

débordante de vie et d'humour, d'affection et de sensibilité. Iacurto fut aussi le premier peintre à être admis à peindre dans les Jardins du Vatican, l'autorisation lui ayant été accordée par nul autre que le cardinal Montini, aujourd'hui le pape Paul VI. Il n'aurait jamais pu abattre autant de besogne sans le dévouement inlassable de sa femme (née Laurette Asselin), à qui d'ailleurs il exprime plus d'une fois sa profonde gratitude aussi bien par la plume que sur la toile, comme le révèlent les portraits en hors-texte.

Ce qui ne manquera pas aussi de frapper le lecteur, c'est le vif attachement qu'a gardé Iacurto à ses premiers maîtres du Monument National et de l'École des beaux-arts de Montréal. Les photos, presque toutes inédites, qu'il a insérées dans son volume, valent de longs commentaires; elles sont extrêmement rares et précieuses: le futur historien de l'École des beaux-arts de Montréal en fera sans doute sa nourriture. Il en possède aussi une importante collection sur l'École des beaux-arts de Québec. Quel dommage que son livre n'en contienne point davantage! Iacurto a dû éprouver quelque difficulté à en faire un choix judicieux, car il en conserve pieusement des centaines d'autres, son atelier ayant été pendant plus de trente ans le rendez-vous des artistes renommés de passage à Québec. La galerie de portraits et de photos est si riche qu'elle pourrait remplir plusieurs albums de taille. De quoi étoffer aussi un autre volume de souvenirs à l'intention des étudiants, des professeurs et des historiens de métier. Comme il déborde toujours d'activité, je ne serais pas surpris de le voir un jour entreprendre ce nouveau travail.

Cette édition originale de *Souvenirs* est illustrée de 46 hors-texte de Iacurto. La société typographique Compoplus a assumé la responsabilité de la composition de l'ouvrage en caractère Souvenir. Quant à la disposition des textes et des illustrations, elle est l'œuvre de Jacques Robert. Le tirage est limité à 250 exemplaires tous numérotés et signés par l'artiste. Chaque volume contient aussi, numérotée et signée par Iacurto, une lithographie originale, sur papier Arche, réalisée avec le concours de l'atelier Arachel. L'artiste a poncé en présence de l'éditeur la pierre ayant servi au tirage des lithographies. C'est dans l'atelier de Pierre Ouvrard, à Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-noix, que s'est effectué le travail de la reliure en daim anglais.

MAURICE LABEL
Université Laval
Québec

LUC D'IBERVILLE-MOREAU. *Lost Montreal*. Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1975. 183 pp., 154 illus., \$16.95.

WARWICK HATTON AND BETH HATTON. *A Feast of Gingerbread/Pâtisserie maison*. Translated by René Chicoine. Montreal, Tundra Books, 1976. 96 pp., 140 illus., \$9.95 (paper).

LEONARD L. KNOTT. *Montreal 1900-1930: A Nostalgic look at the way it used to be*. Toronto, Nelson, Foster and Scott, 1976. 64 pp., 99 illus., \$3.95 (paper).

"This book will doubtless arouse a feeling of nostalgia," writes Luc d'Iberville-Moreau in his preface to *Lost Montreal*, "but I have not collected the photographs or written the text with the intention that it should." D'Iberville-Moreau's fears were well founded. So much of what we have always called history seems lately to have been toned in sepia, framed with gilt, draped in burgundy velvet, and reborn as nostalgia. The airwaves resound with golden oldies, the racks of couturiers abound with moiré silks, the catalogues of our most proletarian builders are studded with half-timber. Tuscan columns, and steep mansards. What has happened? It surely seems as if an age of brash modernism has suddenly become acutely aware of its ruptured roots and begun to grope frantically for any handhold on the past. Our culture has contracted a pathological yearning for anything that is old; in our desperation we appear even to have lost the ability to discriminate value.

The nation's publishers must have been toiling overtime in preparation for this new wave of hysteria, for they have suddenly piled the booksellers' tables high with glossy illustrated volumes extolling the civilization of the not-so-distant past.

Lost Montreal is far and away the best and most serious of that part of the harvest here under review. D'Iberville-Moreau, an art historian formerly at the Université du Québec à Montréal and now with the Macdonald Stewart Foundation, intended not to titillate, he explains, but to plea to his fellow Montrealers to stop the wholesale destruction of the city that he knows and loves. And this he has done passionately, articulately, and sensitively. His technique is deceptively simple. A sequence of 124 historical photographs (mostly an ample half-page in size in a 22 cm. by 28 cm. book) accompanied by concise descriptive legends is punctuated at intervals by tiny modern pictures (30 in all) that have been taken from the same viewpoints as adjacent old photos. The contrasts are poignant. We see an ugly parking garage squatting in front of City Hall and a gas station occupying the site of a sophisticated mansion. Few readers can look at these pictures and continue to "watch the rape of the city in silence" (p. 7).

The old photographs have been chosen with care. Most are handsome views of important buildings and streetscapes that convey information, beauty, and a real feeling for the life and manners of the past. They are both a delight to the general reader and a valuable resource for the historian. The Notman Photographic Archives at the McCord Museum provided many of the pictures, but several other collections were tapped as well.

Sequences have been used to superb effect. The author's stunning series of nine views of Victoria Square taken between 1852 and 1975 (Fig. 1) shows the steady

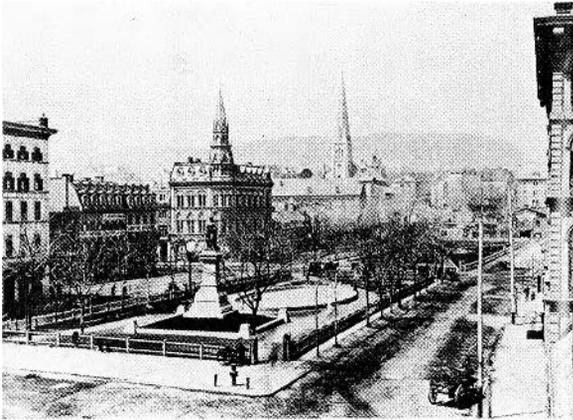


FIGURE 1. Victoria Square, ca. 1873. D'Iberville-Moreau, Pl. 26.

development (and erosion) of the urban fabric through generations of building and landscaping.

An introduction offers the standard arguments for urban conservation and adds topical references to those two vociferous local preservation groups, Green Spaces and Save Montreal. In the main text, concise legends describe the illustrations. The author's unabashedly elitist appreciation of the homes and meeting places of nineteenth-century capitalists is refreshing in this day of strident socialist history. Architects and dates are given where known, but architectural analysis is held to a minimum — just as well, perhaps, because this is not the book's strongest point. (It is naïve, for instance, to describe the former Zion Congregational Church only in terms of Wren.)

Photos and text alike repeatedly tell us that all old buildings are good and all new ones bad. The adjectives "nondescript" and "mediocre" are applied to recent architecture time and again. The new photographs have been taken in the least flattering manner imaginable, then cropped to eliminate any trace of Montreal's better modern buildings. Moretti's stunning Stock Exchange Tower, for instance, is conspicuously absent from the view of modern Victoria Square. The author grieves that Notre Dame no longer dominates the skyline, that the lush private gardens of the English merchant barons have disappeared, and that the *côtes* have been developed. "No other city in the world," declares the author in a gush of hyperbole, "has sacrificed so much in so short a time to so-called progress" (p. 26). But progress apparently wasn't so bad a century ago. The razing of the eighteenth-century fortifications in 1801 was necessary for expansion, and when the rows of stone houses that sprang up in place of the walls were in turn destroyed only a half-century later during the commercialization of Victoria Square, that too was apparently a blessing. The demolition of those 1860s structures after almost a century of productive life, however, is cited as a disaster that "has completely destroyed the human scale of the square" (p. 48).

This may be so, but it is just this kind of argument that weakens the stance of d'Iberville-Moreau and so many other preservation lobbyists. It is inconsistent, to say the least, to offer a blanket condemnation of all new demolition and development without a thought for what earlier structures may have been destroyed when the old buildings

were themselves erected. And it is this narrow adulation of the past and the consequent denigration of the present that risks making *Lost Montreal* do just what its author feared—appeal primarily to the reader's sentimental feeling for nostalgia.

The other books in the new crop on old Montreal are openly aimed at our susceptibility to nostalgia. *A Feast of Gingerbread/Pâtisserie maison* (a pair of delicious plays on words) by architect Warwick Hatton and librarian Beth Hatton praises what is left of old Montreal buildings, rather than lamenting what has been lost. From the introduction one would hardly know that the Hattons are writing about the same city as d'Iberville-Moreau: "Few other cities still possess such a large, rich collection with so many streets remaining intact" (p. 5).

A Feast of Gingerbread does for the Victorian woodwork of Montreal what Anthony Adamson and John Willard's *The Gaiety of Gables* (Toronto, 1974) did for that of the Ontario countryside, although here in a more modest soft-cover format that bears a correspondingly lower price. Some 140 black-and-white photographs of decorative gables, vergeboards, roof brackets, railings, porches, doors, and more offer a delectable banquet of ornamental detail (Fig. 2). The photographs are competently but uninspiringly taken. The camera points sharply upward in most without resulting in unpleasant perspective distortion.

The views are identified by address — a helpful touch — and accompanied by a brief text which regrettably imparts little information. The authors gamely try to discern four sets of stylistic influences: Gothic, Italianate, Swiss, and the Bracketed. Nowhere does the reader encounter the name of Charles Lock Eastlake, whose books made him (much to his own horror) into a kind of spiritual godfather of North American decorative woodwork.

Author Leonard L. Knott came out of retirement in Elora, Ontario, to write the third book considered here. *Montreal 1900–1930: A Nostalgic look at the way it used to be* is just that. "This is openly and unashamedly a nostalgic book about Montreal as it used to be more than half a century ago," begins Knott's introduction. The book was assembled cheaply but presentably. Sixty-four saddle-stitched pages of standard letter size each contains one or two old black-and-white photographs showing the city's buildings, streets, personalities, and activities. The illustrations were apparently selected for their subject and not their quality. Horses and streetcars are two favourite subjects. A concise, well-written paragraph describes each photograph in quietly evocative terms, mostly dipped in sugar and lightly covered with whipped cream. An "old, faded print" of Place Viger "records a time when Montrealers had the time to stroll, to relax and just to sit in the shade" (p. 18). We learn that a smoked meat sandwich used to cost twenty-five cents at Ben's, and that an evening on the water slides at Dominion Park cost less than a dollar.

The contrast between Knott's gentle nostalgia and d'Iberville-Moreau's impassioned exhortation comes out in a comparison of their descriptions of St. James Methodist Church. D'Iberville-Moreau shows it both in its original splendour and as it stands today hidden behind a three-storey commercial block. "Unfortunately," he laments, "the church board decided in 1920 to sell parcels of the land surrounding it, with the inevitable result that commercial buildings were erected. . . . It is threatened with demolition" (p. 132). Knott dwells on the past and



FIGURE 2. Houses, rue Sainte-Famille. Hatton, p. 55.

avoids raising our anxieties. The church, he tells us, “was not always hidden by a bank of banal retail stores. Until the twenties, it stood alone in all its glory — the largest and finest Protestant church in the city” (p. 19).

The degree of nostalgic appeal is generally inversely proportional to the amount of seriously researched historical material, and it is the latter that we assume to be of greatest interest to the readers of this review. *Lost Montreal* comes close to achieving a happy balance between the two, although, as we have seen, the author was somewhat embarrassed by the latter. As for the other books, however, we must either teach our sentimentalists a bit about history, or show our historians how they may learn to feel.

H.K.

ELLIS WATERHOUSE. *Roman Baroque Painting: A List of the Principal Painters and their Works in and around Rome*. London, Phaidon, 1976. 121 + viii pp., 81 illus., \$48.00.

The distinguished art historian Sir Ellis Waterhouse belongs to that group of brilliant scholars and connoisseurs who have written innumerable classic articles and books on a variety of subjects and artists. Among Waterhouse's notable contributions are his monographs on Sir Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough, and his survey studies *Painting in Britain, 1530 to 1790* (Harmondsworth, 1953) and *Italian Baroque Painting* (London, 1962). Thus,

this reviewer looked forward to the recently published book here under review.

This work is a revised edition of his original text *Baroque Painting in Rome: The Seventeenth Century*, which appeared in 1937, at which time it was described as being indispensable. Waterhouse offers some reasons for reissuing his work: “The book has now become extremely scarce and it has been reported to me that it has been stolen from a surprising number of University libraries” (p. vii). He adds, “It has not been easy to decide what to do with the preliminary text. One can hardly recapture the spirit in which it was written more than thirty-five years ago and do it all over again. But . . . treating it as a sacred text and merely adding some modest notes of correction does not seem to me acceptable. I have therefore corrected positive mistakes and modified certain points of view. . . . The result is a compromise” (p. vii). The present text is, however, more than a reprinting of the first, for the lists of artists and their works have been greatly expanded and there are an additional twenty-one plates.

The book consists of a brief essay (some thirty-nine pages) which can be loosely divided into sections delineating the history of the later sixteenth century, a cursory look at Annibale Carracci, Caravaggio, and the decoration of palaces during the first quarter of the seventeenth century, and a discussion of the reigns of Urban VIII, Innocent X, Alexander VII, and their successors until 1700. This essay is then followed by a general bibliography of Roman Baroque sources, a note on subsequent annotated lists of nearly seventy artists (wherein recent changes in attribution are mentioned), a citation of some recent literature, a selection of eighty-one black-and-white illustrations, and a topographical index.

Phaidon, the publisher, asserts that the volume on Baroque painting is “an indispensable source book for all those interested in its essential manifestation — the pictures painted by artists in Rome between 1580 and 1710.” However, would it not be fairer to acknowledge the actual limitations which the author has observed? The book is not a definitive study of Roman Baroque painting. It is a list of the principal painters who worked after the accession of Urban VIII in 1623 and were born before 1660. Of all the artists mentioned in the lists, only Bacchio Ciampi was alive in 1580, and he was then only two years of age. In his chapter on the later sixteenth century, Waterhouse therefore offers no discussion of Federico Barocci, who was a native of Urbino yet was a major precursor of the Roman Baroque.

Waterhouse writes of Annibale Carracci, “It will thus be seen that what Annibale did for the succeeding century of Roman painters was to sum up compendiously the results of the Renaissance and to establish the canon of a classical style” (pp. 8-9). This is quite true, but the discussion might well have been carried further for, in fact, Carracci's ceiling in the Farnese Gallery was the starting point for the two major Roman Baroque stylistic currents — classicism and illusionism. Hence, the painter points forward not only to Domenichino, Sacchi, and Maratta, but also to Lanfranco, Cortona, and Bernini. Several sources of inspiration for Carracci's ceiling can be found across the Tiber River in the Villa Farnesina; works painted there by Peruzzi and Raphael anticipated Carracci's later use of the *quadratura* and *quadro riportato* devices. Of course the *quadratura* tradition was extremely well known to Annibale through his knowledge of the work of Mategna, Giulio Romano,