada that is to be. We may say that our future is on the knees of the Gods -- it lies in our schools...."98

In a later text, Massey elaborated his thoughts on education as a broadly democratic concern. He criticized

97 Massey, "Speech" (from the early to mid-1920s); M FamP, V. 43, speech 5.

98 Massey, "Education and Nationality".
Canadian education for not taking account of the "special education of the prospective farmer or workingman" and making no accommodation for the adult worker; he complained that "High School education is not even free". He argued that there was "no room in a new Canada for the employer who rejected the plan for tutorial classes for his workmen because it would make them discontented." He supported the widening of the educational web to include university extension programs. He praised, for example, the Worker's Educational Association (WEA), founded in Britain in 1903, and active in Canada from 1918. Under Sir Robert Falconer's presidency of the University of Toronto, the WEA offered a selection of university courses modified and shortened to suit the labourer. The Massey Foundation, with Vincent Massey as chair, sponsored a modest survey of Adult Education conducted by the WEA, of which Falconer was honorary president, in the mid-1930s.

Conversely, there were aspects of the university that Massey criticized for being anti-democratic, and which might seem prophetic today: "Our universities are undemocratic in their control. The Boards are too often composed of "prominent citizens", pious benefactors, people of unquestioned respectability, whose very success in life unaided leads them to question the real value of education." He asked: "Can the universities be acquitted of the charge

99 Massey, "Some Notes on Education".

100 This comment was made in the context of a discussion of Bolshevism, which Massey argued should be fought not by censorship and repression, but by an educated citizenry; Massey, "Some Notes on Education".


102 W. J. Dunlop (Director of the Department of University Extension and Publicity, University of Toronto) to Massey, 2 May 1935; VMP, 81/20.
that they are placing too limited a construction on their duties?...Its responsibilities do not end with an annual crop of B. A.'s, embryo professional men and Doctors of Philosophy. If democracy means anything it means that the stores of learning and of inspiration which the universities have in their gift must be carried far and wide. We must not be afraid of the bogy of popularizing learning."\textsuperscript{103} In short, his education gospel embraced public and private schooling, informal and adult education, as well as the university. Education was a pervasive thing, infiltrating every walk of life. Canada was at a cross-roads educationally and nationally, he believed, and must "agree to a large devolution of authority[;]...the people must be trusted..."\textsuperscript{104}

The goal of this broadly democratic enterprise was, as he stated in 1923, that "our education and our nationality should have an intimate relationship."\textsuperscript{105} Education held both the promise of Canadian unity, in the face of regionalism and ethnic diversity, and the promise of Canadian sovereignty, in the face of internationalism and American world pre-eminence. As early as 1924, he tackled squarely the cultural domination threatened by the United States, a subject which was to be of increasing centrality to his thought:

\begin{quote}
Sometimes people look on our relation to our neighbour as a rather hopeless one, leading as it does to the infiltration through very many media, of ideas, which would almost seem to be more than we could resist. Our magazines, those of the greatest circulation, come from the United States, as we all know. Our moving pictures are created in California. Our theatres are supplied from New York. And now, to add to the list of those vehicles of ideas other than our own, we have the radio, and our population is listening nightly to political speeches in capitals that are not ours, and to patriotic music from another land. It will be only a very robust
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{103} Massey, "Some Notes on Education".

\textsuperscript{104} Massey, "Some Notes on Education".

\textsuperscript{105} Massey, "Education and Nationality".
kind of Canadianism that can withstand this influence, and it can be resisted only by such a revived consciousness as I am trying to suggest. Censorship will not work -- that is a mechanical way, and the wrong way in which to conserve our institutions. Our national characteristics must be protected by our own aroused consciousness, by public opinion, and if public opinion cannot be moved, then the battle is not worth fighting.\textsuperscript{106}

The fear of Canadian effacement is palpable. Education was the route to awakening the necessary consciousness, to affirming Canada's difference. In education, specifically a cultural education, where the humanities were the centrepiece and character and citizenship were the goals, lay the hope of a robust Canadian national identity. Massey stated: "A Dominion-wide effort to nationalize our Education, to concentrate this potential force in one great purpose would give us the means to produce men and women who in the fullest sense of the word are Canadians."\textsuperscript{107} During his term as president of the National Council of Education, Massey referred to "education as a crusade";\textsuperscript{108} he might have said "Canadian nationalism is a crusade". For him, the two were inseparable.

\textsuperscript{106} Massey, "Some Canadian Problems" (address to the Canadian Club of Ottawa, 26 Jan. 1924); MFamP, V. 43, speech nos. 10A and 12.

\textsuperscript{107} Massey, "Some Notes on Education".

\textsuperscript{108} Massey, "Education and Nationality".
Chapter 3

Becoming "Art-Minded"

In a 1930 speech, Vincent Massey commented: "we [Canadians] are becoming more 'art-minded'." He was referring as much to himself as to others. Until the late 1920s, the arts played a modest, even minimal part in his understanding of culture. This, of course, was not unusual. Recognition of fine art in Canada has been slow, ambiguous, even tortuous. Its validation has drawn strength from various sources, often ones that simultaneously and viscerally sought its repression.

The role of Protestantism's many denominations in this process is complex and begs to be sorted out. In Massey's case, Methodism was a seminal influence on his early views towards the arts. By the turn of the twentieth century, music and, to a lesser degree, painting had secured some measure of acceptance in Methodist thought. They were enlisted in the educational cause and were understood to serve a moral purpose. Massey was indebted to both these principles; however, he came to draw a pivotal distinction between moral and moralizing art. He discovered that aesthetic discernment

1 Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada" (address before the Royal Society of Canada, Montreal, 22 May 1930); VMP, 46/16; also published in The Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Third Series, V. XXIV (1930), (Appendix B), LIX -LXXII.

2 Early music education in Canada was indebted to Egerton Ryerson, who prescribed vocal music as a subject in the Common School Act of 1846; however, music's appearance on school curricula was far from guaranteed. As a Methodist, Ryerson emphasized the relevance of music in the moral foundation he sought for education; it fostered class discipline and offered social benefits, such as the encouragement of temperance; see J. Paul Green and Nancy F. Vogan, Music Education in Canada: A Historical Account (Toronto/Buffalo/London, 1991), especially 44-74.
had a role to play in improving and uniting a community, and that art need not be propagandistic to serve society. By the late 1920s, he was dedicated to full recognition of the fine arts, lobbying for their inclusion in university study and their integration in everyday life.

In his early years, Massey was actually "barred" from the theatre. He could itemize the few occasions when his father was persuaded to attend the theatre: once to attend the opera; "once to hear Parsifal, because it was a drama with a religious theme; once to the London Hippodrome, because it was not called a theatre....; and once to see one of Shakespeare's plays, which were acceptable as classics". Massey was well into his teens before he was allowed to set foot in a theatre, even though his brother Raymond remarkably went on to become a very successful stage and television actor, and Vincent, purportedly, an accomplished amateur one. At best, theatre was countenanced in a domestic and amateur context. His father, for example, despite censuring professional theatre, was reputed to be a masterful charades player, and there was a stage on the top floor of the family home, equipped with lights, a curtain, and dressing-rooms. On the other hand, dancing ranked as an unmitigated vice. As Massey recalled: "our family recognized no place in life for dancing, playing cards, tobacco, or alcohol in any form. Sunday was a day of

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3 As late as 1914, the "Doctrine and Discipline of the Methodist Church of Canada" forbade theatre attendance; Ann Saddlemeyer and Richard Plant, eds., Later Stages: Essays in Ontario Theatre from the First World War to the 1970s (Toronto/Buffalo/London, 1997), 262.


5 Augustus Bridle, The Story of the Club (Toronto, 1945), 51.

unbroken austerity". These were the proscriptions of Methodism.

Methodist attitudes towards the arts were ambiguous. A Primitive Methodist recounted that in the 1830s "novel reading was a sin, and a fiddle was a terribly wicked thing. It was the devil's instrument to snare the young into dance; but the bass viol was not in the same category because consecrated to the service of God. Father never allowed us to sing songs, he considered them wicked...." Conversely, the founders of Methodism were notably appreciative of music and John Wesley's brother, Charles, was a distinguished hymn writer. From the late 18th century the Established (Anglican) Church in England had to contend with the loss of large numbers of its congregation who were ostensibly drawn away by Methodist musical practice, which was novel for its secularity.

In Canada, early Methodists had serious misgivings about singing in church. Nevertheless, they soon accepted choral music, which became a mainstay of their services and camp meetings, rivalling preaching in importance. Unlike the Presbyterians, who long considered the organ "a carnal instrument", Canadian Methodists welcomed it as an accompaniment to choral music. From the mid-nineteenth century especially, Methodist churches eagerly sought to


acquire pipe organs. The role of instrumental music was also boosted by the advances of Salvation Army bands in Ontario. In response, the Methodists formed bands to help with their own evangelistic campaign. Conversion rates were high at revivals assisted by band music.

Methodism's rather conflicted embrace of the arts, at some point, became intertwined with its educational mission. The annual reports of the Methodist Church's Educational Society (1884-1925) provide some profile of the growth of art education at its denominational schools. The fine arts were first mentioned in the 1888-1889 report; programming and facilities for music and painting experienced startling growth over the next decade.

The Massey family ventured into the realm of the fine arts along various paths, invariably with Methodism as its guide. Vincent Massey's mother, Anna Vincent Massey (1859-1903), an American by birth, was sent to the Methodist school, Centenary Collegiate Institute in Hackett's Town, New Jersey, in 1880, where "for two years she devoted herself to special courses in literature and music." In later life, she was distinguished for "the rich beauty and the harmony and good taste of all that had grown up under her hand in her delightful home."

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12 Semple has called the Salvation Army "quasi-Methodist"; The Lord's Dominion, 201. See also Green and Vogan, Music Education in Canada, 140-43.

13 Airhart, Serving the Present Age, 20.

14 Educational Society of the Methodist Church of Canada annual reports; UCC/VUA, Yrbk, Bx 8251, A10E43. See also Green and Vogan, Music Education in Canada, 68-9.

15 Nathanael Burwash (pamphlet printed on the death of Anna Vincent Massey, Feb. 1906); VMP, 121/11.
Anna Vincent's half-brother, Bishop John Heyl Vincent, who was a close friend of the Masseys, enthusiastically sanctioned a Methodist embrace of the arts. General Agent for the Methodist Episcopal Sunday School Union in the United States and editor of the *Sunday School Journal* from 1865-1888, Vincent co-founded Chautauqua with fellow Methodist Lewis Miller in 1874. Located on Lake Chautauqua in western New York state on the site of a former Methodist camp meeting ground, it was, at the turn of the century, about a six-hour trip from Toronto. Begun as a two-week summer school for Sunday School teachers, it soon became a leading force in adult education. Bishop Vincent sought to move beyond old style revivalism and focused on educating his church community. He favoured culture over conversion, and culture very much included the fine arts.

Although a Methodist conception, from its earliest days, Chautauqua boasted an all-denominational mandate. Chester Massey called Chautauqua "the most international, and the most interdenominational thing in the world". It had a broad, populist vision of education and recognized "the wide relations of biblical and Sunday-school work to general culture." It sought to prepare Sunday school teachers for "the social, aesthetic, and literary allurements, good and evil, by which they are helped or hindered between Sundays".

The expansive mission of the movement was expressed in

16 Lewis Miller of Aultman, Miller & Co. Buckeye Mowers, Reapers, and Binders, of Akron, Ohio.

17 Chester Massey, *Chautauquan Daily*, no. 28 (1 Aug. 1916), 5; quoted in archival notes kindly provided by Alfreda L. Irwin, Historian, CHIA.


various statements by Bishop Vincent, notably *The Chautauqua Movement* (1881). In a passage echoed frequently by his son George Vincent and his nephew Vincent Massey, he wrote: "Education, once the peculiar privilege of the few, must in our best earthly estate become the valued possession of the many....Chautauqua has therefore a message and a mission for the times. It exalts education, -- the mental, social, moral, and religious culture...of all, everywhere, without exception."²⁰

Bishop Vincent included aesthetic culture:

So general a scheme of education must increase the refining and ennobling influence of home life, ... giving the whole house an air of refinement; touching with artistic skill floors, walls, and windows; finding the right place and the right light for the right picture; putting the right book on shelf and table; furnishing a wider range of topics for home conversation; crowding out frivolity and gossip; removing sources of unrest and discontent at home....²¹

The arts flourished at Chautauqua. Its founders and supporters believed that life was not divisible into sacred and secular domains; all could be transformed to serve the sacred. A music school was established in 1879. The Chautauqua Society for Fine Arts, established in 1885, organized instruction in painting, sculpture, decorative arts and crafts, and, by 1907, the history of art; it also held art exhibitions. While theatre was long avoided, recitations and readings paved the way to the full staging of plays in the years before World War I.²²

Underlying the Chautauqua commitment to education and the impetus to embrace all facets of life was the belief that

leisure time must not be left to idleness. As a visitor to Chautauqua observed: "It has been the struggle of the world to get more leisure, but it was left for Chautauqua to show how to use it."^{23}

The Massey family was involved with the New York Chautauqua from its inception.^{24} As an early (perhaps founding) trustee, Hart Massey was intimately acquainted with its development, making periodic visits both in his capacity as board member and with his family to the summer school. The Massey family owned a cottage at Chautauqua, and it was at Chautauqua that Vincent Massey's parents met.^{25} Upon Hart Massey's death in 1896, Chester became a Chautauqua trustee.^{26}

Bishop Vincent looked to the Massseys as primary financial backers of the Hall of Christ, intended as the architectural centrepiece of the Chautauqua site. As Vincent wrote to Hart Massey in 1895: "It is to have a department devoted to all the pictures, engravings, photographs, which art now represents to the world setting forth the possible appearance and the works of Christ....It is to be a place for an occasional, rare, rich, reverent, beautiful service of

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24 To the Earl of Aberdeen, Hart Massey wrote: "I am one of the Chautauqua Trust Board, and have taken a great deal of interest in the Assembly since its organization in 1874", 18 May 1885; MFamP, V. 4. The Massey family was involved almost exclusively with the founding Chautauqua, not its offspring, although there is at least one piece of correspondence with a Mr. Massey, presumably Hart or Chester, concerning the Niagara Assembly or the Canadian Chautauqua, Niagara-on-the-Lake; MFamP, V. 2.


worship to the Christ...."27 The Masseys contributed to the Hall of Christ and made other gifts of varying size, among them the Massey Memorial Organ and $1000 for the Margaret P. Massey Scholarship.

As early as 1902, Vincent Massey, aged fifteen, referred to the family visiting Chautauqua, in what was probably an annual event. His cousin and close friend, Ruth Massey, daughter of his uncle Walter and Aunt Susan, was also present. He recorded visiting Bishop Vincent and cousin George, and attending sermons, lectures, a dramatic reading, Sunday School, and a Young People's Service conducted by his uncle.28

Raymond, Vincent Massey's brother, born in 1896 and younger by nine years, wrote in his memoirs that Chautauqua was the place "where I got my first taste of the theatre when I was about nine".29 He credited Bishop Vincent with introducing him to the stage and described him as "the first Methodist minister to approve of the theatre". Raymond recalled how on the family trip to Europe in 1903, the fateful journey that brought the death of Anna Vincent Massey from appendicitis, they rendezvoused with Bishop Vincent in Switzerland. Anna Massey was eager to attend the theatre when they arrived in London. Her brother, Bishop Vincent, encouraged Chester Massey to relent and attend the opera: "After all, Chester, you have all the great opera stars singing at Massey Hall. The only difference is that at Covent Garden they have scenery and costumes. You should see some Shakespeare in London, too."30 Bishop Vincent vowed that

28 Massey, Diary, Aug. 1902.
29 Raymond Massey, When I Was Young (Toronto, 1976), 18.
30 Raymond Massey, When I Was Young, 18 and 38.
there would be professional performances of Shakespeare at Chautauqua. This happened in 1905, according to Raymond Massey, who recalled being "one of a dozen youngsters who helped decorate the platform of the amphitheatre for the performances [there being no scenery]."\textsuperscript{31}

In 1910 Chester Massey resigned his position as Chautauqua trustee due to his limited physical strength and, in June 1911, Vincent Massey took his place.\textsuperscript{32} In the wake of his new appointment, Massey visited the Chautauqua summer school in 1911 with his father, stepmother, brother Raymond, and Aunts Lillian and Susan. According to his diary, his first two days were taken up with Board work.\textsuperscript{33} As a recent university graduate and now twenty-three, he brought a discerning eye to the Chautauqua experience. "I can't quite make up my mind in regard to Chautauqua. In some ways it incorporates all the faults of the U.S.A.: superficiality, Puritanism, misguided zeal, and a general vulgarity....So much of the culture lying about Chautauqua is of such a piffling variety...." Around this time, he began to develop his critique of Puritanism, which became a significant theme of his writing and addresses in the 1920s. His sexism also reared its head. He wrote with derision of the "meek subdued males" in the audience.

The fact remained, however, that he approved of Chautauqua's expansive vision of education. "It may have the seeds of greatness within it," he observed, praising its summer schools especially. He also found George Vincent's

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{31} Raymond Massey; quoted in the \textit{Chautauquan Daily}, 3 Aug., 1974; I am grateful to Alfreda L. Irwin, CHIA. Morrison has claimed that George Vincent, rather than his father, Bishop Vincent, was responsible for the support of theatre at Chautauqua, \textit{Chautauqua}, 156.
\item \textsuperscript{32} Chester Massey to Arthur E. Bester (Director, Chautauqua Institution of New York), 2 June 1911; MFamP, V. 21.
\item \textsuperscript{33} Massey, Diary, 31 July 1911.
\end{itemize}
presence "an assuring sign." His cousin was President of the Chautauqua Institution from 1907 until 1911, and subsequently honorary president. George Vincent went on to become president of the Rockefeller Foundation (1917-29). Like his father, he had a popularizing approach to education, which included an openness to the role of the fine arts. It is noteworthy that the cousins, George Vincent and Vincent Massey, each well-versed in the Chautauqua educational model, later ran cultural foundations, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Massey Foundation, respectively. Both organizations were heavily mandated to work in the education sector, and to varying degrees, supported the fine arts. Massey relied on his cousin's counsel in various educational contexts, well into the late 1920s when he was posted to Washington.

The Massey family's involvement in Chautauqua was symptomatic of their relatively broad cultural stance, which they extended to both the workplace and public life in Toronto. As early as 1881, the Canadian Methodist Magazine reported: "Chautauqua seeks to combine all the influences of mental culture, art, science, literature, and, above all, of religion, in a crusade against ignorance, skepticism, and sin". This might have described the Masseys' approach to the enviroment in which their employees worked. Charles

34 Massey, Diary, 31 July 1911. In "Postscript", Massey wrote that under the influence of George Vincent, Chautauqua struck a more intellectual note.

35 Morrison, Chautauqua, 83.

36 Although the Rockefeller Foundation was established in 1913, focussing in its early years on public health and medicine, it did not properly become involved with the humanities until the mid 1920s and the fine arts until the late 1920s; Raymond B. Fosdick, The Story of the Rockefeller Foundation (New York, 1952), 238.

Massey, one of Hart Massey's six children\(^{38}\), played a leading role in promoting literature and music at the Massey Manufacturing Company. He took over management of the firm in 1871, when his father went into semi-retirement due to ill-health. In 1875, the Company launched a firm newspaper, the *Massey Pictorial*, later *Massey's Illustrated*, which reached a circulation of 70,000.\(^{39}\) In 1896, as *Massey's Magazine*, it featured articles on agriculture, sports, and the literary and fine arts, including such regular columns as "The Literary Kingdom" and "The World of Art". Poems and works of fiction appeared, and Canadian content was at a premium.\(^{40}\)

Another of the company's publishing initiatives was *The Trip Hammer*, a monthly magazine which appeared from February 1885 to February 1886 before being absorbed into *Massey's Illustrated*.\(^{41}\) A "trip hammer", it explained, was an instrument of precision and power intended to smash "a thousand and one ["rampant"] evils."\(^{42}\) *The Trip Hammer* was distinguished by the fact that it was produced by the company's employees. Indeed, it claimed to be the first literary magazine in North America to be published by the employees of a business enterprise. Hart Massey's son, W.E.H. (Walter) Massey, was, nonetheless, listed as its business manager. It was an experiment devoted to enhancing the

\(^{38}\) Charles Massey was the eldest or second eldest child in the family; often it is stated that there were five children, Charles, Chester, Lillian, Walter, and Fred Victor, but there was another son George Wentworth, who died in infancy. The order of his birth is unclear; *Massey Music Hall Festival* (Toronto, 1894), 7; MFamP, V. 16-18.

\(^{39}\) Gillen, *The Masseys: Founding Family*, 53

\(^{40}\) Merrill Denison, *Harvest Triumphant: The Story of Massey-Harris* (Toronto, 1948), 89.


\(^{42}\) *The Trip Hammer*, V. I, no. 1 (Feb. 1885), 1.
relationship between "labour and knowledge". Although it professed to support organized labour and the right to strike, it did so in a highly qualified manner.**3** Its primary focus was promoting reading, by encouraging subscribers to find time each day to sample from the rich legacies of fiction, poetry, and history. **The Trip Hammer** boasted articles by leading theologians including J.M. Buckley, prominent editor of the Methodist Christian Advocate (New York) and John Heyl Vincent, Chancellor of the Chautauqua University.**4**

More than a literary journal, it chronicled and encouraged the diverse company-fostered cultural activities of its employees. It announced the commencement of a night school for Massey employees, launched with the help of a local public school inspector, and two teachers hired by the firm.**45** The journal informed its readers that an adult Bible class was being started under the auspices of the firm.**46** It reported on the early organization and progress of the Workman's Library Association, for which the firm provided a comfortable and spacious reading room and library of books and periodicals. The aim of the Library Association was "to wean its members away from gross thoughts and hurtful associations where such unhappily exist, and by surrounding them with refining and inspiring influences to draw forth the good in their natures and lead them to overcome and suppress the evil."**47** It was soon opened to adult family members of the workers and sponsored a variety of entertainments, including performances by the Glee Club, the Orchestra, piano, violin,

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**43** The Massey Manufacturing Co. was strike-free until 1886.

**44** The Trip Hammer, V. 1, no. 4 (May, 1885), 52.

**45** The Trip Hammer, V. 1, no. 10 (Nov. 1885).

**46** The Trip Hammer, V. 1, no. 12 (Jan. 1886), 181.

**47** The Trip Hammer, V. 1, no. 2 (Mar. 1885), 14.
flute and vocal solos, duets and quartets, recitations, readings, tableaux, and a charade in four acts representing the word "incarcerate"(!). 48

With the encouragement of Charles Massey, 49 the Company also launched the Massey Cornet Band in 1881. By the mid-1880's, it had twenty-one members and boasted of its expanding popular and classical repertoires. Concerts were held in either of two halls built for the purpose, one that seated three hundred guests, the other, the Massey Memorial Hall, eight hundred.

The journals, the musical groups, and the library club, the latter reminiscent of Chautauqua reading circles, reprised the Chautauquan impetus to extend Methodism's educational mission, and positioned the Massey Manufacturing Company within the vanguard of the adult education movement. Under a quasi-religious and educational mantle, the fine arts, music especially, and amateur theatre as charade and recitation, garnered at least modest validation.

In 1894, Hart Massey carried the commitment to the arts beyond the family firm, by giving to the city of Toronto the Massey Music Hall (later Massey Hall), a memorial to his son Charles and a tribute to the latter's love of music. Vincent Massey, age six, laid the foundation stone on 21 September 1893, and attended the opening on 14 June 1894. 50 The hall seated over 3,000 people, and was equipped with a large, powerful organ and a spacious stage for orchestral and choral purposes. 51 It boasted state-of-the-art acoustics, ventilation, and sanitary facilities. Nothing like it existed in Toronto. During its first year, more than 350,000 people

48 The Trip Hammer, V. 1, no. 4 (May 1885), 44-5.
51 Massey's Illustrated, V. 5, no. 1 (Jan. 1893), 6.
attended events in this new cultural centre.\textsuperscript{52}

A brochure published on the occasion of the Hall's opening indicated its perhaps unsurprising marriage of purpose: "musical entertainments, evangelical, temperance and benevolent work, and such other uses as may be acceptable to the Trustees".\textsuperscript{53} Among the religious gatherings, the Methodist Magazine and Review singled out for comment "the Moody evangelistic services, by which it was crowded twice a day for week after week", and which were of particular interest to Hart Massey.\textsuperscript{54} The deed of trust provided further that the space be used in the "cultivation of good citizenship and patriotism".\textsuperscript{55} An echo of the authority of Chautauqua may also be found here. Vincent Massey's enterprising uncle, Walter, so active in the cultural life of the Massey Manufacturing Company, was closely involved in the planning, building, and finishing of Massey Music Hall, and even its early programming. He wrote to his brother Chester on 4 July 1894 at Chautauqua: "I wish you would look into a few of the best lectures in Chautauqua while you are there to see how they would suit for the Popular Course I am mapping out [at Massey Music Hall]....Possibly Bishop Vincent would be a good one for an opening lecture." Walter Massey wrote with excitement about a dizzying range of possible speakers he was considering, from a Bishop Warren on Astronomy, to Marian Holland, who conducted cooking experiments on stage, to

\textsuperscript{52} Gillen, The Masseys: Founding Family, 106.

\textsuperscript{53} Massey Music Hall Festival, 7.

\textsuperscript{54} Methodist Magazine and Review, V. XLVII, no. 6 (June 1898), 515. Other denominations also booked the Hall; Gillen, The Masseys: Founding Family, 106 and 108.

\textsuperscript{55} Deed of Trust (H. A. Massey and J. J. Withrow), Massey Music Hall, 5 June 1894; VMP, 121/07.
lecturers on chemistry and electricity.\textsuperscript{56} While he did not mention the fine arts, his zeal for enlightenment was sweeping.

Massey Hall’s mandate for music was by no means neglected, although theatre was pointedly absent and no provision was made for a curtain. The Hall was launched with a three day music festival, opening with a performance of the Messiah attended by the Governor-General, the Earl of Aberdeen. Among the organizations which applied to give concerts in the Hall in its first year was the Toronto School of Music, Limited, which was affiliated with the University of Toronto. The author of the request complimented Hart Massey on his deep interest in music, specifically "educationally".\textsuperscript{57} Later, Massey Hall provided a home for the Toronto Conservatory Symphony Orchestra, founded in 1906,\textsuperscript{58} and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, founded in 1922, both supported by the Massey family. Vincent Massey became president of the Symphony in 1932.\textsuperscript{59} The Massey family’s support of music also prompted the donation of organs to a number of Methodist churches in Toronto and a carillon to Metropolitan Methodist Church.\textsuperscript{60}

In many ways Vincent Massey’s "fabulous uncle", Walter Massey, played a more demonstrative role in his nephew’s

\textsuperscript{56} Walter Massey to Chester Massey, 4 July 1894; MFamP, V. 3.

\textsuperscript{57} Toronto School of Music to Hart Massey, 8 May 1894; MFamP, V. 4.

\textsuperscript{58} It was discontinued in 1918, according to The Canadian Encyclopedia (Edmonton, 1988), 2174.

\textsuperscript{59} Massey to Colonel Gooderham (President of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra), 25 July 1932; VMP, 51. Chester Massey was an early subscriber to the Toronto Conservatory Symphony Orchestra, according to correspondence from the T.C.S.O. Chairman, Edward [Fisher?], 7 May 1908; MFamP, V. 20.

\textsuperscript{60} Tippett, Making Culture, 119.
childhood than his own father, who was limited by frail health.\textsuperscript{61} His father did, nevertheless, provide a role model in at least one area of the fine arts, as a collector of paintings. "The nearest approach to a hobby which he made was the collection of pictures", Vincent Massey stated in a family chronicle, "and his favourite haunt was the room he built to house them."\textsuperscript{62}

As early as 1903, Vincent Massey recorded his family's proclivity for visiting art galleries and dealers. On the occasion of the family's trip to Britain and the continent that year, Vincent Massey noted that the family had made the rounds of galleries and museums. On August 6, they went to the Mauritshuis Picture Gallery, The Hague, in the morning, and, in the afternoon, his parents went to Scheveningen to visit the painter Jozef Israëls (1824-1911), the leader of the Hague School of art.\textsuperscript{63}

It is not clear how Chester Massey acquired his taste for painting, or what role his wife Anna Vincent Massey played in this regard. The collecting of paintings from the Hague School certainly predated her death. After his remarriage in 1907, Chester Massey and his second wife, Margaret, renovated their home at 519 Jarvis Street and created a spacious, skylit gallery-sitting room (fig. 3). A painted frieze by Gustav Hahn, dating from 1908, surmounted the rich fabric-covered walls. It was here that Chester Massey spent much time in the company of his collection of pictures; 'worshipping in comfort' was the phrase used by a 1910 \textit{Toronto Saturday Night}.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{61} Massey, \textit{What's Past Is Prologue}, 6.
\item \textsuperscript{62} Massey, "The Masseys in Canada".
\item \textsuperscript{63} Massey, Diary, 6 Aug. 1903.
\end{itemize}
reviewer. 

The collection was dominated by art from the Dutch School (Willem Maris, Johannes Hendrik Weissenbruch, Jacob Maris, Willem Bastiaan Tholen, Albert Neuhuys, Bernard Johannes Blommers, and Jozef Israëls), followed by the Barbizon School of French painters (Constant Troyon, Henri Harpignies, Camille Corot, and Eugène Boudin), and a few English works. All three groups of pictures were invariably tame landscapes or domestic interiors. Among the figurative pieces were titles such as "The Mother's Return", "Happy Hours", and "Children's Lunch". Finally were a very few Canadian works, notably by Frederic Bell-Smith, Lucius O'Brien, and Homer Watson. In short his collection was very much the sort of "brown", foreign, domesticated assortment that the Group of Seven would rail against during the 1910s and 1920s.

Chester Massey also commissioned various family portraits, among them one of Walter Massey for Victoria College and another of Elizabeth Massey, Hart Massey's wife, for the Women's Residence, Annesley Hall. Robert Harris,

64 "Chester D. Massey's Paintings", Saturday Night, V. 23, no. 28 (23 April 1910). I am grateful to David Kimmel for the reference.


66 These commissions are mentioned in a letter from Nathanael Burwash to Chester Massey, 17 Jan. 1908; NAC, MFamP, V. 20. However, it has not been possible to confirm their existence or whereabouts. In 1926 Vincent and Raymond Massey gave a portrait (date of execution undetermined) of their grandmother, Mrs. Hart A. Massey, by MacGillivray Knowles to Annesley Hall; The Globe, Toronto, 25 Nov. 1926. According to Colin S. MacDonald, Knowles also painted a portrait of Chester Massey; A Dictionary of Canadian Artists, rev. ed. (Ottawa,
best known for his painting *The Fathers of Confederation* (1883-84, destroyed in the Parliament Buildings fire, 1916) was commissioned to paint a portrait of Chester’s first wife, Anna Vincent Massey.67

In addition, Chester Massey put a small sum at Bishop Vincent’s disposal to acquire prints, photographs and reproductions of the life of Christ for the Hall of Christ at Chautauqua.68 In 1908, he financially supported one William E. Dyer, visiting lecturer and "general manager for Canada" of the American Tissot Society, who presented a lantern slide lecture on J. James Tissot’s Bible paintings to a Toronto audience, heavily made up of pastors, associate pastors and church newspaper editors (perhaps held at the Metropolitan Methodist Church). The lecture, given in conjunction with an organ recital also sponsored by Chester Massey, was one in a series of similar events held during what is referred to by Dyer as "Exhibition Week".69

Chester Massey’s interest in painting also led him to a role in the fledging Art Museum of Toronto. As early as 1898, *Massey’s Magazine* had decried the lack of a public art gallery and museum in Toronto. It argued that commercial interests had too long prevailed and had received huge subsidies, while

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67 Chester Massey paid Harris $600 for the portrait of his first wife; Chester Massey to Robert Harris, 15 May 1907; MFamP, V. 19.

68 Chester Massey to George E. Vincent, 2 Oct. 1911; MFamP, V. 21.

art and architecture had been allowed to languish. In 1900, Chester Massey was among those who helped to redress the situation as a founder of the Art Museum of Toronto (later the Art Gallery of Toronto and now the Art Gallery of Ontario). He was a member of the Provisional Council of the Museum and on May 18, 1910, in recognition of his role as a founder, was elected a member of its permanent council. Another founder and the first president was Byron E. Walker (Sir Edmund Walker as of 1910), who played a decisive role in the early development of the Art Museum of Toronto, the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, and the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, and became a towering figure in the advancement of the arts in Canada in the first quarter of the century.


71 C. D. Massey and W. E. H. Massey are listed on the Committee struck to form the Art Museum of Toronto, 1900; Minute Book, AGOA. C. D. Massey was also listed among the committee names on the Art Museum’s Declaration for Incorporation, 1900; Minute Book, AGOA. At the first meeting of the Provisional Council of the Art Museum of Toronto, the Hart Massey Estate was among the subscribers (Hart’s children, Chester, Walter and Lillian were the executors). On 12 Apr. 1901, the Massey Estate paid a subscription of $5,000; J. E. Robertson (Secretary of the Estate) to B. E. Walker, 2 Oct. 1911; AGOA, "Art Museum of Toronto: Letters. 1900-11. M". Subsequent mention is made of a subscription from the Massey Estate in the amount of $25,000. Whether this included the original $5,000 remains undetermined; the final installment of the $25,000 subscription was made in 1920; Massey Foundation to AGT, 10 Dec. 1920; AGOA, "Art Museum of Toronto: Letters, 1919-20. M". Those who donated $5000 or more, at the Gallery’s inception or after, were designated a "Founder", according to a catalogue published on the occasion of the Museum’s second exhibition, Catalogue of a Loan Collection of Paintings of the English, Old Dutch, Modern Dutch, and other European Schools (Toronto, 1909).


73 Walker, president of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, also became chair of the National Gallery of Canada in 1910.
Chester Massey apparently relied upon Walker in some of his art purchases, and there are parallels between their collections.  

Lillian, Vincent Massey's aunt, joined in Chester's penchant for collecting paintings, at least to a minor degree. After her death in 1915, Chester Massey gave six of her works, including a Hague School piece by Willem Bastiaan Tholen, entitled *The Arcade at The Hague*, and a work attributed to John Constable to the Art Museum of Toronto.  

The Massey family was also involved in the early development of the Royal Ontario Museum. Conceived initially as a museum for Victoria College by its President, Dr. Nathanael Burwash, and Dr. Charles Trick Currelly, the Royal Ontario Museum of Archeology began to take form in 1905. Currelly, a first cousin of Lillian Massey Treble's husband, was a graduate of Victoria College, a member of its Board of Regents, and was encouraged by Burwash to pursue a career in biblical archeology. He became what fellow Victoria

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74 I am grateful to David Kimmel, who has informed me that Walker acted as an art broker for Chester Massey; UTA, B. E. Walker Papers, Box 27A (invoices). Both Walker's and Chester Massey's collections were drawn upon heavily for the Art Museum of Toronto's second exhibition, *A Loan Collection of Paintings of the English, Old Dutch, Modern Dutch, French, and Other European Schools*, 24 Nov. to 16 Dec. 1909 at the new Public Library, College St, which had opened that summer "through the munificence of Mr. Andrew Carnegie" and housed a room designated as a picture gallery, according to the exhibition's 181-page catalogue.

75 Art Gallery of Ontario, acquisition no. 583; the first "modern" Dutch paintings to enter the Collection were the result of the 1916 gift; Martha H. Hurdalek, *The Hague School: Collecting in Canada at the Turn of the Century* (Toronto, 1983), 7.


77 Currelly, *I Brought the Ages Home*, 35 and 38.
graduate Northrop Frye called a "cultural missionary". By the time of Currelly's return from Egypt in 1905, he had concluded that the museum he envisioned should be part of the University of Toronto as a whole. With the support of university board member Byron Walker, he was authorized to make acquisitions on behalf of the planned museum. He became the Museum's first director (1914-1946).

During a visit to the Holy Land in 1888, Walter Massey had acquired a collection of clay items in Jerusalem, which subsequently came to the new museum. As well, Chester Massey, as executor of the Hart Massey Estate, established, in cooperation with Currelly, a Walter Massey Biblical Collection fund; Middle Eastern artifacts Currelly had been acquiring since 1907 entered the Museum as the Walter Massey Collection. Lillian Massey Treble, her acquisitions guided by Currelly, donated approximately 180 items to the Museum between 1908 and her death in 1916, notably a selection of Middle Eastern textiles.

In these and undoubtedly other ways, the Massey family


79 Byron Edmund Walker was a fellow student of Currelly's at Victoria, and, in 1910, became chair of the board of governors of the University of Toronto.

80 Currelly, I Brought the Ages Home, 128-30.

81 A letter from C. D. (Chester) Massey as Executor of the Estate of H. A. Massey, to Charles T. Currelly, 28 May 1909 enclosed "the first payment on behalf of a fund to establish a Biblical Collection in the Museum of the University of Toronto, to be known as the Walter Massey Biblical Collection". It is also apparent from the letter that the sum enclosed constituted payment for acquisitions already made; ROM Curatorial files.

82 Chester Massey also supported the Museum as a member of "the Twenty Friends of the Arts", which was formed in 1917 to assist the Museum in paying for acquisitions in the fine arts.
was involved in the arts. True to their Methodist background, music, especially choral and organ, was the art form they esteemed most highly, but they also collected paintings and other objets d'art. On the other hand, they regarded drama and dance as sinful well into the early 20th century. In short, there is evidence of both hostility and receptivity towards the arts in the attitudes of the Masseys and in Canadian Methodism more broadly. But as conversion gave way to culture, so resistance to the fine arts gave way to acceptance. The Methodists' sweeping embrace of education, extended at Chautauqua to a celebration of the arts, helped to erode the barrier between sacred and secular endeavor. All could be sacred, if right-minded. The fine arts could serve both religion and morality. While Massey long preserved a hierarchical view of the fine arts, placing them well below the liberal arts in cultural significance, there were foretastes here of an alternate view.

Vincent Massey's social and intellectual orbit expanded appreciably with his enrolment at the University of Toronto in the fall of 1906, although he continued to live in two rooms at the rear of the family home on Jarvis Street.\textsuperscript{83} He launched into his university studies, becoming formally acquainted with the discourse on culture. Biographical writing about Massey has stressed his study of history, which was his chosen field as a Master of Arts at Oxford. Massey's history studies at the University of Toronto brought him under the tutelage of George Wrong, who "had firmly established Canadian history as a major field of scholarship" by this time.\textsuperscript{84} Perhaps less recognized is the fact that Massey's program in Toronto was a double major, an honours course in

\begin{footnotes}
\item[83] Raymond Massey, \textit{When I Was Young}, 69.
\item[84] Bissell, \textit{The Young Vincent Massey}, 36.
\end{footnotes}
"English and History with a modern option".\textsuperscript{85}

Included in the English honours program were the texts of cultural critic Matthew Arnold. By 1906-07, Arnold’s \textit{Culture and Anarchy} was listed as part of the University curriculum,\textsuperscript{86} and, by the 1909-10 academic year, the fourth year English program also prescribed Arnold’s essays "The Function of Criticism"; "The Study of Poetry"; "Democracy"; and "Equality".\textsuperscript{87} All are among Massey’s collection of books, preserved at the Robertson Davies Library, Massey College, including two editions of \textit{Culture and Anarchy}.\textsuperscript{88}

Arnold was unequivocal about the significance of culture. He stated: "I have often spoken in praise of culture; I have striven to make all my works and ways serve the interests of culture....I am, above all, a believer in culture". \textit{Culture and Anarchy} set out be an inquiry into "what culture really is, what good it can do...[and] to find some plain grounds on which a faith in culture -- both my own

\textsuperscript{85} This is confirmed by his university transcript; UTA, University of Toronto academic records, A89/200.

\textsuperscript{86} University of Toronto academic calendar for 1906-07. Massey probably came under the influence of W. J. Alexander, chair of English, who was deeply indebted to Arnold; Patricia Jasen, "Arnoldian Humanism, English Studies, and the Canadian University", \textit{Queen’s Quarterly}, V. 95, no. 3 (Autumn 1988), 555 and 558-59.

\textsuperscript{87} \textit{University of Toronto Calendar}, 1906-07, 128, and 1909-10, 122.

\textsuperscript{88} Arnold, \textit{Culture and Anarchy} (London, 1909) and (Cambridge, 1946); the 1909 edition has Massey’s nameplate dated 1913, the year of many of his nameplated books. The volume Matthew Arnold, \textit{Essays Literary & Critical}, which contains the essay "The Function of Criticism" is inscribed: "C. Vincent Massey 1909" on the inside leaf and bears Massey’s nameplate dated 1913. Also among the collection is Arnold’s \textit{Essays in Criticism} (1896), with "Alice S. Parkin, 1901" handwritten on the first page.
Chief among the tenets of his faith was that culture be defined as the study of or the striving for perfection. This distinguished it from "scientific passion" which aimed "to see things as they are," although he argued that culture did embrace the critical spirit of science in its quest for perfection. Raymond Williams has concluded that Arnold virtually equated culture with criticism. For Arnold this exacting spirit also signified disinterestness: "Criticism must maintain its independence of the practical spirit and its aims. It must not hurry on to the goal because of its practical importance." By aligning culture with the questioning, rigorous spirit of criticism, Arnold steered it away from orthodoxy and towards progressivism.

However, knowledge alone was not enough; it must be combined with betterment. The striving for perfection encompassed "all the love of our neighbour, the impulses toward action, help, beneficence, the desire for stopping human error, clearing human confusion, and diminishing the sum of human misery, the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it...[; all these] come in as part of the grounds of culture, and the main and pre-eminent part." His idea of perfection, then, had a strong moral component. The disinterest that was required of an inquiring, exacting mind was not understood to absent itself from caring and concern. Rather such disinterest absented itself from

89 Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, 4-5.
90 Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, 10.
91 Williams, *Culture and Society*, 243.
93 Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, 8.
self-interest in order to engage with the greater good.

Conversely, Arnold was uneasy with the English emphasis on morality to the exclusion of other functions. While he recognized in Puritanism "the strength and prominence of the moral fibre, which...knits...the genius and history of us English, and our American descendants across the Atlantic, to the genius and the history of the Hebrew people", he sought to balance what he termed Hebraism and Hellenism. Hebraism represented moral verve and Hellenism beauty and knowledge. He blamed Puritanism (Hebraism) for the English devaluation of "sweetness and light" (beauty and knowledge), in favour of moral rectitude and the useful. Too often, a narrowness which Arnold called Philistinism, governed: "how generally, with how many of us, are the main concerns of life limited to these two: the concern for making money, and the concern for saving our souls!" What he prized about Hellenism was its essential "impulse to the development of the whole man, to connecting and harmonising all parts of him, perfecting all, leaving none to that their chance...."94 Through this essay, in particular, Arnold had a three-fold impact on the relationship between culture and the moral. First, he affirmed culture's moral purpose. Second, he moderated its moral purpose, by arguing for the greater validation of the aesthetic and intellectual. Third, he helped to redefine the moral; the tireless pursuit of perfection was, by transcending self-interest, a moral quest, a service to the greater good.

Massey marked and occasionally annotated passages in his copies of Arnold's texts.95 He singled out for approval many of Arnold's key points: that culture had a social function

94 Arnold, Culture and Anarchy, 15, 116, and 163.

95 The markings can reasonably be attributed to Massey. Not only do the books bear his nameplate, but the written comments, which occasionally accompany the strokes, checkmarks and other markings for emphasis, resemble his handwriting.
expressed in a "love of our neighbour" and "the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it"; that culture was "a study of perfection"; and that this perfection "is a harmonious expansion of all [Arnold's emphasis] the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature, and is not consistent with the over-development of any one power at the expense of the rest." This, of course, sounds not unlike Methodist language about educating the whole person. The extent to which Arnold's thought impacted on Canadian Methodism, itself with a progressive undercurrent, remains to be explored. Nonetheless, Arnold's arguments that the moral be moderated by the intellectual and aesthetic, and that it be transformed into a pursuit of excellence left a strong imprint on the young Massey. It also appears that his introduction to Arnold launched Massey's critique of Puritanism, which he equated with Methodism. Certainly, Massey concurred with Arnold, that in its ministering to the intellectual, aesthetic, as well as moral functions, "culture goes beyond religion, as religion is generally conceived by us."  

Under the influence of Arnold, Massey came to speak the language of criticism. He learned to place tremendous store in the principle of critical distance, that which purportedly removed one from self-interest in the pursuit of excellence. This principle informed his understanding of character education (in the quest for quality and the emphasis on

96 For an examination of Canadian Methodism's reconciliation of faith and criticism, see Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century, 125-180. Margaret Prang has provided some insight into the Methodist milieu of Massey's home by documenting Chester Massey's role, in 1909, in a heated and public debate about the literal truth of the bible. In a letter to the Globe, he firmly supported subjecting the bible to "the searchlight of investigation"; N. W. Rowell: Ontario Nationalist, 71-72.

97 Arnold, Culture and Anarchy, 6 and 9 (Massey's 1909 edition).
independence of mind), and gradually came to have a crucial place in his ideas about the arts, the literary arts first, and later the visual arts. It gave him permission to endorse more readily the aesthetic function, itself connoting disinterested appreciation, and helped him to distinguish between art that preached and art that served a more subtle moral purpose -- the transcendence of partisan interest and the unity afforded by excellence.

As his markings of Arnold's text indicates, Massey also took an early interest in the role of the state in culture (still understood primarily as education), although his own ideas on this subject did not take mature form until the 1940s. In his essay "Democracy", Arnold warned that if the middle classes "will not seek the alliance of the State for their own elevation, if they go on exaggerating their spirit of individualism...they will certainly Americanise it. They will rule it by their energy, but they will deteriorate it by their low ideas and want of culture". Massey singled out the latter part of this passage. He also found persuasive Arnold's defense of the French diffusion of culture throughout society, where "the people, as distinguished from a wealthy refined class, most lives what we call a humane life, the life of civilised man."  

Like Arnold, Massey sought to democratize culture and was interested in how the state might further this end. Arnold, however, assumed that only a select few had the developed knowledge and taste to be the real arbiters of that culture. Arnold might be described as an elitist with regard to the agency of culture and a populist with regard to its recipiency. While Massey was indebted to Arnold's thought, and subscribed to the view that certain genres of individuals,


99 Arnold, "Democracy", 72.
particularly intellectuals and later artists, were most apt to be agents of culture, his idea of culture gradually admitted a broader base and was guided by multiple sources. He also specifically rejected the French, centralist model of state-supported culture, on the grounds that it did not sufficiently protect against state propagandizing. He came to believe deeply in the principle of excellence as a means of guiding state support away from partisanship and, thereby, locating a harmony among diverse parts.

Massey's study of Arnold figured in both his formal education and his extracurricular activities. He was part of a reading club, The Seekers or The Seven Seekers, formed during the 1908-09 school year, which included friends Murray Wrong (son of Professor George Wrong) and Harold Tovell. Their program included a reading, for example, by Massey of the poetry of Matthew Arnold. He also joined the Letters Club, composed of about fifteen members, who met "for the purpose of studying literature in an informal way". According to Arnold, literature was, after all, the high road to culture. The fine arts remained, for now, peripheral to his interest in literature.

In 1910 Massey came up with the idea for a literary monthly magazine run by undergraduates at the University of Toronto. The result was The Arbor, with Massey as one of six editors. Inviting articles, correspondence, and

100 Massey, Diary, Aug. 1909.
102 Massey, Diary, 1 Jan. 1910.
103 Massey, Diary, 1 Jan. 1910. The other editors were students J. L. Duncan, Murray Wrong, D. P. Wagner, A. M Goulding, and H. Tovell (the latter two married into the Massey family). All were fourth year students except Tovell, who was in third year and Wagner in second. While Massey graduated in 1910 and went on to Oxford in 1911, he remained a regular contributor to The Arbor until its demise in April.
opinions from every faculty and college, it sought to act "as a unifying force." Its first issue, in February 1910, led with an article entitled "Culture and the College", contributed by Massey's cousin George E. Vincent. Sounding like his father, he warned: "Unless liberal culture is conceived in a new spirit, it will survive merely as a means of aristocratic distinction for the sons and daughters of the rich and well-to-do....Liberal culture is fast becoming a luxury rather than a necessity." He added: "Most unfortunate of all is the too prevalent belief that scholarship and culture are inconsistent with deep concern for the community, that they withdraw their possessors from the common life.... Liberal culture cannot exist in any true sense apart from physical science, vocation, the immediate present, the emotional side of life, devotion to the common ideal." He urged a new merging of vocational training with culture, anticipating Massey in the Methodist Schools report of 1921.

Vincent Massey, himself, contributed a short piece entitled "On Thinking and Its Suppression". While his prevailing concerns continued to be literary, he ventured into the area of the fine arts. As an illustration of the lack of independent thinking among students and society at large, he cited contemporary, repressive attitudes towards the arts: "we also have the habit of raising our eye-brows in well-bred disapproval when a man makes a fervent defence of a favourite poet, or explains his theories on art." Sounding appropriately Arnoldian, he added: "This attitude is that of the Philistine

1913. For a brief overview of Massey's literary and social activities at Balliol, see Bissell, The Young Vincent Massey, 98-100.

104 The Arbor, V. III, no. 1 (Nov. 1911), 1.

105 George E. Vincent, "Culture and the College", The Arbor, V. III, no. 1 (Nov. 1911), 8-10.
and is eminently improper". One can only speculate as to
the theories on art that Massey attempted to espouse at this
stage in his life, but he once more couched the discussion in
terms of virility. This lack of critical thinking, instead of
being consistent with "the virility of our young nation", was,
in his view, more symptomatic of "the decadence of old
age".

In the next issue, Massey again dealt with art criticism.
He complained of the lack of informed, discriminating
commentary on the arts, describing it as "a pitiable business.
A book-review, we are told, is still largely influenced by the
business-manager's blue pencil, and is consequently reduced to
a 'very nice' notice or a synopsis of the book. Dramatic and
musical comment seems also to be dominated by the box-office.
Most things artistic are reduced to a dead level of
uniformity".

Another essay, "A Note on Music", whose authorship
remains undisclosed, sounds suspiciously like Vincent Massey.
Here the author tackled the definition of culture. He readily
acknowledged the musical character of the Toronto community,
but asked rhetorically if "the status of music in a community
[is] a criterion of its culture? Surely, not. Few will deny
that in North America music is patronized to the neglect of
the sister arts". He bemoaned the widespread ignorance of
painting and the "feeble representation" of dramatic art.
Describing music as a "showy" and "not inexpensive" art, he

106 (Massey), "On Thinking and Its Suppression", The Arbor,
V. I, no. 1 (Feb. 1910), 57; in the copy of The Arbor in the
VMP, although the essay was published anonymously, "Vincent
Massey" appears in handwriting beneath it.

107 (Massey), "On Thinking and Its Suppression", 58.

108 [Massey], "The Uncritical Spirit", The Arbor, V. I, no.
2 (Mar. 1910), 120-21. In the copy in the Vincent Massey
Papers, "Vincent Massey" is handwritten at the end of the
piece.
argued that "modern artistic reproductions and the cheap editions of to-day have removed any excuse for our ignorance of pictures and books." The author continued: "Of course there is another rather obvious error regarding music. This art is vaguely understood to mean culture (we should perhaps spell it 'culcher' in this sense) and it seems to be thought sometimes that the purchase of a piano will guide a family into a pleasant cultured path....But music alone does not give us culture. Newman\textsuperscript{109} has said something to the effect that stuffing birds and playing stringed instruments may be delightful amusements, but they do not constitute a liberal education."\textsuperscript{110} Here, as later in the Massey Foundation Commission on Methodist schools, was the impulse to anchor fine art to the liberal arts; otherwise, it constituted no more than a degraded culture.

During his college years Massey also experienced wider travel, a broadening circle of associates, and greater exposure to the visual arts. During the summer of 1907, he travelled to Europe with Harold Tovell, son of a Methodist minister and future husband of cousin Ruth Massey.\textsuperscript{111} Harold and Ruth Tovell, who met through Massey, and with whom Massey maintained a close friendship through the 1920s,\textsuperscript{112} became keen supporters of the fine arts as well.\textsuperscript{113}

Again in the summer of 1908, Massey made the pilgrimage

\textsuperscript{109} Cardinal John Henry Newman (1801-1890), English theologian and author.

\textsuperscript{110} [Massey?], "A Note on Music", \textit{The Arbor}, V. 3, no. 8 (Apr. 1911), 273-74.

\textsuperscript{111} Chester Massey to John Heyl Vincent, 30 June 1910; MFamP, V. 21.

\textsuperscript{112} Interview, Freeman and Rosita Tovell, 22 Nov. 1996.

\textsuperscript{113} Harold Tovell, a distinguished physician and an Art Gallery of Toronto museum trustee, and Ruth Tovell, a respected art historian, were both active art collectors.
to Europe, this time with school friend Douglas Mason. They made the rounds of art historic landmarks in Naples, Rome, Pompeii, Tivoli, and Venice. Massey described lying in the grass in the Borghese Gardens in Rome, reading English art critic John Ruskin (1819-1900) for the afternoon. On July 24 in Venice he noted: "[a]m reading Ruskin assiduously -- he is very good on Venice...." This was probably The Stones of Venice, a sort of art travel book in three volumes. Ruskin had revolutionized the English-speaking appreciation of the visual function; seeing, or grasping exactly with sight, was, in his view, the superior means of knowing and understanding the world. On these and other grounds, he validated visual art. He also insisted that art was at base a moral and social enterprise. He was disgusted by the increasingly mechanical systems of production and use of cheap materials, and valorized Gothic art for its communal and handcrafted character. Arguing that art was not only the concern of artists and connoisseurs, Ruskin stressed its public nature. He adamantly opposed the growing "art-for-art's sake" movement in England in the later nineteenth century, arguing that art had an urgent social mission, that is, to deter a descent into atheism and utilitarianism.

Whatever the specifics of his interest in Ruskin's thought,  

114 Massey to Raymond Massey, 10 July 1908; NAC, MFamP, V. 20.  

115 Massey, Diary, 24 July 1908.  

116 Massey owned a copy of Stones of Venice; Robertson Davies Library, Massey College, has a 1906 edition, with a Vincent Massey bookplate, inscribed "1908", along with seven other titles by Ruskin, also with Massey's bookplates, all editions dating from between 1903 and 1907, and mostly pertaining to art and architecture.  


Massey's commitment to the fine arts would very much align itself with a belief that art had a social and moral mission, although, unlike Ruskin's, not a didactic one.

By the time of his summer trips to Europe, Massey had an easy familiarity with the names and best-known achievements of the masters of the Renaissance and other eras, although there is little evidence that he studied art formally.\(^{119}\) He carried on the family practice of visiting artists' studios. In early August, 1908, in London, he visited the home of G. F. Watts (1817-1904), perhaps the most remarkable of England's High Victorian artists, and was entertained at tea by the artist's widow. He described the visit as "the most important thing I did all summer....The house breathes of Watts and his work and every pallette [sic] and brush are as he left them....The walls [are] covered with pictures by the master himself."\(^{120}\) He visited the National Gallery and "renewed my acquaintance with the Turners, Gainsboroughs, Reynolds, etc."\(^{121}\)

He went to Europe again during the summer of 1909. In his diary, he noted: "Charlie Currelly took me to tea at the house of Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema [in London presumably]. It is quite the most remarkable place I have seen. Exquisite treasures of all kinds grouped together in perfect taste in a beautiful house built to the purpose."\(^{122}\) Currelly was a friend of Alma-Tadema, a High Victorian artist who specialized in paintings of archeologically-researched ancient Roman and Middle Eastern domestic interiors. Currelly was also close to

\(^{119}\) His son Hart believed that Massey studied art as part of a university history course, but otherwise learned about art informally; Hart Massey to author, 12 Dec. 1996.

\(^{120}\) Massey, Diary, 12 Aug. 1908.

\(^{121}\) Massey, Diary, 20 Aug. 1908.

\(^{122}\) Massey, Diary, Aug. 1909.
Holman Hunt, one of the original Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood of English painters, who were befriended and strongly endorsed by John Ruskin.\textsuperscript{123} By 1909, Currelly was well-connected in the London art and museum world and was in a position to help initiate the young Massey.

Back home, Massey was introduced to the collection of Byron Walker, at a Historical Club meeting at Walker's home. "What pictures he has! Everything in the house from the mantel pieces to the smallest vase show the most exquisite taste. Would that all business men were such connoisseurs."\textsuperscript{124} It was possibly through his father's association with the Art Museum of Toronto that Vincent Massey first made Walker's acquaintance, and their paths crossed in various artistic contexts during the 1910s and early 1920s.\textsuperscript{125}

About this time, Massey also started his own art collection. In the summer of 1910, while an official delegate at the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, he went to London and "invested rather heavily" in some etchings by James Abbott McNeill Whistler, among others, noting that he preferred etching to painting, because it had more feeling.\textsuperscript{126}

In early January 1911, Massey made his first visit to what was becoming a focal point in the gathering art community of Toronto, the Arts and Letters Club. Founded in 1908 as a men's club for artists and others interested in the arts, it brought painters, writers, musicians, and architects together

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{123} Currelly, \textit{I Brought the Ages Home}, 127-28.
\item \textsuperscript{124} Massey, Diary, 25 Feb. 1910.
\item \textsuperscript{125} Massey says he got to know Walker well through their common dealings at the Art Gallery of Toronto and the Royal Ontario Museum; "Postscript".
\item \textsuperscript{126} Massey, Diary, 2 July 1910.
\end{itemize}
with members of the business community. Massey visited the Club with Ralph Eden Smith, one of its founding members. He "met many weird geniuses", but found it "refreshing after the complacent Philistinism of most Toronto drawing-rooms". Later in the month he dined at the Club with member Henry Sproatt, a partner in the architectural firm commissioned to design Burwash Hall and Hart House. Massey described it as "a gloriously bohemian evening"; he decided to join the Club and was admitted in February.

The Arts and Letters Club, a breeding ground for the Toronto Symphony, the Mendelssohn Choir, the little theatre movement, and the Group of Seven, was seminal in Massey's expanding view of the arts. He met there many of the artists whose work he and Alice later collected, and ventured to comment: "[if] it had not been for their association with this Club, the Group of Seven would probably never have emerged." Through his association with the Club, Massey's interest in theatre developed into a lively hobby during the 1910s. Massey's friend Eden Smith was among those who were active in Toronto little theatre and belonged to the Arts and Letters Players; Massey was involved in at least one of its productions in 1917. Under the leadership of Roy

127 Massey, Diary, 10 Jan. 1911,
128 Massey, Diary, 24 Jan. 1911.
130 Peter Mellen, The Group of Seven (Toronto 1970), 18.
131 Massey, "V.M. on Art, Sculpture, Architecture", excerpt from "Postscript"; NAC, MFamP, V. 42.
132 According to Augustus Bridle's highly anecdotal account of the Club, Massey became keenly interested in both its musical and dramatic activities; The Story of the Club, 16.
133 Bissell, The Young Vincent Massey, 66.
Mitchell, also a Club charter member, the troupe had become what has been called "the foremost group in Toronto's amateur theatre" during the 1910s. Future Group of Seven member Lawren Harris, another founder, and Arthur Lismer, who had been involved in the Sheffield Little Theatre in England, were also active in the Club's dramatic efforts. The Club confined itself to performing plays that had not previously been produced in Canada and, in many respects, leaned towards the experimental, especially in set design. In 1911-12, planning began for an adequate theatre space for the Arts and Letters Players. Smith, an architect, designed "a most ingenious little theatre and art gallery combined." The project was abandoned with the outbreak of war, but resuscitated with the Club's removal to St. George's Hall, by which time Massey was Club president (1921-21). There a small stage was incorporated, designed by architect Henry Sproatt. According to Merrill Denison, however, the activities of the Arts and Letters Players were, to a significant degree,

134 Usmiani, "Roy Mitchell", 151.

135 Usmiani, "Roy Mitchell", 151; see also Hill, Group of Seven: Art for a Nation (Ottawa, 1995), 125.

136 Until then they had performed in the Club's quarters in the old Assize Court house on Adelaide Street.

137 Merrill Denison, "The Arts and Letters Players", Canadian Bookman, V. 2 (Feb. 1923), 32; at some stage, it appears that it was intended, although not realized, that this theatre/gallery would form part of the Studio Building, Toronto; the latter was financed primarily by Lawren Harris with assistance from Dr. James MacCallum in order to provide studio space for artists and opened for use at the beginning of 1914; Hill, The Group of Seven, 125.

138 A small permanent stage was incorporated at the new site, designed by architect Henry Sproatt; Saddlemyer and Plant, Later Stages, 267.
absorbed by Hart House at the end of the decade. Roy Mitchell became Hart House Theatre’s first director, and Harris and Lismer worked there side by side with Massey. Certainly the many relationships that Massey forged at the Club paved the way for the role that the fine arts were to play at Hart House.

Originally, there was little provision for the arts at Hart House, although, from the outset, Massey viewed the building’s architecture to be of the utmost significance. The Hart Massey Estate hired the Toronto firm Sproatt and Rolph, specialists in the Collegiate Gothic idiom, to design both the male residence at Victoria College, Burwash Hall, and Hart House. As far back as 1895, Hart Massey had indicated his preference for Gothic architecture, encouraging John Heyl Vincent to adopt the style for his Chautauqua Hall of Christ. Chester Massey, in his turn, appears to have favoured a Gothic style and, perhaps not coincidentally, to have been a reader of Ruskin. On the subject of Burwash Hall, Vincent Massey wrote in his diary in 1910: "The building is going to be charming -- Gothic in its very essence....Sproatt and Rolph are geniuses at this style of work". The extent to which Vincent Massey’s own reading of Ruskin on Gothic architecture had a bearing on the architectural style of the two University of Toronto buildings is mere conjecture -- Collegiate Gothic was certainly popular

139 Denison, "The Arts and Letter Players", 32; the Club did remain active during the 1920s, nonetheless; Saddlemyer and Plant, Later Stages, 267.

140 Vincent replied that he preferred a "Grecian" idiom; John Heyl Vincent to Hart Massey, 9 July 1895; MFamP, V. 4.

141 Among the books from the Massey collection at the Robertson Davies Library, Massey College is John Ruskin’s The Complete Works with Chester Massey’s bookplate.

142 Massey, Diary, 16 Feb. 1910.
during this period; but the moral and social import of Gothic art espoused by Ruskin surely did not escape either him or his father.\textsuperscript{143}

Some insight into Massey's view of architectural setting is gained from his comments about the interior design and decoration of the building. Acknowledging his wife's role in its furnishing, he stated: "Both she and I felt very strongly that although every effort should be made to give the building beauty and distinction, this did not imply an atmosphere of luxury. The latter is too often confused in the public mind with the former. Luxury is an enervating thing, beauty ennobling and invigorating....Most of the club rooms of Hart House are austere in character."\textsuperscript{144} He referred also to the "noble proportions" of the dining hall, the "Great Hall", as a means to counteract "sordid habits". Elsewhere he contrasted the behaviour of a group of schoolboys in "some unlovely basement dining-room" with the same students "in a dignified, well-proportioned hall, with lofty timbered roof and mullioned windows." In the latter setting, "their manners will improve and with their manners, the point of view of which manners are a natural expression." To his mind,
"physical environment is part of the equipment of education".\textsuperscript{145}

As Hart House moved towards completion, the building was modified to make greater accommodation for the fine arts. Only a music room was planned originally,\textsuperscript{146} but because construction slowed due to the War, it became possible to incorporate certain "afterthoughts". Once the roof was on and the building enclosed, Vincent and Alice Massey decided that the following additions were to be made: "the theatre and its adjoining equipment, the faculty union, the chapel and the sketch-room."\textsuperscript{147}

Not surprisingly, music found the most ready home at Hart House, in keeping with the Masseys' traditional support in this area, and more widely among Protestant Canadians. When a YMCA meeting in the music room called for a piano, the Massey Foundation purchased a concert grand on the condition that, if it were well used, it would remain a permanent gift.\textsuperscript{148} This initiative marked the beginning of a musical club, which held weekly recital/meetings on Wednesdays. At its second meeting, it resolved that "all music of the kind

\textsuperscript{145} Massey, "Address" (on Founder's Day, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Mass., 8 Nov. 1929; VMP, 45/5.

\textsuperscript{146} "Hart House" (brochure), undated (probably late 1920s); VMP, 109/02. Massey corrected Burgon Bickersteth’s misunderstanding that the music room was not part of the orginal plan: "You speak, by the way, of the music room and suggest that it was not originally planned for music. This is incorrect. The original idea of the room was that it should be used for music as is suggested by the character of the various stone corbels." Massey to Bickersteth, draft letter, Nov. 1928.

\textsuperscript{147} Massey to Burgon Bickersteth, draft letter, Nov. 1928.

\textsuperscript{148} The Massey Foundation also gave Hart House 4 medieval viols in 1932, according to Burgon Bickersteth; cited in Montagnes, An Uncommon Fellowship, 69-70.
known as 'ragtime' be excluded from the piano".¹⁴⁹

Underlying the music programming that developed at Hart House, from the Sunday evening recitals in the Great Hall to Friday recitals in the second floor music room, was an educational agenda. As Warden Burgon Bickersteth recounted with reference to the latter: "We avoided the word "educational" but the fact remains that these particular events did provide an opportunity to instruct the undergraduate informally in musical construction and history. I think of the brilliant recital Sir Ernest MacMillan gave on the architecture of music, playing Bach fugues and a Mozart sonata to illustrate his points."¹⁵⁰

The Music Room was also used on Sundays for what became known as the "songsters", informal choral evenings, led by oratorio singer Campbell McInnes.¹⁵¹ These, too, became an educational opportunity. McInnes divided the hundred or more participants into two groups antiphonally. Two pianos, the Steinway and the upright stood between them in the middle. The music was projected onto two screens and McInnes directed the singing, interspersing remarks about the music's history and author. As Bickersteth wrote: "It is not difficult to see what an immense influence this must have had on the

¹⁴⁹ Minutes, Hart House Music Committee, 3 Dec. 1919; HHA. The annual report of the Music Committee, 1921-22, stated that the acquisition of a new upright piano made it possible to spare the grand piano from "the pseudo-pianists of the House [who] satisfy the jazz craze"; HHA; my gratitude to Myra Emsley, Hart House Warden's Office, for bringing the latter reference to my attention.

¹⁵⁰ Bickersteth; quoted in Montagnes, An Uncommon Fellowship, 69.

¹⁵¹ McInnes, originally from England and divorced from novelist Enid Bagnold ("National Velvet"), was father of art historian/diplomat Graham McInnes and British novelist Colin McInnes.
undergraduates.

In support of its various musical endeavors, Hart House also built up a substantial reference collection of songbooks and slides.

Best known of the musical ventures associated with Hart House was the internationally renowned Hart House String Quartet, especially celebrated in the years between 1924 and 1934. Vincent Massey had a pivotal role in its formation and subsequent success. The Massey Foundation guaranteed the four musicians' salaries, in Massey's words, "as a contribution to the musical life of Canada".

Theatre also became a vigorous branch of the Hart House cultural milieu, despite being an afterthought. Massey explained in What's Past Is Prologue how the theatre came to exist physically. He and Alice were making one of their many visits to the Hart House site under construction. In the basement, beneath the quadrangle, was a huge, excavated, but unallocated space. "The roof rested on well-proportioned arches, and at one end, the flanking supports and beams joining them resembled the proscenium of a theatre. We said to each other in almost one breath, could this be a theatre?" The architects approved their idea to transform the space, which became a 500-seat theatre. Its realization was effected with advice from Roy Mitchell, who had gone to New York to study design but who returned to Canada in 1918 to become Director of Motion Pictures for the federal Department of Information. Technically, the theatre was one of the best-equipped on the continent, especially with

152 Bickersteth; in Montagnes, An Uncommon Fellowship, 70.
153 Bissell, The Young Vincent Massey, 70-73.
154 Massey to Hart House Theatre Board of Syndics, 22 Jan. 1926; VMP, 376/09.
respect to lighting,\textsuperscript{156} and included all the equipment necessary to make its own scenery, properties and costumes.\textsuperscript{157}

Hart House Theatre was not only an outgrowth of theatrical activity at the Arts and Letters Club, it was an extension of earlier, if limited, campus dramatics at the University of Toronto. Massey had become active in the Players' Club, formed in 1913, which mounted two productions in the dining-room of Victoria College's Burwash Hall. One author has stated that the Players Club began, in fact, as the Victoria College Players Club.\textsuperscript{158} It may be significant that its origins date to the beginning of Massey's tenure as Dean of Residence at Victoria College, despite his assertion that "Victoria was steeped in the Puritan tradition."\textsuperscript{159}

One of the two Players' Club productions performed in Burwash Hall was The Pigeon by John Galsworthy, directed and produced by Massey in early 1915, while he was the Club's President (see fig. 6).\textsuperscript{160} His brother, Raymond, by then an undergraduate at Victoria College, played the character Ferrard.

The Players' Club moved into Hart House upon its completion and ran the theatre briefly, but in 1921 the theatre was taken over by a House managing committee, known as the Board of Syndics, with Vincent Massey as chair, a post he

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{156} Renate Usmiani, "Roy Mitchell: Prophet in Our Past", Theatre History in Canada, V. VII, no. 2 (Fall 1987), 155.
\textsuperscript{157} Hart House Theatre: A Description of the Theatre and the Record of its First Nine Seasons, 1919-1928 (Toronto, 1928?). Alice and Vincent Massey were intimately involved in equipping the theatre; Saddlemyer and Plant, Later Stages, 266.
\textsuperscript{158} Lee, Love and Whiskey, 76.
\textsuperscript{159} Massey, What's Past Is Prologue, 42.
\textsuperscript{160} Hart House Theatre: A Description, 4-5.
\end{flushright}
kept until 1935.\textsuperscript{161} Alice Massey was one of the other three members. Sustained with assistance from the Massey Foundation, it was run as an independent repertory theatre, which aside from a professional director, several one-time professional actors, and one or two technicians, was operated by amateurs, many but not all from the university ranks. It later became a wholly university theatre.\textsuperscript{162} As with Hart House's musical programs, considerable emphasis was placed on educating the audience about theatre. When the Theatre launched its first program, each play was preceded by a lecture and talks on the nature and practice of drama.\textsuperscript{163} Beginning in 1923, the Theatre conducted a summer school for individuals interested in learning about directing amateur theatre.\textsuperscript{164}

The visual arts also found a home at Hart House. In 1917 a call to form a visual arts organization at the University of Toronto appeared in the student paper The Varsity. Vincent Massey responded by proposing that such a club have a place in Hart House.\textsuperscript{165} This was the beginning of the University of Toronto Sketch Club, later the Hart House Sketch Club. In 1921 its name was changed to the Sketch Committee, for it became a principle of Hart House that it not be home to exclusive clubs; the Sketch Club, therefore, became a standing

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{161} For details about Massey's involvement in Hart House Theatre, see Bissell, \textit{The Young Vincent Massey}, 62-69.
\item \textsuperscript{162} Massey, \textit{What's Past Is Prologue}, 60-61.
\item \textsuperscript{163} The Hart House Theatre 1922-23 season included a series of eight lectures, delivered at 5 p.m. Friday, preceding each production; Hart House Theatre "Program", 1922-23; UTA, HHP, A75-0009/051(09).
\item \textsuperscript{164} \textit{Hart House Theatre: A Description}, 17.
\item \textsuperscript{165} Jeremy Adamson, \textit{The Hart House Collection of Canadian Paintings} (Toronto, 1969), 11.
\end{itemize}
committee of the House. Each committee was made up of both faculty and elected students, the latter in the majority, and reported to the governing body of the House, the Board of Stewards. With an administrative structure conceived by Massey, Hart House was the first institution at the University with substantial student representation.

Only in 1938 did the Sketch Committee become the Art Committee. As Massey later explained: "The word 'art'... was carefully avoided at first....The fear that they might seem to be taking themselves too seriously led the beginners to use the modest term 'sketch', and the 'Sketch Committee' for years flourished under this title until the importance of its work brought about the adoption of a more precise, if challenging, word and the 'Art Committee' emerged."

A moving force of the Sketch Committee was renowned Goethe scholar Barker Fairley, its first chair and an enthusiast of Canadian art. The Committee carried on the series of modest exhibitions begun by the Sketch Club and offered informal art classes under C. W. Jefferys, Fred Brigden, and others. But it added a variety of other activities. Most significantly perhaps, in 1922, it began to purchase works of art, always Canadian, at the rate of usually two to four a year, with the result that it built up one of the premier collections of Canadian art in the country. Massey, Bickersteth, and Fairley steered the early art

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166 Bickersteth; cited in Montagnes, *An Uncommon Fellowship*, 52.


collecting of the Committee.  

In 1925, the House developed a formal collections policy, assisted by a group of advisors that included Bickersteth, Massey, Lawren Harris, Fairley, Professor H. Wasteneys (now Sketch Committee chair) and B. Richardson. They recommended that Hart House collect Canadian art, that the pictures be representative of the best Canadian work available, and that an advisory committee of three artists be formed to assist a subcommittee of the Sketch Committee in its purchases. Early acquisitions were made possible with funds from the Massey Foundation, but other sources were needed for the long term. In 1927, an endowment for the purchase of art was established by Massey’s friends, the Wrong family, who were keen supporters of the arts.

The Committee also mounted increasingly ambitious exhibitions; during the 1923-24 academic year it held solo shows of work by Tom Thomson, lent by Dr. James MacCallum, and Group of Seven member Lawren Harris. Meanwhile the sketch room, which had been "intended as a studio from the first", hosted an art course for the first time. Group of Seven member Fred Varley was hired as instructor and taught every Monday night for two hours. The classes were successful immediately. Bickersteth referred to the Hart House sketch room as "the only place in the


172 This effectively removed the art collecting function from the Sketch Committee’s responsibilities; minutes of an informal meeting in the Warden’s office, 18 May 1925 to discuss the future of the Sketch Committee; VMP, 376/12.


university where a novice in sketching and painting could begin operation". Massey reiterated this point in the late 1920s: "Until Hart House was built there had been practically no organised interest in the arts and certainly no activity in this sphere [the visual arts] of the informal nature which is often the most lasting in its effect."

The group of advisors who met in May 1925, Massey among them, also decided that "the holding of short lectures leading to a discussion on pictures, architecture, old silver, old jewelry, handicrafts in general, and heraldry, was an experiment worth trying". They planned to begin such a series before Christmas and, if successful, carry it on in the new year. Suggested speakers on the subject of "pictures" included Lawren Harris of the Group of Seven; Massey, now listed as a member of the Board of the National Gallery of Canada; Eric Brown, Director of the National Gallery; and J.E.H. MacDonald. The group also discussed the viability of Hart House publishing monographs on Canadian artists.

Moreover, in January 1926, the Sketch Committee decided to create a fund to purchase reproductions to illustrate the history of art. Several hundred reproductions were acquired and each month a small exhibition was created in the print room, a small space off the sketch room. According to Bickersteth, over three or four years, they covered the whole history of art from "the primitives" to the Barbizon school. In his view, "this plan was of great educational value, though I hesitate to use that word. The one thing we tried to avoid

177 Bickersteth; quoted in Montagnes, An Uncommon Fellowship, 62.

178 Massey to Burgon Bickersteth, draft letter, Nov. 1928.

179 While the lecture series presumably came to fruition, there is no evidence that any monographs were published; minutes of an informal meeting held in the Warden's office to discuss the future of the Sketch Committee, 18 May 1925; UTA, VMP, 376/12.
Hart House ever becoming, in the strict sense, was educational. Of course the House was educational in the broadest sense, but only as a side issue. "Education", "art", and "culture" appear to have constituted a triumverate of ill-favoured words.

Massey, himself, while increasingly supportive of the fine arts, long appeared ambivalent about his penchant for theatre and painting. In 1930, he remarked: "A grand assize would reveal each year more lawyers and bankers and doctors and manufacturers who would confess to the secret vice of painting, or, under the pressure of a search warrant, would reluctantly surrender a sonnet or a play composed in stealth." Despite the gentle sarcasm, his remarks indicate that his support of the fine arts continued to place him on the defensive. Admitting in his memoirs that Hart House Theatre had been his chief hobby in early adulthood, he referred to amateur acting as "an unusual recreation for a serious business man" and defended it as no "more frivolous or unbecoming than golf or shooting or yachting".

The reality was that, in the early years of Hart House, little recognition of the fine arts generally, formally or informally, was accorded by Canadian universities, although the University of Toronto's Extension Department offered some lectures in art history and art appreciation, and Victoria College had art appreciation study groups. As late as 1947, art critic Robert Ayre, in The Humanities in Canada, observed that the question of the extent to which fine art

180 Bickersteth; quoted in Montagnes, An Uncommon Fellowship, 56.

181 Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada".


183 "National Council of Education: Department of Art Appreciation" (typescript), n. d. (ca. 1930?; authored by Fred Ney most likely); VMP, 389/18.
(which he defined as visual art) should be incorporated into the university, while "perplexing educationists and artists in the United States" had "not greatly disturbed Canada."\textsuperscript{184}

While "Canadian Universities recognize music as an essential subject of education", for many, even this was a recent development.\textsuperscript{185}

Much of the impetus to foster the fine arts at the University of Toronto was, in fact, an outgrowth of developments at Hart House with the encouragement of Vincent Massey and his associates. As early as 1922, Massey had suggested including dramatics in the curricula of the university.\textsuperscript{186} However, attention focused initially on music. In the 1920s, the University had a Faculty of Music consisting of a Dean and four part-time lecturers, three cross-appointed to the Toronto Conservatory of Music. The Faculty, the Conservatory's parent body, did very little teaching itself, and in general, appears to have been singularly inactive.

In May 1926, in a bid for financial support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York for developing the musical life of the University of Toronto, Massey wrote: "We are most anxious to make an appointment to the University...[of] a Director of Music, who could co-ordinate and develop the various musical activities among the undergraduate body, particularly the Glee Club." He went on to explain that a beginning had been made at Hart House, and expressed the belief that if the right person could be found "the results on

\textsuperscript{184} Robert Ayre, "Fine Arts in Canadian Higher Education"; in Watson Kirkconnell and A.S.P. Woodhouse, eds., The Humanities in Canada (Ottawa, 1947), 220.

\textsuperscript{185} Arnold Walter, "Music in Canadian Higher Education"; in Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, The Humanities in Canada, 217.

\textsuperscript{186} Massey, "The Prospects of a Canadian Drama", Queen's Quarterly, V. XXX (Nov.-- Dec. 1922), 205.
music in this country would be very important". However, due to economic conditions, the University was unable to pay for the appointment. He added: "[m]usic, as you know, is too often regarded, by the powers that be, as a frill".187

The fine arts met with resistance in the university setting for the precise reason that Massey and his fellow commissioners griped about these subjects in the Methodist Commission report in 1921. They were considered technical and extra-curricular, rather than cultural in nature. But by 1926, Massey had overcome his prejudice against the fine arts in a formal setting, provided that they were taught as part of a general arts program, rather than isolated as purely technical or professional training. He was pleased to report to Carnegie that Sir Robert Falconer, President of the University, and Dr. A. S. Vogt, Principal of the Conservatory, also strongly supported the appointment of a specialist in music.188

In a subsequent letter to the Carnegie Corporation, Massey argued the case for the creation of a full professorship of music at the University of Toronto and wrote that Dr. Ernest MacMillan was the "right choice" for the position.189 MacMillan, who became one of Canada's most distinguished conductors and musical figures, had previously been employed by Hart House Theatre to compose and conduct music for its productions.190 However, it does not appear

187 Massey to Thomas W. Surette (Carnegie Corporation), 20 May 1926; VMP, 376/07.
188 Massey to Thomas W. Surette, 20 May 1926; VMP, 376/07.
189 Massey to Thomas W. Surette, 12 June 1926; VMP, 376/07.
that the position was created at this time.\textsuperscript{191}

The enhancement of musical life at the University of Toronto continued to be a subject of discussion at Hart House. In the spring of 1928, noting that the musical programs of the House had "encouraged the belief that students were attracted by good music", the Warden added that there were still severe shortcomings. There was no university orchestra, the Glee Club had died, and "little or nothing was being done in music among the women students".\textsuperscript{192} Bickersteth proposed a series of Hart House fellowships, whereby a young specialist in music would be appointed to guide and develop the musical life of the University. Bickersteth explained that Vincent Massey had suggested that such a person be made a fellow of Hart House. Massey wrote confidentially to MacMillan on the subject in 1928. On behalf of the Massey Foundation, Massey offered to pay $2,500 for three years for a director of music at Hart House, but recognized that this was not a sufficient salary for a well-qualified individual. He believed that the University of Toronto should make a contribution. "If the University is not sufficiently interested to pay $1,000 or $1,500 towards such an object, I am afraid the only conclusion to be derived is that the interest in such work is not great enough to warrant its success when established." He added, "I greatly hope that something can be done, if not this year, in 1929 at the latest."\textsuperscript{193} It was suggested further that a Fellow in Art be appointed; Group of Seven member Arthur

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{191} Later that year, after the death of Dr. Vogt, MacMillan became principal of the Conservatory and within a few months the Dean of Music at the University; Schabas, \textit{Sir Ernest MacMillan}, 73 and 77.
  \item \textsuperscript{192} Hart House Finance Committee Meeting Minutes, 26 Apr. 1928; HHA.
  \item \textsuperscript{193} Massey to Ernest MacMillan, 8 June, 1928; UTA, 109/06.
\end{itemize}
Lismer was named as a prospective candidate.\textsuperscript{194} The creation of other fellowships in the arts was also envisioned.

The proposal was greeted, however, with reservations; one member of the Board of Stewards thought that "the appointment of Fellows of Hart House might emperil [sic]...the voluntary and spontaneous co-operation among members of the University of all ranks: the name "Fellow" carried with it certain purely academic associations and suggested a positive educational role." While acknowledging that there was great interest in "the various experiments being carried on in music, art, religion, debating and other activities" at Hart House, other Board members were also reluctant to venture into a more than informal, voluntary relationship between staff and the House; the proposal appears to have been indefinitely postponed.\textsuperscript{195}

Meanwhile, Massey was active in plans to create a chair of fine art at the University of Toronto. The idea seems to have dated from 1928, a time when visual art was very modestly making its way onto the agenda of a few other Canadian universities. Walter Abell, with financial assistance from the Carnegie Corporation and other sources, established a lecture course in art history at Acadia University in 1928.\textsuperscript{196} Art was already being taught at the women's seminary affiliated with Acadia University.\textsuperscript{197} Similarly, Regina College and Mount Allison University, both part of the Methodist network of educational institutions, had taught art

\textsuperscript{194} Burgon Bickersteth, 19 April 1928; VMP, 109/06.

\textsuperscript{195} Hart House Board of Stewards, 204 Meeting Minutes, 26 Apr. 1928; HHA.

\textsuperscript{196} Tippett, Making Culture, 41.

\textsuperscript{197} Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, The Humanities in Canada, 222.
In 1928, Massey wrote to F. P. Keppel, President of the Carnegie Corporation, about support for the visual arts in Toronto. He explained that there was now an art school adjacent to the Art Gallery of Toronto, and that the School of Architecture at the University of Toronto had "in the last few years emerged from the domination of Engineering". Along with the Royal Ontario Museum and the Art Gallery of Toronto, these constituted "a very powerful engine in a responsive community for the promotion of the arts, both as regards achievement and popular interest." A chair of Fine Arts at the University would help galvanize the cause of the arts, he argued, but lack of funds had to date precluded its creation.

Subsequent correspondence reveals that the search was on for a suitable candidate. In 1931, W. G. Constable of the National Gallery, London, replied to Massey's inquiries, in the negative, saying "[w]hen the Courtauld Institute [of Art, London] gets going I hope we shall be able to offer a better choice." The matter dragged on. Eric Brown, Director of the National Gallery of Canada, corresponded with Massey about the position, which he regarded of utmost importance to art in Canada. In 1933, Constable wrote in confidence with the news that "a first-rate man seems likely to be available"; this proved to be none other than Herbert Read, rapidly

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198 See also Tippet, Making Culture, 38-39 and 40-41; and Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, The Humanities in Canada, 220-28.

199 Dating from 1921, the Ontario College of Art had its own building, the first in Canada devoted exclusively to art education; The Canadian Encyclopedia (Edmonton, 1988), 1577.

200 Massey to F. P. Keppel (Carnegie Corporation), 5 Oct. 1928; VMP, 15.

201 W. G. Constable to Massey; VMP, 28/6.

becoming one of Britain's most eminent art critics and theorists. Vincent Massey had to write back and report that the position was still in limbo. Finally in 1934 a Chair of Fine Arts was created with assistance from the Carnegie Corporation, and occupied first by arts scholar and well-known minor poet, John Alford. Bickersteth recounted that Alford spent the first couple of weeks in Toronto living at Hart House and soon commenced a series of informal five o'clock talks on art in the Hart House sketch room. Two years later, enrolment in a four-year honours Bachelor of Arts in fine art became possible at the University of Toronto. Art education, which had made inroads informally at the University first, now became a formal pursuit, and Hart House, a conduit for both.

It became Massey's life-long view that education gained informally was, indeed, the most lasting, and the inclusion of the arts at Hart House was very much a product of this outlook. As he stated in 1927: "A liberal education should give us the knowledge of how to live -- in leisure and in work. I think that the use of leisure is after all the most searching test of the educated man or woman." By the later 1920s, however, he had also become fully supportive of the integration of music and visual art into formal study at the highest levels of academia, demonstrated by his vigorous lobby to secure a chair in these two disciplines at the University of Toronto. In 1929 he was able to state: "The

203 W. G. Constable to Massey, 10 May 1933; VMP, 30/10.
204 Massey to W. G. Constable, 1 June, 1933; VMP, 30/10.
205 Montagnes, An Uncommon Fellowship, 61.
206 Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, The Humanities in Canada, 221.
207 Massey, "Address" (by the Canadian Minister to the United States at the commencement exercises, Swarthmore College, 6 June 1927); VMP, 46/23.
appreciation of art in all its forms, abstract and applied, is worthy of the attention of the university mind.\textsuperscript{208}

Massey's growing endorsement of the fine arts was facilitated not only by their alignment with education, but by a transformation in his understanding of the moral function of the fine arts. This he elaborated on in several statements during the 1920s. Increasingly he remarked upon the inadequacy of the Puritan view of the arts. In a 1922 essay, with some humour, he warned against using the theatre for didactic or propagandistic ends:

\begin{quote}
We are familiar with the morally elevating play that our fathers thought safe. ...plays to teach children the value of soap and fresh air; plays to teach farmers the importance of consolidated schools and the evils of scrub bulbs; and there are plays to aid home missions, or to stop cigarette smoking, to stimulate patriotism, and to do a number of things, in the interests of health or morals, for which the drama was not intended. Perhaps from our double foundation of Puritanism -- drawn from Scotland and New England and a strength in most respects -- we have derived a certain weakness for preaching. But the drama may be elevating without a trace of 'uplift'. A play must not point a moral and the plays which really give us the 'uplift' -- in the original sense of this degraded word -- are the plays which 'nourish the imagination'. The \textit{Beggar's Opera}, as its prologue says, contains not an honourable man nor an honest woman, yet with its sheer beauty of colour and music, and the clean wit of its satire its influence is incomparably finer than the most moral Sunday School pageant, in which a set of allegorical abstractions, called 'social service' and 'foreign missions' or what you will, ultimately overcome another set of allegorical abstractions labelled perhaps the "drink traffic" or "heathen religion".\textsuperscript{209}
\end{quote}

Here Massey wonderfully illuminates the transformation of Puritanism's moralism into post-Puritan 'uplift'. By this time, he had come to view Puritanism as the main enemy of the

\textsuperscript{208} Massey, "Address" (on Founder's Day, Mount Holyoke College).

\textsuperscript{209} Massey, "The Prospects of a Canadian Drama", 208-09.
arts; it either ignored them altogether or subverted them with moralistic pronouncements. In 1929, he referred to the Puritan's "half-confessed idea that ugliness is on the side of the angels". This theme preoccupied him again in a 1930 address when he spoke about North America's puritan forebears' and their suspicion of beauty. However, he remarked with interest that: "the Puritan, in the first blush of the reforming movement did not set his face against the beautiful. Cromwell's men may have broken painted glass and sculptured saint in their zeal, but Cromwell himself, as we know, loved music." He added: "A Puritan atmosphere lingered longer in North America than in Europe. A simpler life, relative poverty, and other causes kept our physical surroundings, for instance, comparatively austere. The 18th century, which to Europe meant elegance and urbanity, not without a touch of cynicism, brushed this continent but lightly."

Despite his view of Puritanism as the primary culprit in the suppression of beauty and art, he was still Puritanism's heir in his emphasis on "uplift". His distinction between moralizing and so-called true "uplift" resulted from various interventions. One was his endorsement of the role of criticism, for which he was indebted to Arnold. He often argued for the "intellectual detachment" that empowered one to make distinctions between good and bad art. He came to disdain moralizing art as sentimental and uncritical. What was truly ennobling about art was not only its beauty (art as beauty still had some currency in the 1920s), but the opportunity it gave to exercise one's powers of discrimination, to discern excellence, to transcend self-

210 Massey, "Address" (on Founder's Day, Mount Holyoke College).

211 Massey, "Address" (on Founder's Day, Mount Holyoke College).

212 Massey, "The Prospects of a Canadian Drama", 209.
interest and, thereby, serve the greater community.

In a speech dating from 1929 he argued that "our equipment for life" should include "an aesthetic conscience", what he called a balance between the intellect and the emotions. If one relies solely on intellect, he stated, one tends to "over-intellectualize"; if one relies solely on emotion, "the result is worse -- the sin of sentimentality.... The appeal of the arts must be jointly to mind and senses".213 The intellect provided a presumed impartiality, while the emotions and senses provided authenticity, a connection with life.

As Massey worked his way towards a moral foundation for art, one that accommodated the principle of disinterest, he perhaps paradoxically, strongly opposed divorcing art from life. Although valuing fine art, like the liberal arts, for their non-utilitarian and therefore disinterested nature, he also sought to wed art to the useful. He adamantly disagreed with those who viewed art as belonging to a rarefied sphere, as a law unto itself, or existing for art’s sake alone. While he saw the intellectual, and subsequently the artist, as a source of special insight and came to call the artist "the interpreter"214, he resisted the separation of the artist from the greater community.

Massey spoke repeatedly in favour of a reunification of art and utility, which for too long, in his view, had been divorced. In a college address in 1929, he stated:

Art is too often thought of only in relation to sonnets, symphonies and old masters, but the same principles are to be found in the streets and rooms we have to see hourly and in the tools of our everyday life. The concepts underlying a treatise on aesthetics are afterall, no different from those governing the design of a lampshade. The restriction of our sense of criticism

213 Massey, "Address" (on Founder’s Day, Mount Holyoke College).

214 Massey, On Being Canadian, 29-43.
to an occasional concert or art exhibition and the fleeting hour we grudgingly give to real literature, may well remind us of that kind of religion which is reserved for Sunday alone. Most human beings must find their aesthetic stimulus chiefly on the hoardings and in the newspaper or on the walls of whatever may be their home. We are influenced, after all, by what we see oftenest. This suggests to the trained aesthetic conscience its opportunity and its appropriate task. In a famous passage Milton says: "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and seeks her adversary"....This was written, or course, in terms of a moral issue. If we apply it to the world of art -- the fine arts and the applied arts as well -- it teaches its own lesson. If the university mind, sensitive to beauty and as discerning as sensitive, and above all possessed of a public spirit, which rejects the seclusion of cloistered beauty and sallies out to seek the adversaries of Philistinism and ugliness and sentimentality still to be found about us, there is no telling what victories it might still achieve.\footnote{Massey, "Address" (on Founder's Day, Mount Holyoke College).}

The subject of art in relation to community was gaining topicality in the late 1920s, and manifested itself in a variety of ways. "Art in Everyday Life" was the title of a lecture series proposed by the National Council of Education around 1930.\footnote{"National Council of Education: Dept. of Art Appreciation" (typescript), n. d. (c. 1930); VMP, 389/18.} According to Group of Seven member, Arthur Lismer, the idea that the artist "decorates life -- is the colourful mouthpiece of the upper classes -- has passed. He is nosing into all kinds of things....Town planning, educational schemes, printing, advertising, craftsmanship, architecture, office decoration, modern interior decoration of the home, industrial design, wherever the aesthetic question of choice of form and colour rises for solution."\footnote{Arthur Lismer, "Art Appreciation"; in Bertram Brooker, ed., \textit{Yearbook of the Arts in Canada, 1928-1929} (Toronto, 1929), 65-6.}
Lismer, like others in the public gallery and museum field, saw the art gallery "becoming a community idea in Canada, serving the public as a library, or a hospital, serves".\(^{218}\) The examples are countless, and may be seen in the context of a wide-ranging interest in the reunification of the arts and everyday life.\(^{219}\) It recalled George Vincent's condemnation of the rarification of culture and his plea for its unification with vocational training, and even the role of the arts at the Massey Manufacturing Company.

In an address to the American Federation of Arts on May 16, 1930, Massey spoke of "reconciliation" and "a re-marriage between the useful and the beautiful". He stated, sounding again like the Vincents (uncle and cousin): "It is an accepted axiom that the time is past when art can be regarded as a luxury of the few -- it must now be regarded as the necessity of the many."\(^{220}\) In a speech in 1930 to the Royal [Footnotes]

\(^{218}\) Lismer, "Art Appreciation, 61.

\(^{219}\) This was as far-ranging as the arts and crafts movement emanating from England from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, under the influence of Ruskin and William Morris, and the Bauhaus school in Germany during the 1920s and early 1930s; in the realm of art theory, John Dewey (1859-1952), philosopher and educator, was very influential in arguing grounds upon which such a reunification might be understood: "Works of art that are not remote from common life, that are widely enjoyed in a community, are signs of a unified collective life. But they are also marvelous aids in the creation of such a life"; *Art and Experience* (New York, 1934, rept. 1958), 81. Lismer, for example, was reading Dewey by 1928; Brooker, *Yearbook of the Arts in Canada, 1928-1929*, 60. Whether Massey was aware of Dewey's writing at this stage remains to be determined. He and Hilda Neatby corresponded about Dewey in the early 1950s; Massey to Neatby, 27 Oct. 1953; VMP. 585/07. Neatby regarded Dewey to be too egalitarian, *So Little for the Mind* (Toronto, 1953), 36 and 38.

\(^{220}\) Massey, "Address" (given to the American Federation of Arts", Washington, D. C., 16 May 1930); MFamP, V. 44, speech 53. "Art as a necessity" was a refrain that would echo throughout the first half of the twentieth century. It was a
Society of Canada, he challenged the propensity to relegate art to the sidelines: "we commonly think of it [art] as a commodity -- as something external -- as representing one side of life -- a hobby to be played with -- a subject for examination -- a superficial embellishment -- a sort of sociological cosmetic." He described the art of the recent past as emasculated by the divorce between art and utility (this emasculation he characterized as "a group of anaemic and angular maidens"). "Art had a place in Canada", he argued, "despite its population of "practical people" and this "a practical age". He compared the artist and the engineer, who shared a sense of poetry and the need for a "disciplined intelligence"; both discern "the 'unseen harmonies'".

Beyond Massey's emphasis on reintegrating art into the larger community was his awareness that art was a source of community. He seemed to understand this unity, in part, to reside in the principle of excellence. He trusted the search for quality as a means of transcending partisanship and divisiveness. In its eloquent capacity to unite, it shared a sacred mission. As artist Bertram Brooker wrote in 1929, art was first about exalting "the wholeness and the oneness of life", and, as such, was akin to the religious central notion in Wassily Kandinsky's Concerning the Spiritual in Art (1912); members of the Group of Seven employed the phrase (for example, Lismer, in Brooker, ed., Yearbook of the Arts in Canada, 1928-1929, 67. As late as 1948, Paul-Emile Borduas and his co-authors exclaimed in the artistic manifesto Le Refus Global: "Make way for necessities!"; quoted in Douglas Fetherling, Documents in Canadian Art (Peterborough, 1987), 121.

221 Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada".

222 Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada".
experience.223 "Human beings are separated by material things and united by the spiritual", Massey stated in 1930. "Art, after all, is a kingdom in itself, a unifying, not a dividing thing".224 For Massey to accord such stature to art testified to the significant transformation in this thought during the 1920s. Through its alignment with education and through the rearticulation of its moral and social functions, art had become a worthy ally in the cultural quest.

223 Brooker, Yearbook of the Arts in Canada, 1928-1929, 16-17.

224 Massey, "Address" (before the American Federation of Arts").
Chapter 4

Art and Nationality

"The swift development of Canadian painting is not only a story interesting to ourselves but it also has...[a] bearing on the large question of the relation between art and nationality", wrote Massey in 1948. By the late 1920s, he had fully awakened to the role that art might play in the forging of national community. This, in turn, solidified his commitment to the fine arts. His association with the Group of Seven, especially Lawren Harris, was instrumental in persuading Massey of the national and spiritual mission of art. Harris vigorously defended a national context for art, based on an alignment of creativity with diversity, and he argued for the co-existence of nationalism and internationalism.

While Massey also applauded the rise of internationalism, his years in Washington in the late 1920s heightened his

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1 Vincent Massey, On Being Canadian (Toronto/Vancouver, 1948), 34.

2 Earlier writing on art and nationality in Canada awaits thorough investigation. Of relevance is the role of the Governors-General the Marquis of Lorne and Lord Dufferin during the 1870s and 1880s. For an introduction to this earlier period in Canadian nationalism and its connections with painting, see Dennis Reid, "Our Own Country Canada": Being an Account of the National Aspirations of the Principal Landscape Artists in Montreal and Toronto (Ottawa, 1979), especially 274-295. The early activities of the Association of Canadian Clubs bear examination also; Nina L. Edwards has mentioned, for example, a paper by W. A. Sherwood, "The National Spirit in Art" given during the first year of the Canadian Club, 1893; The Story of the First Canadian Club Told on the Occasion of Its Diamond Jubilee, 1893-1953 (Hamilton, 1953), 13.
appreciation of the vulnerability of Canadian culture to the growing sphere of American influence. His Canadian nationalism deepening, he became intensely involved in a wide range of national projects during the late 1920s and early 1930s, from collecting Canadian art with his wife Alice, to working as a trustee of the National Gallery of Canada, to helping launch the Dominion Drama Festival, to joining in the bid for public broadcasting.

Massey's Canadian nationalism was of long duration, drawing upon a variety of sources. Not least was his Methodist heritage, already noted to have been a hotbed of nationalist sentiment. His nationalistic views were shared by his wife, Alice Parkin Massey, daughter of Imperial Federation advocate Sir George Parkin. The nation-making experience of World War I and Massey's stint as Canadian minister in Washington in 1927-1930 further strengthened his self-awareness as a Canadian. In his memoirs, Vincent Massey wrote: "From the United States where we had lived for three years and more, the character of Canada was easier to know, and with our knowledge grew our pride."\(^3\)

While Massey was Toronto-centric during his university days and beyond, he came to reckon with a national perspective as chair of the country-wide Methodist commission on schools in 1919-1921 and in his involvement with the National Council of Education during the early to mid-1920s. As has been observed, he was thoroughly committed to education as the engine of national character.

Massey first tackled the subject of the confluence of nation and art in print in 1922. In an essay about drama in Canada, he expressed deep concern over foreign domination of the Canadian stage. "In the theatrical world we are -- as I

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am afraid in some other things -- a province of New York."\(^4\)

Moreover, he was unhappy with the "Trans-Canada Theatre" scheme, which brought English theatre companies to tour in Canada. "This plan", he commented, "seems not unconnected with an all-British propaganda. I am not quarrelling with such propaganda, but propaganda and art do not harmonize. Little good will come of the substitution of one form of mediocrity for another."\(^5\)

Massey claimed that only twelve to fifteen Canadian plays had yet been produced, but held out hope for the 'little theatre' movement of amateur experimental drama, noting that there were now several well-organized community theatres in Canada. He singled out for particular praise the Orchard Players of the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia.

He wrestled with the notion of what makes drama Canadian. "Must the plays be by a Canadian? Must they be about Canada?" He acknowledged that Canadianism could not be prescribed -- "no standard set of virtues can be made to personify Canada". He wrote of "several Canadas" and noted that "there is little in common between the atmosphere of Maria Chapdelaine and Moose Jaw -- between a peasant farm in Northern Saskatchewan and commercial Montreal, between a Hudson Bay Post and an Ontario city....The forces of geography are too strong for the growth of a national drama in the strict sense." But he reflected that "it would be comforting, of course, to feel that whatever the diversities of material, a characteristic feeling, manner or style, was possible that could be called Canadian." Harking back to his conviction about the importance of character, he claimed that Canada's dramatists need only be "both good Canadians and good artists" for their

\(^4\) Massey, "The Prospects of a Canadian Drama", 197.
\(^5\) Massey, "The Prospects of a Canadian Drama", 198.
plays to have in them "the essence of Canada".\textsuperscript{6}

He cited the 'Algoma School' of painters (the Group of Seven) as having "something, almost indefinable, which can be called Canadian", and added, "a similar quality equally subtle will be characteristic of the Canadian drama".\textsuperscript{7} The Group of Seven, indeed, became a touchstone for Massey in his nationalizing agenda for the arts. Of all the arts, he believed painting pointed the way to something discernibly Canadian, and it increasingly absorbed his energies.

Massey's close friendship with Lawren Harris, arguably the Group of Seven's leader, dated from their university days.\textsuperscript{8} Harris (1885-1970) was about a year and a half older than Massey and outlived him by two years. Their lives ran parallel in many respects. Both came from a privileged and fervently religious background. Like Massey, Harris owed his financial independence to the Massey-Harris Company. Beginning in the summer of 1906, Massey socialized frequently with the "Harris boys, Lawren and Harold" -- tennis, boating, and swimming.\textsuperscript{9} On 2 October 1906, Massey saw Harris off on a journey to Berlin to study art.\textsuperscript{10}

Massey and Harris renewed their friendship at the Arts and Letters Club, where Harris, a founding member, was an

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{6} Massey, "The Prospects of a Canadian Drama", 206-7 and 212.
\item \textsuperscript{7} Massey, "The Prospects of a Canadian Drama", 207.
\item \textsuperscript{8} Massey, What's Past Is Prologue, 87.
\item \textsuperscript{9} Both attended St. Andrew's College, a Presbyterian boys' school that opened in Toronto in 1899; their enrolment overlapped for one year, 1903, but they did not get to know each other at that time.
\item \textsuperscript{10} Harris had enrolled as an undergraduate at the University of Toronto in 1903, but the following year left to study art in Berlin, where he had an uncle. He was home during the summer of 1906 and left again for overseas that fall, returning to Canada finally in 1908; Peter Larisey, "Chronology"; in Adamson, Lawren S. Harris, 14.
\end{itemize}
important link between his fellow artists and the business community. During World War I, the two men were allied in war duty; based at Hart House, an army headquarters, Lieutenant Harris reported to Lieutenant-Colonel Massey. The future theatre was used as a rifle range, set against a mock Belgian village in ruin designed by Harris. Massey and Harris were closely associated in the early years of Hart House Theatre, the latter designing sets; they also worked together on the Sketch Committee. Harris was as well a good friend of Harold Tovell. Arthur Lismer recorded in a sketch an evening in 1925 at the home of Ruth and Harold Tovell, at Dentonia Park, with Massey and Harris in attendance (fig. 9). Indeed, the two men socialized and conferred on art throughout their lives. Given their close working and personal relationship, it is hardly surprising that Harris' philosophy of art found a sympathetic audience in Massey.

The Group of Seven took its name and held its first exhibition in 1920 at the Art Gallery of Toronto. World War I had both temporarily dissipated the prospective Group's gathering momentum and yet fuelled Canadian nationalism. Writing in 1918, future member J. E. H. MacDonald linked support of the arts with patriotic duty: "the aim of patriotism is a full expression of the beneficent spirit of a particular people, and this expression is stunted without a native Art." MacDonald championed, for example, the Canadian artists who had participated in the Canadian War Memorials, created in late 1916 by Lord Beaverbrook to record the war effort, arguing that the War had increased "the

12 Siddall, The Prevailing Influence, 15 and 17.
13 Interview with Freeman and Rosita Tovell, 22 Nov. 1996.
14 J. E. H. MacDonald, "Art and Our Friend in Flanders", The Rebel, V. II, no. 5 (Feb. 1918), 186.
emotional interest of Canadians in their homeland". 15 Approximately 440 of the War Memorial works were exhibited at the Canadian National Exhibition's Fine Art Gallery in Toronto and at the Art Association of Montreal in 1919. Sir Edmund Walker exclaimed: "Apart from the war itself [it was]...one of the greatest events in Canadian history". 16

Art's relevance for Canadian nationalism was central to the Group of Seven's mission, as Lawren Harris' catalogue foreward for the Group's 1920 exhibition emphasized: "Art...interprets the spirit of a nation's growth", he wrote; "an Art must grow and flower in the land before the Country will be a real home for its people". 17

The theorist of the Group, Harris was unequivocal about the high mission of art and its importance for national-well-being. A. Y. Jackson wrote of his first acquaintance with Harris just before the War:

To Lawren Harris art was almost a mission. He believed that a country that ignored the arts left no record of itself worth preserving. He deplored our neglect of the artist in Canada and believed that we, a young vigorous people, who had pioneered in so many ways, should put the same spirit of adventure into our cultivation of the arts. With MacDonald, Lismer, Varley and others, whose acquaintance he had recently made, he believed that art in Canada should assume a more aggressive role, and he had exalted ideas about the place of the artist in the community. After the apathy of Montreal it was exciting

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to meet such a man.\textsuperscript{18}

Harris's views on art, spirituality, and nationalism reached a high degree of resolution in a variety of published statements during the 1920s. His writings were often quite esoteric, a quality that Massey would have shunned. Massey's remarks certainly disclose no interest in Harris's theosophical views, which became ever more dominant during the 1920s.\textsuperscript{19} Nonetheless, their outlooks shared several threads.\textsuperscript{20}

Harris tackled the subject of art and nationality squarely in an essay for the Yearbook of Canadian Art 1928-1929, entitled "Creative Art and Canada". He championed the creative function. He referred to it as spiritual, and saw it as central to Canada's future as a nation. He shared a sense that Canada was awakening to the creative forces in its midst, and that creativity was spreading to all facets of life. To a greater extent than Massey, he reserved the creative function for the artist, but he may have influenced Massey's view of the artist as a person of special insight. Harris believed "that creative life begins to stir in a people


\textsuperscript{19} Theosophy was a religion-cum-philosophy popular in the early 20th century that drew upon eastern and western sources in an effort to seek out an underlying unity. It relied heavily on colour and form symbolism, which had particular relevance for visual artists such as Harris. For Harris and Theosophy, see Ann Davis, The Logic of Ecstasy: Canadian Mystical Painting, 1920-1940 (Toronto/Buffalo/London, 1992).

\textsuperscript{20} Focussing on the relationship between Massey and Harris is not to minimize, of course, the role of like-minded individuals including Alice Massey, Barker Fairley, Edmund Walker, the Tovells, Eric Brown, as well as other members of the Group of Seven, who reinforced the preoccupation with visual art as an expression of national character during the 1920s.
faintly and hazily and almost unconsciously, and that it only
approaches precise expression through a few individuals who
respond to it vibrantly and who are also capable of
concentrating the diffuse spiritual force into new works.\textsuperscript{21}

Paralleling Massey, Harris explained that there was a
modern attitude towards creativity. "It amounts to a new
dispensation and a new conception of beauty and fitness and
meaning....The new attitude is nowhere moralistic, nor
dogmatically religious. Its possibilities of directness, of
candour, of clear seeing, even of spiritual realism, are far
greater than those of recent centuries." He believed that
"every creative individual, to the exact extent of his
capacity for rejuvenation, gives life to what he finds worthy
and leaves that which has the germ of decay in it to die.
This winnowing process goes on here and now amongst us, and is
creative of our future values." Harris saw the absence of
creativity as decay. For him, it was not education, but "an
unconquerable faith in the presence of the creative spirit"
that was his hope.\textsuperscript{22}

He promulgated a withering view of those who relied on
borrowed traditions, European "hand-me-downs": creativity and
true art were not about copying. As the artist broke free to
creative expression, so Canada must create itself. He invited
his reader to meet the challenge that Canada faced at this
moment: its self-creation. We "must create our own
background" he wrote elsewhere.\textsuperscript{23}

Harris was gripped by the adventure of "a new race
forming on this continent" and the vital role that Canadians

\textsuperscript{21} Lawren Harris, "Creative Art and Canada"; in Brooker,
Yearbook of the Arts in Canada, 1928-1929, 179.

\textsuperscript{22} Harris, "Creative Art and Canada", 180-81 and 184.

\textsuperscript{23} Lawren Harris, "Winning a Canadian Background", The
Canadian Bookman, V. V, no. 2 (Feb. 1923), 38; quoted in
Adamson, Lawren S. Harris, 137.
were playing in its development. Above all, he validated art as a product of local, rather than foreign, inspiration. He understood the wellspring of creativity to reside in diversity, understood as enviromental rather than ethnic. Indeed, for Harris, focus on the environment was a means of transcending ethnic difference. The artist must make "a thorough acquaintance" with all the forms of nature; "the almost endless diversity of individual presences in lakes, rivers, valleys, forests, rocklands, and habitations...[leads] him to feel the spirit that informs all these." For Harris, Canada's local character resided especially in its proximity to the North: "We live on the fringe of the great North...and its spiritual flow, its clarity, its replenishing power passes through us to the teeming people south of us". Indeed, he considered the spirit of the North to be "everything that is spontaneous or free or creative".  

While Massey did not view Canada's diversity in such exclusively environmental terms, he was touched by the rhetoric of the North. In a series of addresses dating from around 1930, he ventured to explore the role of art in society and its relevance for nationalism. Echoing the timing and the

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24 Harris, "Creative Art and Canada", 181-83 and 185. Associated with the vigour of Canada's perceived youthfulness and the manliness of reckoning with a formidable ruggedness, the mythology of the North in Canada was informed by a belief in the potency of the wilderness. It challenged the more traditional assumption that meaning came from civilization, that is, large metropolitan centres, and was probably indebted, at least indirectly, to the frontier thesis of Frederick Jackson Turner in the early 1890s, in response to the closing of the American frontier. Turner argued that the frontier was a source of renewal and vitality for American democracy. J. M. S. Careless has situated the frontier thesis in Canadian historiography; "Frontierism, Metropolitanism and Canadian History", The Canadian Historical Review, V. XXXV, no. 1 (Mar. 1954), 1-21. For the mythology of the North in Canada with reference to the visual arts, see, for example, Roald Nasgaard, The Mystic North: Symbolist Landscape Painting in Northern Europe and North America, 1890-1940 (Toronto, 1984); and Ann Davis, The Logic of Ecstasy.
title of Harris' essay, Massey spoke on "Art and Nationality in Canada" to the Royal Society of Canada in 1930. To an audience that included many scientists and engineers, he reflected upon the north from both a practical and artistic perspective. "Our northern wilderness is...the scene of this poetry of action with its great treasure hunt conducted from the sky, its railways nosing their way through the forest to northern oceans, the harness which is being thrown on rapid and water-fall". As well, "its legend and mystery...inform our literature and art with a spirit of its own." "These northern wilds", he enthused, "have cast the same spell over us as has the sea upon the life of England."\(^\text{25}\)

Most of all, Massey was invigorated by Harris' defense of the local. According to Massey, Harris emphasized the authenticity that came from direct experience and from placing "no limitation on emotional expression."\(^\text{26}\) Careful always to reject "self-conscious" nationalism, or the use of art to propagandize, Massey stated:

> Emotion and insight are needed to portray national character. Our painters were painting Canadian things before they produced Canadian pictures. These came when through an intense feeling for Canada, they developed a style appropriate to their task. They gave their canvases the colour which is evoked by our brilliant sun. They acquired a directness of statement and boldness of stroke and simplicity of temper which suggest Canadian traits.\(^\text{27}\)

The emphasis on local character, fortified by the alignment of creativity with diversity, was a persuasive defense of nationalism against the rising tide of internationalism. International forces were gaining ground at a time when Canada had not entirely shaken off its colonial

\(^{25}\text{Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada".}\)

\(^{26}\text{Massey, "Outline" (An Address to the Oxford Art Club, 7 Feb. 1939); MFamP, V. 44, speech 141.}\)

\(^{27}\text{Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada".}\)
past. Canada's regional character and demographic fragility rendered national unity more in the nature of a vision than a reality, especially when coupled with the hegemony of early globalization. Moreover, contemporary art theory conflated abstraction, internationalism, and the quest for a universal language. Those who viewed art as an expression of local or national character were placed on the defensive. Both Harris and Massey addressed the challenge by arguing for a marriage of nationalism and internationalism.

They readily conceded the abuses that were perpetrated in the name of nationalism. Harris suggested another word be substituted "with no combative or competitive implications", while Massey stated: "Nationality has been the excuse for deeds of violence and selfishness since nations were known...." (Both men had strong pacifistic tendencies.) Nevertheless, Harris argued:

Here we may find the solution to the seemingly opposing statements that 'there is no such thing as a national art' and on the other hand that all manifestations in art are of time, place and people. Both are true, for a paradox is not a contradiction....We can say then that the idiom, the emphasis, the garment of art in each age and with each people is the result of the awakened sense of the relationship of mankind, time and place, and that this is what we call national or immediate. And we may also say that the universal urge toward unity through infinite diversity and toward the consummation of understanding and love through infinite experience is of the spirit and that this is not immediate only, but eternal. The creative faculty is the means of communion between these two, the immediate and the eternal.

Massey, in turn, stated:

There are those...who say that art has no concern with nationality; that the only aim of the artist should be to produce good art. It can be argued that, as the

28 Harris, "Creative Art and Canada", 180.
29 Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada".
30 Harris, "Creative Art and Canada", 180.
international point of view gains strength in the world, as we hope and believe it will, it is less and less appropriate that the work of artists should emphasize national colour and this is a plausible thesis. But it surely requires little argument to refute that cosmopolitanism which regards nationality as an evil, and to demonstrate that the world has never suffered from this principle, but rather from its abuse. Nationality rightly understood surely provides the very pillars on which a sound internationalism can rest. Nations form the very framework of a coherent and integrated world.31

Of importance to both was the idea that nurturing the local/diverse was essential to the well-being of the larger, encompassing unit. In Harris’ words, "a people must become individualized before the universal can have any meaning. It must give life to its own particular attitude which depends upon the interplay of its time, its place on earth and its capacity....[The result] is what we call 'Nationality'...."32 For Harris, art was the link between the local and the universal, between diversity and unity.

For Massey, who understood the quest for unity as the ennoblement of life, diversity found a new validation, as the lifeblood of creativity. To those who argued against the fostering of Canadian arts and letters on the grounds that they were of little interest beyond Canada’s borders, he countered: "Our contribution to the world, whatever it is to be, will be true to ourselves and welcomed by others in direct proportion to its Canadianism. As we grow more conscious of our own past and our surroundings, we will produce...art which will be increasingly significant." He cited the "vast quarry in the folk-songs and chansons of French-Canada", the Indian music that was being (re)discovered, and the distinguished composers in Canada’s midst. "There...is an audience for them, not only in Canada but beyond her boundaries, interested

31 Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada".
32 Harris, "Creative Art and Canada", 180.
in proportion to the Canadian atmosphere which they have infused into their work." He spoke of art as a contribution to "our diversified national achievement" and the role of artists in lending "increasing richness to the orchestration of our life".\footnote{Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada".}

On one point, however, Massey vehemently disagreed with Harris and others of the Group and that was the role of the past. "We can, perhaps, accept no better definition of a nation than that of Renan,"\footnote{Joseph Ernest Renan (1823-92), French historian and philologist.} he proposed: "'Avoir fait des grandes choses ensemble, vouloir en faire encore, voilà la condition essentielle pour être un peuple.' The formula involves a recognition of the past and its influences. Of this, surely there can be no question."\footnote{Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada".}

On the role of the past, he took issue, for example, with the writings of Walt Whitman, an important source for Harris, and others of the Group and their circle.\footnote{Davis, The Logic of Ecstasy, 42-94.} He qualified Whitman's statement that "the direct trial of him who would be the greatest poet is today. If he does not flood himself with the immediate age...let him merge in the general run".\footnote{Massey had digested the contents of Bertram Brooker's Yearbook of the Arts in Canada, 1928-1929 before preparing this speech; many of his themes echo those made in this volume, and the passage that Massey quoted here from Whitman was specifically excerpted by Brooker as his introduction to the book.} Massey argued that to look forward only and not back was to rob the Canadian artist of a major source of inspiration. He accused Canadians of "lethargy" and "indifference" in relation to their past, and claimed that
they were "in little peril of an over-grown historical sense."
"The safe path to a national art lies, of course, through the increased consciousness of our environment -- of our geography as well as of our history." In short, his was a less radical view than Harris's, which sought to sweep away a repressive heritage viewed as heavily indebted to Europe. Massey, instead, summoned renewal through a deep imbibing of Canada's present and past.

Massey's knowledge of Canadian visual art broadening and his conviction about its national role deepening, he and Alice Massey became serious collectors of Canadian painting. Late in life, Massey claimed that pictures had always been "an obsession" and he acknowledged his wife's "keen instinct for paintings and a highly developed aesthetic sense." Their first Canadian acquisition was fourteen sketches by Tom Thomson, bought for $25 each, in 1918. Massey wrote in his memoirs that "Alice and I were captivated by what was happening in the world of art in Canada", and recalled: "I think our original inoculation, so to speak, took place when we had the privilege of choosing a number of Tom Thomson's sketches, shortly after his death. We spent nearly a day looking at the brilliant little panels that had been painted in the open, not as studies for larger paintings but as finished works in themselves. So began our collection of Canadian pictures."

38 Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada".
39 Massey, "V. M. on Art, Sculpture, Architecture".
40 Massey, "V. M. on Art, Sculpture, Architecture".
41 Massey, What's Past Is Prologue, 86. Alice and Vincent Massey corresponded on the acquisition while Vincent was in Ottawa on military duty in 1918. Vincent wrote: "I have put the Tom Thomson in the hall directly in front of me -- it's a wonderful thing. I love to think we can possess two or three
Tom Thomson, closely associated with the future Group of Seven, but never a member himself because of his untimely death, had drowned in Canoe Lake, Algonquin Park in July 1917. Dr. James MacCallum, a major supporter of Thomson and his colleagues, and then president of the Arts and Letters Club, hung a selection of paintings from Thomson's estate at the Club in December 1917, and subsequently at the Studio Building, where they were stored whilesold being off. It is most likely that Massey saw the Thomson works at the Club. The Masseys received many requests for loans from their collection over the years and were generous lenders. Perhaps the first occasion was a Thomson exhibition in February 1925 at Hart House, borrowed from several collectors, including Lawren Harris, to which the Masseys lent their fourteen sketches. So began their role in the canonization of the Group of Seven.

Another early foray into contemporary Canadian art occurred in 1920, when, through the efforts of Professor Barker Fairley, Group member Fred Varley was commissioned to

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of them"; Vincent to Alice Massey, 25 Feb. 1918; MFamP, V. 53. Alice wrote: "I have written to Dr. MacCallum asking if we [may have?] some more of T.T.'s pictures ...."; Alice to Vincent, 27 Feb. 1918; MFamP, V. 33. In a diary entry of Sat., 23 Mar. 1918, Massey noted he had spent a quiet evening enjoying the newly-acquired Thomson sketches.

42 According to Eric Brown, who visited the exhibition in April 1918, the lighting was terrible; Dennis Reid, Tom Thomson: The Jack Pine/Le pin (Masterpieces in the National Gallery of Canada, no. 5), (Ottawa, 1975), 31-2.

43 A. Y. Jackson thought there were about 145 Thomson sketches still left at the Studio Building in 1922; Harold Town and David Silcox, Tom Thomson: The Silence and the Storm (Toronto, 1977), 207.

44 Siddall, The Prevailing Influence, 39.
paint a portrait of Massey for Hart House (fig. 19). In the words of Fred Housser, who wrote the first monograph on the Group, the picture "was considered at the time it was done, the most modern piece of portraiture in the Dominion." The commission led to three other Massey portraits by Varley: of Chester Massey, dating from 1920 and also in Hart House (fig. 4); of Sir George Parkin, Alice Massey's father, 1921 (National Gallery of Canada), and of Alice, wearing a green shawl, dating from 1924-25 (fig. 12). Varley was none too pleased with his treatment from the senior Masseys. Hungry and poor, he recounted how on his last day of painting at their home, Chester Massey came and asked him to join them, not for something to eat, but for prayers.

Early private support for the Group of Seven remained in the hands of a tiny circle of collectors and was confined to small works and sketches. Not until the mid-twenties did their major canvases find a market. Collectors in Canada in the early part of the century had preferred imported art, in particular, paintings by The Hague and Barbizon schools, favourites of Chester Massey. Vincent and Alice Massey were influential in turning the tides of taste towards Canadian art, especially after their return from Washington in 1930, at which time their collecting escalated dramatically.

45 Christopher Varley, F. H. Varley: A Centennial Exhibition (Edmonton, 1981), 64.


47 Christian, George Grant, 378, n. 15.


50 An apparent anomaly in the Masseys' collecting was an interesting group of revolutionary posters and prints acquired by Massey during his trip to Russia in 1924; my gratitude to Vincent Tovell for bringing this collection to my attention.
supported Canadian art both as patrons and as practitioners. Massey maintained that the layman could be more than a patron of art: "for patronage we can substitute companionship". The Masseys tried their hands at sketching and painting, and encouraged others to do the same.

Even during his Washington years, at some remove from the art scene at home, Massey managed to promote the cause of Canadian art. He had taken up the appointment as Canada’s first minister to Washington in early 1927. After arranging for the purchase of a house for the Legation on Massachusetts Avenue, he set about securing art for its walls. He wrote to A. G. Doughty, Dominion Archivist, on 18 March 1927, inquiring about the loan of some prints of Canada from the Public Archives. He explained that he had been presented with some engravings of Quebec by the Belgian ambassador "and should hate to feel that the Belgian Embassy could out-do our own Archives in supplying a Canadian atmosphere to our Legation here." He also appealed to the Archives for the loan of one of its prizes, a portrait of Mohawk chief Joseph Brant by English artist George Romney of c. 1776, which had been acquired by the National Gallery in 1918, but was then in the custody of the Public Archives. He further recruited the assistance of Eric Brown, Director of the National Gallery of Canada, on whose board he now sat. Brown sent to Washington fifteen or so works, which included the Brant

It was gifted to the Art Gallery of Ontario by Hart Massey between 1982 and 1985.

51 Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada".

52 Alice Massey was instrumental in the choice of the property, according to Massey; What’s Past is Prologue, 130-31.

53 Massey to A. G. Doughty, 18 March 1927; VMP, 57/03.

54 Massey to the Secretary of State for Canada, 21 July 1927; VMP, 57/03.
portrait. Also in the shipment were a number of Group of Seven works owned by the Gallery or still in the hands of the artists and one or two owned by the Masseys.56

Massey also inquired about obtaining a "good reproduction of the famous picture by Robert Harris of the Fathers of Confederation" and a reproduction of a portrait of John A. Macdonald. He corresponded with Sir Robert Borden about his portrait for the same grouping. He apologized to McCurry for giving "so much trouble with regard to the decoration of the walls of this building, but the subject is not without its importance to Canada as I know you understand".57

The collection attracted considerable attention. In response to an inquiry from Emma H. Little of the New York Times, Massey explained that the pictures were practically all Canadian landscapes, some belonging to him and some to the National Gallery. He told her that he was "very much interested in the development of Canadian painting" and offered to show her the pictures and send any material that

55 Eric Brown to Massey, 2 Aug. 1927; VMP, 57/03.

56 According to a list in Massey's papers, "Canadian Legation Loan 1927-28, Washington, D. C.", the works were:
1. from the Masseys: A. Y. Jackson's Winter Road and Quebec Village, Winter (although there is a question mark beside the second one); 2. from the collection of the National Gallery of Canada: Franklin Carmichael, The Hilltop, Kriehoff, Indians Running a Rapid and Autumn Scenery, Ernest Lawson, Winter, Arthur Lismer, Big Rock, Bon Echo, Mabel May, Boats on the St. Lawrence, Morrice, La Britonne, Charles H. Shannon, Princess Patricia (the only non-Canadian work other than the Brant portrait), and Tom Thomson, Spring Ice; and 3. from the artists: A. J. Casson, Cool Weather, R. S. Hewton, Nude in Landscape, G. A. Kulmala, Sturgeon Lake, Winter, A. H. Robinson, Bend in the Road, and Anne Savage, April in the Laurentians; VMP, 57/03. On a separate crate list for the shipment the A. Y. Jackson, Winter Road was crossed off and the Shannon was not included.

57 Massey to H.O. McCurry, 27 Sept. 1927; VMP, 57/03.
might be helpful. The pictures also attracted the attention of *The Washington Post* in June 1929. While the article misled the reader into thinking that the entire group of works belonged to Vincent Massey (one suspects that Massey was not immune to self-aggrandizement), it provided some insights into the nature of the collection. Of those owned by the Masseys were a couple of portraits by R. S. Hewton, of the couple's sons, Hart and Lionel, and of Alice Massey. By this time, they had also acquired one or more works by A. Y. Jackson, who was represented at the Legation by several paintings. They were "mostly Quebec villages and scenes in Alaska" and drew "inspiration from the untrodden fields of the far North," according to columnist Ada Rainey who waded rather clumsily into the language of northern myth-making. The Masseys were to become good friends of Jackson and acquire a significant number of his works.

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58 Massey to Emma H. Little, 31 January 1928; VMP, 57/03.


60 They acquired one of their first works by Jackson, *Winter, Quebec* under rather unpleasant circumstances. The painting was included in a Group show in Ottawa in February 1928. Apparently unbeknownst to the Masseys, who viewed it and left a cheque for it, it had been sold by the artist to Elise Kingman of Montreal just before the exhibition opened. On the Masseys' behalf, McCurry wrote to Jackson, who, in turn, wrote to Kingman and asked her to relinquish the picture. McCurry wrote that Vincent Massey "is most anxious to have the picture as a permanent possession for the Legation. The Canadian Legation is a very important centre and the Canadian pictures there receive constant publicity of an unusually desirable kind and I feel that, as you suggest, it would be of considerable importance to the artist to have this particular picture there"; H. O. McCurry to Abner Kingman (Elise Kingman's brother), 5 Mar. 1928; NGC, Acc. file "A. Y. Jackson: Winter, Quebec". Aside from the apparent inaccuracy that the picture would be a "permanent Legation possession", there is a distastefulness about the pressure brought to bear on the Kingmans; whether it emanated from the Masseys (Alice
The Washington Post also mentioned and reproduced a major canvas by Lawren Harris, "Afternoon Sun, Lake Superior". Massey had written to Harris asking for some of his work for the Legation, since the Masseys then owned only one small sketch. Harris lent them a canvas for Washington, which they hung prominently and subsequently bought. Massey wrote to Harris: "You will be amused to hear that the more conservative picture-lovers, who look with misgiving on the work of Jackson, Lismer and Varley, look on your canvas with relief and pleasure because it has no 'new-fangled nonsense' about it." Massey was obviously pleased with the effect the collection was having, informing Harris that "the Canadian pictures here have been a great success and have attracted

or Vincent) or McCurry or both is unclear.

On another occasion, in 1934, the Masseys were careful not to be coercive. Alice Massey wrote to Jackson to revise an earlier request for him to approach Brooke Claxton and his wife about an Anne Savage picture. Learning of Alice's request, Vincent became worried that even making the inquiry put pressure on the Claxtons, who clearly treasured the picture, which was a view from their house; he asked that Alice withdraw the request; Alice Massey to A. Y. Jackson, 28 May 1934; VMP, 006.

61 Massey to Lawren Harris, 27 June 1928; VMP, 57/03. By 1928, the Masseys owned Harris' In the Ward, Toronto (fig. 17); later, they acquired three other works by him: Lake Superior I; Lake Superior II, and Iceberg, Smith Sound; Canadian Paintings, the Collection of the Hon. Vincent and Mrs. Massey (Toronto, 1934), cat. nos. 109-112.

62 Lawren Harris to Alice Massey, 28 Oct. 1929; VMP, 6; whether this was Afternoon Sun, Lake Superior is unclear. See also Massey to Harris, 27 June 1928; VMP, 57/03.

63 Massey to Lawren Harris, 10 April 1929; VMP, 57/03. Later, Massey had reservations about Harris' abstract paintings. "While I could see the beauty of movement and rhythm in some of the designs," he stated that he could "never quite enjoy them"; Massey, "V. M. on Art, Sculpture, Architecture"; in "Postscript".
much attention."64

Massey's tenure in Washington also introduced him to the possibilities of international cultural exchange. "Music and pictures and sculpture and all which they represent can provide an international language more expressive and more profound than any manufactured Esperanto."65 He applauded the sending of art exhibitions abroad, a practice that was still in its infancy, and praised American collector and benefactor Duncan Phillips for his recent comments promoting the role of native art in the foreign mission.66 "An internationalized embassy is, after all, a contradiction in terms", Massey asserted. "We can accept the artist as a true ambassador, and his product, whatever it may be, as a diplomatic language which can both express nationality and help to unite nations....Paradoxically enough, competition in such things as music and painting and sculpture and architecture means co-operation and collaboration too."67

Massey believed that if Canada were to fulfill its role as a nation, that is, to fully assume its nationhood, it must take its place among the community of nations. After his stay in Washington, Massey became very active in the Canadian Institute of International Affairs (CIIA), which was founded

64 Massey to Lawren Harris, 27 June 1928; VMP, 57/03.

65 Massey, "Address" (before the American Federation of Arts', 16 May 1930); MFamP, V. 44.


67 Massey, "Address" (to the American Federation of Arts").
in 1928 to carry out educational work from an international perspective. It was one of a host of international bodies that sprang up between the World Wars in the hope of fostering peaceful international exchange. It served its membership (drawn from business, the universities, journalism, members of Parliament, and trade union officials) primarily by bringing in speakers and publishing papers. It acted as a national unit of the Institute of Pacific Relations, founded in 1925, electing delegates to the parent organization’s biennial conferences. It also liaised with the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, created after World War I.

In the early 1930s, Massey became a major supporter of the CIIA, funding it through the Massey Foundation and assuming the presidency in 1934. As a Canadian delegate, Massey attended the 1931 Institute of Pacific Relations conference in Shanghai, where he emphasized the role of culture in international affairs: "Many observers may say, 'very pleasant to know a little more of Chinese philosophy, or Japanese art, very interesting to have a better knowledge of the remote political problems which agitate the Orient but

68 In 1933-34, its membership numbered 627; Canadian Institute of International Affairs, "Annual Report", 1933-34; VMP, 33/10.

69 Massey reported that three study group reports were being published in 1934: "Canadian Economic Policies' by Professor H. A. Innis; "Monetary Policy with Particular Reference to Canada", ed. by Mr. A. F. W. Plumptre; and "Canada and the Collective System"; Massey, "The Canadian Institute of International Affairs", 1934; VMP, 33/6.

70 Massey to chairman (unnamed), CIIA, 26 January 1932; VMP, 33/09.

71 It is unclear from Massey’s papers if he was elected or re-elected president in Feb. 1934. His term of office is not given; CIIA, "Annual Report", 1933-34; VMP, 33/10.
does it mean that we will sell any more lumber or wheat or fish or silver bullion?" He continued:

Is it too fantastic to suggest that we are under some obligation to know something of the civilization, the culture of these people in the Orient with whom we want to trade. We shall not be less effective as traders if we learn to respect their contribution to the world in all its aspects and earn their respect in return. It happens that the first men of business in China and Japan, as many here are, of course aware, are generally interested in literature and the arts as well as in trade returns. They do not indulge in a love of pictures or porcelain or poetry as something to be ashamed of but as a natural part of every day life and the better we are able to meet them in their widespread interests, the better we shall get along with them.  

As the Masseys' stay in Washington drew to a close in 1930, their commitment to collecting Canadian art intensified. Besides periodic visits home which helped them stay in touch with developments in the visual arts, both Lawren Harris and A. Y. Jackson kept them posted about exhibitions of contemporary Canadian art. The Masseys had relinquished their house on Queen’s Park Crescent in Toronto on their departure for Washington and decided to transform their country place, Batterwood, outside Port Hope, Ontario, into their primary residence. Meanwhile, Chester Massey's collection of art, so heavily weighted towards the modern Dutch and Barbizon fields, was disposed of by auction in 1928 with Vincent's and Raymond's blessing.  

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72 Massey, "Address on the 1931 biannual conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations in Shanghai" (to the CIIA, Toronto, 15 Jan. 1932); VMP, 41/20. In the same speech, Massey challenged Canada's racist immigration policy; he argued that restrictions on the attendance of Chinese students at Canada's universities and technical schools, the hindering of Chinese merchants, and the discouraging of Chinese tourists placed Canada in an unfavourable light as a trading partner with China.

73 The Jenkins' Gallery, Catalogue of Chester Massey's Collection.
summer of 1930, the Masseys settled into Batterwood and, over the next five years, built up the largest private collection of Canadian art in the country.

Immediately upon their return to Canada, Massey commissioned Jackson to make an oil sketch of a view from Batterwood as a birthday present for Alice (see figs. 14 and 15). He invited Jackson to spend a few days with them, adding: "What we should like most is to have the chance of some good long talks with you about pictures and other things in general." 74

Henceforth, Jackson and the Masseys were in frequent contact. The nationalistic sentiments they shared are evident in their correspondence about Jackson's 1930 arctic journey. Shortly after his stay at Batterwood, Jackson left on his second trip to the Arctic on the Beothic, a Department of the Interior ship supplying northern RCMP posts, that had been established to secure Canada's territorial claim to the Arctic. 75 He wrote to Massey about the upcoming trip: "I think we can put the Canadian Arctic on the map pretty definitely. We might even hold an exhibition in New York. It would be a very artistic way of letting the Americans know it is ours." 76 He asked Massey if he could do anything to facilitate Lawren Harris' accommodation on the ship. Massey contacted Charles Stewart, Minister of the Interior, suggesting "our north can be made better known...by the work

74 Massey to A. Y. Jackson, 4 June 1930; UTA, VMP, 6. Jackson did several sketches of the Batterwood property; two oils on panel by Jackson, Massey Gardens at Port Hope and Valley at Batterwood, both 1930, are in the collection of the National Gallery of Canada (acc. nos. 6939 and 15489).

75 Jackson, A Painter's Country, 96.

76 A. Y. Jackson to Massey, 31 May (1930); VMP, 006.
of painters who will use its scenery as their subjects."77 Harris made the journey and returned, according to Jackson, with "enough sketches to keep himself busy painting canvases for the next two years."78

Jackson was a tremendous organizer, like Harris, and seemed to have his finger on the pulse of virtually any art exhibition, on show or in the making. He kept the Masseys thoroughly posted. In early 1932, in reporting on the current Royal Canadian Academy of Arts exhibition in Ottawa, he singled out a Kathleen Morris entitled St. Sauveur, priced at only $150, as "about the best thing in the Academy....I thought it about the liveliest interpretation of a Quebec village I have seen." He relayed that "there is also a Jim [J. E. H.] MacDonald which I thought was sold years ago, a brook with [some] leaves floating on it, about the size of the Algoma canvas."79

For a 1932 exhibition at the Roerich Gallery, New York, Jackson wrote to borrow from the Masseys' growing collection, requesting Ludivine (fig. 22) by Edwin Holgate, now a member of the Group of Seven.80 The Masseys obliged. For the first exhibition of the Canadian Group of Painters, the Group of Seven's successor, in November 1933, at the Art Gallery of Toronto, Jackson appealed to the Masseys for a loan of one of his own canvases, Frieze of Spruce, which had never been exhibited because they had bought it right off the easel.81

77 Massey to Charles Stewart (Minister of the Interior), 6 June 1930; VMP, 006.

78 Added Jackson in 1958, "nowadays this country has become as remote as Wall Street. If a Canadian wishes to visit the Canadian Arctic, he has to get permission from Washington; A Painter's Country, 113.

79 A. Y. Jackson to Massey, 23 Jan. (1932); VMP, 6.

80 A. Y. Jackson to Massey, 23 Jan, 1932; VMP, 6.

81 A. Y. Jackson to Massey, 27 Sept. (1933); VMP, 006.
After the show, Jackson told them he was dissatisfied with the work and asked to replace it: "I like to think of your collection as being only the outstanding works by Canadian artists".82

Jackson also introduced the Masseys to the art scene in Montreal, where, he reported, the group was "perhaps more sure of their social position...while in Toronto I feel sometimes that art is only being used as a means of gaining social prestige." He observed that, whereas the Group of Seven were all males, now women were doing some of the most exciting work: "There was a remarkable example of it in our group show....Arthur Lismer and I thought it [Isabel McLaughlin’s ‘Grey Ghosts of Algonquin’] the most significant thing in the show. I wished it had gone to your collection....There is a kind of celestial feeling about Sarah Robertson’s work, just sheer beauty. Prudence Heward is better equipped technically than the others. Less imagination, but a deep sincerity and a fine intelligence."83

Alice Massey wrote back to say that "Vincent and I will be infinitely grateful if you will let us know from time to time when there is a picture that you think we ought to add to our gallery."84 Jackson reacted quickly. Within the week, he reported that he had arranged to have "a little silvery autumn canvas by Isabel McLaughlin" reserved at Scotts.85 Jackson also arranged to assemble a number of possible additions at the Art Gallery of Toronto. There were several Harris pictures, including three Arctic works, which Jackson marked first, second, and third choice, and a work entitled "Ontario, Hill Town" that Harris considered "one of his finest

82 A. Y. Jackson to Massey, 27 Apr. (1934); VMP, 6.
83 A. Y. Jackson to Alice Massey, 27 Apr. (1934); VMP, 6.
84 Alice Massey to A. Y. Jackson, 30 April 1934; VMP, 6.
85 A. Y. Jackson to Alice Massey, 6 May (1934); VMP, 6.
works"], but had always "hedged" about selling.  

Anne Savage’s *The Plough* and Jackson’s "Quebec Farm" were also in the group.

Vincent Massey wrote to Jackson about the resulting acquisitions: "‘The Plough’ has arrived and looks splendid on our wall....We have decided that the [Harris] canvas we like best is an early one, called "House in the Slums", painted I think in 1920. It is a charming study of a rough cast house in pinks and greys." Massey added: "We like the "Quebec Farm" more and more and more...."  

Later on, in 1935, in the wake of the break-up of Lawren Harris’s first marriage and his departure from Canada with Bess Housser, Jackson wrote more pessimistically of his "feeling that the great days are over". He continued: "We hear that Lawren and Bess are not coming back, and I have a feeling that I will be returning to Quebec before very long. The movement here is over. The ending has little of the glamour of the beginning."  

Meanwhile, the Masseys developed friendships with several other Canadian artists. Around the new year, 1934, they bought a controversial picture by the Montreal artist Lilias Torrance Newton, of a female nude wearing green slippers, that no one in Montreal would exhibit. How they knew about the picture is unclear, but the artist, discouraged by the ban and in "a state of almost hopeless despair", was thrilled. To the Masseys she wrote: "to have it all so splendidly

86 A. Y. Jackson to Massey, n. d. (July/Aug. 1934); VMP, 6.  
87 Massey to A. Y. Jackson, 10 Aug. 1934; VMP, 6.  
88 A. Y. Jackson to Alice Massey, 3 Mar. (1935); VMP, 6.  
89 A. Y. Jackson to Alice Massey, 27 April (1934); VMP, 6.
vindicated is wonderful." She believed their interest in her work had significantly improved her fortunes, and she looked forward to teaching at the reopened Art Association of Montreal school the following autumn. The Masseys subsequently commissioned Newton, primarily a portraitist, to paint their likenesses, and invited her to Batterwood during the summer of 1934. She wrote to thank them for the "happy summer" she had spent with them: "I feel enormously refreshed in mind and spirit. Please remember what loving interest will always follow you and the boys...." Other artists who spent time at the Masseys' Port Hope home during the summers of 1933 and 1934 in what has been called "the little art colony" were Pegi Nicol (after 1937, McLeod), who also designed sets for Hart House Theatre, and Will Ogilvie, whom the Masseys commissioned in 1935 to design and execute murals for Hart House chapel. Guests included as well violinist Harry Adaskin, soprano Frances James, and National Gallery of Canada director, Eric Brown and his wife, Maud, who wrote of their "refreshing" visits to Batterwood, often in the

90 Lilias Torrance Newton to Alice Massey, 17 Jan. 1934; VMP, 7.

91 Lilias Torrance Newton to Alice Massey, 30 Sept., 1934; VMP, 7.

92 Bissell, The Young Vincent Massey, 187.


94 The Masseys proposed the commission in Oct. 1934. It was authorized as an expenditure in the Massey Foundation meeting minutes, 12 April 1934; VMP, 106/07. Payments totalling $4000 were made to Ogilvie between 1935 and 1936. Massey bequeathed the studies for the chapel murals to Hart House; R. H. Hubbard, "Vincent Massey and the Arts"; in Vincent Massey Bequest: The Canadian Paintings (Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada, 1968), 7.
company of a small group of artists. 95

The artist with whom the Masseys had the most ambitious and problematic relationship was David Milne. Their efforts to promote his work in the name of bettering Canadian art went terribly awry. 96 Massey dated their introduction to Milne’s work to 1930 or 1931, shortly after their return from Washington. He recalled in his memoirs first seeing a painting by Milne with Alice in a show at “an art dealer’s shop in Toronto”. “Its subject was simple enough: a bunch of white flowers -- trilliums, I think, -- placed in some sort of jug on a window-sill, overlooking the roofs of a small town -- purple, green, the off-white of the trilliums, and throughout the canvas -- it was an oil -- masses of grey and even black strikingly and effectively employed.” 97 They promptly bought the picture, Window (fig. 23). Correspondence from Alice Massey indicates that while their first encounter with Milne’s work took place under somewhat different circumstances, the couple shared an immediate interest in his art. She wrote to Milne on 28 March 1932: “We have never met but my husband and I had the delight of discovering at the National Exhibition98 one of your pictures, and now it hangs in an honoured place in our dining-room. I cannot tell you what a delight it gives us


96 David Silcox has recently examined the Massey-Milne correspondence in some detail, providing many helpful insights; Painting Place, 250-61. Nevertheless, in sifting through the documentation, I believe that their complex relationship warrants review for the insights it yields into Massey’s nationalism.

97 Massey, What’s Past Is Prologue, 88.

98 Presumably the 7th Annual Exhibition of Canadian Art, organized by the National Gallery of Canada, 22 Jan. to 23 Feb., 1932 (cat. 198, “Window”).
-- it is full of a subtle charm that fascinated us from the moment we saw it." Enclosing a cheque for $175, she continued: "I hope some day that we may have the pleasure of meeting you."99

Milne subsequently approached them with a novel plan. In 1934, in dire financial straits, he wrote the Masseys a twenty-nine page letter, one of the most illuminating and lively documents in Canadian art history, outlining his development as an artist and his artistic concerns. He proposed that they acquire his entire unsold (it was mostly unsold) artistic output to date: "I have put a price of five dollars each on them, good or bad, as they come, possibly five thousand in all. This is purely arbitrary. It isn't large enough to have made their painting a profitable, or even possible, enterprise; yet it is enough to ensure years of continuous, undisturbed painting for the artist of simple tastes."100 It was arranged that Milne send the Masseys the works then in his possession (a large number were still in New York where Milne had lived during his early maturity). Lilias Torrance Newton was present at Batterwood when a trunkful of paintings by David Milne arrived in September 1934, "packed like tablenapkins".101 Alice Massey wrote to Milne to tell him what a "thrill" the works had given her husband and herself. "How they ought to be dealt with we do not as yet know. -- in some ways it is a difficult thing. We are thinking much about it. It was your idea that they should be

99 Alice Massey to David Milne, 28 Mar. 1932; VMP, 376/17.

100 The letter is paginated to number 26, but Milne added a "10B", and there is a covering memorandum of two pages. David Milne to Alice and Vincent Massey, 20 Aug. 1934; VMP, 585/01.

bought en masse."102

David Silcox has rightly emphasized the value that Milne placed on keeping his works together.103 Milne approached his works in a serial manner, exploring and developing an "aesthetic theme" through as many or more than a dozen paintings or etchings.104 A wonderful conception, the scheme he proposed rightly belonged in a museum setting. The Masseys sought the advice of H. O. McCurry, assistant director of the National Gallery. The works could have been subdivided by series perhaps, and only one or two series purchased for a domestic collection. But it was an incredibly ambitious undertaking for a private collector to assume responsibility for such a large and complex group of works. In the end, the Masseys agreed to take approximately 300 pieces, for which they agreed to pay $1500.105

What persuaded them to take this large number were probably several factors: they were sincerely trying to accommodate Milne's wish to divest himself of a large number of works; they knew that the remarkably advantageous price was dependent on their sale en masse; and they recognized that, as custodians of such a large body of exceptional work by a hitherto largely unknown artist, they were in a position to recover some or all of their original outlay for the works while, at the same time, furthering the cause of Canadian art.

102 Alice Massey to David Milne, 17 Sept., 1934; VMP, 376/17.

103 Silcox, Painting Place, 252f.

104 David Milne to Alice and Vincent Massey, 20 Aug. 1934; VMP, 585/09.

105 The 300 works were those Milne had sent, which constituted his entire production since returning to Canada in 1928 except for about a half dozen which he had sold before 1934, and about forty still in Buffalo, but not the New York group.
From the outset, as they made clear to Milne, they had no intention of keeping the works together. Enclosing the first of two payments of $750, Alice Massey explained that, after selecting some works for their collection and donating a few to public galleries, they proposed to arrange exhibitions in Toronto and Montreal: "Our intention is that as the pictures sell, whatever surplus there is over and above the original purchase price of the group we are buying from you (together with selling costs, framing, etc.) will be used to buy further examples of Canadian Art. It is of course right that you should have some share in the appreciated value of the canvases, and this I hope you will let us arrange." She also asked that they be given right of first refusal on future works.

Initially Milne found the exhibition proposal "startling", fearing that it would "demolish" his "pet theory of the interrelation of the pictures". Upon reflection, he changed his mind:

Now that I think it over, it doesn't, or needn't, at least for the period of the exhibition. Anyway the adventure sounds thrilling. The whole thing is surely a unique experiment in art patronage. You speak of my having a share in any appreciated value of the canvases. It was kind of you to think of it, but it isn't possible. It would be unfair to the enterprise, besides I am being fully and generously paid for the pictures, and that closes the transaction. If the pictures can be used to give other Canadian painters a chance it will be an additional pleasure to me....

With thanks, and best wishes for the further success of the enterprise in aid of Canadian painting.

The Masseys' correspondence with Milne makes it clear that they very much fancied they were advancing not only Milne's career, which was true, but the cause of Canadian art. Massey wrote: "Both my wife and I are very glad that you

106 Alice Massey to David Milne, 3 Oct. 1934; VMP, 376/17.
107 David Milne to Alice Massey, 10 Oct. 1934; MFamP, V. 34.
approve of the plan which we have for the pictures. The exhibition of your canvases, I have no doubt at all, will greatly increase the existing interest in Canadian art." He introduced Milne to Donald Buchanan, recently of the staff of *Saturday Night* and the recipient of a scholarship from the Carnegie Foundation for studying painting and gallery and museum operations, who had "a real flair" for writing about art. While acknowledging Milne's dislike of fanfare, Massey argued that "some dignified publicity" was an essential accompaniment to the Toronto and Montreal exhibitions, and that "in the general cause of Canadian art", it would be beneficial for Buchanan to write about Milne's work. He added: "I feel sure that there will be a widespread interest in your painting when the public has a chance to see it."^{108}

Buchanan visited Milne at Six Mile Lake in the Muskoka area, where the artist had recently moved. Living humbly in a small cabin, he introduced Buchanan to the rewards of roughing it; they canoed, and slept on a bed of moss in the open air. Milne was delighted with his new acquaintance, the first of many that developed out of the Masseys' support: "I think I said I found Mr. Buchanan interesting. That is too mild. He has the makings of what Canada should pray for, if it is to have any widespread culture -- an appreciator and critic with an aesthetic point of view -- and that is of more value than a score of artists."^{109} Buchanan wrote a brochure essay in preparation for the exhibitions and an article on Milne for *Saturday Night* and *Canadian Forum*.^{110} Buchanan also alerted Alice Massey to the fact that Milne

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108 Massey to David Milne, Oct. 13, 1934; VMP, 376/17.

109 David Milne to Alice Massey, 28 Oct. 1934; VMP, 376/17.

could afford little reading material; this she determined to remedy by sending him material selected from "the great many books and papers" that came into their home owing to her husband's work.\textsuperscript{111}

Alice Massey kept Milne apprised of plans for exhibitions, the first of which was slated for 20 November to 8 December, 1934, at Mellors Fine Arts Limited, a private gallery in Toronto. Sending Milne a copy of Buchanan's pamphlet, she promised to honour as much as possible Milne's suggestions for the picture's hanging.\textsuperscript{112} Once it had opened, she wrote excitedly: "You cannot think how exceedingly well the show is going. I will send you some clippings. The effect of it all, I am perfectly sure, will be cumulative, and it is only the beginning. There were 100 or more people on the first day in at Mellors.\textsuperscript{113} Milne wrote to affirm his endorsement of the project: "From my point of view it is all fine. I hope it will be a success, at least that it will produce something to launch the second half of the unusual plan you have in mind, that there will be something toward the purchase of pictures by other Canadian painters."\textsuperscript{114}

After the exhibition, 135 Milne works were placed by the Masseys on consignment with Mellors, who was to be "exclusive agency for David B. Milne's pictures until May 31st, 1935." Mellors set out several conditions that were very favourable to his gallery; he was to deduct the costs for framing, stretchers, insurance, transportation, commissions to other than members of the firm, advertising, and incidentals, and

\textsuperscript{111} She sent Milne copies of The Studio magazine, a newly-published three-volume collection of Vincent Van Gogh's letters for Christmas, 1935, and periodic other gifts; Alice Massey to David Milne, 11 Dec. 1935; MFamP, V. 34.

\textsuperscript{112} Alice Massey to David Milne, 5 Nov. 1934; VMP, 376/17.

\textsuperscript{113} Alice Massey to David Milne, 29 Nov. 1934; VMP, 376/17.

\textsuperscript{114} David Milne to Alice Massey, 28 Nov. 1934; VMP, 376/17.
then split the remaining proceeds evenly with the Masseys.\textsuperscript{115} From subsequent accounting, it appears that this arrangement was followed, and was renewed in a letter of September 10, 1936.\textsuperscript{116}

Meanwhile, in early 1935, Massey wrote to H. S. (Harry) Southam, Chair of the Board of the National Gallery of Canada, with the plan to donate some Milnes to the Gallery, which he noted had "a very fine collection of Milne’s watercolours done under the War Records scheme, but nothing as yet illustrating his work in oil."\textsuperscript{117} The Masseys gave three Milnes to the Gallery at this time.\textsuperscript{118}

They also turned their attention to extending their association with Milne. Alice Massey wrote again in March, 1935: "I have been thinking a lot in connection with any future work you may do. I think our arrangement was that we should have the opportunity of seeing anything that you turn out. The organizing of the Exhibitions has been quite a problem, but I cannot tell you how happy we are that people are beginning to know you. It strikes me that it would be better for you for us to have a clear understanding as to what we should plan for the future. Will you think out some sort of business arrangement that we can make for a year or so[?]"\textsuperscript{119}

However, no clear business arrangement with Milne was defined, and all parties waded into what became an almost

\textsuperscript{115} R. Mellors to Massey, 10 Dec. 1934; VMP, 386. G. Blair Laing stated that the Gallery had no verbal or written contract with Milne or the Masseys between 1934 and 1938; G. Blair Laing, \textit{Memories of an Art Dealer} (Toronto, 1979), 60.

\textsuperscript{116} Robert Mellors to Massey, 10 Sept. 1936; MFamP, v. 34.

\textsuperscript{117} Massey to H. S. Southam, 6 Mar. 1935; VMP, 4.

\textsuperscript{118} Silcox, \textit{Painting Place}, 11.

\textsuperscript{119} Alice Massey to David Milne, 2 Mar. 1935; VMP, 376/17.
insoluble muddle. It appears that the Massey-Mellors agreement was extended beyond the Milne works owned by the Masseys to include new works that they did not own, but in which they assumed a proprietorial interest. The Mellors Gallery did, indeed, lump the two groups of paintings together. Milne was not a signatory to any arrangement with Mellors, and apparently remained in the dark for some considerable time about the exact nature of the Massey-Mellors relationship. Meanwhile Mellors and the Masseys arranged exhibitions of his work, Mellors sent small sums from the proceeds of sales to the Masseys, much of it applied against the original purchase price of $1500, and Alice Massey sent modest sums to Milne, alternatively referred to as advances by Milne and payments by Alice Massey.

As remarkable as the fact that the Masseys and Mellors treated the two groups of paintings as one, which seems to have been a mixture of gross presumption and ineptitude, is the fact that Milne sent new works to Mellors for exhibition, despite no contractual agreement himself with Mellors, apparently trusting that through the benevolent patronage of the Masseys he would receive due payment. In the wake of a visit with the Masseys in 1935, Milne did partially endorse the arrangement in a letter to Alice Massey, on a temporary basis at least, when he wrote: "Your information about sales and exhibitions and finances was a little bit of a shock. I have always clung to the idea that sometime the pictures would have a market value, but it never occurred to me that they might sell without producing a surplus. It was disappointing to learn that after all the time and thought and enthusiasm

120 W. M. O'Conner wrote that in a recent meeting "Mr. Laing of Mellors Galleries explained that they had regarded all Mr. Milne's paintings as part of the contract with you and naturally had not made any attempt to keep a detailed schedule of expenses on any one or group of Mr. Milne's paintings"; W. M. O'Conner to Massey, 1 Nov. 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
the Masseys have given, the picture fund was still a minus quantity....Of course to continue the price arrangement we made for the accumulation [ie. $5 a piece] and apply it to current painting could be no more than an emergency plan to get the fund on its feet; it would soon produce a crash in Six Mile Lake...."121

In other words, Milne does acknowledge, if only in the short term, the involvement of his new pictures in the Massey's fund to buy other art. In a later letter to Alice, he went so far as to say: "I suggested that these pictures be used to try to get the fund on its feet, but I never did understand very clearly about the fund -- I was just tagging along. At first I thought it was a very ambitious plan for the encouragement of Canadian art in general -- by purchases and sales from an ever renewing fund. Later, something either Mr. [or]...Mrs. Massey said made me think it was concerned only with my pictures....Anyway, I was dropping that year's work into the pot hoping to make it boil over to the great delight of all of us and to some profit for myself."122 Increasingly, however, as he realized how little this arrangement was yielding him financially, he became desperate. After all, his entire output of new paintings was going to Mellors and this was his only source of income. And, as he wrote to Alice Massey in early 1938, he turned fifty-six that January.

Vincent Massey claimed afterwards that Milne was apprised of the arrangements with Mellors.123 Whether or not this was accurate, the question remains: why would Milne have conceded management of his new pictures to the Masseys when

121 David Milne to Alice Massey, 17 Oct. 1935; VMP, 376/17.
122 David Milne to Alice Massey, 24 Feb. 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
123 Massey to W. M. O'Connor, 20 September, 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
they had not bought them? The fund Milne referred to, which was initially envisaged by the Masseys to be an accumulation of revenue from the resale of the original 300 works, made no sense applied to new, unpaid for works. Why would Milne agree to have his new pictures sold to support a fund to buy other artists' work, especially when he was so close to being broke himself? How either the Masseys or Milne thought this was a viable plan is hard to fathom, and yet, it would seem, they both played a role in its making.

The matter climaxed in 1938. In January, while attending an exhibition of his works at Mellors, Milne apparently twigged to the financial arrangement between Mellors and the Masseys. As he put it in a letter to Alice Massey: "[if Mellors are guaranteed [expenses]...and then a commission, they would be taking no chance at all and, unless there were phenomenal sales, there wouldn't be anything much for the painter." In short, he wrote: "Mellors appears to be profiting too much from the arrangement." Alice Massey wrote to Mellors and attempted to get the matter sorted out, but without success. Meanwhile Milne was reaching a state of extreme distress. On August 28, 1938, he wrote:

124 To confuse the matter further, the Masseys evidently did believe that they had, indeed, bought a second allotment of 65 pictures from Milne in 1935 for $250, which would amount to less than $5 a piece; Massey to W. M. O'Connar, 20 September, 1938; MFamP, V. 34. Alice Massey made the same assumption in a letter to Milne when she referred to "the second lot" being purchases; Alice Massey to David Milne, 30 Nov. 1937; MFamP, V. 34. To Milne's mind the money he was paid for this second lot was merely an advance; as he said, the favourable pricing of their original deal of $5 per work was hardly sustainable from his standpoint. Milne eventually relinquished claim to this second group, ostensibly as the path of least resistance. Massey did concede that subsequent works, from the years after 1935, were clearly owned by Milne and were wrongfully grouped together with the Massey works; Massey to W. M. O'Connor, 6 Oct. 1938; same archival source as above.

125 David Milne to Alice Massey, 25 Jan. 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
Occasionally the cabin has failed me and I have felt a strong desire to walk out on it, to leave the clock ticking, the kettle [brewing?] on the stove, the pails full of water, the pictures lying in their usual place, everything just as it is, not to close the door -- not to look back, or ever think of it again, or remember anything connected with it. Simply to go, to make an end. With no feeling except relief. Clean, free and new, as a snake may feel when it crawls out of its own skin.

I have something of that feeling about the Mellors picture situation, no particular ill-will or criticism, not much feeling of any kind. Just a strong desire to end the complicated situation, to ask no more about it, to think no more about [it], to abandon the unsold pictures and to look for nothing from those sold, to call the last few years a dead loss so far as any material return for the by-products of painting is concerned, and to start over with nothing, but with no entanglements from the past.¹²⁶

Not until Milne put the matter in the hands of a lawyer, Miss V. Parsons, was ownership of the various pictures finally resolved. In the fall of 1938, Milne received restitution from the Masseys for the sale revenue he was owed: a grand total of $354.67.

Despite this unfortunate turn of events in the Massey-Milne relationship, there is evidence of much good intention. The Masseys had taken a sizeable risk on an unknown artist with their initial purchase of his work. As Vincent Massey stated, it was their aim "to popularise the work of an artist in whom we believe",¹²⁷ and they did much to this end. Alice Massey spent considerable time and effort in aid of exhibitions of Milne's work, in Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal, especially before she and her husband left for England in late 1935. There was also a Milne exhibition installed in the foyer of Massey Hall in early 1938, which Milne reported to

¹²⁶ David Milne to Alice Massey, 28 Aug. 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
¹²⁷ Massey to the National Trust Company Ltd., 20 Sept. 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
Alice had "been of interest to a good many people." In London, where they hung Milnes throughout their Hyde Park Gardens home, along with works by other Canadian artists, Alice Massey was also intent upon organizing an exhibition of his work. She reported on "how very keen people who have come to the house are about the pictures. Mr. Constable, the head of the Courtauld Institute, was most enthusiastic about them, and many other casual visitors. Today I have one of the art dealers coming to see our whole collection, and will let you know at some later time his reaction to yours." While fielding the idea of a London exhibition of his work, she sought to reassure him: "My feeling is, don't become obsessed by what you call 'exhibition pressure'; just paint with no exhibition in mind and then let us, who love your work, get exhibition-minded if we want to." Later she wrote from London to report on sales and exhibition plans, and wondered: "How we are going to get this whole thing going on a good business basis I don't know -- the suggestions must really come from you. I do feel that I am a help in getting them across and I want to continue to be."

The Masseys' encouragement must have meant a good deal to Milne. Time and again they expressed their esteem for his work and their desire to promote it. David Milne and Alice Massey, in particular, shared what appears to have been a genuine affection. Alice wrote with concern in April 1936: "I wonder if you refused to show with the group in Toronto? If they didn't ask you I am furious -- still it doesn't

128 David Milne to Alice Massey, 11 Feb. 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
129 Memo, Mar. 1937; MFamP, V. 34; some Milnes were also hung in the Oxford rooms of their two sons, Lionel and Hart.
130 Alice Massey to David Milne, 29 April 1936; MFamP, V. 34.
131 Alice Massey to David Milne, 17 Feb. 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
matter. We know where you stand and what your pictures mean." Milne wrote to her on a variety of subjects, not only about his art, but his immediate environment: "Last night I woke up several times hearing the rattling of ice in the hard court. This is one of the nice Canadian sounds -- we have a lot of nice sounds and sights and smells, not much art or literature or music or creative effort of any kind but lots of geography and weather".133

Alice Massey obviously treasured his letters and from London in late 1937 she wrote: "You little know how I miss the letters you used to write...[] I really long for a touch of your woods in the midst of our black fogs and our very exacting life here. They always bring me a breath of fresh air from the country I love and from an atmosphere in which my heart is."134 "Do write as often as you can", she urged him, "and continue to take care of yourself, and paint, paint, paint[,] there are few people like you."135

The Masseys' enthusiastic efforts on Milne's behalf certainly widened his circle of support. In late 1935, he visited Hart House and was introduced to art activities and various art-minded individuals at the University; his work began to be exhibited there in 1936. By January 1936 his works had been purchased by such collectors as W. C. Laidlaw, J. S. McLean, and Gerald Larkin, the Canadian Legation in Paris, and Alan Flaunt, among a host of others. J. S. McLean, founder and president of Canada Packers, credited Vincent Massey's example with his own commitment to collect Canadian art, which would ultimately cover the walls of his

132 Alice Massey to David Milne, 29 Apr. 1936; MFamP, V. 34.
133 David Milne to Alice Massey, 24 Feb. 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
134 Alice Massey to David Milne, 27 Jan. 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
135 Alice Massey to David Milne, 17 Feb. 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
company offices. At an exhibition at Mellors in January 1938, Milne had a parade of visitors: Globe and Mail columnist Pearl McCarthy, Arthur Lismer (a first meeting), a Miss Proctor from The Varsity, Barker Fairley, A. Y. Jackson (whom he had met many years before), Bob Hunter, assistant to the curator of the Art Gallery of Toronto, and Douglas Duncan and Alan Jarvis, of the Picture Loan Society, founded in 1936.

Without doubt the Masseys helped Milne to forge important future relationships in aid of his art. They recognized that they were in a position to activate the market for his work, through exhibitions, introductions, publicity, and documentation of his art (Alice Massey referred to a clippings file she was keeping as well as a list of purchasers of Milne’s work). But most of all they were driven by a commitment to "aid the enterprise of Canadian art". Even their relationship with Mellors was tinged with this ambition. Alice wrote to Robert Mellors: "Have you seen Mr. Eric Brown or Mr. McCurry? Both were interested in my suggestion that you should become an agent for Canadian work". As early as 1932, Vincent Massey had been one of those interested in establishing a commercial gallery of Canadian art in Toronto specializing in the work of the Group and their circle.

The Massey-Milne experiment in art patronage, hare-brained as it may have been, and, perhaps in the minds of some, downright abusive in its lack of sensitivity to Milne's financial realities, starts to make some sense when it is understood as part of a mission to further Canadian art. Earlier successes in art patronage had emboldened the Masseys


137 Alice Massey to Robert Mellors, 11 Dec. 1935; MFamP, V. 34.

138 Charles S. Band to Massey, 3 Nov. 1932 and Massey to Band; VMP, 389/17.
to attempt this new scheme. Even Milne's unfathomable 'tagging along' with the plan was, in part, driven by the prospect of participating in this benevolent fund to further Canadian art. The problem was that while the fund worked to recover the Masseys' initial investment, it did little to further Milne's financial well-being. And it nowhere approached being of aid to other artists. In short, it was a dismal failure. The whole affair may speak as much as anything to the pitiful, often desperate, state of artists' finances (then and now) in Canada. Even the members of the Group of Seven, who by the 1930s had become Canada's most acclaimed artists, could not survive on income from painting, with the exception of A. Y. Jackson, a frugal bachelor. Harris was financially independent; the others had to rely on teaching or commercial art.

Milne also came to be critical of the very emphasis that the Masseys placed on exhibiting his work, again perhaps unwilling to accept the bind of economic reality. In his correspondence with Alice Massey in the late summer of 1938, he lamented the fact that he was no longer as free to work in a trial-and-error fashion. Because he now had to assume that each picture was intended for exhibition, and he was afraid that early trial works would diminish the value of more resolved pieces, he tended to work and rework the same composition. As he clearly seemed to realize at this stage, his preferred method of working in series made his art most at home in a museum setting.  

Despite its shortcomings, this unique experiment in art patronage ended amicably enough. Vincent Massey was eager to right matters, once they were in the hands of lawyers. In receipt of an accounting of Mellors' Milne transactions,

139 Hill, The Group of Seven, 18.
140 David Milne to Alice Massey, 28 Aug. 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
Massey wrote to W. M. O'Connor of the National Trust Company: "This statement makes quite clear that pictures belonging to Milne have been treated in the same way as have pictures belonging to my wife and myself. He should, of course, have received all the proceeds of such sales, and the statement confirms my fear that this had not been done." Milne also took exception to the expenses Mellors had charged against his pictures, and alleged that Mellors had sold them at disadvantageously low prices, in accord with the deflated prices of the Massey acquisition. Massey took full responsibility for recompensing Milne for any charges the artist considered unjust. To O'Connor, Massey added: "I may say that Milne is a very fine character. My wife and I are fond of him personally. He is the soul of fairness and honour....We are very anxious to maintain his friendship and deal with the matter generously and constructively."  

Milne, in 1939, wrote a conciliatory letter to the Masseys: "Among my few good qualities I do claim a capacity for forgetting, for blotting out what has been unpleasant. I hope the same applies to the Masseys." He, nevertheless, remained guarded in response to the Masseys' proposal to exhibit his work at the Leicester Galleries in London that year. In his view there were not enough new oils to warrant a London show. Careful to distance himself, he added that, should they wish to pursue it, they could contact Douglas Duncan, who now had all his pictures.

The Masseys' mounting support of Canadian painting, which played no small part in its recognition, climaxed in an

141 Massey to W. M. O'Connor, 6 Oct. 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
142 Massey to W. M. O'Connor, 20 Sept. 1938; MFamP, V. 34.
143 David Milne to Vincent and Alice Massey, 6 May 1939; VMP, 376/16.
exhibition of their collection at the Art Gallery of Toronto at the end of 1934. Alice Massey wrote excitedly that the pictures were leaving for the Grange (part of the Gallery) on November 29.\textsuperscript{144} To Milne, she added: "The show of this little collection of ours will, I think, give an impetus to Canadian Art."\textsuperscript{145} The exhibit of approximately 125 works was on display in three galleries for the month of December.\textsuperscript{146} With the exceptions of a painting by Cornelius Krieghoff and some early French-Canadian carvings, the works all dated from the twentieth century.

In addition to the Masseys' fourteen Thomson sketches, which one reviewer called "the most important group of Tom Thomsons outside of art galleries",\textsuperscript{147} there were four works by Lawren Harris, including two Lake Superior pieces and one of his Toronto 'Ward' pictures on panel; close to a dozen by A. Y. Jackson, as well as works by other Group of Seven members J. E. H. MacDonald, Arthur Lismer, Fred Varley (including his profile portrait of Alice Massey), Arthur Lismer, Frank Johnson, Lionel Lemoine Fitzgerald, and Edwin Holgate. Milne was represented by nine oils (which Alice Massey told him "we especially love")\textsuperscript{148} and three watercolours. James Wilson Morrice, Marc-Aurèle Fortin, and Albert Robinson, from Quebec, were also represented, as was British Columbian Emily Carr. In addition, a host of works by

\textsuperscript{144} Alice Massey to Will Ogilvie, 29 Nov. 1939; VMP, 106/07.
\textsuperscript{145} Alice Massey to David Milne, 29 Nov. 1934; VMP, 376/17.
\textsuperscript{146} The exhibition catalogue, Canadian Paintings. The Collection of the Hon. Vincent and Mrs. Massey (Toronto, 1934) listed a total of 134 works (nos. 100 through 232 including number 207a), although a contents list for insurance purposes listed 132 works; AGOA, Ex. File.
\textsuperscript{147} "Notable Collection of Canadian Paintings", Canadian Homes and Gardens, V. 12, no. 1-2 (Jan./Feb. 1935), 20.
\textsuperscript{148} Alice Massey to David Milne, 29 Nov. 1934; VMP, 376/17.
a new generation of Canadian painters reflected the greater presence of women among professional artists: three pieces by Lilias Torrance Newton, including her portraits of Vincent and Alice Massey; close to a dozen works by Pegi Nicol; and single works by Mabel Lockerby, Isabel McLaughlin, Mabel May, and Kathleen Morris, Anne Savage, Sarah Robertson and Ethel Seath.

The exhibition was greeted with considerable enthusiasm. A review in Canadian Homes and Gardens opened by bemoaning the continued preference among Canadian collectors for foreign rather than local art "in spite of the fact that in the past twenty-five years Canadian art has become lusty, articulate, confident, that it has had something to say and a particularized method of saying it...." But circumstances were changing, it acknowledged, pointing to the Masseys' leadership in the collecting of modern Canadian art. The article declared: "There isn’t a dull or uncovetable picture in the whole collection, and they are all Canadian."\(^{149}\)

Pearl McCarthy in the Mail and Empire wrote: "the thrilling thing about his [Vincent Massey's] collection -- and thrilling is not too strong -- is the astuteness of the buying."\(^{150}\) Augustus Bridle commented in the Toronto Daily Star: "There are citizens in Toronto who have spent more on a few old masters than the Masseys did on their whole show. But in all Canada there is no other home with so many Canadian pictures and so few foreign ones as at Batterwood House near Port Hope." He claimed that Massey viewed painting as Canada's "most indigenous creation", while also being supportive of architecture, plays and music.\(^{151}\)

\(^{149}\) "Notable Collection of Canadian Paintings", Canadian Homes and Gardens, 20.

\(^{150}\) Pearl McCarthy, Mail and Empire, Toronto, 7 Dec. 1934; VMP, 5.

\(^{151}\) Augustus Bridle, "Massey's Canadiana Feature at Gallery", Toronto Daily Star, 7 Dec. 1934; VMP, 5.
One component of the exhibition that reviewers did not tend to mention and an apparent anomaly among so many modern works were several nineteenth-century French-Canadian carvings, including Oval Panel with Angel's Head by François and Thomas Baillairgé, an altarpiece of the Last Supper by Jean-Baptiste Côté, and an anonymous tabernacle door. The inclusion of these works in the collection, nonetheless, points to one of the primary historicizing initiatives that flowed from Canadian nationalism of the period.

In their acquisition of early Quebec sculpture, the Masseys relied upon anthropologist Dr. Marius Barbeau, who had been documenting French Canadian sculpture and folk music on behalf of the Geological Survey of Canada. He also helped to organize a series of major folklore festivals; with the crash of 1929, interest in regional and folk art would gain momentum.

Massey and Barbeau may have first made contact in connection with a celebration of Canada's Diamond Jubilee, a 'Canadian Week', held in New York City under the patronage of Canada's Governor-General Lord Willingdon and the Canadian Minister to the United States, Vincent Massey, in October, 1927. Films were shown which gave "a few glimpses" of "the French Canadian Folk Song Festival at Quebec in May, 1927, of the Highland Gathering and Scotch Music Festival at Banff in September of this year, and of the Indians of the Totem Pole land", organized under the auspices of the Canadian government. Massey and Barbeau subsequently corresponded in early 1928 when Massey required information about Canadian

152 For a brief but helpful overview, see René Villeneuve, Baroque to Neo-Classical Sculpture in Quebec (Ottawa, 1997), 18-21.

153 "Canadian Week" (pamphlet), New York (Oct. 1927); VMP, 51.
folksongs for a public address, and Barbeau sought Massey's support for "A Concert of Canadian Music". The concert was held initially in Ottawa in April, 1929, but Barbeau wanted it to travel, and Massey agreed wholeheartedly that it should be repeated. He encouraged Barbeau's liaison with Graham Spry and the Association of Canadian Clubs.

In late December 1928, in response to an inquiry from H. O. McCurry of the National Gallery of Canada on the Masseys' behalf, Barbeau wrote that there were several carvings and statues by Quebec artists which might be of interest to them, and their acquisitions appear to date from this occasion. The Masseys became lenders to the Exhibition of Traditional Arts of French Canada, which opened 4 January 1935 at the Art Gallery of Toronto, organized by Barbeau with assistance from the National Gallery. The exhibition stood as "a revelation to the people of Toronto of the historical background of French Canada".

The December 1934 exhibition of the Masseys' Canadian collection at the Art Gallery of Toronto was shown in conjunction with Contemporary Paintings by Artists of the United States. It was felt that Canadians were not well enough acquainted with "the trends and accomplishments of the

154 Massey to Marius Barbeau, 11 Jan., 1928, and Barbeau to Massey, 11 Jan., 1928; VMP, 51.

155 Marius Barbeau to Massey, 14 Feb. 1929 and Massey to Barbeau, 21 Feb. 1929; VMP, 51.

156 Barbeau had also organized Painting, Sculpture, and Wood Carving of French Canada, an exhibition shown with the 1926 Group of Seven exhibition at the Art Gallery of Toronto; Villeneuve, Baroque to Neo-Classical Sculpture in Quebec, 20.

157 Martin Baldwin to Massey, 16 January 1935; VMP, 5.
art of its nearest neighbours...." The exhibition was a result of a collaboration between the National Gallery’s trustees (including Massey) and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, with which Massey made connections while in Washington. The project may also be seen in the context of the closer ties between Canada and the United States generally in the inter-war years and their corresponding isolationism from Europe. Among the leading American artists represented were Thomas Hart Benton, Charles Burchfield, Stuart Davies, Charles Demuth, William Glackens, Marsden Hartley, Edward Hopper, Rockwell Kent and Canadian-born Ernest Lawson.

The Masseys had seen the show in Ottawa where it opened and in Alice’s opinion there was "no comparison between what the Americans are doing and the really lovely work of Canadians...." In a letter to Alice, David Milne recorded his reactions to the two exhibitions. He considered the American show strong technically but complained:

These are not composers, they are musicians....

158 Eric Brown, "Foreward"; in Contemporary Paintings by Artists of the United States, Canadian Paintings, the Collection of Hon. Vincent and Mrs. Massey; and in the Print Room Scissors Cuts by Rene Kulbach (Toronto, 1934). (It was not unusual for catalogues for more than one exhibition to be published together in one volume).

159 Massey’s contact with the Carnegie Corporation, in fact, went back to at least early 1923. W. S. Learned of the Corporation wrote that he was trying to gather information on organizations engaged in similar work to its own. An exchange of information about their two foundations followed; Learned to Massey, 4 Feb. 1923; Massey to Learned, 22 Mar. 1923, and Learned to Massey, 27 Mar. 1923; VMP, 384/04.

160 One product of this continentalism was a series of conferences on Canadian-American affairs, sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation beginning in 1935. The final one, in Kingston in 1941, coincided with a seminal conference of Canadian artists, "the Kingston Conference".

161 Alice Massey to David Milne, 29 Nov. 1935; VMP, 376/17.
Cezanne is God and we are his prophets, and no one could ask [for] more appreciative and enthusiastic disciples. I don't see much sign here of any one hammering at things for himself, trying, failing, once in a while seeing just a glimmer of something no one else had ever seen. Perhaps the selecting committee left those things out, the uniformity of the show suggests it.... A mellow, competent, delightful show. I remember no better exhibition of American art. But the one great thing -- creative courage -- if it is here, I missed it.

He considered the difference between the American and Canadian shows to be "startling":

The Canadian is more difficult and you will get lots of fighting. Do you like that? I'll admit low tastes -- once in a while I get tired of harmony and enjoy an out and out dog fight in art.... The little green Morrice, done when he forgot about everything except the thrill of the thing. The little Jackson with the road to the village.... Here rhythm [sic] wasn't a formula, it was pure joy. Harris at his most aggressive, the woman from B. C. [Emily Carr]....

Perhaps the most exciting moment for me was when I saw the watercolors -- my own. I had skated through the American section in joy and harmony, but when I came to these -- even though they were familiar enough -- I was stopped dead -- someone had sanded the ice.... I am not sure that they don't give the key to the collection -- drive for one thing and overlook everything else to get it.

I hope this splendid exhibition may be seen outside of Toronto; nothing could be more stimulating to art appreciation in Canada.162

The Masseys continued to collect Canadian art for another couple of years but, with their departure for England in 1935, their acquisitions dwindled to a few works.163 While they

162 David Milne to Alice Massey, Dec. 1934; VMP, 376/17.

163 For example, they bought two works by Carl Schaefer in Dec. 1936; H. O. McCurry to Carl Schaefer, 10 Dec. 1936; NGCA, 9.2M Trustees: Vincent Massey, file 1. Vincent Massey bought a canvas by Alexander Bercovitch of Montreal as a gift for his wife in May 1936; H. O. McCurry, 6 May 1936; NGCA 9.2M Trustees: Vincent Massey, file 1. See also Hubbard, Vincent Massey Bequest. Upon Vincent Massey’s death in 1967, 101 Canadian works from his collection were bequeathed to the National Gallery of Canada, including twenty-seven Milnes.
remained active promoters of Canadian art, their collecting turned increasingly towards modern British painting. Nonetheless, especially during the late 1920s and early through mid-1930s, their collecting played a significant role in the promotion of Canadian art. They demonstrated a considerable responsiveness to emerging artists, and those who worked in a diversity of idioms. They were very supportive not only of the Group of Seven, and David Milne, but to many of the young women artists who were struggling to establish themselves professionally during the rigours of the depression years.

Meanwhile, Massey's involvement as an art museum trustee deepened. His relationship with the Art Gallery of Toronto, where his father had had a lengthy affiliation, dated from 1913.\textsuperscript{164} By 1924 he was chair of the Building Committee when plans were being made for a major Gallery expansion.\textsuperscript{165} On 26 May 1925, Massey spoke at the laying of the new building's cornerstone. Thanking the city of Toronto and private benefactors for their contributions in excess of $282,000 at a time of "commercial depression", he made a favourite point: "we have come to realise that it is under the rigours of hard times when we most need the inspiration which can be derived from intangible things such as painting and the sister arts." He suggested that "in painting, perhaps

\textsuperscript{164} In 1915, Massey was elected to fill a vacancy created by the death of Edmund Morris on the Collections and Exhibitions Committee; Michael Macaulay (for Finlay), "An incomplete list of the executive members of the Art Museum/Gallery of Toronto, 1900-1966", 1987; AGOA.

\textsuperscript{165} He recommended, for example, that Lawren Harris be consulted by the architects, Darling and Pearson, regarding the lighting of the new gallery space. C. B. Cleveland, of Darling and Pearson, to Massey, 24 Nov. 1924; VMP, 32-33.
first of the arts, Canada is finding herself."

Upon commencement of his appointment to Washington in 1927, Massey attempted to resign his position on the Art Gallery of Toronto's building committee, but was persuaded to serve during 1927, and then accepted the title of honorary president. Intermittently he acted in various capacities for the Art Gallery of Toronto, especially during his appointment as High Commissioner in London from 1935 to 1946 (chapter 5). The main focus of his activities as art museum trustee in Canada, however, was the National Gallery of Canada.

In 1925 Massey was appointed a National Gallery trustee by the Mackenzie King government, a position he held until 1952, when he became Governor-General. He worked closely with Eric Brown, who had been appointed the Gallery's first curator in 1910 and director in 1912 and who remained in that position until his death in 1939. Brown had very definite views on the role of art in relation to nationality. In the Gallery's first annual report in 1921, he stated: "there never was a great nation that had not a great art....Art is one of the most spontaneous forms of individual or national idealism which exists. Money spent wisely on it returns a thousandfold in the education of public taste and elevation of national character." Brown viewed the hard economic times in 1933 as an "extremely opportune, if not unique [occasion] ...for presenting this gospel [the promotion of

166 Massey, "Address at the Laying of the Corner Stone of the New Buildings of the Art Gallery of Toronto" (Toronto, 26 May 1925); MFamP, V. 43, speech no. 15.

167 Bissell discusses briefly the political circumstances that led to Massey's appointment as a trustee; The Young Vincent Massey, 181.

Brown and Massey sustained a close association, professionally and personally until Brown's death, each undoubtedly strengthening the other's zealous support of Canadian art. However, their emphasis was slightly different. Rarely did Massey talk about the "elevation" of national character -- more commonly it was the revelation of national character; nor did he rely on the rhetoric of national glory to sell his ideology. For Massey, the development of national character involved resisting the uniformity of cosmopolitanism and preserving the vitality of diversity.

Taking up his appointment as trustee in 1925, Vincent Massey fell heir to the controversy that surrounded the Gallery's role in the 1924 British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, England. Opinion was strongly divided on which artists should represent Canada and how the selection was to be made. Basically it boiled down to a rivalry between a more conservative group of artists under the auspices of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts and the "moderns", primarily the Group of Seven. The 1924 exhibition, which gave ample representation to both, nevertheless, vindicated the latter, who won dramatic acclaim in the British press. More than any other single event, this exhibition established their reputation. As trustee, Massey joined forces with Brown and H. S. Southam, who became chair in 1929, to protect the director from sustained attempts at his removal, to assert the autonomy of the Gallery in the face of interference from outside bodies, chiefly the Royal Academy, and to affirm the Gallery's freedom to collect and exhibit progressive art.


170 Canada showed again in a second Wembley exhibition in 1925. Maud Brown has discussed the circumstances of the Wembley controversy and its aftermath in Breaking Barriers, 69-75; see also Hill, The Group of Seven, 142-151.
Massey hotly defended the Gallery in 1927 to the Minister of Public Works, into whose jurisdiction the Gallery fell, claiming that statistics showed "no preference or favouritism...in gallery exhibits at home or abroad for any one group of Canadian painters". He argued against artists being appointed to the Board (for which the Academy forces were lobbying) because they tended to perpetuate rivalries.\textsuperscript{171}

The matter dragged on, escalating again in 1931 with the change in government -- indeed the continuing assault on Brown which took place behind closed doors, in the media, and in Parliament, was nothing short of relentless and mean-spirited. As late as 1934, Massey worked with Southam to formulate a response to the latest round of attacks, warning against "too many concessions with regard to the alleged shortcomings of the Director". While hastening to assure artists and public that the Gallery would strive for the most cordial possible relations, he argued that Brown's continuation as director must not be conditional on changes in gallery policy or structure.\textsuperscript{172}

The Gallery had long struggled for an adequate measure of autonomy. Founded in 1880 by the Marquis of Lorne, the same year as the Canadian Academy of Arts (shortly the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts), the Gallery's early development was closely intertwined with the Academy. Further, it had little protection from direct political and governmental whim. Even with its incorporation by an act of parliament in 1913, its personnel were still employees of the Department of Public Works, whose functions were entirely dissimilar. Massey was keenly committed to securing the Gallery's arm's-length relationship from government and much of his energy as trustee

\textsuperscript{171} Massey to Hon. J. C. Elliott (Minister of Public Works), Mar. 1927; VMP, 3.

\textsuperscript{172} Massey to H. S. Southam, 1 Mar. 1934; VMP, 4.
before and after his departure for England in 1935 was directed to this end.\textsuperscript{173}

Massey was quite prepared to defend the Gallery's actions even when it displeased its supporters. A. Y. Jackson, for one, was not happy when the Gallery spent funds on European historical art. Jackson wrote to Massey: "The 'group', much to its disgust finds itself in accord with the Academy in regard to Eric's old master hunting...[,] one thing that needs no assistance from the government of Canada." Jackson specifically blamed Brown's reliance on art advisor Charles Ricketts, whom he considered as welcome "as a shark at a bathing beach".\textsuperscript{174} Massey, however, clearly held a dissenting view. Citing Brown's "skill and initiative" in collecting European historical art as well as his influence in promoting the development of Canadian art, he recommended Brown for an honorary degree from the University of Toronto in 1929, as a means of recognizing "the place which the plastic arts should take in our national life."\textsuperscript{175}

The rivalry between the so-called moderns and the more academically-minded artists and their supporters affected a host of activities, as well as pointing up the consequences of Canadian default in the cultural sector. In 1929, an exhibition of Canadian art was proposed for travel in the United States under the auspices of the American Federation of Arts,\textsuperscript{176} with funding from the Carnegie Corporation.

\textsuperscript{173} See King, "The National Gallery of Canada at Arm's Length".

\textsuperscript{174} A. Y. Jackson to Massey, 18 Nov. (no year); VMP, 3.

\textsuperscript{175} Massey to Sir Robert Falconer, 29 January 1929; VMP, 003. There is no evidence that Brown received this honour.

\textsuperscript{176} Massey had considerable contact with the American Federation of Arts during his Washington years; on 16 May 1930, he addressed the Federation at its 21st annual convention.
Massey's correspondence regarding the exhibition illuminates the ludicrous situation in which the National Gallery found itself. None other than Mackenzie King entered the fray. In receipt of a letter from Massey which broached the exhibition proposal put forward by Carnegie Corporation President, F. P. Keppel, King replied: "I agree with you as to the compliment to Canadian art which the invitation implies. I can see, however, wherein its acceptance may lead to considerable differences of view and many heart-burnings, unless the greatest possible care is taken in the selection of the paintings to be exhibited." He continued: "Personally, I should rather see no exhibition at all than one which would favour a few Canadian artists at the expense of others, and which would seek to put forward any particular group as being distinctively Canadian....I am, as you know, particularly anxious to avoid all possibility of controversy, especially where it is linked up, in the public mind, with the attitude of the United States towards Canada, and vice versa."\(^{177}\)

King's remarks might have had some credibility if his own interest in the arts had been more than marginal and highly partisan.\(^{178}\) Moreover, his efforts to prevent the sending of an exhibition of Canadian art sanctioned by the National Gallery highlights the difficult course the Gallery was obliged to tread.

Massey pressed the matter with the skills of a professional diplomat: "I entirely share your feelings as to the importance of keeping any exhibition of Canadian pictures in a foreign country, out of the realm of controversy. It should be possible, however, for the pictures to be selected in such a way as to relieve the trustees of the National Gallery and, a fortiori, the Government, from any

\(^{177}\) W. L. M. King to Massey, 4 Oct. 1929; VMP, 2/3.

\(^{178}\) King, "The National Gallery of Canada at Arm's Length, 17."
responsibility." He continued: "a well-chosen exhibition of Canadian pictures in this country would be of such value to the development of art in Canada that, unless there is one insuperable objection, the trustees of the Gallery should very discreetly and circumspectly offer their cooperation." He added a postscript: "My own idea of an exhibition would be one showing the historical development of Canadian painting commencing with Kreighoff and running through Homer Watson, Horatio Walker, Clarence Gagnon etc., with a very carefully selected group from Tom Thomson and his school and no extreme canvases at all."179

Massey also heard from A.Y. Jackson, who explained that he and Harris had carefully considered the exhibition proposal and concluded that only a show of modern work would attract attention in New York. They believed that an Academy show, representing its overall membership, would constitute "the dull average of Canadian art" and excite no interest. Jackson warned that involving the National Gallery would risk triggering "another campaign in the press and elsewhere to oust Eric Brown", and proposed that he, Harris, Holgate, or Lismer arrange the exhibition and liaise with the American Federation of Arts directly.180

Massey subsequently arranged with Carnegie and the AFA that the exhibition be organized without direct involvement from the National Gallery.181 Jackson and Harris, along with an AFA representative, selected the works, all "moderns".182 The exhibition showed at the Corcoran

179 Massey to W. L. M. King, 10 Oct. 1929; VMP, 2/3.
180 A. Y. Jackson to Massey, 10 Dec. (1929); VMP, 2/3.
181 Massey to W. L. M. King, 4 Oct. 1929; VMP, 2/3.
182 Lawren Harris to Massey, 3 Feb. 1930; VMP, 2/3. The Masseys bought two of the pictures in the AFA show: Sarah Robertson's Joseph and Maris Louise (National Gallery of
Gallery, Washington, D. C., in March, 1930, and subsequently at the Grand Central Art Galleries in New York in June, at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts in July, and the City Art Museum of St. Louis in August. Thus, an exhibition of contemporary Canadian art was mounted for travel in the United States without institutional involvement from Canada or the expenditure of Canadian funds.

Following upon the interest which welcomed the pictures at the Canadian Legation, the AFA show was greeted favourably in Washington. The Art Digest remarked that it was the first time that Americans had had an opportunity to view on such a comprehensive scale the art of the Dominion, and quoted Ada Rainey of the Washington Post: "[t]he Canadian paintings are among the most original seen in the gallery for years". Soaring to mythological heights, she stated: "These men of the North sing a saga of their land which has a strain of cosmic forces untainted with the sterility of a false civilization." Quoting Leila Mechlin of the AFA in the Washington Star, the article added: "Obviously, nature in the Northland is rugged and severe. Strength and endurance are its dominant characteristics, and it is these that one finds reflected in the art of these Canadian painters....In many of these pictures one comes face to face with the immutable and realizes the littleness of man as measured by the eternal." Despite government neglect and prime ministerial resistance, Massey's skillful intervention had garnered at least modest foreign recognition for Canadian art.

In a postscript to Massey's dealings with the AFA, president Frederic Allen Whiting inquired about the

Canada) and George Pepper's A Street in Hull.

183 Leila Mechlin (Secretary of the AFA) to Massey, 29 April 1930; VMP, 040/7.

184 "Canadian Pictures at Corcoran 'Sing a Saga of the North'", The Art Digest, V. IV, no. 12 (Mid-March, 1930).
possibility of developing its Canadian membership and even invited Massey to head a Canadian chapter of the organization. Massey replied with clarity: "Under present conditions a Canadian chapter or a Canadian individual loses all national identity in a body which belongs to another country". He made a counter proposal that a "Canadian Federation of Arts" be created with which the AFA might then cooperate. But, as he readily acknowledged, such an organization was not likely to be realized in the immediate future, given current economic circumstances.\footnote{185} Whiting replied that if the plan for a Canadian Federation of Arts went forward, the AFA would cooperate in every way. For the time being, they would recruit whatever Canadian members they could.\footnote{186}

Meanwhile, Massey and his colleagues at the National Gallery of Canada accepted guidance and financial assistance from the Carnegie Corporation, which had been supporting the arts in Canada since the mid-twenties.\footnote{187} Even earlier, it had funded libraries and the acquisition of church organs in Canada. In 1931 the Corporation commissioned Sir Henry Miers, scientist, scholar, and president of The Museums Association (London, Eng.), and Sidney F. Markham, British Labour Member of Parliament and secretary of the same organization, to survey the museum situation in Canada.\footnote{188} Among those they interviewed was Vincent Massey.\footnote{189} While "astonished at the standard of museums and galleries" in Canada "considering the

185 Frederic Allen Whiting to Massey (n. d.); Massey to Whiting, 5 Jan. 1931; VMP, 376/23.


187 Tippett, Making Culture, 145.

188 They had carried out a similar examination in Britain and produced a report on British museums in 1927; S. F. Markham to Massey, 19 June 1931; VMP, 15.

189 Massey met with the two at their request in July 1931.
infancy of the movement", Miers and Markham were gravely concerned about the lack of cooperation among museums. With few exceptions, curators were completely ignorant of each other's activities, even within their immediate areas. Generally in favour of decentralization, Miers and Markham recommended, nevertheless, that Canada develop a network of provincial museums loosely affiliated with a central body.

They were also critical of the lack of effort made by museums in Canada to interest the general public: "Paralytic modesty is a common museum disease from Calgary to Halifax". Not least, they expressed dismay at the "steady drain of some of the best full-time curators in the Canadian museums to museums in the United States..." They estimated that if all sixty of the presently inadequately curated museums were to seek curators, "it is doubtful whether more than two or three persons could be found in the whole Dominion qualified to fill these posts."\(^{190}\)

The report led to the formation of the Carnegie Corporation's Canadian Committee in 1933. Miers recommended specifically to Frederick Keppel, President of the Corporation, that "there be set up in Canada a small group of informed persons who would discuss informally Canadian museum problems and proposals with a view to advising the Corporation as to significant opportunities for service."\(^{191}\) The Corporation's large resources included ten million dollars earmarked for the British Commonwealth outside the United Kingdom, which had yielded an accumulation of two or three million dollars.\(^{192}\)

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191 F. P. Keppel to Massey, 1 June 1933; VMP, 004.

192 H. S. Southam to P. S. Fisher (Southam Publishing Company Limited, Montreal), 7 Feb. 1934; VMP, 004.
The National Gallery of Canada convened a committee consisting of Eric Brown, H. O. McCurry, E. L. Judah of McGill University, Dr. Clarence J. Webster, Shediac, N. B., and F. Kermode, Victoria, B. C. Massey accepted an invitation to join the committee, but was unable to attend its first meeting. Propelled by a belief that the museum was rapidly becoming one of the most active of cultural agencies and as essential to the education of children and adults as the public library, the Committee resolved to create a Canadian Museums Association, to organize a circulating exhibition system beyond but in harmony with the National Gallery's, and to implement a system of scholarships for museum training. Massey was selected to sit on the three member executive committee (with Brown) and a subcommittee on galleries (with Brown and Webster).

Massey wrote to Keppel after attending his first meeting on 29 May 1934: "I am most enthusiastic about [the] possibilities...arising out of the establishment of the Committee on Canadian Museums. The meeting of the 29th was a revelation to me of what can be done in educational effort under this head." However, he questioned the exclusion from the Committee of a representative from the Royal Ontario Museum, specifically C. T. Currelly, arguing that "the Royal Ontario is the only museum which can perform a national duty in such activities as the loan of materials and numerous other

193 H. O. McCurry to Massey, 29 May 1933; VMP, 4.

194 H. O. McCurry to Massey, 29 May 1933, Frederick Keppel to Massey, 1 June 1933, and Massey to McCurry, 1 June 1933; VMP, 004. Keppel was listed as first Vice-President of the AFA on its letterhead in the spring of 1930; Leila Mechlin to Massey, 29 Apr. 1930; VMP, 40/7.

195 McCurry to Massey, 10 Sept. 1933; VMP, 4.
Keppel advised him to take the matter up with the rest of the Committee, explaining that it was "of the first importance that the initiative for enterprises in the Dominions should come from the Dominions themselves," adding that at the present time he was "engaged in teaching a lesson upon this point to the British Association, the active representative of which, Mr. Markham, would be very glad indeed to have the initiative lie in London instead of Canada or Australia. For this reason, we have endeavored to be particularly correct in our relations with the Canadian Committee, though our informal relations are wholly friendly and comfortable." While the Carnegie Corporation may have made an admirable effort at devolution, and their profile in Canada warrants closer study, Keppel's choice of words "teaching a lesson" rather betrays the problem of one country funding the cultural activities of another. The latitude given the Canadian Committee remains unclear. In September 1934, Keppel wrote: "In a general way I think the practice which has so far been followed by the Canadian Committee of informal consultation with this office in the case of grants of importance is a sound one."

With more alarming implications for Canadian cultural sovereignty was a turn of events in the Gallery's funding in early 1934. Faced with a dramatic decrease in its

196 Massey, to F. P. Keppel, 5 June 1934; VMP, 4; Currelly never became a member of the Committee; I am grateful to Cyndie Campbell, Archivist, NGCA, and Jeffrey D. Brisen, Fellow in Historical Canadian Art, NGC, for this information.

197 Frederick Keppel to Massey, 12 June 1934; VMP, 4.

198 It has been pointed out that Carnegie funds were directed more towards training staff (who often migrated south to join better facilities) than building the museum infrastructure in Canada; Tippett, Making Culture, 145-54.

199 Frederick Keppel to Clarence J. Webster, 10 Sept. 1934; VMP, 4.
Parliamentary appropriations during the early 1930s to a mere $25,000 for the 1934-35 fiscal year, the Gallery contested the matter with the Minister of Public Works and, meanwhile, looked elsewhere. Massey reported to Harry Southam that he had visited Keppel in New York to propose that he underwrite the Gallery's "requirements for the year 1935...if for any reason the Government decided against increasing our grant for this year to $100,000." He continued: "A few days after my return home I received a letter from Mr. Keppel's secretary saying that...it was found they could make us a straight grant of $7,500 from some unexpected fund which they asked the National Gallery to accept as a token of their appreciation of the work we are doing, and for our helpful cooperation with the Carnegie Corporation, especially in connection with the recent exhibition of paintings by contemporary American artists [the show paired with the Massey collection at the Art Gallery of Toronto several months earlier]." Remarkably, the Gallery accepted a donation for this amount from the Carnegie Corporation in 1935, a telling commentary on their financial vulnerability due to marginal government support. It was also an ironic concession from Massey, in so many respects the consummate Canadian nationalist, and an insight into the fruits of cooperating in

200 By contrast, its 1931-32 Parliamentary appropriation had been $100,000.

201 Massey to H. S. Southam, 2 Jan. 1935; VMP, 4. For a sampling of the projects that the Carnegie Foundation supported in Canada, see Tippett, Making Culture, 145-154.

202 "In January 1935 a cheque for $7,457.81 Canadian funds was received from Carnegie to be used in cases of emergency only"; NGCA, Carnegie files; I am grateful to Cyndie Campbell, Archivist, NGCA, and Jeffrey D. Brison, Fellow in Historical Canadian Art, NGC, for this information. Parliament's appropriation to the Gallery was $25,000; National Gallery of Canada, Annual Report, 1934-1935 (Ottawa, 1936), 23; it was raised to $73,470.45 the following year; National Gallery of Canada, Annual Report, 1935-36 (Ottawa, 1937), 20.
the showing of American art in Canada.

The Gallery's meager Parliamentary appropriation was matched by an equally inadequate physical plant. As chair of the Massey Foundation, Massey made several offers to fund the building of a concert hall and art gallery in Ottawa.\(^203\) Writing to Mackenzie King in 1937, he stated that, if land were provided, the Foundation would finance the building. However, as he noted in his memoirs: "This aroused no interest, let alone enthusiasm, and the proposal died a natural death."\(^204\) Federal government disinterest, on this occasion, approached an almost perverse neglect. However, Massey would return to the subject of a building for the Gallery with renewed vigour after his return from England in 1946.

Meanwhile, Massey's nationalizing agenda was shaping his involvement in Canadian theatre. At Hart House Theatre, he was insistent upon the inclusion of a Canadian bill of fare, usually two plays a season.\(^205\) Seventeen of these, edited by Massey, were published in *Canadian Plays from Hart House Theatre* in two volumes in 1926-27. The Masseys also arranged for a $500 annual prize in support of Canadian playwriting. The play was required to be by a Canadian (or a British citizen living in Canada); to deal with some aspect of Canadian life, to be full-length, and to be in French or English. The Syndics of Hart House Theatre agreed to give the winning play a public production during the 1926-27


During and after their stay in Washington, the Masseys continued to be involved in Hart House Theatre, choosing its directors, including its first woman director, Nancy Pyper, a former professional from Winnipeg, in 1935. But the theatre project that distinguished Massey's career after his return to Canada and was most symptomatic of his national agenda was the Dominion Drama Festival.

Amateur theatre had gained ground in Canada, invigorated by various developments in the late 1920s and early 1930s. It was a beneficiary of the mortal blow suffered by professional theatre, dominated by foreign touring companies, especially out of New York, as a result of the 1929 stock market crash and the arrival of "talking" pictures. Failing international money markets helped to validate local initiative in various areas including the amateur theatre movement. By then, it had also acquired a certain respectability among the church-going population, in the service of the social gospel movement.

As early as November 1931, Lord Bessborough, Governor-General from 1931 to 1935, and a devotee of amateur theatre in Britain, 'floated' the idea of a national drama league and festival in an address to the Ottawa Little Theatre. The talk exalted drama both artistically and educationally. In his

206 "Massey Prize for Canadian Drama: The gift of Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Massey" (typed statement); VMP, 384/18. The committee was made up of Vincent and Alice Massey, the director of Hart House Theatre, and two others. Whether the prize was awarded by the Masseys personally or the Massey Foundation, or was, indeed, ever awarded, remains undetermined.

207 In a letter from Alice Massey to Mrs. W. J. Kernohan of Toronto, 19 March 1935, she stated: "both Mr. Massey and I are very keen about the fact that we and the other Syndics of Hart House Theatre have appointed its first woman director in Nancy Pyper. Her support by the various women's organizations will mean a great deal"; VMP, 57-58.

208 Saddlemyer and Plant, Later Stages, 263.
view, universities were the primary "sources of culture", but artists had their part to play in enhancing the reputation of a nation. His emphasis on national prestige contrasted quite sharply, in fact, with Massey's defense of nationalism as a protection of diversity. Nonetheless, the two were united in their aspirations for a national infrastructure for the amateur theatre activity across the country.

Bessborough sent Massey a proposal for an ambitious national amateur drama competition, and despite some initial reservations, Massey responded with alacrity. He recommended that there be two competitions, one for "declamation" and one for "drama". Declamation, he argued, would incur little expense and be more attractive to the public and educational authorities, who did not yet accept drama "officially as a factor in education". Massey noted further "certain misgivings" about theatre because of a "lingering Puritan tradition". Thus, he advised "that the dramatic competitions...be conducted the first year on a very conservative and limited basis, while the contest in declamation might be carried considerably further."

Massey also stressed the need to secure the support of all provincial governments before proceeding: "The subject of education...is strictly provincial and the provinces are very jealous of their prerogatives in this matter...." As for Bessborough's suggestion that the dramatic competition be limited in the first year to certain large centres, Massey took strong exception. "The plan must, for obvious reasons, be a national plan and it would be unfortunate if even in the first year participation was confined to the eastern cities or

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209 Lord Bessborough, "Extract from an Address Given by His Excellency The Governor General at The Little Theatre, Ottawa" (Nov. 10, 1931); VMP, 376/26.

210 Bissell, The Young Vincent Massey, 178.
even the cities as distinguished from the country districts."\(^{211}\)

Bessborough invited Massey to be chair of the general and executive committees of the Festival, and on 29 October 1932, at a meeting at Government House in Ottawa, the Dominion Drama Festival was inaugurated. Bessborough relied heavily on Massey, who was intimately involved from the beginning with the Festival's organization and arrangements, down to the wording of diplomas.\(^{212}\) Characteristic of his support for other ventures, Massey's role in the Dominion Drama Festival qualified as what he called "active" rather than "passive patronage".\(^{213}\)

For the purposes of the festival the country was divided into twelve regions, each province deemed a region, except Ontario, which was divided into three regions, and Quebec, two. The winners of the regional competitions were to compete in national finals in Ottawa. For the first festival there were 110 entries. As chair, Massey welcomed the 168 contestants: actors, directors and technicians, who converged on Ottawa in April 1933 for the first finals. He noted with satisfaction that eight provinces were represented: "The number of individuals who will take part have become a rather formidable army. If the festival was held in Europe, teams would have to come together from as far apart as Constantinople, Warsaw and Algiers. That gives you an idea of the geographic dimensions of this Dominion Drama Festival."\(^{214}\)

\(^{211}\) Massey to Captain A. F. Lascelles (Secretary to the Governor-General, Lord Bessborough), 4 Jan. 1932; VMP, 376/26.

\(^{212}\) Lee, *Love and Whisky*, 105.

\(^{213}\) Massey to G. Dickson Kerwin, 2 Dec. 1929; VMP, 21.

\(^{214}\) Massey, "Address" (at the opening night of the Dominion Drama Festival, 24 Apr. 24, 1933); quoted in Lee, *Love and Whisky*, 114.
The success of the first national competition was due, in significant measure, not only to Massey's counsel, but the financial support he steered its way. The Massey Foundation made an initial $2500 donation; the balance of the projected $6000 needed for the first year's expenses was solicited from a few other private donors, although it was hoped in the long run that the Festival would be self-sustaining.\textsuperscript{215} The Massey Foundation continued to be a benefactor, giving $1000 in each of 1933 and 1934.\textsuperscript{216}

From the first, there was a consensus that original Canadian plays were to be encouraged.\textsuperscript{217} Looking over the proposed list of plays that contestants could choose to perform for the first festival, Massey suggested that one or two one-act plays from the two-volume Hart House collection be considered. However, the number of Canadian plays performed was consistently disappointing. Little theatre companies were timid about risking their success on untried material, despite a prize, the Barry Jackson Challenge Trophy (dating from 1934), to encourage Canadian material. Moreover, plays by Canadian authors were still in limited supply. Not until 1967 did the Dominion Drama Festival dare to hold an "all-Canadian play" final.\textsuperscript{218}

Massey's affiliation with the Festival continued, albeit in a less than hands-on manner, after his departure for London as Canada's High Commissioner in 1935. He held the title of President until 1950 except for a brief period as Vice-President in 1937. As Governor-General from 1952 -- 1959, he

\textsuperscript{215} Massey to R. A. McLaughlin, 21 May 1935; VMP, 22/23.

\textsuperscript{216} As late as 1949, the Massey Foundation accounts show $600 paid to the Dominion Drama Festival; MFP, V. 1, file 6.

\textsuperscript{217} Lee, \textit{Love and Whisky}, 96-97.

\textsuperscript{218} Lee, \textit{Love and Whisky}, 287-98.
was also an active supporter.\textsuperscript{219} While most intimately involved with Canadian theatre during the 1920s and early 1930s, throughout his career, he held out strong hopes for the development of a national theatre. He was a keen supporter of the Stratford Shakespearean Festival in 1953, the Massey Foundation again making a timely donation of $10,000.\textsuperscript{220}

Of underlying importance in his involvement with theatre was Massey's healthy respect for the well-spring of theatrical activity across the country and its local character. The creation of a national system was a means of fostering communication and excellence, and, was, by no means, an initiative aimed at dominating or suppressing local diversity; quite the contrary. Both his activities in connection with Hart House and the Dominion Drama Festival testify that Massey keenly appreciated the richness of Canadian artistic effort.\textsuperscript{221} However, he increasingly believed that the amateur and local nature of theatre was not sufficient; it must be aligned with national structures in the arts in order to protect Canadian sovereignty and the very principle of diversity.

By the late 1920s a new threat to Canadian cultural sovereignty and diversity had reached alarming proportions, that is, the growing domination of the air waves by American private broadcasting interests. The orbit of American

\textsuperscript{219} Lee, \textit{Love and Whisky}, 131-32.

\textsuperscript{220} H. T. Patterson (Stratford Shakespearean Festival of Canada Foundation) to Lionel Massey, 14 May 1953, and Lionel Massey to H. T. Patterson, 1 June 1953; VMP, 368/10. According to Paula Sperdakos, however, the donation was made at the last minute and sought out; \textit{Dora Mavor Moore: Pioneer of the Canadian Theatre} (Toronto, 1995).

\textsuperscript{221} Of some indication of its capacity for inclusion was the 1938 Festival winner, Theatre of Action's production of John Wesley's \textit{Steel}, a play of political and social activism; Saddlemyer and Plant, \textit{Later Stages}, 58.
influence in Canada expanded appreciably after World War I as both countries sought to distance themselves from responsibilities that might draw them into another European conflict. With North American isolationism on the rise, American investment in Canada for the first time in 1926 exceeded that of Britain.\textsuperscript{222} Meanwhile, a massive influx of American cultural fare entered Canada via radio, driven by commercial concerns and virtually unhampered by the American and Canadian governments.

Massey's deepening nationalism awakened his acute appreciation of the role that public radio might play in fostering a sense of community in Canada. While he could not be construed as a major player in the battle for public broadcasting in the late 1920s and early 1930s, he intervened on its behalf in a timely fashion on several occasions. While in Washington, Massey had served as part of an international body involved in assigning radio frequencies, and appreciated fully the expansionist aspirations of American private radio interests.\textsuperscript{223} In December 1928, the Canadian government established the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting, chaired by Sir John Aird, president of the Canadian Bank of Commerce. Massey was apparently responsible for suggesting Aird's name along with one of the other two commissioners, Charles Bowman, editor of the Ottawa Citizen,\textsuperscript{224} who was the most active of the three members and already committed to public broadcasting. Massey kept up a lively correspondence

\textsuperscript{222} Unlike British investment which was typically confined to the loan of funds, American investment was more fundamental, that is, the creation of branch-plants; Susan Crean and Marcel Rioux, \textit{Two Nations: An Essay on the Culture and Politics of Canada and Quebec in a World of American Pre-eminence} (Toronto, 1983), 30.

\textsuperscript{223} Bissell, \textit{The Young Vincent Massey}, 194.

\textsuperscript{224} Massey, Diary, 14 April 1928/25 Sept. 1930; cited by Bissell, \textit{The Young Vincent Massey}, 261, n. 37.
with Bowman from Washington, during the Commission's proceedings.

Bowman warned him in December 1928 "that United States organizers of commercial airways" were "planning to treat North America as one common field of enterprise".²²⁵ He bemoaned the contradictions of those who lobbied against public broadcasting and pointed to models in Britain and Germany that Canada might consider emulating. Massey sent Bowman and Aird a copy of the annual report of the Federal Radio Commission of the United States,²²⁶ and a copy of an editorial in the Washington Post (2 January 1930) that was critical of the U. S. system of broadcasting.²²⁷

In the face of opposition to the Aird Commission's report (tabled in September 1929) in favour of public broadcasting, Massey launched his own lobbying campaign. He wrote to Bowman "that in addition to the organization of a nation-wide body which will represent the point of view in favour of nationalization, it will be essential to find a number of outstanding citizens who will be prepared to appear before the Committee [the Parliamentary committe considering the report's recommendations]." He suggested Canon Cody, Sir Robert Falconer, Sir Arthur Currie, Colonel Henry Cockshutt, and "other men with intelligence and influence in various cities". He argued that if such individuals spoke in favour of government ownership of broadcasting, it would help counter "the organized effect of propaganda which is certain to be brought to bear upon the question by people who are commercially interested in maintaining the status quo." He added: "Your editorial suggests the most appropriate line for such persons to follow, that of advocating nationalization in

²²⁶ Charles Bowman to Massey, 10 Dec. 1928; VMP, 59.
²²⁷ Massey to Charles Bowman, 2 Jan. 1930; VMP, 59.
the interests of Canadian nationality."  

In turn, Bowman wrote Aird: "The necessity of safeguarding Canada's place in the radio realm for educational broadcasting must surely appeal to leading citizens like Sir Robert Falconer, Canon Cody, and your banking associates, particularly Sir Joseph Flavelle and Sir Thomas White. To the list, he added Toronto patron of music Dr. F. R. MacKelcan (National Trust Company), and Dr. Ernest MacMillan, adding that several might be willing to appear before the special parliamentary committee in support of the Commission's report."

Bowman also wrote to Fred MacKelcan to solicit his support, emphasizing the campaign's importance for the arts in Canada. "Within a few years it will be possible to bring by radio some of the finest music from Great Britain and the cities of Europe....It does seem desirable under the circumstances that no effort should be spared to retain Canadian radio independence on this continent, by establishing Canadian broadcasting on a secure national basis. Otherwise, the present tendency would seem to indicate that private stations will become more and more dependent upon United States sources of supply for radio entertainment."

Massey, meanwhile, suggested to Bowman that Dr. Ernest MacMillan, head of the Conservatory of Music, Toronto, make an appearance before the Parliamentary committee considering the Aird report. Massey also recruited the support of the

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228 Massey to Charles A. Bowman, 7 Feb. 1930; VMP, 059.
229 Charles A. Bowman to Sir John Aird, 20 Feb. 1920; VMP, 059.
231 Massey to Bowman, 18 Feb. 1930; VMP, 59.
members of the Hart House String Quartet.\textsuperscript{232} Moreover, he authorized MacKelcan to make a submission on behalf of Massey Hall. MacKelcan was able to marshall statistics on Massey Hall attendance that countered unsupported statements in the media about the lack of musical talent in Canada and showed "a large majority of Canadian performances as compared to outside ones." MacKelcan and Massey were keenly in favour of public radio, not only in order to support the arts in Canada, but as a means of moving the focus of broadcasting beyond Toronto, where it had been heavily weighted by commercial broadcasting.\textsuperscript{233}

In March, Massey wrote to O. D. Skelton, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, enclosing two copies of an article in the \textit{United States Daily} on a report of an advisory committee on education by radio, set up by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Dr. Ray Wilbur, that gave "little hope of commercialized broadcasting being able to perform educational services."\textsuperscript{234} Meanwhile, Massey was also in contact with BBC executive Gladstone Murray (a Canadian) in London, who was following the struggle over broadcasting with keen interest.

Rather auspiciously, in February 1930, Massey speculated to Bowman on the virtue of attempting to enlist the support of "any existing bodies such as Canadian Clubs, or Rotary and the other "service" clubs which might be induced to give a corporate support to the Radio Commission's report."\textsuperscript{235} In October 1930, Graham Spry, the energetic and enterprising national secretary of the Association of Canadian Clubs, and Spry's new friend Alan Plaunt created the Canadian Radio

\textsuperscript{232} Geza de Kresz to William Lyon Mackenzie King, 24 Mar. 1930; VMP, 59.

\textsuperscript{233} F. R. MacKelcan to Massey, 7 Apr. 1932; VMP, 59.

\textsuperscript{234} Massey to O. D. Skelton, 13 Mar. 1930; VMP, 59.

\textsuperscript{235} Massey to Bowman, 10 Feb. 1930; VMP, 59.
League. Together, they would conduct what has been called "a classic study on the art of lobbying"\textsuperscript{236} and "one of the most remarkable accomplishments ever to take place in our country"\textsuperscript{237}. As chairman and secretary of the League respectively, they galvanized support for national public broadcasting, which led to the formation of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission in 1932 and, in turn, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in 1936.

Speaking on behalf of the League in 1932 to the Parliamentary committee convened to study the matter of radio, Spry stated: "Radio broadcasting is not to be considered or dismissed as a business only. It is no more a business than the public school system, the religious organizations, or the varied literary, musical, and scientific endeavors of the Canadian people. It is a public service. It is a national service. As a public and national service it should be controlled."\textsuperscript{238}

As the lobbying effort reached its climax, Plaunt reported to Massey that "the radio issue has reached a decisive juncture and the League will require substantial financial assistance if it is effectively to complete its work." He summarized the League's efforts in March 1932: "During the past fourteen months the League has organized and focussed a vast body of public support for a rationally organized Canadian broadcasting system. That support now includes the leading national, labour, farm, women's and listeners' organizations, the heads of, and the principal


\textsuperscript{238} Graham Spry (Radio League's brief to the Parliamentary Committee of 1932); quoted in R. Austin Weir, The Struggle for National Broadcasting in Canada (Toronto/Montreal, 1965), 132.
religious bodies; 16 presidents of Canadian universities; a large number of business, industrial, banking and professional leaders throughout the country, and 75 principal daily newspapers."

Plaunt followed up with a telegram on 21 March 1932, impressing upon Massey the urgency of the situation: "[w]ould appreciate your financial assistance to bring Gladstone Murray Canadian sub director BBC London appear before Parliamentary Committee on Radio. Would require five hundred dollars for this purpose stop his testimony would be invaluable at this time stop...time most important as committee sits only one week after Easter recess". Massey stood the cost, and, enclosing his cheque (for $400), he wrote to Spry to commend the League on its efforts: "All of us who believe in radio as a national service owe you [Spry and Plaunt] a debt of profound gratitude for the self-sacrificing and skilful work you have done in the last few years." Plaunt wrote back to thank Massey for making Murray’s appearance possible: "his testimony may well have been the decisive factor in convincing the committee and the Prime Minister of the feasibility of a public monopoly". Plaunt’s correspondence with Massey is also revealing for his view on the nature of a public monopoly. As he explained to Massey, the League had always been opposed to paid commissioners and envisioned, instead, "a voluntary board of directors who would simply be a guarantee to the public that the broadcasting organization was being operated independently of partisan politics and generally in the public interests. Then there would be the operating corporation or commission headed by a high salaried expert such as Gladstone.

239 Alan Plaunt to Massey, 14 Mar. 1932; VMP, 59.
241 Massey to Graham Spry, 25 May 1932; VMP, 59.
Murray.” Massey, himself, would reflect deeply over the next decade on the nature and mechanisms of government cultural support.

In May 1934 the League and Massey were in contact again. The compromises that had shaped the CRBC’s creation had proven of limited success. Plaunt wrote to Massey "that the present set-up imperils the principle of a public system" and sent him a copy of a memorandum the League had prepared for the Parliamentary Committee on the present situation. The League had particular concern over, for example, the makeup of the governing board of the Commission (the qualifications of members, their numbers, tenure of office) and its relation to Parliament, such that its structure and administration be-non-partisan and business-like. The League was strongly of the view that the board, not the government, should appoint a "director-general" of the reorganized corporation. Again Massey was supportive and encouraged the League in a renewal of its efforts.

In October the government changed hands and Massey was active in promoting the League’s position with C. D. Howe and others of Mackenzie King’s government, and with King, himself, as well as advising the League on strategy. With the successful reincarnation of the CRBC as the CBC in 1936, Gladstone Murray was put forward as its possible head. Plaunt wrote Massey to solicit his support of Murray’s candidacy. The League feared the appointment of R. M. Brophy, a Canadian then employed by the N.B.C. who was viewed as a supporter of commercial broadcasting. Murray became the successful candidate and in his new capacity wrote to Alice and Vincent Massey, now in England. He reported that he had just completed a tour of western Canada where he had had meetings

242 Alan Plaunt to Massey, 2 June 1932; VMP, 59.
243 Alan Plaunt to Massey, 11 May 1934; UTA, VMP, 59.
in communities from Nanaimo to Fort William. "It was strenuous", he reported, "the temperature varying from 40 above on the Island to 40 below at Regina. But enormously useful. No one so far had taken the trouble to examine radio problems on the spot. This is the only basis on which to found policies of lasting value." He continued: "Of one thing I am convinced and that is that compromise between public and private broadcasting provides no permanent solution worthy of Canada. We must work to the elimination of advertising and of privately controlled broadcasting, substituting a high-powered national chain across the country, whatever the cost." He closed: "Thank you again for your critical part in opening this opportunity. It is a great challenge. Pray God I can stand up to it until the new organisation is in being."\(^{244}\)

In 1938, again, Massey sought to intervene in Canadian broadcasting matters. In a letter to C. D. Howe from London, he tackled the subject of short-wave radio transmission from Canada to Britain and the rest of Europe. "Under the present conditions, as you know, broadcasts from Canada must either come to Great Britain through the transmission facilities of the United States broadcasting systems or, alternatively, the beam telephone has to be booked at high rates. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is, I know, anxious to erect in Canada a short wave transmitter which would give good reception in this country and other countries overseas". Massey reported that he had solicited the view of new BBC director general F. W. Ogilvie on the matter, who "would warmly welcome the establishment of such facilities in Canada. ...From both the broadcasting and the imperial points of view, it is in every way desirable that Canada should be able to give, and we and others to receive, much more of Canadian material than can be done at present by the somewhat

\(^{244}\) Gladstone Murray to Massey, 16 Feb. 1937; VMP, 166/08.
precarious means available". Massey added to Ogilvie's words: "I very much hope myself that the C.B.C. can acquire the short wave transmitter in question, for a very obvious reason -- one of the responsibilities of my post here is to secure the fullest possible publicity in Great Britain for Canada and Canadian services. Broadcasting is an increasingly important medium for this purpose and without direct broadcasts from Canada through a short wave transmitter we will never secure the volume of wireless publicity which is so desirable."\(^{245}\)

By the time of Massey's posting as Canada's High Commissioner to Britain in 1935, his ideas about the arts and the role they played in culture and nationality had achieved a new degree of complexity and resolution. Persuaded by the art and rhetoric of the Group of Seven, he understood that the liberal arts were not alone in serving a cultural, spiritual, and national purpose; the fine arts, too, intermingled with "the spiritual forces which nationality creates."\(^{246}\)

He now believed that culture drew much of its strength from the local (viewed as regional and national) and, indeed, that creativity was an outcome of diversity. Canadian nationalism was, indeed, a protection of diversity of various kinds. This realization came into sharpened focus as a result of Massey's experience in Washington, and the growing orbit of American influence in Canada in the inter-war years. While Massey viewed the quest for unity (and community) as that which ennobled life, and had long had a healthy respect for the realities of Canadian diversity, he now appreciated the critical importance, the sanctity, as it were, of protecting that diversity.

\(^{245}\) Massey to C. D. Howe, 24 Nov. 1938; VMP, 166/07.

\(^{246}\) Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada".
As Harris argued, a deep imbibing of the local, and the authenticity and vitality it engendered, was essential to the creative spirit. Art functioned as a link between the particular and the universal, the local and national, the national and the international. Canadian sovereignty was as much about protecting the diversity that gave creativity its lifeblood as it was about the unity promised by aspiring to excellence. The fine arts took their place alongside the liberal arts in Massey's mission to articulate and protect Canadian national character.
Chapter 5

British Connections/British Models

In late 1935, Vincent Massey arrived in London, England, as High Commissioner for Canada. He had long favoured close relations between Canada and Britain and, with the approach of war, he was now at the vanguard of resurgent Canadian-British cooperation. For Massey, this realignment was an affirmation of the humanism he believed to be central to the Canadian democracy and distinguished it from a more purely capitalistic model. A renewed bid for alliances with Europe, especially Britain, counterbalanced the threat of colonial dependency from Canada’s powerful neighbour to the south.

Canada had been the recipient of vast British cultural export, long as a colony. A mixed legacy, which in the artistic field awaits a thorough assessment, it generated both loyalty and resentment. Massey was one of those who firmly believed that the British colonizing presence in Canada was a thing of the past. He claimed no patience with Canadian international subservience and was committed to transforming any lingering dependency into a partnership of reciprocal exchange with Britain. He advanced the cause on both fronts, the dissemination of Canadian culture abroad and the projection of Britain in Canada.

The projects he embarked upon to strengthen the British-Canadian alliance were various: he promoted Canadian art in Britain; he was instrumental in the realization of the Canadian war art program, which brought Canadian and British artists together with their counterparts; he encouraged the British Council’s activities in Canada; and as chair of the Massey Foundation, he assembled, with help from his family, a collection of modern British art for Canada. Furthermore, Massey was profoundly impressed by the nationalizing role of the arts in the British war effort and the emergent British
model of state-supported art. He viewed this as an extremely promising resolution of the need for state involvement in the cultural sector in Canada without placing the arts at the service of political sloganism and cronyism.

His affinity for the Anglo-Canadian alliance dated from his early career. During the 1910s, along with Sir Edmund Walker, George Wrong, and Edward Kylie, and others, he had been involved in the Round Table movement. Founded around 1909, it was concerned with the study and promotion of international, and especially British imperial, relations. Massey and other Canadian members opposed any legal or constitutional union, but sought to foster cultural relations among the Dominions.

Characteristic of Massey's ongoing interest in British sources was a lecture series that he launched in 1932, as chair of the Massey Foundation. The Massey Lectures brought prominent speakers from Britain once a year to deliver addresses in areas such as education, letters, philosophy, or public affairs at a Canadian university. The lectures were broadcast on national radio. When proposing the series, he noted that distinguished Americans often visited Canada, but distance and current economic circumstances made British guests more scarce. In introducing the opening lecture, he

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1 Massey was acting secretary of the Round Table Society at a meeting in Toronto 9 June 1911 and still active with the group in 1917. In 1918, he asked that the material of the Round Table office be transferred to Arthur J. Glazebrook; VMP 414/08. Edward Kylie was a friend of Massey's in the Dept. of History at the University of Toronto. According to Massey, Kylie had attended Oxford, became History don at the University of Toronto, and played an important role in the Round Table movement. It was Kylie who "principally induced" Massey to apply for admission to Balliol; Massey, "Postscript".

2 Massey to Rev. H. J. Cody (Chairman, Board of Governors), University of Toronto, 10 Feb. 1931; VMP, 86/03
stated his bias clearly: "the more faithful we are to those British ideas of which we are heirs, the better Canadians we shall be." He particularly praised certain "traditional qualities of English public life", namely "the natural willingness to serve the state, the contact with the humanities which tempers the judgment and enriches the mind, [and] the broad and balanced view...." He was also interested in modern Britain. His inaugural speech as High Commissioner in 1935 stated: "Too often...the casual visitor from Canada is apt to concentrate unduly on that part of England which is represented by the thatched cottage and ivy-mantled tower". Anticipating the opportunity to familiarize himself with Britain's "impressive plans...of economic and social reorganisation", he affirmed: "it is my belief that England presents today in a striking degree certain attributes associated more with youth than with age -- the qualities of enterprise, of vision and energy."4

Massey's tenure in London from 1935 to 1946 opened up various opportunities for the visual arts in Canada, which neither Massey, the National Gallery of Canada, nor the Art Gallery of Toronto were slow to recognize. As early as 1930, when it first appeared that Massey would be appointed High

3 Massey, "Address" (on the occasion of the first Massey Lecture, March 1932, given by Lord Irwin); VMP, 85/01.

4 Massey, "Address" (to the Canada Club, London, 1935); VMP, 172/08. This was certainly the self-image that British foreign policy sought to project. During the war, for example, a British Dominions Office memo stated: "The Britain to portray to the young nations of the Commonwealth is not so much the land of winding lanes, Tudor cottages, rustic accents, venerable shrines and beefeaters at the Tower...as the country of modern inventions, up to date classrooms and canteens, new factories, broad highways, great airfields, the home of an energetic and enterprising race; Dominion Office memo from Boyd Shannon, 26 July 1943; PRO, DO35/1911/2441/5; quoted in Diana Eastment, "The Policies and Position of the British Council from the Outbreak of War to 1950", Ph.D., University of Leeds, 1982, 259.
Commissioner,\textsuperscript{5} National Gallery of Canada director, Eric Brown, and his board sent a resolution to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Works supporting Massey's continuation as Trustee. Brown also wrote to the Governor-General to commend Massey's potential services in regard to international exhibition exchange, the encouragement of gifts and bequests, and, "as an enthusiast of Canadian art", the promotion of the Gallery's work abroad.\textsuperscript{6} Assistant director H. O. McCurry added: "A Trustee resident in London would be of simply incalculable value to the National Gallery in view of the fact that practically all the best things turn up there and...the rapidly growing sentiment in favor of interchange of art exhibitions in the Empire."\textsuperscript{7} Massey was more than pleased to carry on as trustee: "[t]he work of the Gallery, I need not say, is very close to my heart".\textsuperscript{8}

Both the National Gallery and the Art Gallery of Toronto looked to Britain for the acquisition of Old Master art. Since the death in 1931 of Charles Ricketts, whom the National Gallery had employed as a London adviser, it had been without an overseas scout. With Massey's arrival on the scene, the

\textsuperscript{5} Massey was named High Commissioner in 1930 by Mackenzie King, but with the change in government in July he relinquished the appointment. With King's return to power in 1935, the appointment was made a second time.

\textsuperscript{6} Eric Brown to the Governor-General (Viscount Willingdon), 10 Feb. 1930; NGCA, 9.2M Trustees: Vincent Massey, file 1.

\textsuperscript{7} H. O. McCurry to Alice Massey, 7 Feb. 1930; VMP, 160/03. McCurry pointed out that Ramsay MacDonald, first British Labour Prime Minister (1924, 1929-35), had commended the growing practice of exhibition exchange within the Commonwealth.

\textsuperscript{8} Massey to H. O. McCurry, 6 June 1930; NGCA, 9.2M Trustees: Vincent Massey, file 1.
Gallery had a significant new advocate.9 One of his earliest tasks was to approach Paul Oppé, a London art collector and connoisseur, about acting for the Gallery in the purchase of drawings.10

Brown also sent Massey a list of those he considered to be the most reliable picture dealers in London and suggested that Massey foster the acquaintance of W. G. Constable, director of the Courtauld Institute of Art: "If ever you have a spare afternoon and cared to ask Constable for lunch, he would take you on a 'dealer crawl' and visit some of the most interesting people."11 In February Brown cabled Massey about a Sotheby auction of a Hyacinth Rigaud picture,12 and Massey was pleased to guide the transaction to a successful completion.13 In November 1937, Massey wrote to Kenneth Clark, the youthful and energetic director of the National Gallery, London, about the possible acquisition of a work attributed to Anthony Van Dyck. Massey ventured to suggest that they had "many interests in common" and looked forward to meeting.14 The two men, indeed, became friends and relied heavily on each other's advice in various art-related matters.

The Art Gallery of Toronto also enlisted Massey's services, taking him up on his offer to watch for possible

9 Massey had been well acquainted with Ricketts and his views on collecting, visiting him in London as early as 1926; Boggs, The National Gallery, 19.


11 Eric Brown to Massey, 5 July 1937; VMP, 170/07.

12 Self-Portrait, signed and dated 1699.

13 Massey to Eric Brown, 1 March 1938; VMP, 170/07.

14 Massey to Kenneth Clark, 9 Nov. 1937; NAC, Canada House Records, RG25 A5, V. 390, file M376/HC/37.
acquisitions.\textsuperscript{15} He went to see an El Greco painting at the Spanish Gallery and recruited Clark for an opinion; the latter viewed it as only a fair example of the artist's work and overpriced. Martin Baldwin, the Gallery’s curator, later thanked Massey for his and Clark’s assistance in navigating in this "very interesting though somewhat dangerous field.”\textsuperscript{16}

Massey also promoted Canadian art in Britain. He and his wife arranged to have virtually their entire collection of 132 works displayed on the walls of their London home.\textsuperscript{17} According to Massey, they looked "extraordinarily well" and created "a good deal of interest."\textsuperscript{18} They showed innumerable visitors through the collection, Canadian and British,

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{15} Albert H. Robson to Massey, 20 July 1938; VMP, 170/08.
\bibitem{16} Martin Baldwin to Massey, 6 Dec. 1938, and Baldwin to Massey, 22 Nov. 1938; VMP, 170/08.
\bibitem{17} The collection of 132 works (which did not include all the Milnes) was sent to England with the assistance of the National Gallery of Canada; "Pictures Packed by the National Gallery to be Shipped to London, England", with a noted dated 7 Nov. 1935; VMP, 005. There was correspondence between Massey and McCurry on who should bear the cost; Massey acknowledged that there was some question as to the costs of transportation from Port Hope to Ottawa, but he considered the insurance premium on the collection’s voyage overseas to be "clearly a Government responsibility"; Massey to H. O. McCurry, 3 Apr. 1936; VMP, 170. In the end the National Gallery picked up the expense, because they had neglected to issue a statement of costs to Massey until after he had submitted his moving expenses to External Affairs. As McCurry added, the expenses would only be coming from another government department anyway (!); H. O. McCurry to Massey, 14 Apr. 1936; VMP, 170. There are other instances of the National Gallery doing the Masseys "favours"; this seems to have largely taken the form of making contact with artists in the purchase of works of art by the Masseys. To some degree this was acceptable practice at the time (though unethical by contemporary museum standards), particularly given the fact that public galleries then held exhibitions in which art was for sale.
\bibitem{18} Massey to H. O. McCurry, 3 Apr. 1936; VMP, 170.
\end{thebibliography}
including the young B. C. artist Jack Shadbolt. In 1938, the collection garnered an illustrated story in the *Sunday Times*. As early as 1936 Massey received an inquiry from the City and County of Bristol Museum, whose director saw the works and asked to organize a small loan exhibition. Massey declined because he and his wife hoped there would be a future opportunity to display the entire collection.

By the summer of 1937 Eric Brown wrote to Massey that he was seriously thinking about "a really bang-up Canadian show at the Burlington Galleries or somewhere equally good for 1938-39", possibly in the autumn as Massey had suggested. We could call it *A Century of Canadian Art* and include a few of the best of the old things, Kane, Krieghoff and others with possibly some Quebec carving. I believe it would be a great success.

A month later, "*A Century of Canadian Art*" was tentatively booked at the Tate Gallery, London, for the fall of 1938. H. O. McCurry anticipated that "if properly and tactfully done it should make for peace in Canadian art circles [between the "moderns" and more academic artists] and form the basis for some constructive Canadian propaganda in London, and possibly result in adding some worthy Canadian pictures to the Tate collection."

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19 Eric Newton wrote to Massey to introduce Shadbolt; 22 Mar. 1938; VMP, 195. Shadbolt went to England to study art in the fall of 1937 and was among the first class of students at the Euston Road School. He and Alice Massey corresponded during 1938 and 1939; VMP, 366/10.

20 Bissell, *The Imperial Canadian*, 45.

21 H. W. Maxwell to Massey, 2 May 1936; VMP, 180/07.

22 Massey to H. W. Maxwell, 5 May 1936; VMP, 180/07.

23 Eric Brown to Massey, 5 July 1937; VMP, 170/07.

A leitmotif running throughout the Tate show planning was a concern to stall an American exhibition, *Three Centuries of American Art*, from the Museum of Modern Art, New York, then on show in Paris. McCurry wrote to Massey: "If we act now the American exhibition will be allowed to wait". Massey approached Tate director John Rothenstein about the American show and reported to Brown: "Rothenstein appreciates the importance of doing nothing which would take the edge off our Exhibition and I am sure will act in accordance with this view".25 Rothenstein, in turn, wrote to the Museum of Modern Art to decline the show on the grounds that the Tate could not at the present time do justice to an exhibition of its size.26

In December 1937, Massey continued to press the Tate’s commitment to the Canadian show, urging that it take place in the upcoming year. He argued that "it would mean much to the fortunes of contemporary painting in Canada" and "be widely appreciated...as a friendly act" from one of Britain’s major museums.27 In January 1938, Massey reported to McCurry that arrangements for the exhibition had been confirmed. Enthusiating that "this will be a tremendously important event", Massey offered to lend "anything off our own walls" and to do anything personally to assist in its success.28 The National Gallery of Canada, with the help of an advisory committee, selected about 250 works for the show.29 Massey sent Brown

25 Massey to Eric Brown, 5 July 1938; VMP, 170.


28 Massey to H. O. McCurry, 10 Jan. 1938; VMP, 170.

29 Eric Brown stated that it was the National Gallery’s intention to create an advisory committee "consisting of the Presidents of the Royal Canadian Academy, Canadian Group [of Painters], Sculptors’ Society, Water Colour Society; also
a list of his Canadian works, with those he considered the most representative marked, but added: "It would not be a good thing to have too many pictures from our collection -- not that Alice and I mind -- but it might give the exhibition too personal a character."

Massey had strong views about the timing of the exhibition. While Brown considered it advantageous that it commence in September while Canadian visitors to the Empire Exhibition in Glasgow were still in Britain, Massey preferred it to be later. Arguing that visitors stayed away from London until well into the Fall, Massey prevailed and the exhibition opened on October 14. Brown left the matter of publicity and opening arrangements to Massey, who was determined that there be a "well-staged formal opening" and if possible, "the presence of one of the Royal Family." He arranged for the Duke of Kent to open the show.

As High Commissioner, Massey addressed the guests at the

[the] Curator of the Toronto Gallery and [the] Professor of Art at Toronto University, with Clarence Gagnon to represent French Canada." This committee was to select the artists and prioritize their inclusion in the Tate exhibition, while Brown and McCurry were to make the actual selection of works; Brown to Massey, 15 Mar. 1938; NGCA, 9.2M Trustees: Vincent Massey, file 1.

33 Eric Brown to Massey, 23 Feb. 1938; VMP, 170; Massey to Brown, 27 May 1938; VMP, 366/10. Alice Massey was also involved in arrangements for the exhibition, hosting two parties in connection with the exhibition. However, beyond generalities, her role is difficult to profile; Evan Chanteris to Alice and Vincent Massey, 16 Oct. 1938; MFamP, V. 72. The Masseys bought at least one painting from the exhibition, a work by Pegi Nicol MacLeod, School in a Garden (National Gallery of Canada); H. O. McCurry to Massey, 1 Aug. 1939; VMP, 170.
opening of *A Century of Canadian Art*. He pointed out that this was the most comprehensive exhibition of Canadian art yet held. Indeed, it may have been the first attempt at a significant historical overview of Canada's visual arts in a gallery setting.\(^3\) Certainly the other overseas exhibitions of Canadian art, the two Wembley shows in 1924 and 1925 and a 1927 exhibition at the Musée du Jeu de Paume, Paris, had featured largely contemporary material. As Massey stated in the catalogue accompanying the exhibition: "The history of Canadian art is a longer one than many people imagine. By the middle of the 17th century a flourishing school of ecclesiastical craftsmanship had been established in the St. Lawrence valley which brought artists from France to design and decorate with pictures and carvings the churches and seminaries of the Province of Quebec.\(^3\)

While heavily weighted to the 20th century, the exhibition featured five wood carvings from early Quebec and six West Coast Native works of art including three Haida totem poles in argillite and two Chilkat ceremonial robes. It is noteworthy that these pieces were included in an aesthetic rather than the more usual anthropological context, but authorship of the native pieces was not given beyond tribal origin.

Symptomatic, nonetheless, of the rudimentary state of Canadian art history was the absence of a catalogue essay on the history of Canadian art, beyond Massey's foreward of four short paragraphs. On the other hand, the generously illustrated catalogue did include a brief biography of each of the approximately 120 artists in the show, of whom about one

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34 The only published survey of Canadian art to that date was Newton MacTavish, *The Fine Arts in Canada* (Toronto, 1925); while it began with native art, it eclipsed early Quebec art.

fifth were women.

In his opening address, Massey also touched on his favourite themes, that Canada was developing itself "outside the purely material sphere"; that "the great and growing popular interest in the arts" was attributable to modern education; that "if a community attempts to speak in the language of art it must use its own vernacular"; and that "a healthy diversity" was displayed in the work which ranged from "an emphasis on tradition" to the "more experimental".36

He closed by commending cultural exchange between "our two British countries."37

About twelve hundred people attended the opening reception and press reaction was "very favourable".38 During the first two weeks of the exhibition, 22,000 people visited, apparently far in excess of normal attendance. Massey was gratified and praised Eric Brown for this "very impressive demonstration of the work you have been doing on behalf of Canadian art for the last twenty-five years".39 Brown, in turn, hoped that the show would lead to a reciprocal exhibition from the Tate the following year, possibly in November when John Rothenstein was planning a visit to Ottawa.40 According to Brown, Rothenstein's interest in Canadian art was very much indebted to his acquaintance with

36 Massey, "Speech by the High Commissioner for Canada at the Opening of the 'Century of Canadian Art' Exhibition"; VMP, 170.

37 Massey, "Speech" (as High Commissioner for Canada at the opening of A Century of Canadian Art at the Tate Gallery on 14 Oct., 1938); VMP, 170

38 Massey to H. S. Southam (cable), 17 Oct. 1938; VMP, 170.

39 Massey to Eric Brown, 8 Nov. 1938; VMP, 170.

40 Eric Brown to Massey, 19 Nov. 1938; VMP, 170.
the Masseys' personal collection.\textsuperscript{41}

Massey wrote about the show to his son Lionel, offering some insight into his own artistic preferences:

The Canadian Art Exhibition at the Tate is a great success....It is very useful to see Canadian pictures in a setting abroad. In the tranquil atmosphere of the Tate the colours and design of some of the canvases from Canada are pretty strong. Occasionally I think too strong. A number of people have said that our own pictures, those from 12 H. P. G. [Hyde Park Gardens], are to be preferred to many of the others. I think this is true. We never bought extreme ones and there is a considerable contrast between ourselves and some of the more ultra vigorous paintings from elsewhere. However, by and large, the Show is a great achievement for Canadian painting and whatever the public here may think of it -- and for the most part it has been received extremely warmly -- it represents a definitely Canadian movement. The pictures could not have been painted anywhere else.\textsuperscript{42}

The Masseys, who had lent approximately twenty works to the Tate show, continued to promote Canadian art in Britain, often by lending from their collection. In early 1939 they sent twenty-five pictures to the Oxford Art Club, where Massey also gave an address.\textsuperscript{43} The Masseys lent some David Milnes to the City of Gloucester Municipal School of Art and Crafts for an exhibition of Canadian drawings, which Massey opened.\textsuperscript{44} He took the opportunity to speak about Canadian art.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{41} Eric Brown to Massey, 16 June 1938; VMP, 366/10.
\item \textsuperscript{42} Massey to Lionel Massey, 10 Nov. 1938; MFamP, V. 64.
\item \textsuperscript{43} Both their sons, Lionel and Hart, attended Oxford during the Masseys' stay in England. Lionel was president of the New Oxford Art Society (as distinct from the Oxford Art Club), in which capacity he arranged lectures on art with the help of the London Gallery. Lecturers included Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Hungarian-born Constructivist painter and sculptor, English painter John Piper, and art critic Eric Newton; Lionel Massey to the Director of the London Gallery, April 1937; MFamP, V. 64.
\item \textsuperscript{44} City of Gloucester Municipal School of Art and Crafts to Massey, 17 May 1939; VMP, 198.
\end{itemize}
art to the Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Water-Colours at their annual exhibition in February 1938 and the showing of a selection of Canadian water-colours in Edinburgh.45

In a more personal vein and illustrative of his deep affection for Canadian art, he wrote excitedly to Lionel (by now a prisoner of war) about a new National Gallery of Canada initiative in the promotion of Canadian art. In early 1942, the Gallery completed its first film on art, about A. Y. Jackson, in cooperation with John Grierson of the National Film Board of Canada.46 Massey, who thought it "a fascinating film with some very lovely pictures of Canadian landscape and of Jackson's own paintings," showed it as part of the family's Christmas celebrations in 1942.47 The Masseys repeated the experiment the following Christmas with "a colour film about Tom Thomson. Some lovely pictures of the North country with reproductions of his own canvases. It gave the Canadians a touch of homesickness."48

45 Massey, "Address" (to the Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Water-Colours, Edinburgh, 4 Feb. 1938); VMP 173/11.

46 H. O. McCurry to Massey, 18 July 1941; NGCA, 9.2M Trustees: Vincent Massey, file 2. McCurry had initially planned to make the first film on Tom Thomson "while Dr. MacCallum and others associated with Thompson's development were still with us. I got Graham McInnes to do a script and ["Budge"] Crawley [of Crawley Films, Ottawa] to do the film as a speculation for $300.00". The Thompson project was abandoned, however, for the time being; "it was too difficult to do an artist who was dead as a first film...." They began work on a film on Jackson, instead. When Grierson saw the "take", he was "tremendously impressed and offered the services of the Film Board to finish it." However, McCurry received this assistance as a mixed blessing: "The Film Board is not too well organized yet and at times Grierson takes a rather dictatorial attitude which is not wise when an experimental film of this kind is involved"; McCurry to Massey, 18 June 1942; VMP, 387/38.

47 Massey to Lionel Massey 4 Dec. 1942; MFamP, V. 65.

48 Massey to Lionel Massey, 1 Jan. 1944; MFamP, V. 65.
Massey was well-positioned in London not only to promote Canadian art, but to study the dramatic expansion in British support of the arts. Nationalism in Britain was on the rise before and during World War II and expressed itself in a variety of cultural and artistic projects. Topographical and architectural landmarks were documented and new histories of British art emphasized the continuity and distinctiveness of the English heritage. As tensions in Europe mounted and culminated in war, fears intensified that the British way of life, its values, and cultural expressions, were gravely threatened, and the nationalizing agenda strengthened.

Britain, like Canada, was slow to throw state support behind the arts. Unlike France, Germany, Italy, and other European countries, whose governments sponsored cultural initiatives before the turn of the century, Britain had confined its involvement largely to the creation of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 1927, and a quota system for domestic films to protect them against Hollywood’s assault on foreign markets during the 1920s. Reluctantly, in 1934, the government also established the British Council to counter the mounting anti-British rhetoric emanating from Fascist Germany and Italy.


51 The BBC was established initially in 1922 as a private company, but in 1927 was made public. While funded by the government, it was set up as a virtually autonomous entity.

52 For the events leading to its creation, see Philip Taylor, The Projection of Britain, British Overseas Publicity and Propaganda, 1919-1939 (Cambridge, 1984), 125-52.
With the outbreak of World War II, British inhibitions about state-supported art faded measurably. The fine arts were drafted to the task of raising citizen morale. In the early months of the War, the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts [CEMA] was created; in 1946, it became the Arts Council of Great Britain. From ten regional offices in England and with the advice of committees for Scotland and Wales and panels of experts on art, drama and music, the Council undertook an ambitious program of travelling exhibitions, touring concerts, and plays for civilians, endeavouring to respond to local initiatives in the arts. It supported the professional artist and emphasized quality under the slogan "The Best for the Most". The effect on the demand for symphony and other music, ballet and touring theatre throughout Britain was dramatic. The Council's efforts were added to that other artery of state-supported art, entertainment for the troops, which was actively developed under the Entertainments National Service Association (ENSA). By late 1943, ENSA was sponsoring about 3000 performances per week to military personnel throughout Britain.

Despite the dire circumstances of war, the expenditure of public funds on the arts was not begrudged; "a long tradition of state neglect was finally broken" and suspicions about state interference were overcome. By creating an agency that was "nonpolitical in policies and personnel, but dependent on Treasury grants", cultural activity in Britain "flourished with far greater diversity" than before the War.

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53 In 1994, the Arts Council of Great Britain was divided into councils for each of the countries in the United Kingdom.


Massey studied with close attention British initiatives in the field of the arts during the war. His friendship with Kenneth Clark assisted in the process. Clark was a founding member of CEMA, and, as director of the National Gallery, he supported the introduction of music into the Gallery in the form of daily concerts during the War, which drew up to 1000 people at a time. While the rest of the national art collection was secreted away in a Welsh slate mine, he arranged each month to bring to London a single treasured work of art. Massey was impressed by "the long stream of people who came daily to see 'the picture of the month' [which] gave the corner where it was displayed more the atmosphere of a religious shrine than that of a picture gallery", and by the audiences who listened to chamber music during the air raids.57

With renewed conviction, Massey returned to his theme that "art is not merely the pursuit of the dilettante or the high-brow, but has a normal place in the life of the many". In public addresses, he spoke about the new "appetite for pictures and plays and music" throughout England. He championed the role of museums "as positive instruments of education...where scholarship and showmanship can properly walk hand in hand", and lauded the travelling exhibition as a means of extending access to art. He noted the striking effect of the war on art galleries. "Morale is a word which applies not only to a regiment or a ship but to such places as museums as well, and it is good to realize that wartime difficulties have so often, far from depressing the spirit of

57 Massey, "Address" (to the American Association of Museums, Chateau Frontenac, Quebec, 30 May 1947); NGCA, 9.2-M TRUSTEES, Vincent Massey (file 2). The "picture of the month" was displayed during the day and placed in a strong room during the night.
art galleries, actually stimulated their energies."\textsuperscript{58}

On the invitation of Jane Clark (wife of Kenneth), Massey also participated in a British experiment to popularize art in 1943. British artist John Piper was commissioned to decorate a suburban London restaurant, a project of the British Institute of Adult Education and the "Art for the People" Exhibitions.\textsuperscript{59} Vincent Massey described the result as "a very good example of how a commonplace building can be made interesting, even exciting, by the introduction of first class mural painting...."\textsuperscript{60} At the opening, pointing out that over the past year Canada had sent Britain two-thirds of its total cheese production and three-quarters of its bacon and pork, as well as its entire 1942 catch of salmon and herring, he turned to "another form of refreshment". "Many people spend much of their time in railway stations, hotels and restaurants. There is no reason why these places, so drab and depressing, should not be a setting for the work of the artist. I hope that when the war is over we shall not have forgotten the lesson which we can learn from what British artists have done to give distinction to the British Restaurants."\textsuperscript{61}

Massey was eager to enlist the arts in support of the Canadian war effort. As early as 1939, he contacted Clark, who had been made chair of a new British government

\textsuperscript{58} Massey, "Address" (to the National Art-Collections Fund, 21 June 1945); VMP, 192 2/3. The National Art-Collections Fund is now the National Art Collections Fund.

\textsuperscript{59} The British Restaurants were established by the government during the War. Often located in parish halls and apparently unfailingly dismal, they were intended to provide civilians with a supplementary food source (beyond rations) at low prices. Jane Clark was recruited to improve the British Restaurants in Greater London through decoration; Clark, The Other Half, 56.

\textsuperscript{60} Massey to Lionel Massey, 14 Apr. 1943; MFamP, V. 65.

\textsuperscript{61} Massey, "Address" (at the opening of the John Piper murals at the Morden British Restaurant, 7 Apr. 1943); VMP 258/05.
initiative, the War Artists' Advisory Committee, which was created to employ artists in the recording of war.\textsuperscript{62} Massey hoped for a comparable plan for Canada, noting with pride a similar venture during World War I, the Canadian War Memorials, the largest war art program ever undertaken.\textsuperscript{63}

The British war art program quickly proved its worth, yielding among its achievements Henry Moore's absorbing drawings of Londoners sheltering in the underground from air raids, and Graham Sutherland's studies of twisted and collapsed buildings. Canadian newspapers began to herald a large exhibition of British war art, Britain at War, which opened at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, on 22 May 1941, and toured the United States and Canada.\textsuperscript{64} Curated by Kenneth Clark, it comprised approximately 110 pictures from the British war art program, and about 200 photographs depicting the war effort, both civilian and military. The exhibition attracted more publicity than any previous show held at the MOMA.\textsuperscript{65} H. O. McCurry wrote to A. Y. Jackson with regard to its showing at the National Gallery: "I am planning the 'Britain at War' exhibition in such a way as to explode a bomb under the Government on the question of war records. Maybe it will work."\textsuperscript{66}

Massey, equally determined that a war art scheme be realized, investigated the possibility of funding the

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{62} Massey to Kenneth Clark, 20 Dec. 1939; VMP, 246/08.
\item \textsuperscript{63} Heather Robertson, \textit{A Terrible Beauty: The Art of Canada at War} (Toronto, 1977), 14.
\item \textsuperscript{64} "Britain At War Exhibition Soon to Thrill Canadians", \textit{Spectator} (Hamilton), 26 July 1941.
\item \textsuperscript{65} Meirion and Susie Harries, \textit{The War Artists: British Official War Art of the Twentieth Century} (London, 1983), 269.
\item \textsuperscript{66} H. O. McCurry to A. Y. Jackson, 16 Sept. 1941; NGCA, 4.3-D. W. Buchanan.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
initiative through the Massey Foundation. However, he was dissuaded from this course by legal counsel. He approached David Milne to see if he would be willing to paint war pictures in Britain by private arrangement with the Masseys. Not surprisingly, this came to no avail.

McCurry, meanwhile, who had succeeded Eric Brown as director of the National Gallery in 1939, wrote to Massey in July 1941 to say that he was still struggling to activate the plan at his end. The museum situation, generally, was bleak in Canada: the National Gallery had been unable to make any purchases for two years and the government had closed the National Museum. Nonetheless, McCurry adhered to a policy of "no retreat on the cultural front". Despite government, including cabinet, disinterest and even resistance, McCurry remained upbeat. Acknowledging that a Minister of Education was out of the question in Canada and that public opinion would not support a Minister of Fine Art, he argued: "What we need is a Department of Public Information under a minister of vision and energy to get the war job done and afterwards to remain as a virtual Minister of Education and cultural affairs....My nomination would not be hard to guess!"

In September 1941, Will Ogilvie, a private in a Montreal unit then stationed in London, visited Massey and showed him "a few first class sketches." Massey was instrumental in

67 Correspondence between Massey and the National Trust Company, Jan. 1940; VMP, 248/08.

68 Correspondence between Massey and David Milne, July and Sept. 1939; VMP 246/08.

69 H. O. McCurry to Massey, 18 June 1942; VMP, 387/38.


71 Alice and Vincent Massey to Lionel Massey, 11 Sept. 1941; MFamP, V. 65.
Ogilvie's being seconded for painting duties.\textsuperscript{72} However, a year later, in August 1942, Massey was still at a standstill in securing government commitment to a full-fledged war art program: "I have not yet given up hope of getting some war artists over here. It will be tough going but the case is such a good one that I am going to return to the charge shortly."\textsuperscript{73} The military, itself, had long recognized the importance of fostering morale through music in the form of marching bands and tattoos and theatricals. Nonetheless, not until November 1942 was a Canadian war art scheme finally hammered out. Two committees were formed, composed of artists and representatives of the armed forces, one under McCurry in Ottawa, the other under Massey in London.

Even with the approval to proceed, the program was not without its problems. As Alice Massey put it, some of the artists "are all over the shop". Massey met with war artists Carl Schaefer and Charles Comfort to discuss the project, seeking to enlist, in particular, Comforts' "organising, business-like mind".\textsuperscript{74} Artists who were already in the military were selected for the program first. In total approximately thirty artists, among them Molly Lamb Bobak, Alex Colville, Lawren P. Harris, Edwin Holgate, E. J. Hughes, Jack Nichols, Will Ogilvie, and Jack Shadbolt, were commissioned for the war art program.

The Masseys and Clarks saw to it that the artists met their counterparts in the British war art program, as Alice recounted to Lionel in December 1943:

The Canadian artists that are over here doing special work had a little meeting in our room the other morning,

\textsuperscript{72} Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, n. d. (Sept. 1941); MFamP, V. 65.

\textsuperscript{73} Massey to H. O. McCurry, 14 Aug. 1942; NGCA 9.2-M Trustees, Vincent Massey, file 2.

\textsuperscript{74} Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 26 Aug. 1943; MFamP, V. 65.
with Father and Kenneth, with all their pictures
distributed round the room, and Kenneth, Father says, in
the most charming way, criticised and told them what he
thought of each one. He evidently did it so well that no
one was hurt and everyone was pleased. Then, in the
afternoon, we had a cocktail party, where the Canadians
met those who were doing the same kind of work amongst
the English artists. Kenneth and Jane came, and it was
a great success.75

Jane Clark also arranged for a group of the Canadian war
artists to attend the Churchill Club, which had been
established in the summer of 1943 to provide Canadian and
American military personnel with opportunities to experience
British art, music, and literature. In December 1943, the
Canadians were invited to attend an evening in which "a
brain's trust" of Henry Moore, Paul Nash, John Piper, and
Graham Sutherland, with Clark in the chair, spoke about modern
English painting.76

An exhibition of Canadian war art, chosen by Massey and
Clark, was held at the National Gallery in London in early
1944.77 Massey arranged that it be opened by the Duchess of
Kent. The National Gallery also kept one room in its War Art
Exhibition space for the long-term display of Canadian war
pictures. Exhibitions in Canada followed. In the catalogue
foreword to a 1946 exhibition of Canadian war art organized by
the National Gallery of Canada and circulated across the
country78, Massey explained some of the history of the
enterprise. While regretful about the project's delayed
beginnings, he took some solace in the fact that the first

75 Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 2 Dec. 1943; MFamP, V. 65.
76 Others participants were Julian Huxley, Desmond MacCarthy,
Stephen Spender, and W. J. Turner; Massey, "Postscript".
77 Massey to Captain the Lord Herbert, St. James's Palace, 8
Jan. 1944; VMP 192 2/3.
78 It showed at the National Gallery of Canada from 10 May to
three years of the Canadian war effort were not entirely unrecorded. The War Artists’ Advisory Committee in Britain had presented to Canada 74 pictures by British artists working alongside Canadian troops abroad.  

The 1946 exhibition included both sketches done in the field and larger, finished pictures. This, too, was partly the result of Massey’s intervention. He had written with urgency to Mackenzie King in November 1945 to impress upon him that, unless some provision was made for the war artists to complete their assignment, they would leave the military without working up large-scale canvases for the national collections. The government was persuaded to provide for the artists’ completion of the war record as civilians briefly under the supervision of the National Gallery.

Massey was involved with at least one further project in support of Canadian art and the war effort and that was an active role in the distribution of a large number of reproductions of Canadian art to military personnel overseas. The product of a scheme launched by the National Gallery of Canada in the mid-1930s, and expanded to accommodate the demands of the war, the reproductions were delivered by the High Commission to the War Office in London for distribution to the British army. By the end of 1944, McCurry had received a request for prints for all the R.A.F. stations from Gibraltar to India and asked Massey to function as the liaison

79 Massey, "Foreward"; in Exhibition of Canadian War Art (Ottawa, 1946).

80 Massey to W. L. M. King, 16 Nov. 1945; VMP, 387/38.

81 Massey to the Captain Lord Herbert (St. James’s Palace), 3 Feb. 1944; VMP, 192/2-3. For an examination of the National Gallery’s art reproduction scheme, see Joyce Zemans, "Nationhood, Identity and the Sampson Matthews Silkscreen Project", Universities Art Association of Canada Annual Conference, Nov. 1998.
in their delivery.\textsuperscript{82} Approximately 17,400 prints in total, financed with assistance from private donors, were distributed free of charge in the course of the war.\textsuperscript{83}

Massey, himself, assumed an increasingly strategic position in the London art scene. In May 1941, he was appointed a member of the board of the National Gallery, London. In Kenneth Clark's opinion, it was "a brilliant appointment, the best that has been made for years".\textsuperscript{84} Massey was "thrilled", while Alice Massey speculated that it was the first time that a Canadian had held the position.\textsuperscript{85} In 1943, Massey was selected by his fellow board members to be chair of the National Gallery. As he told Harry Southam, he felt he could not refuse such an opportunity to "be a link between Canadian and British activities in this particular sphere."\textsuperscript{86}

The National Gallery's activities were greatly circumscribed by the War and the trustees only met a couple of times a year. With the collection in hiding in Wales, the Gallery was essentially without its lifeblood, although it did host temporary exhibitions, notably the "picture of the month". In April 1942 and the summer of 1945, it also displayed the wartime acquisitions of the Tate Gallery, which had been bombed in September 1940 and remained closed for the duration of the war. Massey spoke on both occasions.

Now in his capacity as chair of the National Gallery and working in concert with director Kenneth Clark, he addressed

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{82} H. O. McCurry to Massey, 8 Dec. 1944; NGCA, 9.2M Trustees: Vincent Massey, file 2.
\item \textsuperscript{83} Jackson, A Painter's Country, 143.
\item \textsuperscript{84} Kenneth Clark to Massey, 16 May 1941; VMP 371/05.
\item \textsuperscript{85} Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 30 May 1941; MFamP, V. 65.
\item \textsuperscript{86} Massey to H. S. Southam, 1 June 1943; VMP, 371/05.
\end{itemize}
a "renewed attempt to have an exhibition of modern American painting in the Gallery". The Royal Academy had rejected the suggestion outright. Clark wrote: "I think that we can get out of it by saying...that immediately the war ends, it is our first duty to get as many as possible of our pictures back on the walls of the Gallery, and that we should feel bound to cancel any engagements in favour of this over-riding consideration. Apparently the Wallace Collection said this to the Americans and it has choked them off." Massey concurred and pointed out that the Gallery had already adopted a policy to reject "national exhibitions under official patronage" as being "invariably unadventurous". While this was an entirely valid point, it appears to have camouflaged a certain British-Canadian hostility to American art. Massey obviously drew a distinction between "national" exhibitions in general and "A Century of Canadian Art", which, while promoting the art of Canada, was, it is true, far from a government-organized show.

In March 1942 Massey was also made a trustee of the Tate Gallery. The National Gallery and the Tate were closely affiliated; indeed, the mandate and autonomy of the Tate in relation to the National Gallery were subjects of ongoing debate. Among the special projects that Massey undertook, indirectly as a trustee of the two institutions, was an examination of their relative national functions. In April 1944, Massey was appointed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the President of the Board of Education to be chair of a committee on the functions of the Tate and National Galleries and, with reference to paintings, of the Victoria and Albert Museum. The other members of the committee were the directors

87 Kenneth Clark to Massey, 3 Dec. 1943; VMP, 371/05.
88 Kenneth Clark to Massey, 3 Dec. 1943; VMP, 371/05.
89 Massey to Kenneth Clark, 7 Dec. 1943; VMP, 371/05.
of the museums concerned, including Kenneth Clark and John Rothenstein. They first met in July of 1944 and their final report, dated 29 December 1944, appeared in early 1945.

The Committee found that the national art collections were in a state of confusion, with overlapping functions and little coordination, the product of great growth and minimal overall planning. Their report traced the history of the idea of a national collection of British art to as early as 1841, but pointed out that little had yet been done to realize such an entity. In 1897, while the Tate Gallery had been designated the national gallery of British art and some paintings were transferred to it from the National Gallery, it remained a collection of contemporary art. So-called masterpieces remained in the National Gallery, which housed art from diverse national schools and periods. The task at hand was to conceive of British art in terms of historical continuity, and the Committee recommended that the Tate become a truly "National Gallery of British Art of all periods."  

90 Others were Leigh Ashton, Sir Eric MacLagan, and The Honourable Jasper Ridley.

91 A report on the Committee's recommendations was then prepared by the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries, dated 21 Dec. 1945, and the two were published as The Report of the Committee on the Functions of the National Gallery and Tate Gallery and, in respect of Paintings, of the Victoria and Albert Museum together with a Memorandum thereon by the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries (London, May 1946); TGA.

92 The report also tackled the Tate's mandate as a national collection of modern foreign art, noting that contemporary foreign art was virtually unrepresented in the national collections. While it recommended that this area of its mandate also be strengthened, it emphasized that the two collections be managed separately; Report of the Committee on the Functions of National Gallery and Tate Gallery, and, in respect of Paintings, of the Victoria and Albert Museum (Confidential Copy), 7; VMP, 387/03.
The Massey report pointed damningly to the fact that the Tate had not received "one penny directly from public funds towards the purchase of works of art". The absence of any assistance by the State in this country in the public acquisition of examples either of British art or of modern art is a fact which would appear to reflect, however unfairly, upon the national attitude towards the study, enjoyment and encouragement of the arts as a whole. Comparisons with the Government's policy in this matter and that of other nations are extremely unflattering." The Committee recommended a yearly expenditure of £5,000, roughly the equivalent of the National Gallery's annual acquisition grant.

The Massey report also took up the issue of loans from the national collections. It praised the "striking process of decentralisation" that was taking place in the realm of the arts during the war and urged that it not be allowed to slacken in the post-war period. "We consider that the national collections should play an essential part in maintaining and spreading the interest thus aroused, and that, by whatever machinery, a liberal and systematic policy of loans should be developed after the war." 94

On the subject of foreign loans, the Committee noted the great increase in activity in this area since the last war and anticipated its continuation at the end of World War II. "Art exhibitions are now an established feature of international life; by assembling in one place works which could otherwise neither be studied and enjoyed together nor compared, they serve a valuable educational and artistic purpose." Regardless of the motives that may inspire a national government to send art abroad, the Committee argued, it was

93 Report of the Committee on the Functions of the National Gallery and the Tate Gallery, 15.

94 Report of the Committee on the Functions of the National Gallery and the Tate Gallery, 21.
essential that the art always be of the highest quality. Following such a policy would contribute to "a knowledge and appreciation of the finest British achievement in the sphere of art". A major theme of British state involvement in the arts was the substitution of quality for propaganda, partly on the understanding that quality, itself, was a far more persuasive means of engaging the recipient. Massey, of course, would have wholeheartedly endorsed the emphasis on quality, and have been strengthened in his resolve to map this course at home.

Massey subsequently answered for the report in person at a meeting of the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries on 5 December 1945. The Massey Report's primary recommendations, that the Tate Gallery be recognized as a national gallery of British Art of all periods, and that the Tate function as an independent institution, were resoundingly endorsed. It was not until 1954, however, that a bill resolving the Tate's constitutional status finally passed the House of Lords and received Royal Assent.

Even though Massey's support of cultural projects was rarely token, it is possible, in this instance, that he was more in the nature of an able mouthpiece than a leader long steeped in the Tate's thorny struggle for mission and

95 Report of the Committee on the Functions of the National Gallery and the Tate Gallery, 22.

96 When Massey was notified of the bill's passage, his correspondent wrote: "It is only 8 1/2 years since your original report was published, which was the inspiration for this measure, and I think we should score this as rapid and satisfactory progress in this very controversial and delicate operation"; The Rt. Hon. R. A. Butler to Massey, 3 Dec. 1954; VMP, 386/07. A further indication of the trust and respect that Massey had secured in art circles in London was his appointment to the British Committee on the Preservation and Restoration of Works of Art, Archives, and Other Material in Enemy Hands, set up in 1944; Massey, What's Past Is Prologue, 377.
autonomy. At the least, he was acutely sensitive to issues of nationhood and brought a persona of sympathetic impartiality to the task of adjudicating the claims of the various museums. Above all, his experience as chair provided him with a significant opportunity to become thoroughly acquainted with the issues surrounding the role of the national collections in a British context. It must also have reinforced his already firm belief in the role of history. While perhaps relatively unquestioning of the choices that are made in the weaving of an historical narrative, he was extremely cognisant of the weight that such a narrative lent to national consciousness and its legitimization of the national will to survive. The struggle to forge a fully-fledged national gallery of British art was one which Massey could wholly endorse, and it surely served to strengthen his own conviction about the role of memory in Canada's bid for self-preservation.

The Masseys' acquaintance with the London art scene also included a growing familiarization with modern British art. As the nationalistic climate in Britain mounted in response to war, the visual arts witnessed the rise of a loose group of painters labelled the English Neo-Romantics, whose lineage was traced to the early 19th century Romantic painters and nature poets (notably Constable, Turner, Wordsworth and Coleridge). The reputation of these latter artists had been eclipsed in the early 20th century by the taste for modern French art (Impressionism, Post-Impressionism and Cubism), but was now restored.

The new generation of British artists (Graham Sutherland, Henry Moore, John Piper, and Barbara Hepworth), as well as the older Paul Nash, among others, and critics, notably Herbert Read, would unapologetically dwell upon the British landscape and what was understood to be the British experience. With the outbreak of World War II, contact with the continent became tenuous, and the self-reflective character of much
British art became more pronounced. This modern British art, unreservedly nationalistic, was further evidence of the viability of art as local expression, a message welcomed in the context of the hegemony of the so-called international style, hitherto emanating particularly from France. The Masseys were witness to the growing excitement surrounding English contemporary art, which was increasingly recognized as of international stature while retaining its local character.

At what point exactly the Masseys devised a plan to assemble a collection of modern British art for the people of Canada remains unclear. In March 1938, Massey wrote to the National Trust Company in Toronto, which managed Massey Foundation business, explaining that he and Alice wanted to spend approximately $5000 a year to buy contemporary English painting for the National Gallery of Canada. Seeking to determine whether such a benefaction fell within the Foundation's scope, he pointed out: "it is possible at the present moment to buy very interesting examples of contemporary work here at very reasonable prices. The National Gallery has to spend its own resources first on Canadian contemporary work, and secondly on old masters, which leaves no funds available for the purpose we have in mind. A few thousand dollars a year for a few years would give the Gallery a very interesting collection of work which would appreciate rapidly in value. The fact that I am a trustee of the National Gallery makes it possible to arrange the matter very simply." 97 The National Trust confirmed that the gift would qualify as a legal charitable donation, and by May the Masseys were drawing on the Foundation's account for purchases of modern British art for the Gallery. This was one of two projects funded by the Massey Foundation during the

97 Massey to H. V. Laughton, National Trust Company, 29 Mar. 1938; VMP, 250.
Eric Brown, and his successor, H. O. McCurry were very enthusiastic about the plan. Brown, English by birth and early training, and still reasonably well-connected with the London art scene had long been keen on cultivating connections with Britain. He wrote to the Masseys in September 1938 commending their purchases to date, and making some recommendations. He guided them to the work of Philip Wilson Steer, whom he described as "one of the most outstanding landscape painters of his day", pointing out that the Gallery did not own a single sample from his oeuvre. They purchased a distinguished example of Steer's work, _The Severn Valley_.

The Masseys also relied heavily on the advice of certain dealers, in particular, Richard Smart and Dudley Tooth at Arthur Tooth and Sons, Ltd. As Alice stated in 1942, "that firm have [sic] the knack of getting the really lovely things, and I always trust them". As well as guiding many of their purchases, Tooth arranged for Augustus John to paint a portrait of Vincent Massey in June 1938.

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98 Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 25 Oct. 1942; MFamP, V. 65. Vincent, Alice, Lionel, and Hart Massey were the four trustees of the Foundation in 1946; Massey to H. O. McCurry, 29 Mar. 1946; NGCA, Gifts: Bequests/Oils 1.71-M Presented by Massey Foundation. The other project was Garnons, a convalescent home for Canadian officers about 150 miles west of London; Bissell, _The Imperial Canadian_, 154-59.

99 Eric Brown to Alice and Vincent Massey, 24 Sept. 1938; VMP, 250.

100 Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 21 Oct. 1942; MFamP, V. 65.

101 Dudley Tooth to Alice Massey, 8 June 1938; VMP, 198. Others from whom they purchased art were the Redfern Gallery, Ernest Brown & Phillips Ltd./The Leicester Galleries, Zwemmers Gallery, and the Barbizon House, as well as P. & D. Colnaghi & Co. Ltd. On occasion they also bought from Roland, Browse and Delbanco (from whom they acquired a William Nicholson), and the Matthiesen Gallery (Gwen John's _Young Woman in Grey Cloak_). John Piper's _House of Commons_, 1941, AYE Chamber came
The Masseys embarked on the collecting of modern British art with obvious relish. The Massey Foundation collection was by no means a clinical assemblage of works simply to propagandize British interests in Canada. As early as 1936 Alice Massey admitted that, while Canadian art compared very favourably with modern British art, "quite frankly, a great deal of the new work here gives a tremendous thrill. The best Duncan Grants are marvellous and there are all sorts of new and younger schools coming to the fore that are intensely interesting."\(^{102}\)

Both Alice and Vincent Massey spent much time in the selection process, acquainting themselves with the art market, consulting private dealers, viewing exhibitions at the Royal Academy, National Gallery, and elsewhere, and visiting artists' studios. An exhibition of Sickert's work at the National Gallery was a revelation to Massey, who remarked on the artist's versatility, the "lovely pictures of an old music hall in Camden Town, full of warmth and colour, moonlight scenes in Dieppe, numerous studies of cottage life....This exhibition is a perfect joy." The couple also studied and accumulated catalogues and consulted with those knowledgable in the field.

They frequently wrote to their son Lionel with excitement about the purchases they were making. They were pleased with an early Augustus John for both its "historical-biographical value" and aesthetic properties.\(^{103}\) They bought a Matthew Smith nude, which they were persuaded was "one of the very

\(^{102}\) Alice Massey to Will Ogilvie, 13 Jan. 1936; VMP, 366/10.

\(^{103}\) This was John's *An Equihen Fisher Girl* (c. 1900, oil on canvas, 45.7 x 38.1 cm); Massey to Lionel Massey, 30 July 1941; MFamP, V. 65.
best". For their son Lionel they conducted a sustained search for a Sickert and found, with Dick Smart's help, "the Sickert of all Sickerts", The Rialto, Venice. According to Alice, her husband was ecstatic about the purchase and he described it in loving detail to his son.  

While the vast majority of pictures they bought were for the Massey Foundation gift, they acquired the occasional work for themselves and quite a number for Lionel, who had decided to use his accumulating army pay for the purchase of art and his enforced inaction as a prisoner of war to study art history. By letter, he instructed his parents and brother, Hart, on his acquisition and book preferences. Alice recruited assistance from Kenneth Clark, Dick Smart, Dudley Tooth, Ben Nicholson, probably the leading British abstract artist of the period, and John Rothenstein, in drawing up a list of books and obtaining leads on where they might be found.

104 Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 3 Sept, 1941; MFamP, V. 65.

105 Massey to Lionel Massey, 28 May 1942; MFamP, V. 65.

106 The works they acquired for Lionel were mostly British and included examples by Augustus John, David Jones, Paul Nash, Sickert, Gilbert Spencer, Ivon Hitchens, and Tristram Hillier. For themselves, they bought works by Augustus John, Matthew Smith, and Frances Hodgkins, while Hart Massey acquired at least one painting by Matthew Smith; "Pictures (Personal)", a typed list of works of art among Massey's London papers, undated but with a handwritten addendum, Nov. 1944; VMP, 238/1.

107 Clark explained that there were very few good books in English; most were in German. This, in itself, spoke volumes about the study of art in England at the time. Nevertheless, Clark helped the Masseys follow the book auctions. In 1944, for example, they acquired art books from the collection of Michael Sadler, one of the leading collectors of contemporary art in Britain. While some of the books were mailed to Lionel by Zwemmers, they kept many in London for Lionel's return; Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 15 Mar. 1944 and n.d. (Apr. 1942); MFamP, V. 65.
Massey encouraged his son’s plan to employ his time studying art history, and reiterated the virtues of a liberal arts education: "Reading as you do, making notes and keeping a commonplace book and thinking about what you read, turns reading into a very important form of education. Forgive all this preaching. It must sound very boring, but I am so anxious that you should not feel that you are losing time. A liberal education is derived from two sources -- the men you meet and the books you read. Your present existence offers you men and books and little else, and I know you are taking full advantage of both."\(^{108}\)

The Masseys prided themselves on the care with which their acquisitions were made for the family and for the Foundation. When Massey wrote to inform Harry Southam of the plan to assemble "the Massey Collection of Contemporary British Painting" for the National Gallery, he added: "I need not say that this little idea of ours has given both Alice and me great pleasure and we are selecting the pictures with all possible care".\(^ {109}\) Elsewhere, he stated: "There is no doubt that it is never worth while to buy anything for any collection which is not first-rate".\(^ {110}\) They adopted the policy of only acquiring works that they both agreed upon, and "when in doubt, don’t"\(^ {111}\).

Their early choices were by older, twentieth-century British artists, like Philip Wilson Steer, Walter Sickert, Augustus John, J. D. Innes, Christopher Wood, Matthew Smith, and Paul Nash, all well-established by the time of the

\(^{108}\) Massey to Lionel Massey, 7 July, 1943; MFamP, V. 65.

\(^ {109}\) Massey to H. O. Southam, 28 April 1939; VMP, 192 2/3.

\(^{110}\) Massey to Lionel Massey, 30 Jan. 1942; MFamP, V. 65.

\(^ {111}\) Massey to Lionel Massey, 30 Jan. 1942; MFamP, V. 65.
Masseys' arrival in England.\textsuperscript{112} Massey's interest in war art manifested itself as well, especially while he was still struggling to interest the Canadian government in a war art scheme.\textsuperscript{113} They bought "a very interesting documentary picture by Burich of the evacuation of Dunkirk"; Clark, who had an option on it for the War Artists Exhibition, "gave way" for the Masseys.\textsuperscript{114} They bought "two amazing Johns", one of Lawrence of Arabia as an airman\textsuperscript{115} and "two lovely Paul Nashes, one called 'Night Fighter' and the other 'Day Fighter'".\textsuperscript{116}

With the assistance of Dick Smart, they also acquired a large drawing by Augustus John dating from World War I. John had made the drawing as a cartoon for a mural project, The Canadians Opposite Lens, that was never completed. In 1941 Massey notified the National Trust Company, on behalf of the Massey Foundation, that he and Alice had decided to purchase the drawing, some 12 by 40 feet (fig. 28).\textsuperscript{117}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{112} This is confirmed by an interim list of works purchased by mid-1939; Massey to John Rothenstein, 6 June 1939; VMP, 250.
\item \textsuperscript{113} Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 3 Apr. 1941; MFamP, V. 65.
\item \textsuperscript{114} Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 28 Mar. 1941; MFamP, V. 65.
\item \textsuperscript{115} Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 9 Sept. 1941; MFamP, V. 65. The painting is entitled Portrait of T. E. Lawrence as Aircraftman Shaw; Lawrence took the name "Shaw" in 1922.
\item \textsuperscript{116} Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 9 Sept. 1941; MFamP, V. 65.
\item \textsuperscript{117} They intended that the cartoon be installed on the north wall of the Great Hall at Hart House. The price was £3000, and was to be paid in three annual installments. The drawing was stored at Garnons until the end of the war; Massey to W. O'Connor, 18 Feb. 1941; VMP, 250. By 1946, the Masseys' plan for the cartoon changed. Massey contacted H. O. McCurry to say that they intended to present it to a Canadian institution, but had not decided which one. "We will certainly see to it that it will not suffer the fate of the
As the collection developed the Masseys became somewhat
more adventuresome, in part, under the influence of Kenneth
Clark, whose counsel they frequently received. Clark was a
strong advocate of modern British art, particularly of the
Neo-Romantics and the Euston Road School (William Coldstream,
Victor Pasmore, Claude Rogers, Lawrence Gowing and others), a
realist school with some socialist overtones.118

As early as November 1938, the Masseys and Clarks dined
and chatted about modern British art.119 Jane Clark
followed the evening up with a note: "the artists we told you
about are Victor Passmore [sic], William Coldstream, Lawrence
Gowring [sic] & more modern Graham Sutherland. Kenneth thinks
all four very good. You could see Graham's things in our
house, as he lives in Kent, & if you lunched with us we could
take you round to the others' studios which are in Fitzroy St.
behind our home." She added: "I sent you a card of Graham
Sutherland's china exhibition...which opened yesterday. The
things are lovely & very cheap, & keep him going when he can't
sell pictures."120 Kenneth Clark wrote with prices for the

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118 For Clark's friendship with and patronage of Sutherland,
Piper, Moore, and Victor Pasmore, see Kenneth Clark, A Self-
Portrait: Another Part of the Wood (London, c. 1974, 1985),
254-56; and The Other Half, 42-43. The Sutherlands lived with
the Clarks for two years during the War. See also Dennis

119 Alice Massey was not entirely uncritical of the Clarks:
"I sometimes think, although I like him very much, he is
rather arrogant and intolerant. I think they have made the
mistake of keeping too much in touch with the extremely smart
world in London"; Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 18 Nov. 1938;
MFamP, V. 64.

120 Jane Clark to Alice Massey, n. d. (Nov. 1938?); VMP,
193/27.
works in which the Masseys had taken an interest, two paintings by Coldstream (one of Bolton, fig. 36, and another a portrait head of Miss Anreg), as well as two small works by Sutherland (fig. 34). The Masseys acquired all four works, thanking Clark for introducing them to this group of artists.

Alice Massey, perhaps, was the more daring of the two. When Kenneth Clark praised a Modigliani at the Leicester Galleries, Alice was keen to purchase it for themselves, but Vincent Massey would not budge. "I cannot help thinking that there is nothing very permanent about his work." It was Alice who sought to add a Gwen John to the collection. She reported in July 1943 that Dudley Tooth had found one that he wanted them to have a look at. "I have always longed for the Collection to have one of hers. Nobody knows where most of them are". It would not be until the late 1940s that the Masseys would manage to secure one for the collection (fig. 31).

Despite his emphasis on quality and his support of modern art, there remained a certain conservatism about Vincent Massey's taste. This is suggested, for example, by a comment he made about the leading British sculptor of the period, Henry Moore, whose work, while generally abstract, made reference to natural forms. Massey got to know him as a fellow member of the Tate's board: "He does not look like the sort of man who would produce what he produces -- in other

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121 Kenneth Clark to Alice Massey, 27 July 1939; VMP, 192 2/3.
122 Massey to Kenneth Clark, 2 Aug. 1939; VMP, 192 2/3.
123 Massey to Lionel Massey, 30 Jan. 1942; MFamP, V. 65.
124 Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 28 July 1943; MFamP, V. 65.
words he looks quite sane."\(^{125}\)

Massey expressed some of his own views on the practice of collecting in a letter of January 1944. The Leicester Galleries had exhibited the distinguished collection of Michael Sadler and it had generated a great deal of interest. "Much of the work was bought when the artists were very young and entirely unknown. It took a good deal of courage on Sadler's part to make these purchases, but, on the other hand, the expenditure was in most cases trifling compared to what some of the works are fetching to-day. It shows what a discerning collector can do if he is prepared to trust his own instincts and willing to make a mistake now and then."\(^{126}\)

By the end of their stay in London, while their collection had grown to be about half by well-established early British moderns and half by the younger generation of Piper, Sutherland, Moore, Coldstream, Pasmore, Hitchens, and Hillier, it continued to be fairly narrowly circumscribed by the Masseys' middle-of-the-road taste. The examples they chose were often very fine, but certain artists, Augustus John and Paul Nash in particular, were disproportionately represented. And there were some notable omissions; they stayed away from abstract artists, "ultra-moderns", such as Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth, and avoided the intensely spiritual figure pieces by Stanley Spencer, the highly realist work of Lucien Freud, and the disturbing figurative work of Francis Bacon (though in fairness, it was not until the later 1940s that his reputation gained a real footing).

In part, this was a reflection of their own preferences, and in part it was a product of what they felt would appeal to a wide audience. Writing to H. S. Southam, Massey stated: "we have tried to build up the collection on broad lines so

125 Massey to Lionel Massey, 23 Apr. 1942; MFamP, V. 65.

126 Massey to Lionel Massey, Jan. 1944; MFamP, V. 65.
that it will appeal to various tastes, but we have rather emphasised certain painters, such as John, Steer, Sickert, who have a wide appeal."\textsuperscript{127}

John Rothenstein wrote to the Masseys as early as May 1939 asking to make an exhibition of their growing collection of British art.\textsuperscript{128} Massey replied in the negative for the time being, but expressed hope that when the collection was more developed it might be shown.\textsuperscript{129} The collection opened at the Tate on 10 April 1946. The exhibition marked the re-opening of the Gallery after partial completion of repairs to bomb damage. The works, some stored in Toronto, others at Garnons, were assembled and totalled seventy-one pieces.

Rothenstein, who lamented the departure from Britain of a number of masterworks, observed that Canada was "the only dominion where modern English painting can be properly studied and enjoyed on the spot".\textsuperscript{130} English art critic Eric Newton wrote a press release for the United Kingdom Information Office in Ottawa in April 1946, remarking upon the unusual nature of the Massey Foundation collection, being "neither a national collection nor a specially planned exhibition gathered together from many different sources", but rather the effort of one family intent on assembling a survey of modern

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\textsuperscript{127} Massey to H.S. Southam, 29 Mar. 1946; NGCA 1.71-M Gifts/Bequests: Presented by the Massey Foundation.

\textsuperscript{128} John Rothenstein to Massey, 26 May 1939; VMP, 250.

\textsuperscript{129} Massey to John Rothenstein, 6 June and 13 June 1939; VMP, 250.

\textsuperscript{130} National Gallery of Canada, The Massey Collection of English Painting (Ottawa, 1946). This catalogue is to be distinguished from the one that accompanied the Tate showing of the exhibition, A Selection of Contemporary English Painting (London, 1946).\end{flushright}
British art. There is no doubt that the gift was a noteworthy, even curious project. While actively enjoying the works they collected, the gift was clearly an act of cultural propagandizing. But it was not a deferential and colonized tribute to a parent country; rather the collection was an effort to use art to promote closer relations within the Commonwealth and between the two countries, to evoke a common purpose and set of values, and, less directly, to affirm a benign nationalism. It was also significant that they were contemporary works. Not only had this made them more affordable, it was important to Massey to forge connections with modern Britain.

In March 1946, Massey announced the gift to Prime Minister Mackenzie King. He explained that there were seventy-odd canvases by 35 artists, only six of whom were until then represented in the National Gallery of Canada's collection. He hastened to add: "Although they are all from the field of contemporary painting, few, if any, of the canvases are modern in the extreme sense. They have been purchased with a view to giving pleasure to the general picture-loving public". King, whose relationship with Massey had gone from enthusiastic to civil to hostile over the years, privately belittled the gift as "self-glorification". Formally, he thanked the Masseys. McCurry reported that the Prime Minister had spoken of the Masseys' "magnificent


132 W. L. Mackenzie King, Diaries, 20 Apr. 1946; NAC, W. L. M. King Papers, MG 26J; quoted in Bissell, The Imperial Canadian, 173.

133 W. L. M. King to Massey, 10 Apr. 1946; UTA, VMP, 250.
gift to the National Gallery” and was "extremely pleased".134

On 1 October 1946, the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Canada formally accepted what constituted its largest gift to date, the 75 pictures to be known as the Massey collection of English painting. It rendered the institution probably the largest holder of modern British art outside Britain. The catalogue for the exhibition included an essay by John Rothenstein, who told the story of how a generation of English artists had affirmed a peculiarly native tendency:

The salient characteristics of recent English painting, as would be evident to anybody who visited this collection, are, on the one hand, a liberation from the purely plastic and inevitably restrictive theories of Roger Fry, whose teaching mirrored the influence upon English art of Fauvism and Cubism, and on the other, a new realism deriving its force largely from Sickert and thus from Impressionism. Those artists such as Sutherland, Moore, Piper and David Jones who have freed themselves most completely from the ideals of independent French art at the beginning of the century as interpreted by Roger Fry, display an imaginative tendency that can be conveniently described as neo-romantic....135

Rothenstein’s view of British art was premised on the notion that Romanticism was peculiar to the British Isles. H. S. Southam, in the foreword to the catalogue, reiterated the theme of nativism, declaring that the particular virtue of the English model was "above all of a confidence in, and a sympathetic understanding of the land and people of their native country".136 Press material described contemporary British painting as "one of the most interesting schools of


today", and also dwelt on British resistance to international dogma.  

One condition in the contract between the Massey Foundation and the National Gallery of Canada was that the collection be exhibited extensively across Canada. Massey had emphasized this point in his correspondence with King, giving two reasons, first, so that as many Canadians as possible could see the works, and, second, so that the National Gallery's lack of permanent quarters could be circumvented. He added: "There is great expansion in this country [England] in the loan of pictures from the national collections in London to provincial galleries and such a development would seem even more advisable in a country with such a dispersed population as ours."  

The collection began its Canadian tour at the National Gallery, at a gala opening on October 30, 1946, attended by the Governor-General and a host of dignitaries. In the Ottawa Evening Citizen the next day, Dr. R. H. Hubbard again struck the central theme: "The Massey Collection bears out the importance of a national school of painting even during a period when the world prefers to think of its art as international."  


139 Massey to W. L. M. King, 18 Mar. 1946; VMP, 250. He pressed the point home in a second letter to King: "We hope that it [the collection] will give pleasure to the large picture-loving public which is now to be found throughout the country"; Massey to King, 18 Mar. 1946; VMP, 250.  

The exhibition travelled across Canada, to Montreal in January 1947 and then to Toronto, Edmonton, Vancouver, Regina, London, Winnipeg, Windsor, Sackville, Kingston, and Port Hope, not returning until early 1949. It was consistently greeted with favourable, even enthusiastic press notices and attendance figures. The longevity of its tour is suggestive of its demand. From Vancouver, Bess Harris wrote to Alice Massey: "We visited the British Paintings in the Art Gallery again and again -- they are wonderful." Critic Graham McInnes wrote: "The importance of the gift is enormous...; he singled out, in particular, Graham Sutherland for his "brooding" evocation of the "nightmare...in which we live" and John Piper, for his "brilliant and terrifying use of bold color and the abstract forms suggested by burnt buildings...." He contrasted the "joyous, protesting and extrovert" character of Canadian art with the "sober", and introspective nature of British painting.

In early 1949, eleven works were added to the National Gallery’s Massey collection, the fruit of the Masseys’ visit to London in the fall of 1948. They were chosen, according to Massey, to fill in some of the collection’s gaps and included a couple of works by Henry Moore, a Gwen John, another Wilson Steer, and two pieces by William Scott.

141 Bess Harris to Alice Massey, 11 Apr. 1947; MFamP, V. 53.
142 Graham McInnes, "British Art Presented to National Gallery", Saturday Night, V. 62, no. 9 (2 Nov. 1946), 16.
143 Massey to H. O. McCurry, 4 Feb. 1949; VMP, 391/09. A further two works (Duncan Grant, Market Day and Paul Nash, Solstice of the Sunflower) were added to the collection on 22 May 1952. The Massey Foundation gave three additional works on 16 Apr. 1958, which did not constitute part of the Massey Collection of English Painting; E. McLaren, Memo to file, 24 June 1970, NGC, Acc. file no. 4925: "Moore: Family Group".
With the financial assistance of the Carnegie Corporation the reconstituted collection of 86 works was sent to Australia and New Zealand (1949-50). It stopped as well in Honolulu and San Francisco before returning to Vancouver for a second, two-month stay. Lawren Harris, chair of the Vancouver Art Gallery's exhibition committee, arranged for it to visit both the Vancouver Art Gallery and the University of British Columbia. In short, its exposure was enormous.

The Massey Foundation gift and its subsequent tour of the country added presence and momentum to the appearance of modern British art in Canada, which was by now entering Canada from a second source, the British Council. Here, too, Massey played a part. In the visual arts, the collecting and exhibiting of British art had had a sporadic but not inconsiderable history in Canada. Early on, Canadian art museums not uncommonly made the collecting of British art a top priority. Until World War II, the art displayed at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto was two-thirds foreign, and mostly British. The two primary sources of British art exhibitions until 1939 were the Royal British Colonial Society of Artists and the Art Exhibitions Bureau, London. Neither, typically, was distinguished by its curatorial choices.

Added to these sources was the National Gallery of

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145 In 1906, the first work to be purchased by the Art Gallery of Ontario (then the Art Museum of Toronto) was by British artist Edward Hornel, The Captive Butterfly. The Vancouver Art Gallery, founded in 1931, made its first collecting priority the acquisition of British art; Lorna Farrell-Ward, "Tradition/Transition: The Keys to Change"; in Vancouver: Art and Artists, 1931-1983 (Vancouver, 1983), 23.

146 It was founded in 1886 and, from 1954, became the Commonwealth Society of Artists.
Canada, which, from the mid-1920s, began to bring large loan exhibitions to Canada from abroad. In the aftermath of the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley Park, London, in 1924, at which the Group of Seven received such acclaim, Eric Brown mounted the Gallery's first major exhibition of foreign art. Borrowing heavily from the British section of the Empire Exhibition and corresponding directly with the artists himself, Brown wrote in his catalogue: "The Trustees of the National Gallery of Canada have arranged this exhibition as part of its policy of doing everything possible to promote the interchange of the art of the British Empire". The exhibition included works by a few prominent moderns, along with a host of more conservative British painters.

More modest showings, both in size and quality, punctuated the Gallery's offerings during the late 1920s and 1930s, the most ambitious being in 1935. Brown wrote to W. G. Constable at the Courtauld Institute of Art, London: "The whole future of British contemporary shows out here rather stands or fails by this one, and it is a thing rather near my heart to establish a close and continuous art connection [with Britain] by a series of such shows". Brown relied heavily on London art dealers to assemble the show; in some instances, artists sent paintings of their own choosing, which caused Brown concern but over which he had limited control, symptomatic of the vulnerability of his still colonized position.

Brown's efforts to strengthen the association with Britain was sustained and augmented through the offices of Vincent Massey, whose London connections placed him in

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147 Eric Brown, An Exhibition of Contemporary British Painting (Ottawa, 1925).

proximity to the recently-constituted British Council. At close hand, he could observe and, to a degree, steer British outreach in Canada. Already long committed to the ambassadorial function of the arts, Massey studied with immense sympathy the early workings of the Council as it struggled to resolve its administrative and constitutional make-up and assert itself as a serious force in Britain's external affairs.

With the launching of the British Committee for Relations with Other Countries in 1934 (from 1936 known simply as the British Council), Britain belatedly joined other leading European countries in actively projecting their culture abroad. France had led the way in cultural diplomacy, with French language schools in the Middle and Far East dating from before the turn of the century. The Alliance française, a French private society for the promotion of the French language abroad operated with government support and dated from 1880.149 As early as 1883 it had established operations in Ottawa-Hull. Germany and Italy had comparable societies, the Goethe Institute and the Dante Alighieri Society respectively, dating from before the turn of the century; and, between the two world wars, both augmented their sponsorship of cultural propaganda enormously. The Soviet Union founded the All Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (VOKS) in 1925.

Broadly, the British Council aimed its cultural initiatives at countries that figured prominently in its overall foreign policy.150 Favourable cultural exposure led to mutual understanding, it was argued, and paved the way for economic and political rewards. The Council is remarkable, however, for its pains to mute the political import of its


150 Eastment, "The Policies and Position of the British Council".
mission. Symptomatic of the lengths to which it went is the fact that Britain Today, its most widely distributed publication, always hid its Council connection.  

The British Foreign Office had always preferred to propagandize through private and semi-official vehicles in order to maintain credibility. The experience of World War I, wherein Britain had engaged in negative and less than accurate propagandizing against its enemies using photography and film, had backfired. The bitter aftertaste that lingered through the 1920s and 1930s delayed British government support of cultural projection. There was also a diminishing tolerance among western democracies for a small coterie of diplomats and politicians determining foreign policy behind closed doors. Universal suffrage and the growth in importance of public opinion (and swaying it) had come to count formidably. To enhance credibility, the Council resolved to confine its efforts to celebrating its own arts, language, and values, rather than denigrating those of others.

Paralleling its intent to disassociate itself from overt and negative propagandizing, the Council sought to remove


152 Taylor, The Projection of Britain, 153.

153 A vociferous propaganda campaign during World War I had been conducted under the direction of newspaper magnates Lord Northcliffe and the Canadian, Lord Beaverbrook, the latter head of Britain's wartime Ministry of Information, set up in early 1918. Beaverbrook was the first to employ photography and film in the promulgation of state news; Frances Donaldson, The British Council: The First Fifty Years (London, 1984), 13.


itself from direct government management. At the outset, it was created as a semi-official body drawing funding from both the private and public sectors.\(^{156}\) This gave the Council some autonomy from government, making it an early example of a cultural branch of government operating at arm's length, at least in a rudimentary sense. It later became an agency fully funded by the government, but some vestiges of autonomy were retained structurally, for example, by the practice of relying upon advisory panels of experts. Massey claimed that it operated free of political interference. The extent to which this was true remains unclear. Certainly the overt content of its various cultural initiatives, whether it be the art in an exhibition or a concert's musical program, was chosen, ostensibly, on the basis of quality, as opposed to political slogan or affiliation. Of course, there are both uses and abuses of excellence. In the name of quality, and the impartiality it purports to embody, many hidden agendas may be camouflaged. Excellence must go hand in hand with transparency; but, at this early stage, in an effort to distance itself from propagandizing, the British Council may have conflated secrecy and impartiality. Nevertheless, the Fine Arts Committee relied heavily in its early years upon the membership of art historians and critics such as Kenneth Clark, John Rothenstein, Philip Hendy, and Herbert Read, who earnestly steered the art exhibition program away from pure political exigency in the name of excellence,\(^{157}\) a moral imperative with which Massey was well acquainted. He was to study this approach to state-supported art with intense interest.

The earliest documented contact between the Council and


\(^{157}\) This is readily apparent from the Fine Arts Committee meeting minutes; PRO, BCP.
Canada dates from 1938 and was initiated by the Office of the High Commissioner for Canada in London. Under Vincent Massey, a member of the Commission's staff inquired if the British Council might circulate some of the pictures from the Tate show, *A Century of Canadian Art*, to foreign countries.\(^{158}\) While the British Council declined the proposal, the request stimulated a vigorous internal debate. One member of Council staff wrote: "Surely Canadian Art is British art & surely we want the closest possible cultural collaboration with the dominion". The same author conveyed something of the pressure emanating from Canada House: "the High Commission would like anything possible to be done."\(^{159}\) The Fine Arts Committee meeting on 27 Mar 1939 concluded, however, that only in exceptional cases would works of art from the Dominions be accepted in Council exhibitions and that the practice could not be recommended in principle.\(^{160}\)

It is worth noting that, in the absence of a viable Canadian state mechanism for cultural projection, the High Commission hoped to recruit British resources for this purpose. Similar to his reliance on the Carnegie Corporation, Massey was prepared to turn to outside sources to fill the vacuum in Canada. Presumably, it was more palatable to Massey to do so in concert with Britain. On the other hand, he recognized fully that until Canadian culture was taken seriously at home, Canada would continue to be vulnerable to the forces of colonialization.

During the summer of 1939, the British Council turned its

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159 E. D. O'Brien to Miss Barrington[?] (memo), 20 Oct. 1938; PRO, BCP, (NAC copy).

160 Memo, 31 Mar. 1939 with extract of the draft minutes of the Fine Arts Committee meeting of Mar. 27; PRO, BCP, (NAC copy).
attention to starting operations in Canada. Massey was supportive but expressed the view that the Council would have to operate indirectly, in view of the Canadian government's sensitivity about British interference in its affairs and the appearance that Britain was making new inroads in Canada.

Lord Lloyd, the Council's chair, reported to the Executive Committee that the Canadian government was most concerned that the British Council's work in Canada be carried out under the auspices of an already established organization. While Massey himself could not be associated officially with the Council, he "promised that behind the scenes he would give it every possible support". Massey suggested that Major Fred Ney, general secretary of the National Council of Education and a member of the Overseas Education League, be recruited to act on the Council's behalf in Canada. But Lord Lloyd was reluctant to allow any infringement on Council control and the suggestion apparently went nowhere. There were also rivalries within the British government that pitted the Council against the Dominions Office and the wartime Ministry of Information, each with a stake in relations with the Dominions.

Although a British Council office did not open in Canada until 1959, the Council was active in Canada from 1939 on as a source of exhibitions of modern British art. The exhibition that commenced the Council's visual arts activities in Canada was organized for the 1939 New York World's Fair, its first large-scale effort in North America. Outright propagandizing


by a foreign government was virtually impossible in the United States. The Senate had recently passed a law requiring all foreign propaganda organizations operating in the United States to register with the American government. The only vehicle for disseminating state information from Britain in the United States was the British Library of Information. With branches in a number of American cities, it functioned in a low-key manner as a reference library whose holdings were largely copies of official British government papers. The British Council's World Fair exhibition provided, then, a rare and very timely opportunity to celebrate British art and values on American soil. Asked to loan Augustus John's *Summer Noon*, Vincent Massey warmly endorsed the project: "I quite agree that it is most desirable that a really representative exhibition of the best contemporary British works should go to New York, and I am happy to be able to make a contribution to such a collection." It has been argued that the success of the British Pavilion may have vitally influenced American sympathies towards the British war effort.

Due to the outbreak of war and fears about the safety of the approximately 300 works of art returning across the Atlantic, hurried arrangements were made to show the exhibition in Canada. A flurried exchange of correspondence


165 This organization, along with the British Press Service, founded in 1940 were merged into the new British Information Services in 1942; McMurry and Lee, *The Cultural Approach*, 175.

166 Massey to Sir Lionel Faudel-Phillips, Fine Arts Committee, British Council, 1 Feb. 1939; VMP, 198; Massey also encouraged both his sons to lend works to the British Council exhibitions, which he considered important ventures; Massey to Hart Massey, 30 Nov. 1938; VMP, 198; and Lilian Somerville, Fine Art Dept., British Council to Massey, 6 July 1945; MFamP, V. 65.

took place between A. A. Longden of the British Council's Fine Arts Committee Exhibitions Office, Vincent Massey, and H. O. McCurry. Longden referred to "my friend Vincent Massey strongly approving of [chairman] Lord Lloyd's proposal [that the show go to Canada]." 168

The exhibition opened in Ottawa at the end of November, 1939. The reception was attended by over 600 guests, among them the Governor-General, Lord Tweedsmuir, as well as John Rothenstein. 169 From Ottawa, the exhibition travelled to Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver between January and March 1940. The Vancouver Art Gallery extended its hours to accommodate demand for the exhibition. The Canadian press was enthusiastic. In England, at the British Council offices, it was reported that the exhibit had "made a very fine impression in both the United States of America and Canada and, [in John Rothenstein's opinion] the cultural propaganda in connection therewith was of far reaching importance". 170 The World's Fair exhibition was the first in a parade of British Council shows to visit Canada during the 1940s and 1950s and later, and helped establish the Council as the primary link between modern British art and the Canadian art museum community.

Invariably Vincent Massey's name crops up in the dealings between the Council and Canada. When one of the sculptures lent by the Council to the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Eric Gill's Mankind, suffered from being in the open air, Massey suggested loaning it to the Art Gallery of Toronto (it

168 A. A. Longden to H. O. McCurry, 14 Sept. 1939; PRO, BCP.

169 Rothenstein stayed on to give a lecture on "British Art Since 1900" and an address which was broadcast across Canada on the CBC.

170 Fine Arts Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes, 3 Sept. 1940; British Council Library copy of Minute Book.
When McCurry wrote to ask for a modern British art exhibition in 1944, Vincent Massey offered to sit on the selection committee. In 1941, a sum of £10,000 was donated to the Council for the promotion of Anglo-Canadian relations. Vincent Massey and Sir Malcolm Robertson (Council Chair, 1941-45) were trustees of the fund. About this time Robertson suggested that a Council representative visit Canada, and, in 1942, Michael Huxley toured the country on the Council’s behalf. He was greeted with "a mixture of sympathy and suspicion". Among his recommendations was the creation of the Canada Action Group, later known as the Canadian Committee, to promote a knowledge of Canada amongst members of the air force personnel from Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Britain training in stations across Canada under the Commonwealth Air Training Scheme. The idea for a vast air force training program based in Canada was tabled by Vincent Massey and Stanley Bruce, the Australian High Commissioner, at a meeting of the High Commissioners in London in September 1939 and was agreed upon in December.

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171 A. A. Longden to H. O. McCurry, 12 Dec. 1942 and McCurry to Longden, 10 Nov. 1943; PRO, BCP.

172 Dominions Office memo to Sir Malcolm Robertson, 16 Feb. 1944; PRO, BCP. The inquiry led to the Exhibition of Contemporary British Painting, which was comprised of approximately 60 works and toured Canada as far west as Winnipeg from late 1944 to May 1945.

173 The donation was made by Sir Eugene Millinton-Drake, British Minister, Uruguay (1934-41); Eastment, "The Policies and Position of the British Council", 150 and 313.


175 Bissell, The Imperial Canadian, 137-38. For Massey’s role in this initiative, see also F. J. Hatch, Aerodrome of Democracy: Canada and the British Commonwealth Air Training
With Massey’s strong endorsement and Prime Minister Mackenzie King’s approval, the Canadian Committee was launched in November 1942. It was hoped that it would develop into an organization similar to the British Council, although they were in no way formally connected. John Grierson, founder of the National Film Board of Canada, was a member of the Committee and one of its projects was to establish a circuit of films for the RAF stations. The plan was to include an English film for every three Canadian films shown, by working with the British Council. It also drew upon an army of volunteers in an effort to fulfil the demand among the troops for cultural services. More than a hundred small libraries consisting of about 150 books on Canadian history, geography, poetry, art, music, etc. were created. Specialists visited the many clubs organized by the troops, and spoke on topics ranging from bird-watching to film to painting to classical music and woodcarving. In a reciprocal gesture, the British Council supplied libraries on the transport ships of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

An internal memo from May 1944 summarized the British Council’s activities in Canada:

On the advice of Mr. F. A. Gray [of the Canadian Committee], regular despatches of articles, features, illustrations and blocks are now being sent to the United Kingdom Information Officer [part of the United Kingdom High Commission in Ottawa], who will be responsible for obtaining even distribution throughout the Canadian daily and periodical press. Arrangements have recently been made for the printing of an edition of BRITAIN.


176 A. A. Longden to file, 25 Jan. 1944; PRO, BCP, Fine Art Advisory Committee Correspondence.

177 At the end of the war, the Committee gave rise to the Canada Foundation, an entirely private foundation incorporated in May 1945 and funded by "a thousand associates", under the direction of Walter Herbert; Walter Herbert, "The Canada Foundation", Canadian Art, V. XVI, no. 1 (Feb. 1959), 29.
TO-DAY in Toronto by Messrs. Dent from moulds flown out from this country .... There is also a French edition of *BRITAIN TO-DAY* which it is planned to make available for French-speaking Canadians.178

Added to these initiatives were the art exhibitions so enthusiastically received by Canadian art museums. Gradually the Council, which initially made all arrangements pertaining to the visual arts with the National Gallery of Canada, worked directly with other Canadian galleries in planning exhibitions.

After returning to Canada in 1946, Massey continued to take an encouraging stance on the subject of British Council activity in Canada. In 1947 he wrote to Sir Shuldham Redfern, who as Director of the Commonwealth Department of the British Council was to tour Canada in the Fall of 1948:

I am one of those people who feel that the British Council should operate in Canada -- not, of course in any way suggesting Empire propaganda, but as an organization existing to keep the Canadian public in touch with the "cultural" (how I hate the word, but there is no alternative) life in Britain. I gather that there is no official objection to this in Ottawa, and I would hope that before long a representative of the BC might be established there. He could do a most useful job in restoring and strengthening contacts between this country and Great Britain in the field of music and the arts, and the intellectual sphere generally.179

Redfern also conversed with Mackenzie King on the subject in the Fall of 1947 in London. King, according to Redfern, had no objection to extending the Council's activities in Canada: "He welcomed the idea of my going to Canada on a visit to discuss with interested parties an interchange of views on cultural matters and said that such people as Vincent Massey

178 Memo, Miss Collihole to Sir Angus Gillan, Director, British Council, Empire Division, 22 May 1944; PRO, BCP (NAC copy).

179 Massey is quoted in a memo from Sir Shuldham Redfern to Sir Angus Gillan, 18 Aug. 1947; PRO, BCP (NAC copy).
would be most helpful." However, King made it clear the federal government must in no way be associated with the initiative, due to the "delicate relationship" with the provinces and because "any sort of Govt control over a body like the British Council meant red tape, bureaucracy, & stifling initiative & a waste of public funds." Redfern added, providing insight into King's resistance to supporting culture: "He had absolutely set his face against the Government having anything to do with the Canada Foundation, but admitted that the Canada Foundation had almost collapsed for lack of funds."\(^{180}\)

The British Council's presence in Canada continued to be ambivalent. The Massey report of 1951 rebuked Canadian government resistance to British Council operations in Canada and the appointment of a resident British Council representative.\(^{181}\) Even more pressing, as the British Council example made patent, was the absence of a companion organization in Canada. Nevertheless, in concert with bodies such as Canada House, London, the National Gallery of Canada, and the Canadian Committee, the British Council was able, and indeed encouraged, to make significant, if somewhat surreptitious, cultural inroads into Canada.

There were other legacies of Massey's British sojourn. The Massey Foundation gave a small selection of modern British works to the Art Gallery of Toronto. As early as 1937, Massey proposed to curator Martin Baldwin that the Gallery buy the occasional modern British painting. He enclosed a catalogue from a current exhibition at Tooth's and pointed out the

\(^{180}\) Memo, Sir Shuldham Redfern to Sir Angus Gillan, 25 Nov. 1947; PRO, BCP (NAC copy).

\(^{181}\) Massey Report, 1951, 264.
modest prices for works by well-known artists. The Gallery subsequently authorized Massey to make art purchases on its behalf while he was in London; instead, under the auspices of the Massey Foundation, he arranged for a small group of works to be gifted.

He also acted for the Art Gallery of Toronto in connection with gifts from the Contemporary Art Society (CAS). The CAS had been founded in 1910 to support British artists by acquiring their works and then distributing them to public art galleries which paid a nominal subscription fee. The Art Gallery of Toronto had become a CAS subscriber during the war. Other Canadian art galleries followed suit. In early 1946, Martin Baldwin wrote to Massey, who by now was on the Society’s board, asking him to act on the Toronto Gallery’s behalf in selecting a painting from the CAS’s current pool of works. Massey chose a Sickert, St. Jacques, Dieppe, which was accessioned shortly thereafter.

Massey was also responsible for putting the Gallery executive in touch with English art historian Anthony Blunt, later notorious for his activities as a Russian spy, who acted as a London agent in acquiring Old Master and modern works of art. Blunt had been keeper of the King’s pictures and, in 1947, was appointed director of the Courtauld Institute of Art. The Art Gallery of Toronto employed him to curate the

182 Massey to Martin Baldwin, 15 Dec. 1937; VMP, 170/08.
183 Finlay, 20th-Century British Art, 4. There is no evidence that Massey spent Gallery funds on purchases.
184 Finlay, 20th-Century British Art, 6.
185 Massey to Robin Ironside [the CAS’s secretary], 5 Mar. 1945; VMP, 258.
186 Finlay, 20th-Century British Art, 6.
British section of a large exhibition, Contemporary Paintings from Great Britain, the United States and France with Sculpture from the United States, organized to celebrate the Gallery's fiftieth anniversary in 1950. He also counselled them to acquire modern British art by artists such as Henry Moore and Ben Nicholson. With the assistance and funding of the Women's Committee, the Gallery went on to do precisely that.\textsuperscript{187} Blunt acted as well for the National Gallery of Canada.\textsuperscript{188}

Massey was also instrumental in bringing a major post-war exhibition of eighteenth and nineteenth century British art to Canada. As chair of the National Gallery, London, Massey explained to the Art Gallery of Toronto in April 1946 that he and his fellow trustees had just decided "to participate in the loan exhibition of some forty pictures from the works of Hogarth, Constable and Turner -- the best of them -- in Chicago and New York next autumn and winter. Most of the pictures will come from the N.G. It will be an exhibition of the very greatest importance." He claimed that the Board was eager for the show to come to Canada, adding "you may assume that I have not been backward in expressing the same desire". Massey recommended that it be offered to the Art Museum of Toronto as "having the best-equipped, most modern facility." He emphasized that he was "most anxious to have the pictures go to Toronto" and impressed on Baldwin the need to settle the matter before he left London in a month.\textsuperscript{189} The exhibition

\textsuperscript{187} Finlay, 20th-Century British Art, 7-8.

\textsuperscript{188} Massey to H. O. McCurry, 10 Nov. 1948; McCurry to Massey, 26 May 1948; and McCurry to Anthony Blunt, 19 Oct. 1948; VMP, 391/10. See also, Myron Laskin, Jr. and Michael Pantazzi, National Gallery of Canada: European and American Painting, Sculpture, and Decorative Arts (Ottawa, 1987), V. I, xiv.

\textsuperscript{189} Massey to Charles S. Band, 24 Apr. 1946; VMP, 234/11.
showed at the Gallery during April and May of 1947 along with British Contemporary Painters from the Albright Art Gallery in Buffalo (later the Albright-Knox Art Gallery). The show was promoted with the Massey collection of modern British art: "Taken together, the two shows provide a survey of the best expression in English art of the past two hundred years".  

Exhibitions of modern British art, in turn, stimulated the collecting of modern British art in Canada. The Art Gallery of Toronto acquired a string of works in this category beginning in 1949. Building on the Massey gift, the National Gallery followed suit with purchases during the 1950, and the Vancouver Art Gallery renewed its commitment to this collecting area with the creation of its Contemporary British Picture Purchase Fund in 1949. As Canadian Art magazine reported in its winter 1951-52 issue, the Art Gallery of Toronto and Vancouver Art Gallery seemed to be vying with each other in updating their contemporary English collections. Among the other Canadian galleries that joined the trend, the most ambitious was the Beaverbrook Art Gallery in Fredericton (opened 1959). Private collectors also participated.

Massey alone did not precipitate this wellspring of interest in modern British art, but his initiatives were a significant factor, in concert with the British Council, the larger museum community in Canada, and the Canadian War Art

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192 "New Acquisitions by Canadian Galleries", Canadian Art, V. IX, no. 2 (Christmas-New Year, 1951-52), 75.

193 Finlay, "Identifying with Nature", 50.
program, which brought some of Canada's most noteworthy artists in contact with their British counterparts. In turn, modern British art found concordances in Canadian visual expression. According to McCurry, Canadian artists, in particular, expressed their appreciation for the Massey gift. Some artists found the technical experiments of modern British picture-making instructive. Michael Forster, for example, sent overseas as a Canadian war artist, emulated the richly evocative wax resist surfaces of Piper and Sutherland. Others found eloquent the renderings of organic fragments by Sutherland and Paul Nash: clusters of thorns, twisted roots, and tree stumps. Such bits and pieces of the land were understood as stand-ins for the human psyche, an intersection of the life force of nature with the brutalization of the modern world, especially in the wake of war. Artists as diverse as Jack Shadbolt, Gordon Smith, Oscar Cahen, and Harold Town engaged with this landscape aesthetic, sharing its anxiety about loss of wholeness and encroaching fragmentation.

On his departure from London, Massey was eager that the contacts he had made be kept alive and he urged H. O. McCurry to come to London for that purpose. Certainly the war experience renewed and forged a broad base of connections between Canada and Britain that would survive well into the


195 A further outcome of Massey's London stay was his friendship with the collectors Lord and Lady Lee of Fareham, the former a fellow National Gallery trustee. Massey arranged for their collection of Medieval and Renaissance art objects to be stored in Toronto during the war for safekeeping. The couple subsequently donated the collection to the Massey Foundation and it was housed in Hart House until 1960, when it was transferred to the Royal Ontario Museum; Adamson, The Hart House Collection, 14-15.
post-war era. Large-scale British immigration, peaking in 1957, brought to Canada an impressive assortment of individuals who took up leading positions in Canada’s cultural life, from Celia Franca at the National Ballet to Betty Oliphant at the National Ballet School to Tyrone Guthrie and Tanya Moiseiwich at the Stratford Festival. Others, Canadian-born but with British credentials, also played a decisive role, from Alan Jarvis at the National Gallery of Canada, to George Woodcock, founder of the magazine Canadian Literature in 1959. The decade of the 1950s became the golden era (if there was one) of the Commonwealth.

Meanwhile, fears of American domination, economic and cultural, mounted. Massey was far from alone in his belief that Britain honoured a humanistic tradition fostering tolerance, stability, and public service. Britain experienced considerable success marketing itself as a source of stability and vitality in a world shaken by war and in need of innovative solutions. With reference to the arts, the painter Charles Comfort contrasted the “fluctuating environment of the United States” with “the British School [which] provides a model of stability... a rational modernity”. As Britain embraced the welfare state and its public sector became more dominant, the United States perceptibly moved away from the state intervention that had characterized the Roosevelt


administration. It was the British example that Canada favoured, and this included the arts council model of state-supported culture.
Chapter 6

Culture, the State, and Canadian Sovereignty

Vincent Massey returned from England in 1946, his diplomatic posting having served to harden his convictions about the cultural perils Canada faced and the sources from which it drew strength. He was utterly resolved in his belief that Canada must assume responsibility for its culture or remain prey to mounting American imperialism. His early concern for overcoming Canada's sectionalism and for locating a sense of community and unity within its ethnic and geographic diversity was subsumed by his concern with the external forces that threatened Canadian sovereignty.

At the end of the War he asked whether a relationship between the artist and the state was viable and desirable in peacetime.1 His answer was clear. He had observed how an alliance between culture and the state had served wartime Britain and he sought to harness this energy and commitment for Canada. He launched a personal campaign to enlist broad-based, cohesive government support to the cultural cause, through speaking engagements, through his book On Being Canadian, and, ultimately, through the 1951 Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, of which he was chair.

Immediately upon his return to Canada, while the Massey Foundation gift of modern British art was circulating, Massey set out on an arduous lecture tour of Canada. As Alice Massey noted: "Vincent conceived the idea -- and he was perfectly right -- that he and I must get to know our own country

1 Massey, "Address" (to the National Art-Collections Fund).
again". The couple travelled some 9,000 miles, and Massey gave approximately thirty addresses in the course of the trip. According to Alice, they were given "a most wonderful reception everywhere." Many of the people they met were former military personnel whom they had encountered in the Canadian service clubs in London, where Alice Massey had been a tireless volunteer.

As much as reacquainting themselves with Canada, the couple were goodwill ambassadors for Britain. As Alice Massey wrote of the lecture tour: "It is so important in this country now to tell them all about England and to reiterate all her qualities when so much of the American press exaggerates in its headlines the breakup of England." Her remarks evoke the intense English-American rivalry at the end of the War. Indeed, it is quite possible that the Masseys' views of the United States were sharpened by British anti-Americanism. By the end of their trip, they were heartened by the sense of unity they observed among Canadians: "although the provinces are very self-determining...there is far less talk of isolation...." They attributed this sense of community to the experience of war and renewed contact with Britain.

After the tour, "restless" and eager "to get into active life again", Massey continued to give numerous addresses.

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2 Alice Massey to Joan [Lady Lascelles], 24 Mar. 1947; MFamP, V. 53.

3 Bissell, The Imperial Canadian, 151-60.

4 Alice Massey to Joan [Lady Lascelles], 24 Mar. 1947; MFamP, V. 53.


6 Alice Massey to Joan [Lady Lascelles], 24 Mar. 1947; MFamP, V. 53.
Among them, on the invitation of David Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington (opened in 1941), was a speech to the American Association of Museums in Quebec City in May 1947. It provided Massey with an opportunity to espouse his most recent ideas about culture, its dissemination and support, and its relationship with nationalism.

He seized the opportunity to refute conclusions drawn by the American press about Canada’s recently proclaimed citizenship act:

This was interpreted by some newspapers to the south as a step which would weaken our ties with Great Britain. They overlooked the fact that this legislation states quite clearly that a Canadian citizen is still a British subject. That duality, of course, is the key to so much that has happened over the last century. Indeed, in working out our own destiny we have quite unconsciously been the laboratory in which the principles of the modern British Commonwealth were discovered and successfully applied.

...in these days when so much seems to be in dissolution, a story of orderly democratic development has something refreshing about it and the British Commonwealth, we believe, is a highly constructive achievement in a world which needs all the stability it can find.7

His primary topic was, of course, the museum: its role in society, and its function in regard to nationalism. "A spiritual institution", the museum had become, in his view, a major agent in the transmission of culture. He celebrated the fact that the day was over of the "crowded and forbidding depository of objects of value where the necessary notice, 'Please do not touch' seemed to imply 'Please do not enjoy'. ...Museums are happily no longer merely passive in their functions; they have become positive, living instruments of education."8 But he found fault with the growing move to

7 Massey, "Address" (to the American Asssociation of Museums).
8 Massey, "Address" (to the American Association of Musuems).
scholarship which, in an effort to produce "exact scientists" was losing touch with the humanities and "reduced the study of previous cultures to exhaustive classifications of empty vessels." "In museums", he stated, "we shall always have to tread a careful path between the Scylla of pedantry and a popularizing Charybdis." Museums, he suggested, were "the product of a marriage between scholarship and showmanship."  

On the subject of the museum and nationalism, he acknowledged that "a museum can, of course, quite properly be a monument to national pride." But his concern continued to be less with nationalism as an instrument of patriotic glory than with what he argued was the sacred mission of achieving community, and, in turn, nationalism's compatibility with internationalism:

The great function of museums is surely to give us a sense of oneness; to make us think, not nationally nor hemispherically, but spherically. It helps us to gain a correct perspective when we can see the pattern of civilization presented as a whole. It gives us, too, a salutary sense of humility. No one, for instance, who visits a great Chinese collection like that at the museum in Toronto, could retain too cock-sure a complacency about our streamlined Western civilization of today....It can project the world as a whole more directly than even the university or the library, because its records are original ones and can be most easily comprehended.  

Massey's ideas about the museum owed much to his years in London as a trustee, when he came to an important resolution about the art exhibition as an agent of nationalism. In his Quebec address, he raised the subject of museum exchanges of national art. Quoting from the Massey report on the British national art collections, he stated: "there should...be only one dominating purpose underlying any display of art, and that

9 Massey, "Address" (to the American Association of Museums).
10 Massey, "Address" (to the American Association of Museums).
is the presentation to the public of fine works." He added: "If that principle is applied, it seems to me the questionable element of national propaganda can be happily eliminated." 11

Linking excellence and nationalism, a central plank of CEMA and British Council policy, became a mainstay of Massey's campaign for Canadian self-projection. He commended two recently-organized international touring shows for their ambassadorial role and level of excellence: the Hogarth, Constable, and Turner exhibition, which, he, as chair of the National Gallery, London, had been instrumental in sending to North America, 12 and a contemporary collection of the arts of French Canada which travelled to the United States. 13

In such instances, was nationalism hiding behind excellence, or was the quest for excellence a valiant effort to transcend the offensive features of nationalism? Massey would have vehemently argued the latter.

A more complete summary of Massey's mature ideas about the role of the arts and culture appeared in a book that Massey began to draft upon his return to Canada. Entitled On Being Canadian, it was published in 1948 and was both a synthesis of his experiences abroad and a prelude to his work as chair of the soon to be convened Massey Commission. "The sort of thing that has not been done before", according to

11 Massey, "Address" (to the American Association of Museums).

12 Its organization had been authorized by Massey as chair of the board of the National Gallery, London; he was gratified to report that, in Toronto, over 76,000 people, nearly ten per cent of those living there, saw the exhibition.

13 The Arts of French Canada, 1613-1870 (1946); curated by Marius Barbeau, it travelled to the Detroit Institute of Arts, Cleveland Museum of Art and the Albany Institute of History and Art, as well as the National Gallery of Canada and Le Musée de la province de Québec, Québec.
Alice Massey, it was a well-developed argument for Canadian cultural sovereignty and included an enunciation of the state apparatus required.

Massey's ideas about the role of culture and the arts in Canada had begun to take book form in a synopsis he drafted entitled "The Other Canada". While it considered various artistic disciplines, including film, as well as archives, museums, and pageantry, and addressed a variety of themes ranging from the relationship between art and nationalism, to Canada's association with Britain and the United States, and the projection of Canada abroad, it did not allude to state support of culture. Such an omission suggests that it was, in fact, a product of the immediate pre-war period, for it was Massey's engagement with state-supported art in wartime Britain that so shaped his convictions in this regard.

In On Being Canadian, arguing for state-supported art became Massey's raison d'être. The centrality that the arts now occupied in Massey's view of society was indicated by the fact that they were no longer dealt with on their own, but were integrated into a larger picture of Canadian nationalism -- were, indeed, the centrepiece of that nationalism. He denigrated the "disposition to regard painting and music or like pursuits as "frills",... as something largely "of interest to the ladies". He invoked a "rereading" of Matthew Arnold's Culture and Anarchy, which he felt had "lost none of its force." "If life in Canada has a pattern of its own, to whom can we look to explain the design?", he asked. His

14 Alice Massey to Mrs. Vivian Bulkeley-Johnson, 30 Apr. 1949; MFamP, V. 52.

15 Massey, "The Other Canada"; a handwritten book outline inserted in his diary.

16 Massey's library includes an edition of Arnold's Culture and Anarchy from 1946, with handwritten annotations apparently by Massey.
answer was the artist and writer, whom he labelled "the interpreters".17

By now, Massey had developed a synthesis of the two sources from which he understood Canada and its culture to draw strength. The first was its diversity. He quoted Sir George-Étienne Cartier (in the Legislative Assembly of Canada in 1865): "It was a benefit rather than otherwise that we had a diversity of races", and Lord Acton in his essay on Nationality "the co-existence of several nations under the same state is a test, as well as the best security of its freedom. It is also one of the chief instruments of civilization...." As already observed, he also linked diversity with creativity.

Massey addressed specifically the need to understand difference, not only to find conformity: "About half our people are of British stock; nearly one-third are of French origin. The remainder, about one-fifth, represents a great variety of races -- German, Scandinavian and Ukrainian forming the largest groups. There are forty-two Canadian periodicals carrying advertisements in foreign languages of which thirteen are represented. The Bible is distributed in Canada in over fifty languages."18

While his outlook may not be construed as fully multicultural by today's standards, he unquestionably acknowledged Canada's strength to reside in accommodating diversity. He had been a committed biculturalist since at least his university days, who had learned to speak French well himself and ensured that his children learn French. He was a leader in including French-speaking Canadian representatives in national forums and was generally outspoken about the need for bilingualism and biculturalism. The

17 Massey, On Being Canadian, 33.

18 Massey, On Being Canadian, 12,16, and 18-20.
French-English fact of Canadian existence undercut for him the assumptions of racial hegemony that still pervaded so much contemporary thought and practice. Of course, this was so to a limited extent: Massey like other Canadians of his generation who endorsed biculturalism tended to do so, at least partly, on the grounds of a common northern racial heritage. This did not, however, diminish the great store he placed in Canada's historical protection of the freedom to sustain diversity; he lauded the freedoms assigned to the French language and the Roman Catholic faith, the freedoms experienced by the United Empire Loyalists, and the freedom implicit in the achievement of early responsible government, making this country, in his view, the "laboratory" for "that monumental conception which has given the world so great a pattern of political liberty", the British Commonwealth. Massey's reliance upon the "unity in diversity" theme, as it manifest itself in the Canadian federation and, in turn, the Commonwealth, was, indeed, far from mere rhetoric. His commitment to French-English biculturalism was both pro-active and sustained, and he was frequently outspoken about the virtues of a society that embraced a multiplicitiy of ethnic traditions.

The second source of strength from which Canada's cultural sovereignty drew strength, in his view, was its shared history with Europe, and specifically Britain. He adopted a bipolar metaphor: the force of geography versus the force of history. As proof of the role of history, Massey pointed to the fact that "unlike the twenty-one other nations of the Americas", Canada did not cut its "political ties with Europe and the impact of the older world upon Canadian life has been stronger for that reason." Where geography and, in turn, the relation to the United States, was immutable, he argued that history and the European legacy was dependent on

19 Massey, On Being Canadian, 13.
nurturing.

He elaborated the geography/history metaphor further, equating the north-south "threads in our national fabric" with things physical, and the east-west threads with intangibles. He could not have been more resolute in his view that Canadian culture was strengthened by association with Europe and that this alliance helped bind the country together from coast to coast. Or, put more bluntly, Canadians and Europeans shared common values and traditions, and Canada and the United States did not. Aside from the Eurocentredness that seems so outdated now, his view of the United States went well beyond uneasiness about the extent of American influence, a legitimate growing reality, and seemed to deny any commonality at all, other than physical, between Canada and the United States. While an extreme perspective, and not entirely consistent with other statements he made acknowledging positive American influences, it spoke of his profound belief that Canada must resist American penetration, and that this was at heart a cultural matter.

He attempted to disentangle internationalism from colonialism and imperialism. He argued: "true internationalism comes only from the co-operation of responsible national units. It is far removed from the cloudy cosmopolitanism which denies that national feeling...." Massey traced Canadian nationalism back eighty-plus years and assured his readers that while "‘colonialism’ died hard,... it has been long dead. National sentiment killed it...." But he warned of a "new colonialism", a dependence on the United States.

"If, however, we are to keep our Canadian traditions inviolate, we must face another battle, a spiritual battle,

20 Massey, On Being Canadian, 5-6.
21 Massey, On Being Canadian, 7-9.
for if the obstacle to true Canadianism was 'Downing Street' in the nineteenth century, its enemy today is 'Main Street' with all that the phrase implies".²² He noted the domination by Hollywood and New York of Canada's film and commercial theatre respectively, and gave statistics on the immense Canadian readership of American magazines. He expressed concern about the infiltration of particular American values and practices, specifically racial discrimination against blacks, and the use of unsavoury law enforcement tactics for extracting information from accused persons. A decade before Walter Gordon's plea to support Canadian economic nationalism,²³ he pointed out that about one-third of the investment in Canadian industry was now American. Trade unions in Canada, he noted, operated under powerful American influence. But, above all, it was the "cultural reorientation in Canada which demands our thought and attention."²⁴

Finally, he tackled state responsibility for culture. "No state today can escape some responsibility in the field to which belong the things of the mind." He pointed to the cultural tactics of totalitarian regimes, arguing "our peoples need to understand the way of life which they are defending in the war of ideas of today so that they can defend it the better. The state indeed has very serious obligations in this field." But, as he emphasized, "Canada cannot be said to have accepted this principle. We seem to trail far behind most civilized states in our governmental recognition of the arts.

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²² Massey had employed the same juxtaposition as early as 1924 in "Some Canadian Problems" (an address to the Canadian Club, Ottawa, 26 Jan. 1924); MFamP, V. 43, speech 10a.

²³ Walter Gordon chaired the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects (1955-57) and, as minister of finance under the Lester B. Pearson Liberal government, presented a budget in 1963 which proposed a tax on foreign takeovers of Canadian companies. The proposal was subsequently withdrawn.

and letters and the intellectual life of the community.

He relied upon the example of the Arts Council of Great Britain, pointing out that, while it was funded by the British taxpayer, it maintained independence from the civil service: "We would do well to study such a successful experiment in state-aid." He firmly rejected the notion of a government department of culture. "We need public money for the encouragement of our cultural life, but we want it without official control or political interference. That is why a Ministry of Fine Arts or a federal Department of National Culture would be regrettable. The very phrases are chilling. The arts can thrive only in the air of freedom. Official approval of this school of painting, or that group of painters, would sterilize taste and create a false orthodoxy."

Under the title "Culture and the Constitution", he anticipated a key point of the 1951 Massey report, possibly the biggest stumbling block historically to federal government support for the arts in Canada, that is, the Constitution's allocation of education as a sole provincial responsibility. To Massey, accepting this was to sidestep a role that only the federal government could assume. "However active provincial governments may be in the cultural field, there are countless things to be undertaken in this sphere which would be of great value to the Canadian community as a whole, and which, if not done by the federal government or on its initiative, cannot be done at all."

While claiming to support fully the allocation of education to the provinces on the grounds that it "protects for all time the rights and privileges of a linguistic and cultural minority", he argued strenuously that this did not preclude the federal government from involving itself in "Canadian intellectual life". He noted that exceptions to the constitution already existed, most notably radio, a national responsibility, and pointed to its educational mandate as proof of the federal government's legitimate involvement in
the area. He proceeded to itemize the "missing equipment" in Canada's state support of culture, among them a National Library, and permanent, fireproof quarters for the National Gallery.25

At this time, in fact, the National Gallery of Canada became a major forum for Massey's campaign to strengthen government support of culture. A Gallery trustee since 1925 and appointed its chair in 1948, he was well positioned to translate some of his rhetoric on culture into practice. He found himself at the helm of the post-war bid to reformulate Gallery policy and to lobby for a proper Gallery building.

As Massey had reminded Mackenzie King in November 1945, the Gallery's activities and budget during the war had been reduced to an absolute minimum.26 There had been no board meetings since 1939. Vacancies on the five-member board had gone unfilled for some years, and Massey urged that at least one of the new members be appointed from the West.27 A variety of other issues left in abeyance were now pressing. At the top of the list was the urgent need for a new building. Given present quarters and lack of staff, services to the rest of the country, very much in demand, could not be expanded.28

25 Massey, On Being Canadian, 47-55.

26 Massey to W. L. M. King, 16 Nov. 1945; VMP, 387/38.

27 As late as November 1949, Massey was still working on this problem. In correspondence with King's successor, Louis St. Laurent, Massey reversed his earlier view that artists should not sit on the Board, and recommended Lawren Harris, then resident in Vancouver, be invited to become a member; Massey to Louis St. Laurent, 9 Nov. 1949; VMP, 391/09.

28 At around this time, the Gallery received "A Plan for the Extension of the National Gallery of Canada" (typescript, unidentified authorship, but possibly from the Canadian Federation of Artists), 1946-48?. It proposed an ambitious scheme of branch galleries across the country, each with staff working in support of an travelling exhibition program; VMP,
Moreover, the trustees and administration viewed as critical the need to clarify the Gallery's relationship with government; above all, they sought to have the Gallery divorced from a government department (Public Works) with unsympathetic functions. Finally, they addressed the role that the Gallery might play in promoting a wider use of art in industry through the establishment of a Design in Industry Council and a museum of industrial art. Each of these concerns would be pursued over the next several years, with varying success.

The project that absorbed Massey primarily was lobbying for a permanent, fire-proof building to house the Gallery. In 1940, Massey had contemplated lending the Massey Foundation's growing collection of modern British art to the Art Gallery of Toronto until such time as the National Gallery was provided with a fire-proof structure. In a letter to Lionel in February 1941, Alice Massey stated that they had firmly decided that the Massey Foundation pictures were to be given to the Gallery only on the condition that a new, fireproof building be built. "We have got to in some small way spur them on in Ottawa to create something really worth all the treasures they possess. Think of the little Botticelli not being in a fire proof room." 

H. O. McCurry reported to Massey at the beginning of 1945 that MacKenzie King had assured him that a National Gallery

387/38.


30 In 1948, by a special order-in-council, the Gallery received a supplementary appropriation of $10,000 for the work of the newly-formed National Industrial Design Committee; D. W. Buchanan to Massey, 21 June 1948; VMP, 391/10.

31 Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 19 Feb. 1941; MFamP, V. 65.
building in the city centre had "his most cordial support". ³²

King, however, was quite capable of simply 'stirring the pot'. He commented to McCurry that Lord Beaverbrook had recently led him to believe that he would be willing to finance such a building, but that Massey, meanwhile, who had formerly shown an interest in the project, had, for unknown reasons, lost interest. Massey was quick to discredit Beaverbrook's sincerity, and in his capacity as Gallery chair, took up the subject with renewed vigour in 1948.

Massey was most anxious that a new Gallery facility be located in the heart of Ottawa and that it be "a really distinguished structure". ³³ He wrote with keen interest to King about the "City of Ottawa Plan" that was being developed. ³⁴ He and his fellow trustees promptly passed a resolution, which read: "WHEREAS successive governments have recognized the necessity of providing a home for the National Gallery which could serve as a centre of art activity for all Canada and a worthy monument to the high position of the arts in this country...THEREFORE be it resolved that...immediate steps to study the whole problem of a new building in all its aspects [be taken], and that specially qualified architects be employed to assist in this study". ³⁵

In June 1948, Alphonse Fournier, Minister of Public


³⁴ Massey to W. L. M. King, 31 Jan. 1948; VMP, 391/10. This is a reference to the Gréber Plan (1950) for Ottawa; see Richard Scott and Mark Seasons, "Planning Canada's Capital: The Roles of Landscape", International Journal of Canadian Studies, V. 4 (Fall, 1991), 172-73.

³⁵ National Gallery of Canada, Board of Trustees, Meeting Minutes, 18 Mar. 1948; VMP, 391/10.
Works, acknowledged that, in the development of the national capital, it was necessary to accommodate the site of a National Gallery building. Fournier authorized Gallery officials to proceed in a general way to develop plans for a building, and offered the service of Department architects.\(^{36}\)

Massey approached Fournier on the matter once more: "May I...suggest that, in view of the highly specialized nature of the building required,...it might be advisable to insert in the supplementary estimates to be presented to Parliament at the coming session, a token amount of say $25,000 to provide for the thorough preliminary studies which will be necessary before the building is actually proceeded with. These studies would include the most suitable site, the size and style of the building and the experience of other countries in gallery construction." He added that the requirements of the Design Industry Section were so urgent that if exhibition and office space could not be found then a temporary pavilion housing these facilities should be erected near the present National Gallery space.\(^{37}\) Fournier replied that he had nothing further to add on the subject, saying only that "the selection of a site and the erection of a new building for the National Gallery is a matter of government policy". As a temporary measure, he added, the Gallery would likely be offered space in the Museum building, when the Department of Mines and Resources vacated the space presently occupied by the Geological Survey of Canada.\(^{38}\) The campaign for a new National Gallery building was, in effect, on hold.

Meanwhile, pressure was mounting for a stronger government presence in the cultural sector, generally. Ever


\(^{37}\) Massey to Alphonse Fournier, 17 Aug. 1949; VMP, 391/09.

since the 1941 Kingston Conference, which had been mounted with funds from the Carnegie Corporation, and had enabled Canadian visual artists from across the country to meet and share concerns, there had been a growing effort to enlist government support for the arts. In areas ranging from copyright law to the creation of a national library to the establishment of nation-wide community art centres to the creation of a national funding agency for the arts, federal government assistance was sought.

The Federation of Canadian Artists (FCA), a fruit of the Conference, provided a voice for Canada's hitherto desperately isolated visual artists. In May 1944 the FCA joined forces with fifteen other cultural organizations to present a well-argued brief to the House of Commons Special Committee on Reconstruction and Reestablishment (Turgeon Committee). While yielding no immediate results, the appeal joined the growing chorus of demands for the federal government to reckon with its responsibilities in the cultural sphere.

Of course, state-supported culture in Canada was predicated on broader changes in both the conception and structure of government. The Canadian federal system underwent immense transformation between the 1930s and 1950s. In size alone, measured by the number of civil servants it employed, the federal government grew staggeringly during these years, as did its budget. The federal civil service was transformed from a largely stultified repository of hacks and incompetents, animated principally by the machinations of political patronage, into a fully rationalized, well-equipped, and professionally-staffed modern

This transformation was fuelled by a host of factors. One was the new concentration of funds in the hands of the federal government. At the beginning of the War the federal government had assumed control of personal income tax and corporate taxes for a period of one year beyond the end of the conflict. At the conclusion of World War II, the federal government negotiated with the provinces a continuation of this control of taxes, adding death duties. The latter would prove propitious for the creation of the Canada Council.

Fuelling consent of this reallocation of tax revenues was the Canadian embrace of the philosophy and policies of English economist John Maynard Keynes, whose General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money was published in 1936. In the wake of the Depression, there was a readiness to abandon the laissez-faire policies that had dominated Canadian economic practice over the preceding decades and adopt greater federal government intervention in the rhythms of the economic cycle. Canada, itself, was not entirely without a tradition of government provision of services. In areas where the private sector had clearly fallen short, notably transcontinental railways, long distance telephone service on the prairies, and broadcasting, the government had taken control. But there would be a dramatic escalation of government involvement during the 1940s. The birth of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), forerunner of the NDP, in 1932 had also signalled a growing critique of pure capitalism and a resolve to enlist government to the task of social welfare. During the early 1940s, the CCF made a number of important political

40 Granatstein, The Ottawa Men, 19-20.
gains, becoming the official opposition in Ontario in August 1943 and, in 1944, forming the government of Saskatchewan, the first socialist administration in North America. At the federal level, such foundation stones of the welfare system were introduced as Unemployment Insurance (1940) and family allowances (1945).

By the late 1940s, there was, indeed, a significant broadening of the notion of the public good in Canada, and a new readiness to vest responsibility for it in government, especially the federal government. The notion of the public good is, itself, complicated, even nebulous, and cannot be explored here in detail. Certainly, a nation can be characterized by its particular view of the public good: by how broadly it defines the concept, by simply the store it places in collective action; by the constituent elements it designates as public goods; in whom or what it vests responsibility for the well-being of its citizens; by the collective measures it puts in place; and the institutions it assigns as most reliable guardians of this good. In Canada at mid-century, the idea of the public good was deeply intertwined with a transformation in government both in size and make-up. Significantly, it involved finding ways to eliminate or reduce political exigency from public policy-making. Very simply, it was about incorporating moral responsibility, or personal disinterest, into public forums. Massey was involved in both these missions: the broadening of the public sector and the locating of moral authority therein.

Massey was uniquely poised to participate in this project, given his knowledge of and experience in a wide range of areas, from the university to the museum, from the fine arts to broadcasting and film. In his grasp of the implications and scope of cultural matters, and in the clarity of his resolution on the subject, he might be viewed as something of a visionary. It is certainly undeniable that there was considerable ferment around the subject of culture
in Canada, but few, if any, combined Massey's depth of experience in education and the arts with his position of credibility in industry and government.

The specific events leading to the creation of the Massey Commission on culture in April, 1949, have been chronicled by various authors. The account has varied. On one hand, the Commission has been characterized as a response to a groundswell of mounting public support for government intervention in the cultural sector. Alternatively, it has been described as a small band of intellectuals conspiring to press its agenda on an unwilling public, a case that remains inconclusive, and may, indeed, have done the Commission a considerable disservice. It is possible, of course, that there were elements of both. Nonetheless, Massey and his fellow commissioners were deeply fortified by their public hearings and written briefs. Their report received widespread favourable, even enthusiastic support from all levels of government, the media, all manner of volunteer organizations, the universities, and numerous other constituencies.

Every care must be taken, of course, not to conflate the vigourous contribution made by the various members of the Commission, or to diminish the input of other individuals and groups who contributed to its work. But drawing the line between their roles is as difficult as discerning the exact dimensions of public support. The fact remains that there were innumerable continuities between Massey's views on culture prior to the commission, and the commission's

42 Maria Tippett, Making Culture, 156-85.

43 Litt, The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission, 11-37; his account wavers between an unfavourable and favourable view, with the former clearly predominating.

44 Media reaction to the report is summarized by Litt, The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission, 223-33.
findings. This may testify less to Massey’s or the other commissioners’ strong-arming the enterprise, as much as to consensus among the commissioners and the public. Be that as it may, Massey’s purposeful stewardship of the project can be detected at every turn.45

The Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences was appointed by a federal cabinet order-in-council dated April 8, 1949, which stated: "That it is desirable that the Canadian people should know as much as possible about their country, its history and traditions; and about their national life and common achievements; [and] that it is in the national interest to give encouragement to institutions which express national feeling, promote common understanding and add to the variety and richness of Canadian life, rural as well as urban...."46 The Commission was also asked to examine Canadian relations with the newly-formed UNESCO and any other such organizations in the international field. As Alice Massey (who died before the Commission completed its work) summarized the mandate of the Commission, it was set up to study the entire "cultural side of Canadian life and to recommend where the government should step in and

45 Hilda Neatby was apparently warned after the commissioners’ first meeting that its chair had already sketched out his report; Michael Hayden, ed., So Much To Do, So Little Time: The Writings of Hilda Neatby (Vancouver, 1983), 25. Despite this and the need for further assessment of the commissioners’ respective roles, there is ample evidence that each of Neatby, Larry MacKenzie, and Father Levesque had their own forceful presence on the Commission; Arthur Surveyer submitted a written dissenting opinion, primarily concerned with broadcasting, as part of the report. See Litt, The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission, regarding Neatby’s crucial role in the report’s final writing, 209-10.

46 Massey Report, 1951, xi.
help."

Massey, who was named chair of the Commission in the order-in-council, was actively involved in the choice of the other four commissioners, Father Georges-Henri Lévesque, Norman A. M. (Larry) MacKenzie, Hilda Neatby, and Arthur Surveyer. The Commission held public hearings in sixteen cities and in all ten provinces, heard over 1200 witnesses, and received 462 briefs. The report, which ran to 517 pages and included twelve appendices, was tabled in Parliament on June 1, 1951.

The report, itself, was divided into two parts. Part one, which opened with a couple of general chapters entitled "The Nature of the Task" and "The Forces of Geography", was the product of considerable original research and provided an overview of the state of Canadian cultural endeavor at mid-century. It testified to the impressive richness of the cultural fabric of Canada, and brought a wide range of organizations, hitherto largely obscure, to national attention. Part two contained the Commission's extensive recommendations with regard to broadcasting, the National Film Board, the National Gallery, National Museums, federal libraries, aid to universities, scientific research, Canadian culture abroad, and the creation of a national funding body for the arts, letters, humanities, and social sciences.

47 Alice Massey to Mary and Sidney, Lord and Lady Herbert, 30 Apr. 1949; MFamP, MG Al, V. 53.

48 Out of respect for the bilingual nature of the Commission's mandate and the active role played by Father Lévesque, it is sometimes referred to as the Massey-Lévesque Commission. This is more in the nature of a courtesy, however, for Massey was clearly named as the sole chair. Lévesque was neither co-chair or vice-chair and was, himself, clear on this point; Lévesque, Souvenances 2/Remous et éclatements: Entretiens avec Simon Jutras (Montreal, 1988), 236.

49 Massey Report, 1951, 8.
From the outset of the proceedings, Massey's long-standing discomfort over the word "culture" was palpable. He later commented upon the press conference he called the day after the commissioners' preliminary organizational meeting: "The word "culture" floated like a menacing cloud over the occasion. I avoided the use of the term and said that as far as the accounts of our work in English were concerned, it had better be looked on as a naughty word." He added: "It is interesting that "culture" in French is a perfectly normal term but in English it suggests everything that is highbrow, self-conscious and esoteric. If our enquiry was known as the "culture probe", it was simply the result of good natured flippancy".50

As early as the draft terms of reference of the commission, Massey was careful to cross out all uses of the word "culture". In a covering letter to Lester B. Pearson of 20 January 1949, he said that while he liked the term "National Development" in the Commission's title, "the phrase 'in the field of arts and letters' is...a bit too restricted in view of some of the subjects which must be in the list. Culture is of course a word to be avoided and so is education for obvious reasons...."51 Despite his early strictures, by the time of the Commission's final report, the submission abounded in the use of both words.

Massey and his colleagues were guided from the outset by a purposefully broad definition of culture and they ensured that the Commission embrace a wide spectrum of concerns. While the fine arts were included, and were even elevated to join the liberal arts in forming the centrepiece of the project, the Commissioners were careful to encompass the whole range of humanistic endeavors.

50 Massey, "Postscript".

A quotation from St. Augustine's *The City of God*, which opened the report, stated: "A nation is an association of reasonable beings united in a peaceful sharing of the things they cherish; therefore to determine the quality of a nation, you must consider what those things are." The Commission proceeded on the assumption that there was, indeed, a discernible collectivity of "cherished things" among Canadians, and that to measure its worth as a nation, one must look, not to its material well-being and physical resources, but to these values. What they were called upon to consider was "nothing less than the spiritual foundations of our national life". The commissioners called them alternatively "human assets", "spiritual resources", "these intangible elements", "a common set of beliefs", and the "important things in the life of a nation which cannot be weighted or measured". They wrote: "Canada became a national entity because of certain habits of mind and convictions which its people shared and would not surrender. Our country was sustained through difficult times by the power of this spiritual legacy....It is the intangibles which give a nation not only its essential character but its vitality as well. What may seem unimportant or even irrelevant under the pressure of daily life may well be the thing which endures, which may give a community its power to survive." \(^{52}\)

The phrase 'a community's power to survive' strongly evoked the underlying sense of threat and the determination to maintain (or achieve) sovereignty. Massey's campaign for culture's recognition, and the Massey report, itself, may be understood as a bid for Canadian sovereignty, hitherto of questionable existence precisely because of an emphasis on the practical and material and a concomitant neglect of culture. As the commissioners noted: "such an inquiry ... is probably

\(^{52}\) *Massey Report*, 1951, 4 and 271.
unique; it is certainly unprecedented in Canada". 53

Despite Massey's early reluctance to call culture by its name, the first chapter of the report "The Nature of the Task" did concede the problematic nature of the concept in Canada, especially in its relation to education. 54 "Although the word culture does not appear in our Terms of Reference [so carefully deleted by Massey], the public with a natural desire to express in some general way the essential character of our inquiry immediately and instinctively called us the 'Culture Commission'." The Commissioners explained that they had listened to many interesting ideas about the importance of culture, by some who welcomed the inquiry and others who worried about it encroaching on education. Education, the Commissioners hastened to acknowledge, was the constitutional purview of the provinces, but they distinguished between formal and informal education and equated culture with the latter. Rather tortuously, they had both to point out culture's affiliation with education, in order that it be taken seriously, and to disengage it from education as a provincial responsibility.

The commission's view of education clearly revealed its nineteenth and early twentieth century humanistic lineage, so central to Massey's own upbringing and early education: "education is the progressive development of the individual in all his faculties, physical and intellectual, aesthetic and moral. As a result of the disciplined growth of the entire personality, the educated man shows a balanced development of his powers; he has fully realized his human possibilities." As Massey had defined it since at least the 1910s, culture was

53 Massey Report, 1951, 3.

54 According to Litt, the argument justifying federal government support of the cultural sector in the chapter "The Nature of the Task" was written by Lévesque; The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission, 211.
a liberal arts education. To distinguish culture from applied education, that is, technical and professional training, the Commissioners defined culture as "that part of education which enriches the mind and refines the taste....This development, of course, occurs in formal education. It is continued and it bears fruit during adult life largely through the instruments of general education; and general or adult education we are called upon to investigate."  

In making the distinction between formal and informal or adult education, the Commissioners were guided perhaps and certainly strengthened by the briefs they received, especially from various religious groups. The brief from the Canadian Catholic Conference, for example, which Massey found "important and helpful," readily divorced formal education from adult education and considered the latter the territory of the Massey Commission's work.

The churches did not hesitate to employ the term 'culture' to designate broadly the non-material realm of human endeavor. The Catholic Conference concerned itself with the "general principles that...should inspire our Canadian culture" and stated its views on "a number of specific problems connected with the means to be employed in the development and diffusion of this same culture". A passage of the brief of the Canadian Catholic Conference, which drew Massey's particular attention read: "(The poison of materialism has sadly infected our modern world. If Canada has so far been spared its worst ravages, it is due, in large part, to the fact that our tradition in culture and education has been solidly based on the conviction that it is man that matters rather than things, a conviction which has manifested

55 Massey Report, 1951, 6-7.

itself in, and been fostered by, the important place assigned to the humanities in all levels of our education) [Massey's underlining and brackets]. The Church of England in Canada concurred: "We believe that no field of knowledge or research, however important in itself, should be allowed to become a substitute for a basic training in the humanities [Massey's underlining]."

The Commissioners invoked the constructive use of leisure, a concern of theologians and others since at least the mid-nineteenth century and echoed in the Commission's briefs. The Anglican Church noted that, while the amount of relaxation time had increased with industrialization, "little has yet been done to enable the community to prepare itself for the creative use of leisure". The Massey Commission wrote: "The work of artists, writers and musicians is now of importance to a far large number of people than ever before. Most persons today have more leisure than had their parents. ...But leisure is something more than just spare time. Its activities can often bring the inner satisfaction which is denied by dull and routine work".

Harking back to Massey's days on the executive of the National Council of Education in the 1920s, the opening text also situated the task in the context of citizenship: "Our

57 Massey Commission, "A Brief Presented by The Canadian Catholic Conference" (March 1950); VMP, 346.


60 The Massey Report, 1951, 5.
concern throughout was with the needs and desires of the citizen in relation to science, literature, art, music, the drama, films, broadcasting", as well as federal government aid to higher education. Implicit in the choice of the nomenclature 'citizen' was a concern not with fostering the individual's pursuit of personal happiness (although this was not excluded, of course), but with service to the community. As the commissioners wrote: "Education is primarily a personal responsibility....Naturally, however, the individual becomes entirely himself only as a member of society." Elsewhere in the Report, they wrote: "in the realm of culture as distinguished from citizenship, if such a distinction is possible...." They continued with a key statement: "All civilized societies strive for a common good, including not only material but intellectual and moral elements. If the Federal Government is to renounce its right to associate itself with other social groups, public and private, in the general education of Canadian citizens, it denies its intellectual and moral purpose, the complete conception of the common good is lost, and Canada, as such, becomes a materialistic society." Here was the idea, so familiar to Massey, that the quest for community was the ultimate good, the thing that elevated life above the sordid.

The commissioners unequivocally allied the federal government with the custodianship of the common good, not, of course, to the exclusion of the individual, the family, or other levels of government. By doing so, they were attempting to define the public good, or at least frame a new starting point for its conception. This involved augmenting the moral and spiritual authority of the state. It was a declaration that Canadians cared about their collectivity not only for the material prosperity it promised. When critics of the National Film Board of Canada, for example, argued that it should

61 Massey Report, 1951, 7-8 and 31.
confine itself to making government department films, the Commissioners stated proudly that the NFB and CBC had no counterpart elsewhere on the American continent. "Each has been challenged as a government monopoly unjust to the private and perhaps dangerous to public interests. To these charges the reply has been that only a national organization protects the nation from excessive commercialization and Americanization." Much of Canada's identity as a determinedly collective society was, indeed, defined in the years around the Massey Commission, and its findings help illuminate the moral and intellectual heritage that propelled that identity into being.

While the commissioners were vocal about the collective good, they were equally forceful in their defense of diversity. The Massey commissioners devoted a chapter to volunteerism and the volunteer, which they understood to be an important site of "the diversity within our unity". "The fine tradition of the voluntary society which performs work of national importance beyond what government can or will do is perhaps rightly regarded by English-speaking Canadians as their special contribution to our common life in Canada. This claim is partly although not entirely justified, since France too has had her tradition of voluntary effort; but in a more fully centralized state the role of the voluntary organization has been inevitably less vigorous." Such a statement provided an interesting counterpoint to the Commission report's endorsement of government involvement, a reminder that its authors were far from recommending wholesale centralization. Indeed they found the "energy" and even "fanaticism" with which volunteer groups had mounted their activities throughout Canadian history "reassuring in a country where circumstances have exaggerated the virtues of the conformist". They championed the history of "public service on a voluntary

basis" and affirmed that "there is general agreement on the need to maintain individual initiative and a sense of responsibility...." However, the volunteer, the local, and the amateur was strengthened, in their view, by an alliance within a larger unity. A national infrastructure of support was required for the local not to be threatened with effacement.

Here, too, the liberal arts education was central. The brief from the Canadian Catholic Conference argued for a humanistic training "to counteract...the already alarming intellectual passivity among modern people", a passage Massey underlined in his copy of the text. The agility of mind and independence of thought that the liberal arts were presumed to cultivate were weighed against what the commissioners referred to as "passive entertainment", that is, "a tendency to spend increasing leisure in gazing and listening or in aimless motoring".

As Massey had said on an earlier occasion, "'mass culture' is a contradiction in terms. Culture is primarily an affair of the individual...[;] its mechanized dissemination may defeat its own end." While in favour of universal access to the arts and education, he was apprehensive that cultural production disseminated 'en masse' dulled it recipients, minimized their opportunities to participate, and made them vulnerable to manipulation. Passivity and homogeneity were seen to work hand in glove. Fear of standardization, early on a refrain of those afraid of

63 Massey Report, 1951, 66-67 and 73.

64 Massey Commission, "A Brief Presented by The Canadian Catholic Conference" (March 1950); VMP, 346.


66 Massey, "Address" (to the American Association of Museums).
democracy and the loss of privilege, became also a chorus of those on the fringes of society (or the fringes of a superculture), seeking to make an alternative voice heard.

The theme of diversity in Canada drew much of its potency, of course, from the affirmation of Canadian society in the face of superpower domination; Canada prized itself as an alternative voice in a growing single culture globe. Massey and his fellow commissioners cited and defended biculturalism and bilingualism as evidence of Canada's own respect for diversity internally. In chapter two, written by Massey, they also viewed regionalism as a virtue, stating: "In our travels we were impressed by differences of region and atmosphere....The very existence of these differences contributes vastly to 'the variety and richness of Canadian life' and promises a healthy resistance to the standardization which is so great a peril of modern civilization".

On this occasion, too, diversity was linked with creativity. But the premise that government involvement necessarily stifled creativity was rejected and turned around. In its place, it was argued that industry, driven by the profit motive and mass production, circumvented creativity and diversity.

While the Massey commissioners positioned culture in opposition to commerce, and, by implication, Canadians as more "cultured" than their neighbours south of the border, they also wrote of Canada's "cultural indebtedness" to the United States. They praised cultural exchange in principle. They quoted from a brief of the National Conference of Canadian

67 Litt, The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission, 211.

68 Massey Report, 1951, 11.

69 Massey Report, 1951, 682.
Universities, which stated: "culturally we have feasted on the bounty of our neighbours". Such sentiments were, of course, predicated on a second sense of culture, employed relatively, to distinguish particular communities, each having its own "vigorous and distinctive cultural life". In the Massey Report, this relative use of culture became as important as its absolute use to refer to the entire non-material realm. It was, indeed, this second use that added impact and definition to the first. The American threat to Canadian culture made the latter more visible and precious. Culture was that which was lofty and elevating, but it could also be loathsome and threatening. In a sense, this was an admission that culture was always a relative thing, and its claim to absoluteness was none other than an attempt to validate a particular set of values.

The Massey report unequivocally sounded the alarm about American cultural penetration into Canada, which advanced in step with business and even military inroads. While Canada and the United States had moved visibly closer in the interwar period, some of the events that attended World War II had aroused Canadian animosity towards its closest neighbour. With the entry of the United States into the War after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, American military personnel arrived in the Canadian Northwest and Newfoundland often with the manner of "occupying forces".

Accompanying the threat to Canada's own defence policy was the escalation of American capital investment and direct ownership of natural resources and business ventures. While fuelling Canada's post-war prosperity, this economic influence reached proportions that frightened many Canadians. The report commented: "We know that if some disaster were to cut

70 Massey Report, 1951, 15 and 18.
off our ready access to our neighbours, our whole economic life would be dislocated; but do we realize our lack of self-reliance in other matters?"

They acknowledged the beneficence of American foundations to Canadian libraries, and scholarships to Canadian students, but were concerned by the "vast importations of what might be familiarly called the American cultural output". "Few Canadians realize the extent of this dependence;...our lazy, even abject, imitation of them [American institutions] has caused an uncritical acceptance of ideas and assumptions which are alien to our tradition."

As an example of the problematic nature of Canadian culture, the Commissioners cited a brief which reported that out of a Canadian Grade 8 class of thirty-four students, nineteen were able to explain the significance of July 4, and only seven the importance of July 1.\textsuperscript{72} To the commissioners, this was patent evidence of the neglect by Canada of its own history, a theme that has lost none of its relevance a half century later. Culture could either be a pipeline of American influence or a bulwark against it, and the Massey commissioners were determined to buttress its latter function.

In its findings and recommendations, the report focussed on what it considered to be the primary gathering points for culture: i) the mass media; ii) galleries, museums, libraries, archives, and historic sites; iii) the universities and scholarship; and iv) the fine arts. While the immediate task was to assess and recommend systems for the support of each, broad patterns, invariably centred on diversity, depoliticization, and excellence, characterized their vision of state-supported culture for Canada.

With particular urgency, the Commission had been asked to review the principles upon which radio and television broadcasting in Canada should be based. Most Canadians, other

\textsuperscript{72} Massey Report, 1951, 14-16.
than those in southern Ontario and British Columbia, who received transmissions from the United States, had not seen television when the Commission was established, but its launching in Canada was imminent.

Despite reservations about mass-disseminated culture inducing passivity, the Massey commissioners recognized the central place of mass media in modern society and commended especially the "pleasure and instruction [they brought] to remote and lonely places in this country". They readily referred to radio "as an instrument of education and culture". Comparing national public broadcasting in Canada to the building of an all-Canadian railway fifty years earlier, they applauded both on the grounds that they defied absorption into an American system.73

The Commission regarded the CBC's function as three-fold: to foster national unity, to provide quality programming, and to be responsive to diversity. The CBC had met the geographical challenges of the country by straddling six time zones, involving extensive re-broadcasting of national programs, providing special regional services, and maintaining separate networks in French and English, while competing with the American ability to "spend millions on lavish commercial productions." "Minorities, even small minorities, have not been forgotten." Among its public services, they lauded "the Northern Messenger Service with its personal messages to Royal Canadian Mounted Police constables, missionaries, trappers and others in the far north."

The CBC was praised also for its offerings of educational programming, in the form of both school broadcasts and adult education. In the latter category were National Farm Radio Forum, Le Choc des Idées, Citizens' Forum, and Les Idées en Marche, which were geared towards an audience organized into listening and discussion groups. The report commended such

73 Massey Report, 1951, 20, 24 and 36.
programs for "making better citizens of us, in that they awaken our critical faculties". An American authority cited by the Commission praised National Farm Radio Forum for bringing into being "one of the largest listening group projects in the world". The Report continued: "The joint listening and discussion has led in many rural areas to a high development of community spirit and to useful local projects." 74

Finally, while acknowledging how poorly the CBC paid its writers, the report pointed to the instrumental role that radio had played in the encouragement of Canadian writers, composers, actors, and musicians. This was one of the many areas in which the private broadcasters had failed dismally. The major challenge to the existing system of broadcasting came from the private broadcasters, who contested the CBC's function as both broadcaster and regulator and argued for a separate regulatory body. This and their second major bid, which was to open the door to private broadcasting networks, were soundly rejected by the Commissioners. While acknowledging the contribution of the private stations as providers of local services and as affiliates within the national system, the Commission was unequivocal that the position of public broadcasting in Canada not be eroded.

They situated their argument in the context of a public trust: "radio, as one of the most powerful means of education, may be regarded as a social influence too potent and too perilous to be ignored by the state which, in modern times, increasingly has assumed responsibility for the welfare of its citizens. This...view of radio operation assumes that this medium of communication is a public trust to be used for the benefit of society...."

They were critical of the American system, which treated broadcasting merely as "a by-product of the advertising

74 Massey Report, 1951, 27, 30, and 36-37.
business", although they pointed out that even the United States had accepted "the general principle that radio frequencies are within the public domain" and in 1934 had created the Federal Communications Commission, appointed by the President and accountable to Congress. Conversely, France and Britain, they emphasized, placed broadcasting squarely in the public domain, adopting sole government ownership, and not allowing advertising.

While seeking to strengthen the CBC's fundamental position within Canadian broadcasting, they did not ignore its shortcomings. The Commissioners acknowledged the widespread criticism that the national broadcaster was overly centralized. To increase its responsiveness to the country as a whole, it recommended that the CBC's Board of Governors be enlarged. It proposed that the CBC seriously consider further investment in programming developed outside Toronto and Montreal, and that it establish regional advisory councils in order to be more responsive to its listeners' views. It also tackled the inequity in availability of English and French programming, and recommended the creation of a second French network as well as a French-speaking station to serve the Maritimes. They urged the CBC to consider using existing French-language stations in Western Canada for national programs.

Many of their recommendations pertained to quality. In arguing for the CBC's autonomy from political interference, they urged that the CBC Board of Governors be composed of those fully qualified, experienced, and interested in the field. To avoid the political exigency that attends an annual appropriation "by the government of the day", they recommended a statutory grant on a five-year basis to enable the CBC to

75 Massey Report, 1951, 32 and 276-77.
76 Massey Report, 1951, 287, 297, and 299.
make long-range plans. They also waded into the specifics of CBC programming policy and practice. They disapproved of the CBC's use of speakers with no qualifications in a particular field to give radio talks, a practice defended with the argument that amateurs had a more popular appeal. They cited by contrast the policy of the BBC: "It is the principle of the B.B.C. that the popular talk should be in quality and authority comparable to the scholarly. In this matter Britain shares the fine tradition of France where even philosophers are expected to make themselves comprehensible to l'homme moyen raisonnable."  

The Commissioners' findings with regard to broadcasting established the pattern for the rest of their report, with an emphasis on quality, independence from political exigency, and responsiveness to a diverse audience. The very visible successes of CBC radio, which the Commission underlined with tremendous satisfaction, buttressed their recommendations for state involvement in other cultural areas.

Each of the disciplines they examined faced both common and unique difficulties. The Commissioners were quick to acknowledge the particularly embattled position of Canadian film in relation to Hollywood, and the shocking extent to which the press and periodical literature were American-dominated, pointing out that foreign news was largely collected and written by Americans for Americans. They gestured gently in the direction of tariff protection on the paper used by Canadian publishers. But they seemed largely resigned to publishing being controlled by commercial, foreign interest.

As for film, Massey had expressed the view in On Being Canadian that the feature film seemed to prosper most in a free enterprise setting. On the other hand, he had been alarmed since the late 1920s about the control that Hollywood

77 Massey Report, 1951, 287, and 296.
exercised over film in Canada. He and his fellow Commissioners noted with interest promising developments in feature film production in Quebec and lauded the National Film Board of Canada, in particular, for its documentary films and animation. The Commission also commended the NFB for its effect on the growth of the private industry in Canada. In response to pleas from private filmmakers, however, who sought a greater share of government-sponsored work, or argued that the NFB should retire from film production altogether, the Commission was adamantly opposed, citing the danger of commercialization. Herein lay the conundrum: fostering a home-grown film industry while harbouring deep suspicions about commercial interest, especially as a pipeline for American culture. The Commissioners had difficulty envisioning a system in support of commercial Canadian film production, not because they were complicit with the American film industry, quite the reverse.

Should the Commissioners, then, have been more demonstrative about restructuring support of film production and distribution in Canada? The Massey Commissioners were surely well aware of the idea of creating a quota system by which Hollywood would be obliged to invest a percentage of its box-office revenues in Canada. This idea had been floated in response to Canada's balance of payment difficulties with the United States after the War. But the American film lobby had geared up and Canada had retreated.\(^78\) Certainly Massey was ever the pragmatist. While the Massey report was, in a sense, a cultural wishlist, he recognized fully that its credibility and chances of implementation rested on some significant measure of consensus. Nationalization of the feature film

\(^78\) In 1948 the Canadian Cooperative Project was created, and in return for the free flow of dollars into the United States, the American film lobby committed itself to promoting Canadian tourism and making references to Canada in American films. The rise in tourist dollars never materialized.
industry was a battle he and his fellow commissioners were not prepared to tackle.

Turning from the mass media, the Commissioners addressed with more optimism the assortment of federal institutions that functioned (or were intended to function) as custodians of Canada’s material culture. They started with one that was of particular interest to Massey, the National Gallery of Canada.79

The Massey report noted with satisfaction the energetic outreach work that the Gallery had carried out over the years, through travelling exhibitions, art reproductions, radio broadcasts, and films. With reference to its promotion of Canadian art abroad, it commended specifically the 1938 “Century of Canadian Art” at the Tate Gallery. Drawing upon some seventy briefs that addressed the Gallery, the commissioners made a persuasive case for the extension and elaboration of its services across the country. However, only six galleries in Canada had the professional staff and physical conditions to host art exhibitions. There were no provincially supported art galleries in the country. The National Gallery of Canada’s own funding, facilities, and staffing were drastically inadequate. The Commissioners recommended that plans proceed for a new building and urged a significant increase in staffing, in order to accommodate the growing education and extension demands being made of the Gallery.80

They also recommended a realignment of the Gallery’s

79 Gallery director, H. O. McCurry, forwarded the Gallery’s brief to Massey for his criticism and amendments before it was submitted to the Commission; McCurry to Massey, 7 July 1949, and Massey to McCurry, 8 July, 1949; VMP, 391/09

80 A permanent national gallery building, built specifically to its needs, was not realized until 1988, although, in 1960, Massey directed funds to the refitting of an office building, the Lorne building, for National Gallery use; King, "The National Gallery of Canada at Arm’s Length", 55.
relation with government. Noting that its control had been increasingly brought under the Department of Public Works, specifically the Deputy Minister with little knowledge of and little sympathy for its functions, they argued that the Gallery's board should report directly to cabinet, as did the Dominion Archivist. While remaining accountable to Parliament and having more presence at the decision-making level, the Gallery would, thereby, have greater autonomy. In principle, only major issues warranted cabinet attention, and the Gallery would be more able to make decisions based on quality and service rather than political expediency. The Massey commissioners also proposed, in order that the Gallery board be more representative of the entire country, that its membership be increased from five to nine.81

Inadequate physical plant and lack of trained staff was endemic to the national collections. Little had improved in the almost twenty years since the Miers and Markham report on Canadian museums. The Massey commissioners were alarmed by the loss and destruction of irreplaceable museum material every year reported across the country. Moreover, there was a lack of protection for material of national historical significance leaving the country.

The Commission called for a separation of the history and natural history collections and the creation of a Canadian Historical Museum. Like the National Museum (now proposed to be the Canadian Museum of Natural History) and the National Gallery, along with a proposed Canadian Museum of Science, the Canadian Museum of History would be controlled by a non-governmental board reporting directly to cabinet. Its employees and administration would, thereby, be completely divorced from the civil service, in recognition of its specialized functions.

The circumstances of the federal libraries were, if

possible, even more calamitous. The Commissioners reported with shame: "it has been mentioned that Canada is the only civilized country in the world lacking a national library." Equally demoralizing was the Massey Report’s finding that "good collections of Canadiana are rare in Canada"; the best three were located in the United States. Commenting on the local public library as a key institution of education and culture, they pointed to the outside help responsible for the development of regional library systems in Canada. Grants from the Carnegie Corporation in the 1930s had established such a system in the Fraser Valley. The entire library service in Prince Edward Island was indebted to the same source. Meanwhile, they estimated that a mere seven to ten percent of rural Canada had the benefit of library services, compared to five percent a decade earlier. A project to microfilm old and rare Canadian newspapers was proceeding only as a result of a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation.

The Commissioners' recommendations were fundamental: "that a National Library be established without delay; that a librarian be appointed as soon as possible....", and that proper fireproof facilities accommodate the national collections of books. They urged an amendment to the copyright act requiring that two copies of any book published in Canada be deposited at the National Library, and that the Librarian and Board be authorized to assemble through purchase and gift a complete collection of the books published in Canada. Further, they recommended that the Library add music in all forms to its collection. In order that the collection be accessible, they encouraged the establishment of a microfilm service.82

The state of the national archival collection was almost as dismal, and the report was positively damning of its neglect. The recovery and writing of Canada’s history was, of

course, one of Vincent Massey's most passionate concerns as a Canadian nationalist. The commissioners reported that virtually no improvement had been made in the archives since the 1912 Royal Commission on Public Records, which had found national record-keeping in a state of disarray. The report could not even quantify the extent of the holdings or their condition, neglect was so endemic.

Hand-in-glove with the need for a systematic approach to records preservation and retrieval was the need for a professionalized staff. As Massey and his colleagues pointed out, of the more than thirty people then engaged in professional archival work, more than half had less than a high school education. The commissioners were equally appalled by the state of public record-keeping in the provinces where, in several instances, records had no legal protection and could be destroyed indiscriminately. Some provinces, they noted, were more historically-minded than others; Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, and British Columbia had provided adequate facilities for the housing of records, while the others had made little or no systematic provision for the collection and deposit of archival material.

They commented, too, on the range of materials that needed to be preserved, quoting from one of their briefs: "The historian of today, and his allies in the fields of political science, sociology, economics and anthropology, are interested in the activities of all people, and not merely those of their political and military leaders. In a democratic society this interest can be expected to increase."

Noting "the very close relationship which exists between standards of historical scholarship and national policy", the Commission considered "that the public interest is best served by a liberal policy in the matter of access by historians to public records....Without unlimited opportunities for research in the country's modern records the historian cannot render our society and our culture the highest service of which he is
capable."

The commissioners also permitted themselves to comment on the role of the historian: "[M]any people lament the comparative lack of scholarly readable books about our country, its history and its traditions. It has been suggested that Canadian historians, in spite of some recent and welcome publications, have not yet bridged the gap between the area of scholarly research and the ground on which they can meet the common reader". Such a statement was characteristic of Massey’s ongoing desire to demystify education and make learning widely accessible.

Closely related to the Commission’s concern for documenting Canada’s history through the preservation of written records was the federal government’s management of historic sites and monuments, usually consisting of no more than the mounting of a commemorative plaque. They called for immediate steps to be taken to arrest the deterioration of the Halifax Citadel. Fort Henry at Kingston, Ontario, was singled out as one of very few restoration successes.

Above all, they argued for greater autonomy for the Historic Sites and Monuments Board, wider representation from across Canada amongst its membership, and professionalization of its staffing and board membership. They urged that historic sites, then under the care of the Department of National Defence, be transferred to the National Parks Service, which followed proper curatorial practice and grasped its budgetary requirements.

With respect to the federal cultural institutions surveyed by the Commission generally, their recommendations followed a pattern: providing adequate physical plant, the professionalization of staff, achieving greater autonomy from the civil service, and wider representation from across Canada on the boards of the various organizations. All of this, of

course, was aimed at expanding and strengthening the mandate and presence of these institutions and rendering them more effective. More simply, it was about bringing them into the twentieth century, their neglect was so fundamental and endemic, and pressuring the government to assume some of its most basic duties of nationhood. As Massey wrote in his memoirs over a decade later: "We Canadians are in no danger of narrow nationalism; our peril is to be too little conscious of our own identity, too little given to understanding and preserving it."\(^{84}\)

At the outset of their study, the commissioners had committed themselves to addressing informal education alone. The only exception to this in their original terms of reference was a mandate to review the system of scholarships awarded to researchers by various government departments, notably the National Research Council. However, they soon became convinced that it was impossible to ignore formal education, at least at the university level, if they were to honour their vision of their mandate.

As the report neared readiness, on 15 September 1950, Massey wrote to fellow commissioner Larry MacKenzie, who deeply favoured federal aid to the universities:

You will remember that at our sessions we agreed that it would be difficult to recommend Federal Aid to Universities although we arrived at the conclusion that we could, with propriety, recommend the expenditure of Federal money for all forms of scholarships in higher education, including under-graduate scholarships. Miss Neatby and I have come to the conclusion that we can and should recommend Federal Aid to Universities in the Faculties of Liberal Arts, that is to say, for their work which lies outside the professional schools. To neglect the humanities would be to leave out the key stone of the cultural arch with which we are concerned.\(^{85}\)


\(^{85}\) Massey added that the chapters on the universities (parts I and II) had been prepared "in the belief that they will meet with the approval of all five Commissioners" and would be
The university as "the key stone of the cultural arch" was entirely consistent with Massey's and the Commission's deep commitment to education, although it was likely Neatby who most valorized the university's role in society. The Commissioners proceeded to make a thoroughly-argued case for the role of the university in the nation's cultural life. They pointed to its place in the local community's "general culture", that is, in adult education and as a patron of the arts, letters and sciences. By drawing students from across the country, the universities also functioned as a national communications network. They were important, too, as the nation's major sites of scientific research. This was especially significant in view of the fact that industry in Canada lagged behind in contributing even to applied scientific research. The Commissioners found that this was primarily attributable to the fact that so many firms in Canada were branches of American and British businesses, and primary research was generally carried on at head office. Finally, the university had recently become significant recruiting territory for the public service, in turn, fuelling its professionalization. The university was, therefore, of central national concern, and warranted national attention.

Of particular interest to the commissioners was "the plight of the humanities", that is, their devalued role in relation to engineering, medicine, and science. They provided statistics demonstrating that the humanities had become "poor relations" both in terms of faculty salaries and numbers of appointments. Not only were the humanities shrinking in importance with the advancement of "the mechanical and utilitarian tendencies of the past generation or two", they, themselves, were changing. As Massey had argued in his speech forwarded to MacKenzie from Ottawa shortly; Massey to N. A. M. MacKenzie, 15 Sept. 1950; VMP, 585/10; also, 391/13.
to the American Association of Museums in Quebec City in May 1947, the classics were being taken over by the philologist, history was becoming a branch of sociology, and philosophy was being supplanted by psychology.

Of course, "the plight of the humanities" was only one symptom of the larger problem -- lack of financial support for the nation's universities. "Falling revenues and rising costs" threatened to prevent the universities from being (quoting from one of their submissions) "nurseries of a truly Canadian civilization and culture". "Canada's future cultural development depends primarily upon the availability of higher education for her young people", the commissioners wrote; "the more students with ability who receive such education, the wider will be the scope and variety of Canada's cultural possibilities."

Dwelling upon Canada's unfavourable statistics in relation to other countries' financial assistance to university students, the commissioners recommended an array of enhanced and enlarged scholarship opportunities at the undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate levels. They recommended that the federal government provide direct aid to the universities themselves, that is, "make annual contributions to support the work of the universities on the basis of the population of each of the provinces of Canada". Only by assisting and augmenting the role of the universities, they reiterated, would the cultural arch have its keystone. And in "probably no civilized country in the world...[is] dependence on the universities in the cultural field so great as in Canada". 86

In a chapter running to over sixty pages, the longest in the report, the Commissioners turned to the fine arts. The commissioners had stated in their introduction: "We were conscious of a prevailing hunger existing throughout the

country for a fuller measure of what the writer, the artist and the musician could give". And while they had made periodic reference to the arts in their intervening chapters, they now addressed squarely the situation facing artists and art in Canada at mid-century. Of all the commissioners, of course, Massey was by far the best equipped to assess and articulate the interests of the artistic communities in Canada.

The report quoted from the brief of the Canadian Arts Council, an organization formed in 1945 and an extension of the lobbying effort by artists groups that had banded together to present a brief to the Turgeon Committee on Reconstruction in May 1944. The Council, representing some 10,000 members, was an umbrella group for eighteen arts organizations, ranging from the Dominion Drama Festival, to La Société des Écrivains Canadiens, to the Royal Canadian Academy of the Arts, to the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects and Town Planners, to the Arts and Letters Club, Toronto.

The brief opened with a passage that Massey had marked in his own copy, and it was this excerpt that the Massey Report quoted:

No novelist, poet, short story writer, historian, biographer, or other writer of non-technical books can make even a modestly comfortable living by selling his work in Canada.
No composer of music can live at all on what Canada pays him for his compositions.
Apart from radio drama, no playwright, and only a few actors and producers, can live by working in the theatre in Canada.
Few painters and sculptors, outside the fields of commercial art and teaching, can live by the sale of their work in Canada.

88 Massey Report, 1951, 182, and "Brief to the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences by the Canadian Arts Council"; UTA, VMP, 585/09.
With this declaration as their starting point, the commissioners proceeded to enumerate the status of the various artistic disciplines. They applauded and celebrated the many promising signs of activity in each, while emphasizing their universally dismal level of support. The commissioners began their survey with music, the art form with pride of place among Protestant Canadians. They noted the tremendous increase in interest in music in the past twenty-five years, including "serious music", to which they devoted most of their attention. One symptom of this interest was the number of music festivals now numbering almost one hundred annually across the country. While interest soared, there remained no written history of Canadian music, no library of music in Canada, a limited opportunity for advanced study in music, and a sad deficiency in appropriate settings for the performance of music. Furthermore, concert stages in Canada were dominated by performers sent by influential American concert agencies.

The Commissioners traced an even more bluntly inadequate situation in theatre: "In Canada there is nothing comparable, whether in play-production or in writing for the theatre, to what is going in other countries with which we should like to claim intellectual kinship and cultural equality." While there was no lack of talent, there was little encouragement. Advanced training in theatre was said to be non-existent; and "except in the few largest centres, professional theatre is moribund in Canada". The only significant employer in either music or drama was the C.B.C.

The Commission tackled the proposal for a National Theatre in Canada, but warned of "the dangers inherent in attempting to establish and to operate an agency for the advancement of national culture directly under government control...." Without safeguards, such a theatre would be vulnerable with every election, and high quality work would be
impossible. The theatre was at a critical moment in its history in Canada, they argued, and required careful assessment. As they would emphasize shortly, it was possible to offer government support without direct government control.

The commissioners looked briefly at ballet, sculpture, architecture, painting, and crafts. They commended the work of Marius Barbeau and the National Museum in documenting Native, French-Canadian, and English-Canadian folk songs, stories, dances, and myths, but bemoaned the widespread ignorance of Canadian folklore, which while regional in nature, was of general interest and a source of national community.

In particular, the Commissioners pointed to the widespread ignorance of native artistic traditions among Canadians of non-native descent and among native peoples themselves. They did not accept the widespread belief that native cultures were vanishing and that their arts should be preserved merely as a record of the past. Despite referring to the "integration" of native peoples into Canadian society and making other Eurocentric assumptions, they argued strenuously for the encouragement of native art and craft production. They were critical of the Indian Affairs Branch for its lack of support for native art, and maintained that arts and crafts should be understood as an essential part of native education. They adopted a suggestion from one of their briefs that a Canadian Council of Amerindian Studies and Welfare be created. They concluded: "it is no act of patronizing charity to encourage a revival of the activities of those who throughout our history have maintained craftsmanship at the level of an art." 89

On the subject of painting, while the Commissioners

89 Massey Report, 1951, 193 and 199.

90 Massey Report, 1951, 234 and 243.
acknowledged the successes of the Group of Seven and of recent painting in Quebec, they argued that "painting in Canada is not yet fully accepted as a necessary part of the general culture of the country...." A concern that deeply informed the Commission's recommendations for state support of culture was expressed by the Federation of Canadian Artists and quoted in the report: "The arts must not be dominated, regimented or exploited to serve special or narrow ends; they are an unfolding and evolving expression of the inner consciousness of the individual or society."91

This belief in the autonomy of the arts, that in order to have integrity an art form must not be the servant of propaganda, was a notion that Massey had wrestled with since at least the 1920s, and accepted only with significant modification. The challenge was to enlist art's support without subjugating it. A belief that this was possible underlay the Commission's single most important recommendation: the creation of a funding body, the Canada Council for the Encouragement of the Arts, Letters, Humanities, and Social Sciences. In the introduction to their report, the Massey Commissioners had raised two of the chief challenges to state participation in culture: "First, how can government aid be given to projects in the field of the arts and letters without stifling efforts which must spring from the desires of the peoples themselves? Secondly, how can this aid be given consistently with our federal structure and in harmony with our diversities?". The Commissioners were careful not to imply that such a council would stifle or supplant the wellspring of initiative and creative energy that volunteerism in Canada had exhibited. For one thing, the Canadian taxpayer was not going to be asked to bear the full brunt of this expense. On the other hand, as the Commission pointed out, only five learned or cultural organizations then

received federal subsidies, totalling a mere $21,000, "a completely inadequate reflection of public interest in the field of arts and letters. More bluntly, they stated: "If we in Canada are to have a more plentiful and better cultural fare, we must pay for it."

They pointed out that Alberta and Saskatchewan had already established arts boards, and they looked to models in other countries. In many instances, state support of culture took the form of a Ministry of National Education or a Ministry of Cultural Affairs. As they hastened to point out, such a solution was "constitutionally impossible or undesirable" in Canada. For this and other reasons they were adamantly opposed to the creation of a Ministry of Fine Arts and Cultural Affairs, echoing Massey in On Being Canadian. The model they considered most appropriate for Canada, and which they claimed was most consistent with the general desire of those who had made submissions to them, was a modified version of the Arts Council of Britain.

They recounted the circumstances of its creation and early history. Massey might as well have been speaking from personal experience: "On the outbreak of war in 1939, with blackout conditions and shiftions of the population, the prospects of the arts and of artists were seriously affected. Theatres and art galleries were closed, concerts could not be held, but at the same time there arose a great demand for the stimulus and relaxation which only the arts can give. Those who had known such things felt their loss keenly; others who had never heard fine music or visited a theatre or looked at original paintings became aware of what they had missed."92

In response to the demand, the Massey report continued, the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (later the Arts Council of Great Britain) was created. The commissioners quoted a 1945 broadcast by John Maynard Keynes,

92 Massey Report, 1951, 76, 272 and 374.
then chair of the Council: "I do not believe it is yet realized what an important thing has happened. State patronage of the arts has crept in. It has happened in a very English, informal, unostentatious way, half baked if you like." What he referred to as a "semi-independent body" had been created to support private or local initiatives in the arts. He added: "The task of an official body is not to teach or to censor, but to give courage, confidence and opportunity".93

The Massey Commissioners were also interested in Britain's second arts agency, the British Council, created to project British culture abroad.94 But rather than proposing two separate bodies for Canada, the Massey Commission recommended the creation of one funding agency for both domestic and foreign initiatives in the arts and letters. They stated: "The encouragement of the arts and letters in this country, we believe, cannot be dissociated from our cultural relationships with countries abroad..." This, itself, was a telling assumption, but was not immediately explained. Elsewhere, however, they added: "we are convinced that, in our country particularly, encouragement of these studies [the humanities and social sciences] must be carried on to a considerable extent through international exchanges, and through closer contacts with France, Great Britain and with other European countries where traditionally they are held in great respect." In effect, they understood a Eurocentred internationalism as a source of Canadian sovereignty.

The whole business of the 'cultural projection of Canada' was a key concern of the commissioners. To date, Canada's cultural export had been extremely limited and scattered. The

93 J. M. Keynes, 1945; in Massey Report, 1951, 375.
94 It was founded in 1934, not 1935 as the report stated.
new Canada Council would be in a position to spearhead and coordinate a wide range of cultural initiatives and exchanges commensurate with Canada's place as a growing international presence. In the area of cultural projection, too, the commissioners emphasized the need for a degree of autonomy, praising the British Council for maintaining its freedom from direct political interference. They cautioned the National Film Board, a primary source of exported information about Canada, for example, against sending films that attempted to persuade foreign audiences of the virtues of the Canadian way of life.95

Having argued that the two functions, domestic and international, be combined in one body, the Commission turned its attention to other aspects of the constitution of an arts council for Canada. "We should...consider it a misfortune if this Canada Council became in any sense a department of government, but we realize that since this body will be spending public money it must be in an effective manner responsible to the Government and hence to Parliament." They recommended that the Canada Council be composed of fifteen members, all appointed by an order-in-council of the federal cabinet. The position of chair and vice-chair were recommended to be full-time appointments, while the other members of Council would not receive an annual salary, only reimbursement for travelling expenses and a per diem while engaged in Council business. They recommended strongly against officers of the Federal Government sitting as members, and stressed that the council "be properly representative of the cultures and of the various regions of Canada".

They rejected a suggestion from Canadian artists and writers that such a council be representative of their professional organizations. This they judged to be too partisan. They added: "This is not to say, however, that a

Canadian artist, a Canadian musician, a Canadian writer, or a Canadian scholar should not serve on the Council; if he does, however, he should sit in his capacity as a distinguished and public-spirited Canadian citizen...."

They also ruled out a separate council for the humanities and social sciences, modelled on the National Research Council, as had been suggested in some of their submissions, on the grounds that this would aggravate further the problem of the humanities' isolation, when what was desirable was their greater integration with other fields.

Following the example of the Arts Council of Great Britain's and the British Council's use of expert advisory committees, the Massey Commissioners also made the following recommendation: "For its complex and disparate duties we should imagine that the Canada Council would find it advisable to establish permanent committees on which the members would sit in accordance with their special experience and interests...." 96 This would enhance the Council's capacity to honour quality and excellence.

The agency that they were proposing be created, then, embodied a host of mechanisms now generally grouped together under the rubric of 'the arm's length principle'. When the Canada Council was finally created in 1957, along the structural and administrative lines that the Massey Commission recommended, it would entrench many features of this principle. The Council's creation was precipitated by the windfall estate taxes collected by the federal government, as a result of the death of two Canadian millionaires. These taxes yielded an endowment for the Canada Council amounting to $50,000,000, giving it an added measure of early autonomy. Subsequently, as its success grew and it had to rely increasingly on parliamentary appropriations, the Council found its independence under constant threat of erosion.

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Nevertheless, while in danger from the very forces that Massey and his colleagues sought to thwart, the arm’s length principle remains a touchstone of Canadian cultural policy.

While it is widely recognized that the arm’s length principle of government arts funding helps guard against political interference and state sloganism, and has long been valued for these reasons, there are other facets of its construction that are significant. Removing political exigency as the guiding force for choices required the substitution of another set of criteria. One was the striving for quality, (admitting now, but less then, that quality, itself, hosts all sorts of biases). For Massey, excellence was the means by which to transcend partisanship and find unity within difference. Everyone, in theory, could aspire to excellence, regardless of their ethnic or regional background, their gender or class. But claims for quality are often mistaken for exclusivity, when the intent, at least, was to democratize excellence. In essence, by seeking to supplant the political with the aesthetic, by substituting standards of quality for political bias and self-interest, Massey and his fellow commissioners were attempting to affirm and elaborate government as a moral construction. Indeed, they helped to entrench a moral imperative that had a complex history in the Canadian mindscape and was gaining momentum in Canadian social practice: a moderation of popular, that is, majority will, so as to accommodate alternative voices. As the expression "national character" conveyed a commitment to the resistance of conformity and standardization, so the arm’s length principle put a critical distance between the majority and its domination of all minorities. In essence, the arm’s length principle embedded a paradox of exclusion and inclusion: a commitment to both excellence and diversity.

The Massey report proved to be the last and most momentous in a series of sweeping reviews of cultural matters chaired or guided by Vincent Massey, starting with the
Methodist commission on schools in 1919. The 1951 report, while a complex document, reflective of a wide spectrum of concerns and worthy of study from a range of viewpoints, must be acknowledged to belong to the tremendous continuity, ambiguity, and transformation to be found in the person of Vincent Massey. Whether this valorizes him in particular, or, it is hoped, sheds light on Canadian cultural discourse more broadly, the final Massey Report made countless references to his earlier career. This was true from both the standpoint of his depth of experience in a wide range of cultural areas and the ideological position from which he mounted his life’s campaign.

While culture continued to create unease for Massey, he was unequivocal about its centrality within Canadian nationhood. His promotion of a fully-rounded national life had grown out of his early fears of Canadian sectionalism, but increasingly these were supplanted by his apprehensions over American imperialism. Canada’s regional and ethnic diversity became, in his view, sources of strength. There were other transformations in his thought during his career, from his growing endorsement of the fine arts and mass media as purveyors of culture, to his increasing reliance on state support of culture (always in concert with volunteer, local, amateur and private initiatives). Only a well-developed, well-rounded national life, supported by the state, ensured Canadian sovereignty. Without an unequivocal commitment to its cultural life, Canada betrayed its colonialization.
Conclusion: The Force of Culture

Vincent Massey liked to use the expression "the force(s) of geography". He employed it first in the early 1920s; it reappeared in On Being Canadian in 1948, and, again, in the 1951 Massey Report. The phrase characterized the unique predicament of Canadian sovereignty, which he regarded, above all, as the surmounting of physical obstacles (both geographic and materialistic). As counterweight, he invoked the force of culture. Only by recognizing and supporting its intellectual, moral, spiritual, and aesthetic life could Canada survive as a community and nation.

Massey's model of culture was deeply indebted to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century transformation in religion and the emergence of what might be called the education gospel. Education was Massey's panacea. Culture was a virtual synonym for education, specifically a liberal arts education. It was the liberal arts, as distinct from a purely technical or professional training, that rendered an education cultural.

The goal of such an education was the development of character. Ensconced in the notion of character were several key elements. First was the idea that the whole person, specifically, one's intellectual and moral capacity, be engaged in the educational process. Second, "character" signified a resistance to conformity. This was associated with repelling "undesirable" belief systems, emanating from America consumer society and later Communist Russia. Fostering uniqueness was also essential to the humanistic mission of staving off the standardization of encroaching mass society. Finally, character education connoted a commitment to sustaining a diversity of beliefs, although when this meaning crystallized remains unclear. It was widely understood that the breadth fostered by a liberal arts education bred tolerance for diversity and, in turn, societal
Character education was integrally related to citizenship. National character and citizenship became refrains of the 1920s. The notion of the citizen was still vague, both as to duties and rights, and was certainly far removed from the codified entitlements set out in the 1982 Charter of Rights. Nonetheless, the idea of citizenship in the 1920s was actively concerned with Canada's emerging sense of national, as opposed to colonial, identity, a process intensified in the wake of World War I. The task at hand was to fully envision and resolve Canadian sovereignty. This involved planting a number of fundamental signposts of Canadian identity, and included a migration of the moral function from the predominantly individual realm to the domain of the state. Complex, multi-faceted, and protracted, this process, which appears to have dated from the early nineteenth century, gained momentum in the 1920s. As Sir Robert Falconer argued in 1919, the state was not an amoral, but a moral entity. Grappling with how to realize such a conception of the state was a significant enterprise of the inter-war years.

Vincent Massey was heir to the idea of culture as a liberal arts education aimed at fostering national character and citizenship, and it underpinned his entire career. He

1 Questioning the legitimacy of particular literary canons as the foundation of a liberal arts education and, in turn, their circumscriptions on diversity, by and large, awaited a later generation of intellectuals and educators.

2 As early as the 1840s Egerton Ryerson invoked "the public good" as a means of transcending party politics; Neil McDonald, "Egerton Ryerson and the School as an Agent of Political Socialization"; in Egerton Ryerson and His Times (Toronto, 1978), 93.

became deeply engaged in the project to convert individual to national character, to transform personal into collective sovereignty. The well-roundedness of a liberal arts education was the model of a nation. True sovereignty entailed not only material comfort, but the development of a "fully-rounded national life." Only then would Canada have the vigour to fully surmount its colonial past and withstand the neo-colonializing forces ahead.

The fine arts, slow to garner acceptance in Canada generally, belatedly secured a foothold in this scheme. While more welcomed by Roman Catholicism than by Protestantism, visual art only slowly became divorced from morality, in the sense of literal, moralizing content or a Ruskinian labour-intensiveness. The art-for-art's-sake doctrine, gaining ground in France and England during the 1870s, long had but a tenuous hold in Canada. The vast majority of Canadians as Christians viewed the performing arts, except choral and organ music, with moral suspicion well into the twentieth century. Professional theatre was considered downright profligate. As a result, art's role as a cultural force was downplayed. Art was also widely regarded with condescension as a female, amateur, and domestic preoccupation. Refinement was a threat to the vibrancy of a young nation and made it less able to resist the homogenizing influence of mass society, materialism, and colonialism.

Validation of the fine arts was slow, circuitous, and conflicted (and remains far from resolved). One site of transformation was located within Canadian Methodism, under the influence of the Chautauqua model. Here life was not so hierarchical. It was not divided as clearly into the sacred and secular realms: all was sacred, including the fine arts, a great sacred canopy over every form of endeavor. In this

4 Massey, "Speech" (as High Commissioner for Canada at the opening of A Century of Canadian Art).
model, art was understood as education; it was enlisted to help banish idleness and foster the constructive use of leisure. Art, thereby, was sanctioned, but typically in an overtly moralizing manner. Massey's views were indebted to the democratizing, inclusive character of his Methodist heritage and, in particular, the enfolding of the arts in the education gospel. On the other hand, he came to view Puritanism (which he equated with Methodism) as the main culprit in the suppression of art. He firmly rejected art that sermonized or propagandized, while becoming increasingly convinced of its underlying moral and cultural purpose.

The arts had acquired some legitimacy in the service of nationalism during the late 1870s and 1880s. The Marquis of Lorne, Governor-General (1878-83) and founder of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts and the National Gallery of Canada in 1880, clearly linked art and nationality. Lorne's Canadian cultural nationalism engaged both the early mystique of northern virility and the rhetoric of imperial expansion. By the 1920s, with the self-proclaimed nation-building art of the Group of Seven, visual art achieved more widespread validation, and the arts began to figure prominently in ideas about the role of culture in Canada. Contemporary language around the Group and its work was riddled with references to vitality and virility, associations which helped overcome the bias against art as effeminate. The Group of Seven and Tom Thomson were campers and canoeists; they painted the wilderness, and they did so in a bold, forceful, and uncompromising style.

The Group also validated the national (understood as

5 While Lorne was genuinely enthusiastic about Canada's promise as a nation and invested considerable effort in getting to know its territories and aiding in securing its sovereignty, his Canadian nationalism might be rightly characterized as an imperializing nationalism concerned with expansionism and the glory of the British Empire.
local) function of art. Massey's close friend, Lawren Harris, was heavily influenced by Walt Whitman's belief that one had to imbibe the immediate environment deeply in order to glimpse the universal. Harris adhered to the idea that Canada's local character resided in its northerliness, which he and his colleagues essentialized as a source of insight, spirituality, and creativity. His idea of art legitimized Canadian nationalism against the rising tide of what is now called globalism, and closely informed Massey's marriage of nationalism and internationalism. Art was firmly situated as an agent of culture, in its capacity to forge national community out of diversity.

On the other hand, unlike Harris who purported to reject tradition as outmoded, Massey argued for the past as well as the local and present; he recognized both geography and history. Canadian culture drew strength from two sources, its diversity and its traditional ties with Europe. Particularly with Britain, it shared a humanism and commitment to public life that Massey admired and believed distinguished it from a purely capitalistic society.

Massey was acutely sensitive to Canada's difficulties in experiencing community. Aside from the geographic and climatic conditions that made habitation, let alone community-building tenuous, he was deeply aware that Canada was becoming a nation at a time when local community was suffering the inroads of mass society. Canada was obliged to reckon with issues of mass society before achieving any particular resolution of its local character (if a country of these proportions ever can). Massey recognized the opportunities offered by mass society, its new nucleii and structures of power and knowledge and its new means of communicating ideas, be it universal education, broadcasting, film, or the travelling art exhibition. Indeed, these mechanisms helped as much as hindered Canada's search for nationhood. But he also recognized the losses that came with mass society, losses of
identity, of community, of diversity. Indebted to his Methodist background, he adhered to the view that culture was the source of community and identity, and kept alive the hope that life was more than a material, mundane, even sordid, solitary existence. Culture promised the almost sacred sense of community that he believed validated life, rendering social cohesiveness and national sovereignty in the nature of a spiritual trust.

It is perhaps useful here to consider Massey’s position in the political spectrum. A liberal democrat from a wealthy, well-connected family with a vested interest in the economic status quo, he nonetheless sought to counter what he perceived to be the excesses of a liberal democracy and pure capitalism: unbridled individualism, consumerism, materialism, technological fetishism, mass production, homogeneity, a lack of community, and mundanity. Coming from a Methodist background, which by tradition was a faith of the rural working class, but which during the 1890s in Canada had attained a measure of affluence and urban presence, he believed deeply in the forces of progress and in the possibility of creating a heavenly kingdom on earth, both inclusive and elevated. While Canadian Methodism embraced a wide spectrum of political positions, from reactionary to progressive, by the early twentieth century, it was clearly at the forefront of the social gospel movement, and played a forceful democratizing, while Christianizing, role. The Masseys, as a family, belonged more to the progressive (increasingly the leading) constituency of the Methodist Church.

Officially, Massey was a Liberal. He ran for office (unsuccessfully) during the 1920s, and in the early 1930s became president of the National Liberal Federation. He was an admirer of Roosevelt’s New Deal policies, recognizing the growing appeal to the Canadian electorate of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), and believing that the Liberal
Party would do well to embrace the welfare state. Late in his career, he stated: "I am one of those who would like to be remembered as a progressive. His challenge of the existing economic structure took the form of support for a growing public sector to manage the common good, framed in the context of nationalism.

It is necessary to comment on that highly suspect term nationalism. Vincent Massey was unquestionably an agent for Canadian nationalism. How do we approach his stance as a nationalist, when the term has generally been so discredited in the 20th century? There is no question that it continues to be a rhetorical device of dubious value, a rallying cry for all means of self-serving deceptions. And, yes, in Canada, as elsewhere, nationalism has sometimes descended into cheap sloganeering. But, generally speaking, Canadian nationalism is a very different entity from nationalisms that are greedy, autocratic, monolithic, and combative. It might profitably be situated in the context of resistance theory.

6 See Bissell for an overview of Massey's political views and activities during the 1930s; The Young Vincent Massey, 197-238. Also see Douglas Owram for Massey's pivotal role in the redefinition of the federal Liberal party in the early 1930s; The Government Generation, 183 and 187-88. Owram also notes Alice Massey's influence on Massey's reformist views; 183-84.

7 Massey, "The Crown in Canada" (address to the Canadian Club, Toronto, 8 Feb. 1965); UTA, VMP, 399/123.

8 See, for example, Edward W. Said, Culture and Imperialism (New York, 1993; 1994). It is necessary to distinguish between imperializing nationalisms and local, popular nationalisms (Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, rev. ed. (London/New York, 1991, rept. 1994, 113-14), as well as between ethnically-based nationalisms and inclusive nationalisms. Of course, local nationalism may well be the reaction of a colonized population to its imperializing master. Jonathon Bordo, Peter Kulchyski, John Milloy and John Wadland have situated Canadian nationalism in opposition to Euro-American hegemony; "Introduction": "Refiguring Wilderness/Re-conceptualise les espaces sauvages", 4.
pride themselves on their transnationalism and denigrate Canadian nationalism as chauvinism may, indeed, mistake the matter. Nationalism in Canada is not characteristically an offensive thing; it is not aimed at deflecting public attention away from the 'real' issues like healthcare, working conditions, and discrimination. Rather it might be more accurately viewed as defensive, deflecting some of the weight of superculture imperialism, an effort to retain just enough sovereignty to make it possible to deal with the 'real' issues in a manner that is consistent with values Canadians claim to prize. Of course, the whole assumption that it is possible to discern and assign authority to any body of values that might be designated Canadian will always be problematic. But Canadians have achieved a measure of consensus about what they value, be it their public health care program or their desire not to be a gun-toting society. Further, it is difficult to accuse Canadian nationalism of being hegemonic because it has always been so ill-defined. It is even unclear to what extent Canadian nationalism has been aligned with Canada's elites, specifically the corporate, political, or intellectual elites. On the other hand, Canadian nationalism does have an identity, however contested and nebulous. This identity must be assessed critically, particularly with regard to its inclusiveness.

Vincent Massey, an affluent, well-connected Protestant white male in a position of political influence, unquestionably legitimized and empowered a specific set of values by aligning them with nationalism. To what extent were these values the product of consensus among Canada's citizens, or were they inflicted by Massey and a small sector of Canadian society, which was in a position of influence, and short, to reject all nationalisms as hegemonic and imperializing is clearly inadequate.
which sought to blunt internal differences? To what extent was his quest for community merely a drive to co-opt opposition? In other words, did Massey abuse nationalism and was he an elitist?

Massey's reputation has been dogged, certainly in recent years, by charges of elitism, not unlike the notion of culture itself. Maria Tippett has declared that "he possessed an elitist vision of culture, one that made it accessible only to the educated and the well-informed...." She is correct that he was committed to the educated citizen, but to construe this as a symptom of elitism is to misunderstand his considerable populism. The most sustained charge of elitism has come from Paul Litt in his 1992 book The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission. He wrote: "the cultural elite [typified by the Massey Commissioners] liked to think that it spoke for the interests of all Canadians....This", Litt declared flatly, "was hogwash". He accused the Commission and, by implication, its chair of an assortment of elitist sins, among them that it started with a bias in favour of culture (hardly surprising) and, in particular, a bias in favour of a certain type of culture, that is, high art. Litt argued that the Commissioners believed that certain disciplines were the storehouses of culture and did not appreciate fully the positive role of TV, radio, film, and the popular press. Litt appeared to align the Commissioners with what he called "the mass culture critics", whom he described as "simplistic, elitist, abstract, and moralistic", and who were engaged in a "campaign against the culture of the crowd".

It may be argued that to view the major polarity in

9 Litt, The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission.
10 Tippett, Making Culture, 123.
11 Litt, The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission, 53 and 97.
society as elitism and populism is, itself, simplistic. Nevertheless, the charges of elitism levelled against Massey beg to be sorted out, and somewhere in the complex marriage of elitism and populism in Massey's thought and practice lies some insight into Canadian attitudes towards culture more broadly.

So much that might be said to be elitist can also be construed as populist. Liberalism has been called elitist, despite its claim to being egalitarian.\(^\text{12}\) This is symptomatic of the muddle that seems to surround notions of elitism and populism. One problem is that the word "elite" has simply become a bad word; Robert Fulford has called "elite" "the new scare word".\(^\text{13}\) To deny any endorsement of the elite in our society is patently dishonest. The truth is that we are universally and arguably, willingly, governed by an elite of some sort. This is presumably because we are a society driven by the promise of betterment, be it material, social, or otherwise. Competition is considered healthy. Improvement is our measure of things. Pervasively and deeply we esteem those who realize the good, the better, and the best, and we assign authority to them, be it the elite athlete or the elite scientist, be it those we endorse by opinion poll, by ballot, or by consumer dollar. The pursuit of excellence is in the nature of a moral imperative coursing through our society, moderated by the equally compelling imperative for equality.

The more relevant issue may be deciding what kind of elite we want. We need to distinguish between the hereditary elite and an elite of merit, between the exclusive elite and the consensual elite. Historically, elitists did not want to bother with the so-called masses, who, it was assumed, lowered


standards and were irrational and ignorant. One of the early arguments against democracy was that it bred mediocrity. Today, while we continue to empower elites, the elites we approve of generally consist of experts (so-called or otherwise).

Where the elitist trusts the authority of the few, the populist is guided by a faith in the wider population. Here, in this larger community, it is believed, lies the source of vitality, renewal, authenticity, and, finally, truth. The ideal scenario, in fact, may be a mixture of the two; reciprocation and exchange between the elite and the larger community, rather than the elitist promulgating to the populace, or the populace and the elite ignoring one other or being galvanized into knee-jerk campaigns of mutual discreditation. Very simply, we seem to believe that we need experts, but we want them to remain in touch with and be guided by, in significant measure, the larger community. In short, we want them to transcend their own bias. We want the elite, which is advantageously situated to further its own interest, to transcend that interest. The challenge is to find mechanisms that safeguard that end.

Did Massey, then, aspire to a consensual model or an exclusive model of culture? Was he committed to universal access to culture, or, as Tippett claims, a culture that might only be accessed by the "educated and well-informed"? The answer is that Massey advocated that everyone be "educated and well-informed". He honoured both intellectual and artistic quality and went to great lengths to advance universal access to its opportunities and rewards. As he stated in 1923: "education is everybody's business". Indeed, he viewed the viability and strength of a democracy as resting upon an educated citizenry, not only its educated leaders.

But was this commitment to a community of educated citizens merely an effort to mould consent and co-opt opposition? It would be difficult to build a case against Massey on these grounds. Admittedly, integral to his idea of the ideal citizen was the stable citizen. However, such a citizen, in his view, was capable of resisting conformity and was tolerant of diversity. In assessing Massey's commitment to education, it is necessary to distinguish between education that indoctrinates and education that enables. The societal harmony that Massey sought was not achieved by the dulling of the masses but by the enabling of a nation's citizenry. As he said on more than one occasion, it is ignorance, not hatred, that divides. While Massey was a masterful lobbyist and publicist and recognized education as the means to achieving societal stability, his consistent denunciation by words and actions of the use of education and art as propaganda is a critical corrective to the view that he was an unmitigated elitist, governed by an exclusively hierarchical view of society.

While Massey was acutely aware of the fragmentary and diverse nature of the Canadian population, rather than seeking to suppress that diversity, he prized it to a commendable degree. Relative to his time, his idea of community was complex. He was progressive in his view of Canada as a bicultural nation, which he espoused at least from the early 1920s. He was mindful of regional concerns, although he still had a considerable centralist bias. He was also mindful of the difference between urban and rural experience, as the 1951 Massey Report makes evident. On the other hand, he was less sensitive to other ethnic minorities, to native peoples, and to women.15

15 Massey has been accused of anti-Semitism; see, notably, Irving Abella and Harold Troper, None Is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948 (Toronto, 1983), 48-49, 178-79, and 195-96. Bissell has countered the accusation, stating
He did endorse the inclusion of a woman, Hilda Neatby, on the Massey Commission, apparently as an acknowledgement of the role of women as volunteers in the arts and of the prominence of women artists (although Neatby was a history professor).\(^{16}\) Once he had worked with Neatby, who was a very active member of the Commission and instrumental in the writing of its report, he accorded her significant recognition.\(^{17}\) He later relied upon her heavily as a speechwriter when he was

that it would have taken someone "incautious and heroic" to challenge Canada's committed anti-Jewish immigration policy before and during World War II, and cited an instance when Massey challenged the policy on behalf of a young Jewish Rhodes scholar; *The Imperial Canadian*, 101-06. I am not able to add to this debate significantly; of the three anti-Semitic remarks that I have identified among Massey's papers, two were not authored by him. The third was a resentful slur he made in 1922 in response to New York control over Canada's professional stage: "We take thankfully and with necessary docility the dramatic diet which a group of New York gentlemen, with Old Testament names, choose to send us"; "The Prospects of a Canadian Drama", 197. Alice Massey sympathized with, and was deeply troubled by, the plight of European Jewish refugees during the 1930s, but considered them somehow different; Alice Massey to Lionel Massey, 18 Nov. 1938; MFamP, V. 65. On the other hand, Massey spoke out publicly against Canada's racist attitudes towards the Chinese. Alternatively, he occasionally blamed "Teutonic" influence for an anti-humanist orientation in North American education. The extent to which Massey's personal papers were edited by him or his family prior to deposit with Massey College and the University of Toronto Archives remains undetermined.

\(^{16}\) Litt, *The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission*, 34; Bissell, *The Imperial Canadian*, 206.

\(^{17}\) Massey wrote about Neatby in "Postscript": "Hilda Neatby has the reputation of being a feminist. I can only say she was very gentle and forgiving about our masculine neglect, of which she was conscious in the work of the Commission". By way of a "public apology", he confessed to an incident in Newfoundland, in which the male members of the Commission "behaved inexcusably" towards her, by neglecting to include her in the evening's plans; NAC, MFamP, V. 42.
Governor-General. However, he insisted on secrecy concerning this arrangement. Was he uncomfortable because she was a woman? He had had male speechwriters earlier in his career, under no particular shroud of secrecy. His commitment to community and his creativity in its realization in the form of Hart House and Massey College showed complete insensitivity to the group needs of women. In this, the charge of exclusivity appears just.

In short, his idea of a complex community, while commendable in this highly fragmented country, had major myopias. Nevertheless, it was far from monolithic and was consistent with, and even instrumental in, the construction of Canada as a pluralistic nation. In On Being Canadian (1948), in a passage subtitled "The Merits of Diversity",

18 Through the Massey Foundation, he also helped financed her book So Little for the Mind (Toronto, 1953). While he was supportive of the project, it is unclear to what extent he shared her specific views. They were both committed to the fight for humanism and the role of the liberal arts in education; this is apparent in their correspondence concerning her book and the speeches she was preparing for him; VMP, 362/05 and 585/07. In general, however, her orientation appears to be rather different from his. Her book, which is deeply concerned with "standards" and their erosion in the present school system, called for a return to a "traditional" education and sought to discredit "progressivism". Her denigration of the proliferation of "options" in the school system at the expense of the liberal arts sounds more like Massey around 1920 in the Methodist Schools Commission than thirty years later. Her tone is pessimistic and judgmental, quite unlike the generally optimistic and more extroverted and conciliatory approach of the mature Massey. Bissell, however, viewed Massey and Neatby as firm allies in the elitist orientation of the Massey Commission's major recommendations. While he supported this claim with a very persuasive quote from Neatby, he did not provide similar evidence with regard to Massey, and we are left to surmise in what manner Massey's views were elitist; The Imperial Canadian, 234.

19 A pluralist vision of Canada is the current majority view; Reginald W. Bibby, The Bibby Report: Social Trends Canadian Style (Toronto, 1995).
Massey wrote with pride: "we have plenty of colours and lights and shades in our make-up. Canada is no monochrome of uniformity...."\textsuperscript{20} As early as 1926, as retiring president of the National Council of Education, he stated: "Canada is a diversified country possessing different races, religions, social cultures. One hears this diversity often spoken of as a regrettable fact. Could anything be more fundamentally wrong?" He commended the Council's efforts in helping Canadians "to acquire a true understanding and tolerant respect for these precious contrasts in colours and differences in form with which our Dominion is endowed."\textsuperscript{21} Canada as a diversity was a key point for Massey in distinguishing it from what he regarded as the homogeneity emanating from the United States, and arming it against American hegemony.

There remains the second charge of elitism against Massey, that he assigned more cultural worth to certain disciplines, that is, the "high arts". Ironically perhaps, in his early career, he had esteemed the liberal arts and clearly devalued the fine arts. But, by the time of the Massey Commission, the fine arts had long acquired legitimacy in this mind, precisely because of their capacity to locate unity in diversity. Massey and his fellow commissioners approached the popular arts with caution, it is true, especially as a pipeline for American culture. However, they treated them as central to their mandate and report, and focussed on means of turning the mass media to the so-called cultural cause, especially broadcasting. Admittedly, the documentary film commanded more attention than the feature film, which the commissioners seemed to consider almost irretrievably the domain of foreign, commercial interest. Nonetheless, Massey

\textsuperscript{20} Massey, \textit{On Being Canadian}, 17.

and his fellow commissioners recognized the media to be formidable forces of contemporary society and concerned themselves with trying to secure some measure of Canadian control by restructuring and enlarging government funding of the arts.

As for accusations that Massey tried to prescribe content, this is inconsistent with his long held view that education and art which preached were anathema. A key tenet of his belief in the educated citizen was his conviction that it was possible to cultivate independent thought. The critical function, a product of self-awareness, was, by extension, presumed to remove one from self-interest in the quest for truth. It was here that the moral and intellectual functions, so intertwined in Massey’s thinking and Canadian intellectual history more broadly, came to reside. He sought a Canadian community composed of individuals capable of independent thought, who would turn this disinterest towards the common good. This belief in the possibility of transcending bias lies behind such institutionalized notions as academic freedom in the university and the arm’s-length policy of state support for culture. While bias is always present to a degree, these principles continue to have merit.

The arm’s length principle, the key tenet of Canadian cultural policy, however badly eroded, rests on the belief that art must be supported without political interference or it descends into state sloganism. By its very nature, it is intended to offer insurance against the infliction of biases from above. The Canada Council, significantly a product of Massey’s design, has, to an impressive degree, funded Canada’s

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22 A. B. McKillop has extracted from Victorian Canada’s intellectual history the expression a "disciplined intelligence" to characterize the Anglo-Canadian propensity to twin the moral and intellectual faculties; A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era (Montreal, 1979).
artistic counter-culture, whether it be the alternative, artist-run galleries across the country or artist’s projects like Image Bank in Vancouver (founded in 1970) or General Idea’s FILE Megazine (founded in 1972). The arm’s length principle goes a long way towards keeping alternative voices alive, and Massey deserves credit for helping to set Canada’s cultural agencies on this course. In short, to a considerable degree, although far from flawlessly, he promoted accessibility and a non-prescriptive, consensual, Canadian nationalism that accommodated diverse voices and diverse genres. This was perhaps the single most crucial transformation of the moral imperative in Canadian culture, the implanting of mechanisms in the foundation of Canadian cultural policy that attempted to counter the biases of political coteries and elites. The arm’s length principle was a means of resolving the "high-minded" and the common. For authority and political exigency, it substituted the principles of excellence and diversity. The hierarchy of quality can, of course, be just as repressive and exclusive as the tight grip of a political elite. But, in Massey’s conception of culture, excellence was partnered with citizenship in a multi-focal community. The high-minded and inclusive, however paradoxically, resided together. Massey was neither an elitist nor a populist, but both.

Arguing for culture invariably placed Massey in a defensive position. He shared, even while challenging, the ambivalence that has bedevilled the subject of culture in Canada. Whatever the fears and values that fuelled his anxiety and the resistance to culture’s recognition more broadly, Massey understood the fight for Canadian sovereignty or identity as a struggle to secure certain core values. Massey was essentially concerned with preserving enough freedom of action not only to protect those values but to rearticulate them without undue pressure from outside. He sought to contain external influences at least to the extent
that Canadian action was not reduced to the reflexes of a colony. Above all, his campaign to understand Canada as a cultural entity rested on his belief in a Canadian tradition of humanism, one that emphasized the moral and the collective. Culture was very much concerned with the humanities; it validated the human capacity for self-actualization and the making of meaning; its root significance in the modern era was its recognition of human value and human values. Today, in a post-modern, more anti-humanistic world, culture, however defined, continues to have cogency. Despite culture's fragmentation into ever more sub-groups (the individual is understood to belong to several cultures concurrently), we continue to prize culture, not only as an industry or an assortment of commodities, but as a collection of values. In this, we continue to betray our humanism. But, as for Massey, not without ambivalence, and not least within the context of Canadian nationalism.
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"Address" (on Jefferson Day, University of Virginia, Apr. 1929), (VMP).

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"Art and Nationality in Canada" (address to the Royal Society of Canada, Montreal, 22 May 1930), (MFamP, speech 51); in Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada,
"Address" (to the Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Water-Colours on the occasion of the opening of the annual exhibition, Edinburgh, 4 Feb. 1938), (VMP and NFamP, speech 131).

"Address" (at the opening of the A Century of Canadian Art at the Tate Gallery, London, 14 Oct. 1938), (MFamP, speech 137).

(Notes for an address to the Oxford Art Club, 7 Feb. 1939), (MFamP), speech 141).

"Address" (to the American Association of Museums, Quebec, 30 May 1947), (NGCA, 9.2M Trustees: Vincent Massey, file 2).


"Some Notes on Education" [c. 1950], (MFamP, speech 172).


"Postscript" (uncompleted book manuscript [1966-67]), (MFamP).

"V. M. on Art, Sculpture, Architecture" (excerpt from "Postscript", [1966-67]), (MFamP).
Fig. 1  Chautauqua, New York, 1870s; from left to right: founders Lewis Miller and Bishop John Heyl Vincent; Hart Massey and three of his children, Fred Victor, Lillian, and Chester (Vincent Massey’s father); and an unknown man.
Fig. 2  Bishop John Heyl Vincent, Lillian, Vincent, Chester, and Anna Vincent Massey, early 1890s.
Fig. 3  "Gallery", interior of the home of Chester Massey, 519 Jarvis St., Toronto, c. 1910.
Fig. 4  F. H. Varley, *Chester Massey*, 1920, oil on canvas, 123 x 145 cm.
Fig. 5  Arts & Letters Club Executive, 1922; Massey at the extreme left.
Fig. 6  J. E. H. MacDonald, Vincent Massey and Fellow Members of the Arts & Letters Club, Toronto, pen and ink on paper, 15.1 x 13.5 cm, from a volume presented to Massey by the Arts & Letters Club on 15 February 1927 on the occasion of his appointment to Washington as Canada’s first minister to the United States; Massey seated at the extreme lower left.
Fig. 7  The cast of Galsworthy’s *The Pigeon*, Burwash Hall, Victoria College, 1915; Massey in the centre (seated).
Fig. 8 Hart House, front view, looking towards Queen's Park, Toronto, c. 1920.
Fig. 9  Lawren Harris, *Vincent Massey*, 7 March 1925, pencil on paper, 24 x 18 cm.
Fig. 10  Arthur Lismer, Caricature of Polya, Harris, Varley, Jackson, MacDonald, Vincent Massey Seated, 1925, graphite and conte on paper, 19.1 x 25.4 cm.
Fig. 11  F. H. Varley, *Vincent Massey*, oil on canvas, 120.7 x 141 cm.
Fig. 12  F. H. Varley, *Vincent Massey*, 1922, charcoal on paper, 49.8 x 40 cm.
Fig. 13   F. H. Varley, *Alice Massey*, c. 1924-25, oil on canvas, 82 x 61.7 cm.
Fig. 14  Batterwood, study.
Fig. 15  A. Y. Jackson, *Valley at Batterwood*, 1930, oil on wood, 26.6 x 34.4 cm.
Fig. 16  A. Y. Jackson, *Massey Gardens at Port Hope*, 1930, oil on wood, 26.7 x 34.4 cm.
Fig. 17  A. Y. Jackson, *Northern Lake*, 1928, oil on canvas, 82.3 x 127.7 cm.
Fig. 18  Lawren Harris, *In the Ward, Toronto*, c. 1919, oil on beaverboard, 26.7 x 34.7 cm.
Fig. 19  Lawren Harris, Lake Superior, c. 1928, oil on canvas, 86.1 x 102.2 cm.
Fig. 20  Arthur Lismer, *A September Gale, Georgian Bay*, 1920, oil on canvas, 51.5 x 61 cm.
Fig. 21  F. H. Varley, *Vera*, 1931, oil on canvas, 61 x 50.6 cm.
Fig. 22  Charles Comfort, *Tadoussac*, 1935, oil on canvas, 76.1 x 91.4 cm.
Fig. 23 Edwin Holgate, *Ludivine*, 1930, oil on canvas, 76.3 x 63.9 cm.
Fig. 24  David Milne, Window, 1930, oil on canvas, 56.2 x 71.9 cm.
Fig. 25  David Milne, *Painting Place, No. 3*, 1930, oil on canvas, 51.3 x 66.4 cm.
Fig. 26  Emily Carr, Indian Hut, Queen Charlotte Islands, c. 1930, oil on canvas, 101.6 x 82.6 cm.
Fig. 27  "A Century of Canadian Art", Tate Gallery, installation photograph, 1938; Varley's Vera and Carr's Indian Hut from the Massey collection displayed.
Fig. 28  "Canadian War Art", National Gallery, London, 1944: (left to right) Carl Schaefer, Kenneth Clark, The Duchess of Kent, and Massey, examining Schaefer’s Night Exercise.
Fig. 29  Augustus John, The Canadians opposite Lens, c. 1917-19, charcoal on paper, 3.7 x 12.3 m.
Fig. 30  Augustus John, *Self-Portrait*, oil on canvas, 51.2 x 40.8 cm.
Fig. 31 Walter Richard Sickert, The Old Bedford: Cupid in the Gallery, c. 1890, oil on canvas, 127 x 77.5 cm.
Fig. 32  Gwen John, *Young Woman in a Grey Cloak*, oil on canvas, 64.6 x 46 cm.
Fig. 33  Paul Nash, *Chestnut Waters*, 1923-28, oil on canvas, 102.9 x 128.3 cm.
Fig. 34  John Piper, House of Commons 1941, Aye Chamber, oil on canvas board, 76.2 x 64 cm.
Fig. 35  Graham Sutherland, Landscape (I), watercolour on paper, 32.7 x 50.2 cm.
Fig. 36  Stanley Spencer, *Portrait of Elizabeth Wimperis*, oil on canvas, 76.2 x 55.9 cm.
Fig. 37  William Coldstream, *Bolton*, 1938, oil on canvas, 71.8 x 91.4 cm.
Fig. 38  Henry Moore, *Family Group*, 1948, gouache on paper, 55.9 x 60.9 cm.
Fig. 39 Massey Commissioners: (left to right) Arthur Surveyer, Georges-Henri Lévesque, Massey, Hilda Neatby, and N. A. M. MacKenzie.
Fig. 40  Georges-Henri Lévesque, Massey, and Brooke Claxton on the occasion of the inaugural session of the Canada Council, 30 April 1957.