Bishop: A Microhistorical Study of the Church of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré

dans le Canada," undated (detail).

One of the interesting questions raised by the Italian historians engaged in the practice of microhistory concerns the status of archival documents in the construction of a historical explanation.[1] At the risk of oversimplifying, one can say that microhistory prefers to see documents as symptoms or clues to be interpreted rather than data to be collected. The search for data is a search for true and positive information, and it is believed that data can be extracted from documents as minerals are extracted from ore. Clues, on the other hand, do not consist of abstract pieces of information supporting inductive reasoning; they remain on the level of the particular, as when we infer the existence of a fire from the smell of smoke. Instead of going from the general to the particular, as in *deduction,* or from the particular to the general, as in *induction,* the interpretation of clues goes from the particular to the particular, and constitutes what logicians have called *abduction.* According to Carlo Ginzburg, the earliest human intellectual act was carried out by a hunter crouching in the mud, examining the footprints of some animal. Footprints are, for the hunter, clues to the passage of a specific animal. They display a certain degree of freshness, a specific direction, a certain depth, and a certain distance from one another. However, all these concrete features, referring to a single event, need to be discarded when biologists search for what is generic and typical about those footprints in order to determine which species live in the area.

Because of this peculiar situation, clues are often not recognized as scientific evidence. They nevertheless belong to an epistemological tradition that ties together hunters tracking down animals, seers reading the future in coffee cups, Sherlock Holmes finding clues where no one had noticed anything before, Giovanni Morelli attributing artworks of the basis of the shape of an ear or of a small toe, doctors reflecting upon the symptoms of a patient — and humanists interpreting traces of the past.[2]

In this article, I shall begin by discussing the way in which historical documents have been understood by art historians, and how some of the points made by the advocates of microhistory can help us re-examine those ideas. I shall then comment on a few documents concerning the reconstruction of the church of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré at the end of the 17th century. This discussion shall lead me to question the assumption of transparency that architectural historians often make when dealing with building contracts.

b y   M a r c   G r i g n o n

IRWIN PANOFSKY EXAMINED THE AMBIGUOUS STATUS OF ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS IN A TEXT entitled "The History of Art as a Humanistic Discipline," published for the first time in 1940. In this text, Panofsky compared historical documents to scientific instruments on the basis of their similar epistemological status:

When the scientist observes a phenomenon he uses instruments which are themselves subject to the laws of nature he wants to explore. When the humanist examines a [cultural] record he uses documents which are themselves produced in the course of the process which he wants to investigate.[3]

Panofsky then discussed the fictive example of a contract drawn up in 1471 providing for an altarpiece with a painting of the Nativity. He reviewed the different points to which the historian of art should pay attention in order to make sure that the information contained in the contract is true and that it actually relates to the altarpiece under investigation. Panofsky then concluded in the following way:

I have referred to the altarpiece of 1471 as a 'monument' and to the contract as a 'document'; that is to say, I have considered the altarpiece as the object of investigation, or 'primary material', and the contract as an instrument of investigation, or 'secondary material'. In doing so, I have spoken as an art historian. For a palaeographer or an historian of law, the contract would be the 'monument', or 'primary material', and both may use pictures for documentation.[4]

Recent historiography has shown that this distinction between document and monument can be questioned further. Michel Foucault, in particular, wrote that the task of historians is to transform documents into monuments,[5] meaning that historians should question the documentary use of documents. Documents constitute utterances, or fragments of discourses, which not only reflect the positions of historical actors, but also contribute to establishing and modifying those positions. So-called documents not only record activities, they can be instrumental in establishing social practices, and the role of the historian is to reveal such processes when they happen.

Despite the differences in orientation that exist between Foucault and Ginzburg, both would probably agree on this point: Panofsky's observation that documents participate in the events that historians try to reconstruct, or, more simply put, that documents can never be neutral, has deeper implications than what he actually said about it. In his article "Checking the Evidence: The Judge and the Historian," Ginzburg argued that:

There is an element in positivism that must be unequivocally rejected: the tendency to simplify the relationship between evidence and reality. In a positivist perspective, the evidence is analyzed only in order to ascertain if, and when, it implies a distortion, either intentional or unintentional. The historian is thus confronted with various possibilities: a document can be a fake; a document can be authentic, but unreliable ...; or a document can be authentic and reliable. In the first two cases the evidence is dismissed; in the latter, it is accepted, but only as evidence of something *else*. In other words, the evidence is not regarded as a historical document in itself, but as a transparent medium—an open window that gives us direct access to reality.[6]

For Ginzburg, the evidence is neither transparent nor completely opaque, as radical antipositivists would have it. He compares it to a distorted glass, and the interest of this notion is especially clear when he uses minutes of the Inquisition to study 16th-century Italian popular culture, as in his famous book *The Cheese and the Worms.*[7]

THE CASE THAT I WOULD LIKE TO DEVELOP HERE CONCERNS THE CHURCH THAT WAS BUILT AT the end of the 17th century in Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, a parish located on the north shore of the St. Lawrence river 25 kilometres east of Quebec City (**figure 1**). Important documents concerning the construction of this church include the account book of the parish, a building contract dated 17 December 1688, and two cancelled drafts of the same agreement.

On the basis of a payment recorded in the account book, art historian Gérard Morisset attributed the redesign of the church built in 1676 to the architect and builder Claude Baillif (**figure 2**). He reconstructed the following scene:

One day during the fall of 1689, Baillif took the plan of the church to the missionary of Sainte-Anne, and he saw the priest Germain Morin write in the parish account book the following sentence: "Au Sieur Baillif Architecte de l'Eglise de Sainte-Anne: 50 livres."[8]

1 A version of this paper was presented at the 1996 conference of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada in Ottawa under the title "Microhistory and Architectural History."

2 Carlo Ginzburg, "Clues: Morelli, Freud, and Sherlock Holmes," in *The Sign of Three: Dupin, Holmes, Peirce,* edited by U. Eco and A. Sebeock (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1983), 81-118.

3 Erwin Panofsky, "The History of Art as a Humanistic Discipline," in *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1955), 8.

4 *Ibid.,* 10.

5 Michel Foucault, *L'archéologie du savoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1969), 15.

6 Carlo Ginzburg, "Checking the Evidence: The Judge and the Historian," *Critical Inquiry* 18, no. 1 (1991): 83 (italics by the author).

7 Carlo Ginzburg, *Le fromage et les vers* (Paris: Flammarion, 1980).

8 Gérard Morisset, "Un maître-maçon d'autrefois: Claude Baillif," *Mémoires de la société généalogique canadienne française,* July-August-September 1965, 136 (my translation).

The building contract of 1688, which Morisset might not have seen, does not entirely support his conclusions. The contract was drawn up between Claude Baillif, identified as an architect and building contractor, and Jean-Baptiste de La Croix de Saint-Vallier, the second bishop of New France.[9] In the archives, this document is accompanied by two drafts in which Saint-Vallier's architect, Hilaire Bernard de La Rivière, is said to be acting on behalf of the absent bishop. Both drafts indicate that La Rivière is the author of the plans, although the final contract does not mention anything on that subject.

The first draft, identifying Baillif as an architect, gives a general description of the work to be done and refers to La Rivière's drawings, but stops in the middle of a detailed description of the apertures. The second draft is a complete text, beginning the same way as the earlier one, but omitting the description of the apertures. It is signed by Baillif, identified as an architect and building contractor, by La Rivière, identified as Saint-Vallier's architect and representative, as well as by one witness. The notary, however, did not officialize the contract with his own signature, probably waiting for the bishop's approval. The word "Néant" written in large letters over the text indicates that, in the end, it was not approved.

The final contract is very similar to the second draft, and there is no significant change in content that would account for it being rewritten. In both cases, Baillif has to demolish the existing church with the exception of its facade, and the construction procedures are exactly the same. In both cases, Baillif is given the supervision of the entire work including that of the carpenters, and his salary for the masonry work is set at 16 *livres* per square toise.

The similarity between the texts also extends to the mention of the drawings. In the first draft, one reads that:

Les ouvertures des portes et fenestres seront faites et placées aux lieux et endroits portés par le dit dessin qui en a été fait par le dit sieur Bernard, signé du dit Seigneur Evesque et du dit entrepreneur.[10]

The second draft is almost the same, except that each drawing is clearly identified:

[A]uxquelles murailles seront laissées les ouvertures pour portes et fenestres aux lieux et endroits marqués par le plan, profil et élévations qui en ont esté faits par le dit Sieur de la rivière signez du dit sieur Evesque et du dit Entrepreneur.[11]

In the final contract, the only significant difference is the absence of La Rivière's name, which coincides with the appearance of the bishop in his own right. In this case, the apertures had to be:

[T]aillez au ciseau de la largeur hauteur et en la forme marquez par les plans profils et élévations

9 Archives nationales du Québec, Quebec City (hereafter ANQ), F. Genaple, 17 December 1688, contract between Claude Baillif, architect and building contractor, and Bishop Saint-Vallier, for the masonry of the church of Sainte-Anne, in the seigneury of Beaupré.

10 ANQ, F. Genaple, [c. 11 December 1688], first draft of a contract between Claude Baillif, architect, and the Bishop of Quebec represented by his architect Hilaire Bernard de La Rivière, for the church of Sainte-Anne.

11 ANQ, F. Genaple, [c. 11 December 1688], second draft of a contract between Claude Baillif, architect and building contractor, and the Bishop of Quebec represented by his architect Hilaire Bernard de La Rivière, for the church of Sainte-Anne.

qui luy ont esté présentement mis en mains dont l'original est signé du dit Seigneur évesque et du dit entrepreneur.[12]

The first question that arises from these observations is whether Baillif was the author of the drawings mentioned in the final contract. If that were the case, the disappearance of La Rivière's name would imply that Bishop Saint-Vallier rejected his drawings and that new ones were made by Baillif himself. Since, however, the actual contents of the second draft and the final contract are the same, this idea is difficult to support. In all likelihood, the "plans profils et elevations" mentioned in the final contract were the same as those mentioned in the drafts.[13] In that case, Baillif's role would still have been limited to overseeing the construction, despite the title of "architect" given to him in the parish archives.[14] This title, which is also used in the building contract and in the two drafts, would not imply that Baillif actually prepared any plans, as Morisset assumed. Hence, it would not reflect the nature of Baillif's involvement in the construction, but rather his general socio-professional identity. This hypothesis is supported by the existence of many other contracts in which Baillif, although designated as an "architect," is agreeing to execute such work as the construction of simple masonry walls.[15] According to Claude de Ferrière's manual *La science parfaite des notaires* of 1715, it is indeed required that notaries mention the generic professional title or the social status of the two parties involved in a contract, whatever their actual role.[16]

These comments do not provide any explanation for the disappearance of La Rivière's name from the final contract. In order to find such an explanation, we must question why La Rivière wanted to have his name included in the first place. This question leads us to propose that the building contract, in addition to its legal function, might also have performed a symbolic function in the eyes of the parties involved. Since La Rivière had no purpose in signing the drawings themselves, in contradistinction to what architects do today, the only place where he could have claimed the authorship of the design was in the contract. Thus, La Rivière might have used the bishop's absence to influence the formulation of the text, and, for that purpose, to present himself as the bishop's representative. In such circumstances, the notary's prudent wait for the bishop before officializing the agreement can be easily understood.

After his return to Quebec City, Bishop Saint-Vallier would have found the initiative of his architect to be inappropriate and therefore demanded the notary to rewrite the entire contract leaving out La Rivière's name. The inappropriate character of La Rivière's initiative can be confirmed by the fact that building contracts from the French regime generally fail to identify the author of a plan unless he had a special rank, such as that of military engineer. This explanation, however, remains insufficient, and there is one more element that should be mentioned at this point. Indeed, it appears that Saint-Vallier was also very much aware of the symbolic function of official documents and that he had his own reasons to want the contract to be rewritten. These reasons are revealed in a letter that François de Laval, the former bishop who had retired to devote himself to the Quebec Seminary, wrote to the superior of the Séminaire des Missions Etrangères in Paris in order to complain about Saint-Vallier. According to Laval, the new bishop was trying to control the reconstruction of the church of Sainte-Anne, "dont il se vouloit faire honneur ayant faict tous les marchés des ouvriers en son nom."[17] What contributed further to Laval's indignation was that Saint-Vallier refused to refund the money that the Seminary had already contributed to the new building:

Je fus obligé de prendre du dit Séminaire pour douze à treize cents francs de choses nécessaires pour la bâtisse de la ditte église dont je suis demeuré redevable et qu'il ne m'a voullu payier non plus que quatre cent francs qui estoient deus à des ouvriers m'alléguant qu'estant seigneur de la coste de Beaupré où cette église est scituée le séminaire et moy avions quelque obligation d'y contribuer.[18]

In Laval's point of view, Bishop Saint-Vallier wanted the benefit from the prestige that reconstructing the church would confer upon him without having to pay the bills. On the other hand, Saint-Vallier claimed that the Seminary should cover part of the expenses, since the church was located on one of its seigneuries. While we cannot ascertain who was right and who was wrong in this dispute, it does clearly show that both the old and the new bishops were quite aware of the symbolic function of a building contract. A building contract was the occasion to have one's name associated with a building, and such a document mattered more than a real contribution of funds to the construction.

12 ANQ, F. Genaple, 17 December 1688, contract between Baillif and Bishop Saint-Vallier.

13 The fact that La Rivière's signature is not required on the plans is not a new element in the final text. From the beginning, these plans had to be signed by Baillif and the bishop only, these signatures having a purely legal function.

14 La Rivière's plans may also have been followed for the facade rebuilt between 1694 and 1697. Indeed, the two consecutive building phases (the nave, 1689-1693; the facade, 1694-1697) probably belong to a single project. Archives of the parish of Sainte-Anne, Monastery of the Redemptorists, Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, livre de comptes 1.

15 See Marc Grignon, "La pratique architecturale de Claude Baillif," *Journal of Canadian Art History* 15, no. 1 (1992): 15-16.

16 Claude de Ferrière, *La science parfaite des notaires* (Paris: Charles Omont, 1715).

17 Transcription of a letter from François de Laval to Mr. Brisacier, Superior of the Séminaire des Missions Etrangères in Paris, 7 April 1691. Archives du Séminaire du Québec, Musée de l'Amérique française, Quebec City, manuscript 17, p. 774.

18 *Ibid.*

For Bishop Saint-Vallier, the patronage of the church of Sainte-Anne was important for at least two reasons. First, the church was linked to a series of miracles, and was greatly respected in New France.[19] Second, it was located on the seigneury of Beaupré, the most productive land owned by the Quebec Seminary, and it was therefore closely associated with the name of the old bishop (**figure 3**).[20] For these reasons, the church of Sainte-Anne became a valuable pawn in Saint-Vallier's strategy to establish his prestige in his new diocese. By awarding the contract himself, he ensured that the building would be associated with his patronage rather than that of the old bishop. He knew that this document would establish him as the patron of the building in the eyes of colonial officials, in those of the king, and, ultimately, in those of posterity.

The contract was therefore conceived with the clear intention of proclaiming Bishop Saint-Vallier as the sponsor of the new church, and we should not perceive it as an innocent legal instrument. One might say that the contract did give Saint-Vallier control over the construction of the church and that the information it contains is true, but this argument misses the point. All of the persons involved in these events, from La Rivière to the old bishop, were aware that building contracts, because they were official documents, carried with them a certain prestige. They knew that having one's name mentioned in a building contract providing for the reconstruction of an important church would guarantee, in a way, one's presence in history books. The historian confronted with this material thus has to choose between falling into the world of images that was designed to be seen by him, or to show how these documents were perceived at the time they were produced.

THIS LAST POINT, BY INCLUDING POSTERITY AND THE HISTORIAN, MIGHT APPEAR TO CARRY my argument too far. But the documentation of one's actions for posterity could reach a high level of planning at the end of the 17th century, as Louis Marin has demonstrated in his study on the work of Paul Péllisson, the historiographer that Louis XIV appointed in 1670. Assuming that one's existence coincides entirely with one's image, Louis XIV carefully planned the historical representation of his own reign so that, as Marin argues:

In the times to come, it is not the prince who is absent, lost in a bygone past ...; commemorative productions, on the contrary, should make posterity feel its own absence from the time and the space of the prince.[21]

I do not intend to put Saint-Vallier's meticulousness about the writing of building contracts on the same level as the complex system of representation developed for Louis XIV, but I maintain that such meticulousness can be explained in terms of a strategy of representation adapted to the tensions existing in the colony.

19 "Sainte-Anne du Petit Cap est distante de Québec de 6 lieues et de deux du Cap Tourmente, elle contient trois quarts de lieue du côté de Québec et cinq quarts de lieue de l'autre côté, toute habitée le long du grand fleuve. Il y a 38 familles et 167 âmes, il y a une petite église bâtie de pierre, de 80 pieds de longs et de 28 de large dédiée à Sainte-Anne, renommée par les pélerinages qu'on y fait, un côté de la dite église tombe en ruine et a besoin de réparation, il y a un presbytère en colombage." Passage from Bishop Laval, "Plan général de l'état des missions du Canada fait en l'année 1683," in H. Têtu and C.O. Gagnon, *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de Québec* (Quebec: A. Côté, 1887-88), 115-17.

20 The parish was created by Laval in 1678. See "Ephémérides de Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré," *Bulletin des recherches historiques* 30, no. 7 (July 1924): 207.

21 Louis Marin, *Le portrait du roi* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1981), 152 (my translation).

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"THIS PROPER AND
The Marler

Since the founding of the Department of External Affairs in 1909, the Canadian government has been responsible for the construction of more than twenty chanceries.[1] With the exception of the legation in Tokyo, all the Canadian diplomatic buildings have been constructed since the Second World War—after Canada acquired complete autonomy in international affairs. The first Canadian diplomatic compound, built in Tokyo between 1932 and 1933, was the realization of one man, Herbert Marler, the plenipotentiary minister for the Dominion of Canada in Japan between 1929 and 1937.

Under the first mandates of Prime Minister Mackenzie King (between 1921 and 1930), Canada began to disengage its own foreign policy from the British Foreign Service. The autonomous government of King consolidated the embryonic Department of External Affairs, and Under-Secretary of External Affairs O.D. Skelton—like Mackenzie King a strong believer in Canadian autonomy—recruited qualified Canadians to the diplomatic corps, which also included members of the establishment appointed by Mackenzie King.[2] At the end of the 1920s the government acquired its first properties abroad, existing buildings that had to be transformed for diplomatic use. These properties usually reflected the taste of the first diplomatic representatives. Following the recommendations of ambassador Vincent Massey, of Massey-Harris, the agricultural implement manufacturer, and High Commissioner Peter Larkin, from the Salada Tea Company, the department acquired a lavish residence in Washington and Canada House on Trafalgar Square in London. The legation in Tokyo, though purpose-built, reflected, as did these two examples, the wealth of its ambassador (**figure 1**).

The commercial trade between Japan and Canada in 1928 represented 46 million dollars,[3] making Japan an important and strategic partner in the Pacific Rim. There were some tensions between the two countries, however, due to the policy of exclusion of Japanese immigrants in British Columbia, tensions that led Mackenzie King to open a Canadian legation in Japan in order, as suggested by historian Norman Hillmer, to "screen and limit applicants rigorously."[4] King appointed Herbert Marler as the first minister to represent Canada in Tokyo. Marler was a complex character: he (along with many Canadians of the day, including Mackenzie King)[5] held paradoxical feelings about the English motherland. "An Anglophile, Marler's preoccupation was with the British Empire, and Canada's place in it. London, not Washington or Ottawa, was his spiritual capital."[6] Remembered for his penchant for ostentatious court uniforms,[7] he was known earlier in his political career to be against the development of an independent Canadian foreign policy, an opinion which faded with his plenipotentiary appointment.[8]

Marler was a member of the second generation of Quebec English elite, from a family of notaries. His marriage to the grand-niece of Hugh Allan, a tycoon of Canadian ship and railway industries, contributed to his rise as an affluent member of the Montreal elite. A federal deputy minister under Mackenzie King between 1921 and 1925, he, like most Canadians at the time, had no experience in diplomatic matters; Hugh Keenleyside thought him to be "largely ignorant of history and economics ... and was innocent of experience in foreign relations...."[9] But he knew how to organize receptions on a large scale, an asset for ambassadorial duties.
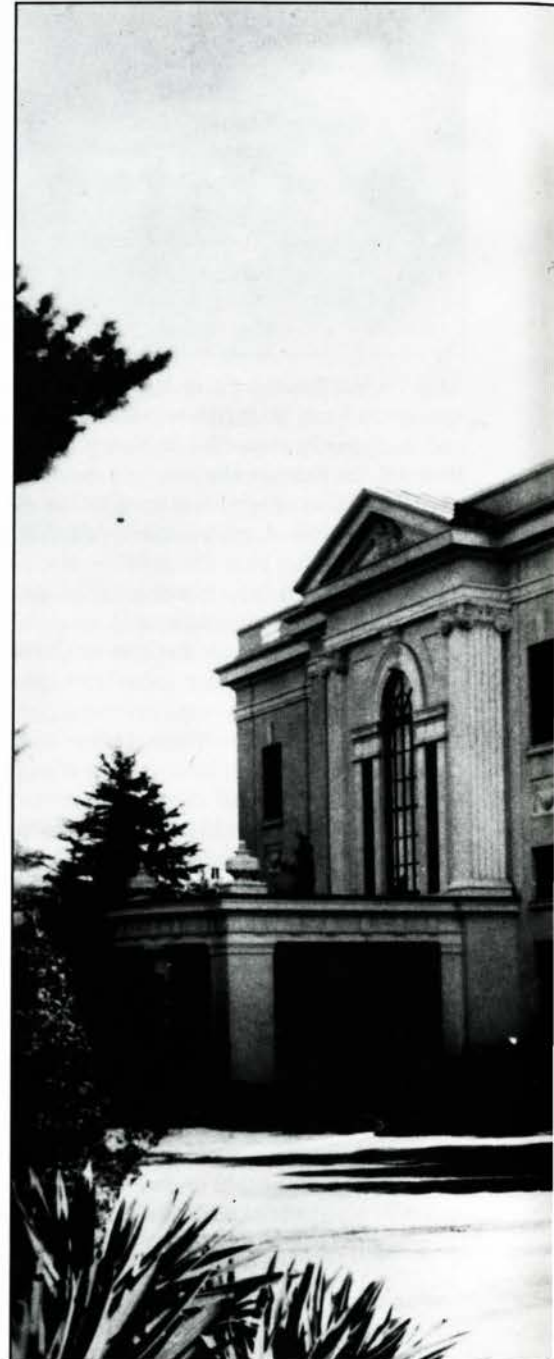
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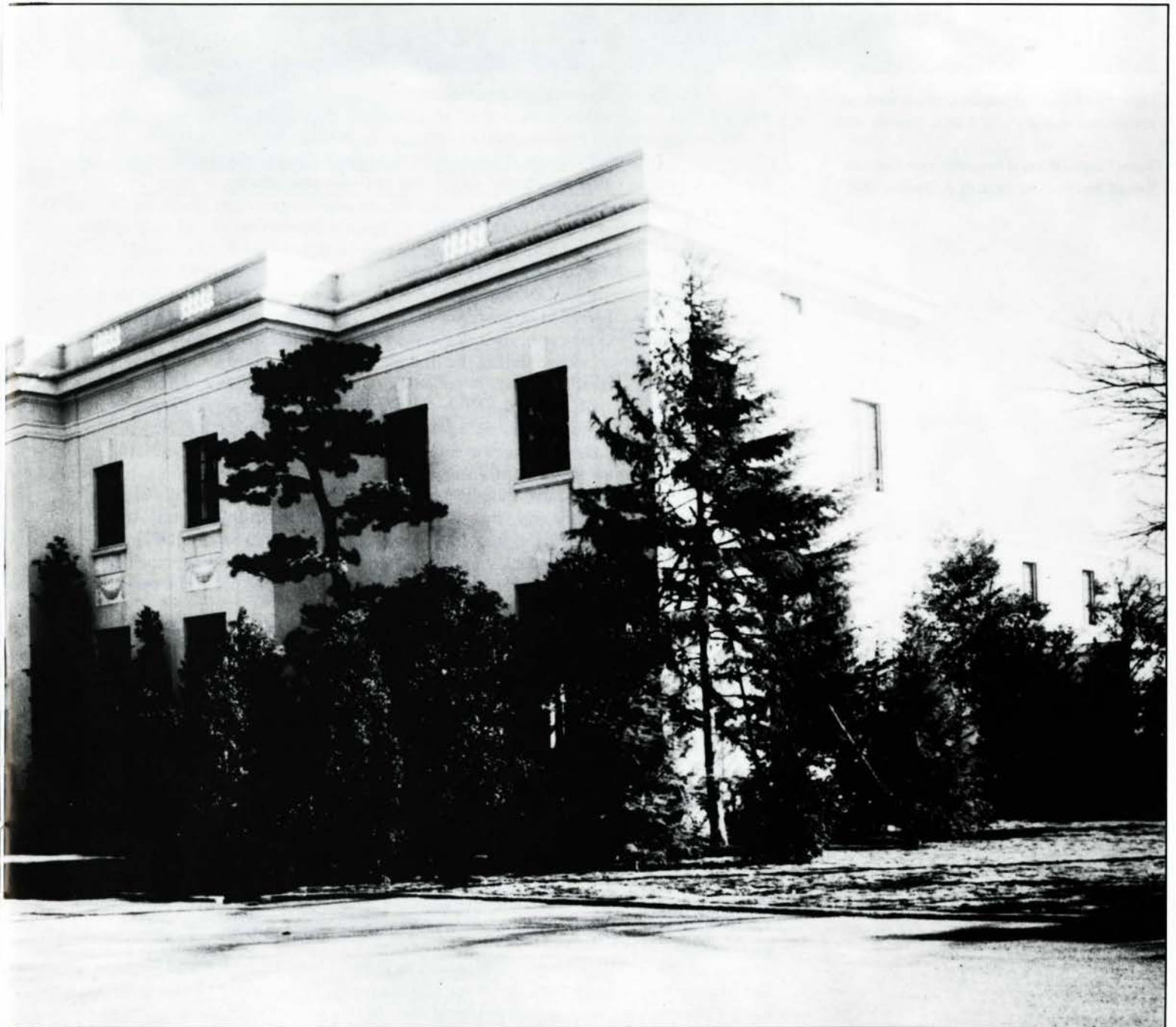
DIGNIFIED ACCOMMODATION"
House in Tokyo

Figure 1. Marler House (or Official Residence), Tokyo, 1932-33; Antonin Raymond, architect. (NA, PA-120404)
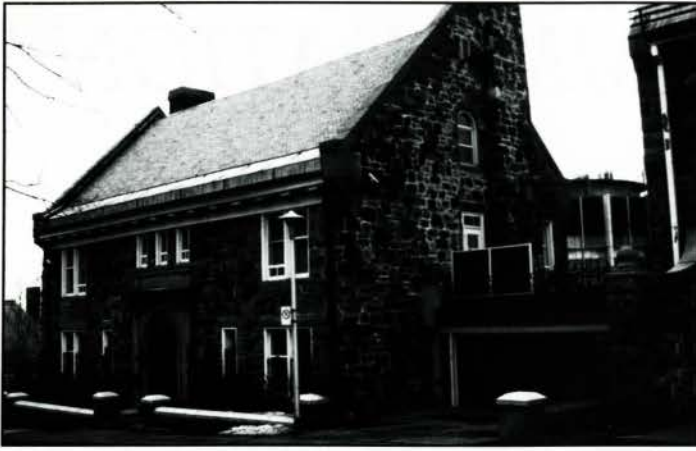
Figure 2 (left). House on Redpath Crescent, Montreal;
Kenneth Rea, architect, c. 1915. (M.-J. Therrien, 1996)

Figure 3 (right). House at Senneville, near Montreal;
Kenneth Rea, architect, 1923. (M.-J. Therrien, 1996)

Marler was university-educated and believed in higher education (though for men only), as he proved by meticulously selecting qualified candidates for the legation.[10] Marler belonged to an urbane society which no longer needed the pomp and eclecticism of the earlier Canadian industrial moguls. In this sense, Marler was not any different than his American neighbours to the south; they too were proclaiming, in Alan Gowans' words, "the cultural superiority of inherited wealth over mere money grubbing."[11]

Marler's fascination with the British Empire was reflected not only in his uniforms, but also in the architectural style he consistently chose for the several houses that he built for his family. By the early 20th century, the taste for lavish, eclectic mansions (such as Ravenscrag, the opulent Montreal residence of Sir Hugh Allan) was being superseded by more sober houses, the stylistic ancestries of which tended to be more coherent than their predecessors. Neoclassical architecture in particular made a triumphant return during the first decades of this century. One of the most popular classical revival styles was based on the architecture of the Georgian era. This style gained great popularity in the United States with the beginning of the restoration of Williamsburg in Virginia, in 1926. For Americans, this "Federal" style, which harkened to the original colonies, was a *retour au source* that gave them, as Harold Kalman writes, "a new patriotic meaning."[12]

For Anglo-Canadians, the interpretation of the Georgian style was a slightly different matter. While it is clear there was a strong American influence in the proliferation of the style in Canada, Georgian Revival architecture also represented an expression of a British lineage for the Canadian Anglophone elite. This link to the British tradition would appeal to an ambivalent character like Marler, while at the same time demonstrate his awareness of the latest architectural trends.

Marler hired Montreal architect Kenneth Rea to design the new legation in Tokyo.[13] His long-standing partnership with Rea, which lasted almost 25 years, had started in 1907 in Drummondville. There, Marler had purchased a large property, adding new buildings to the existing structures. About 1915 he built a new house on Redpath Crescent in Montreal's Golden Square Mile (**figure 2**). This house incorporated some of the earmarks of the Georgian Style, with a focus on the flat front porch flanked by symmetrically placed windows, a cornice with modillions, and a pitched roof that accentuates the main facade.

A similar vocabulary was used for another residence Marler commissioned of Rea, in Senneville on the west side of Montreal. This large residence (**figure 3**), designed in 1923, was a much more elaborate version of the Redpath Crescent house, but drew from the same stylistic family: an emphasis on the facade, with a monumental columned porch crowned by a pediment; a Palladian window opening to a grand staircase inside; a symmetrical placement of the windows; and a pitched roof ornamented with a modillioned cornice.[14]

A few months after his appointment to Tokyo, Marler commissioned Kenneth Rea to produce drawings for a residence and chancery. These were to be included in an extensive project brief assembled by Marler. In this project brief one can find not only the description of the activities that were to take place, but the job definition for each of the positions required to administer the chancery and a meticulous inventory of furniture and other domestic accessories for the household.[15] Marler used this project brief to convince government representatives to authorize the construction of a
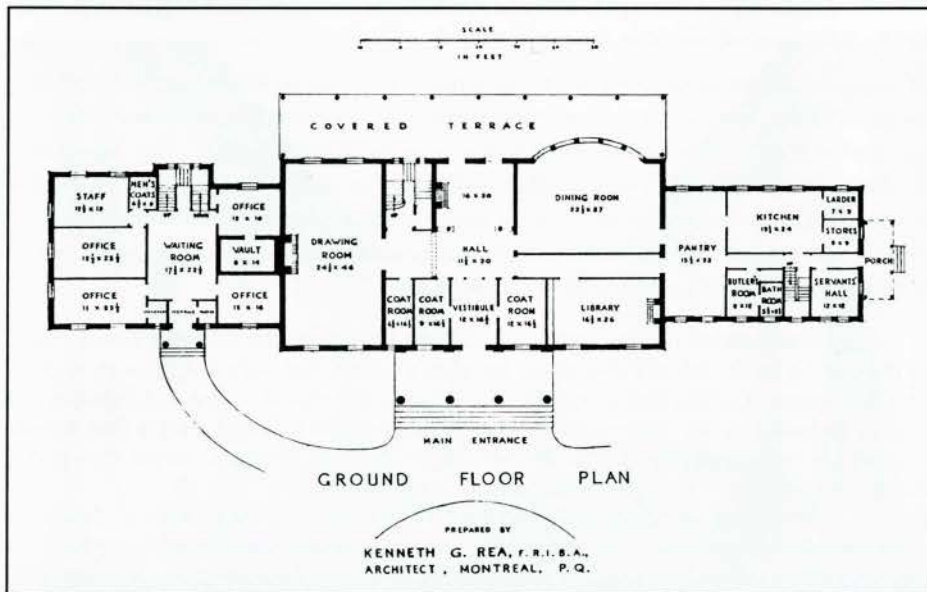
diplomatic enclave—a difficult task in the early 1930s. Marler was not as successful as he would have wished. Nevertheless, he was granted permission to proceed after offering to lend the money to the government for the purchase of the site and the construction of the buildings.[16] Prime Minister Bennett, successor to Mackenzie King, finally approved the arrangement, agreeing that, in time, Marler would be reimbursed.[17]

In his project brief, Marler modelled the future embassy after mansions typical of the wealthy, like his own residence in Senneville. In fact, if Marler had been allowed to follow Rea's plans literally, the Senneville residence and the legation building in Tokyo would have shared some striking similarities: both Marler's residence and the proposed embassy featured a columned porch (the latter crowned by a pediment with the Canadian coat of arms) (**figure 4**), a main building flanked by two wings, windows symmetrically distributed, and facades suggestive of wooden siding.

Marler's requirements, as translated by Rea, reflected a spacial organization typical of Montreal's elite mansions (**figure 5**), including a vestibule opening to a great hall that leads to a covered terrace; a drawing room for social gatherings; a dining room for private dinners; a library; and a wing devoted to the kitchen activities, with the pantry directly connected to the dining room as well as servants' quarters. The second floor is occupied by family rooms and other servants' quarters. In Rea's proposal, both floors of the left wing were to house the chancery. It was later decided to separate the chancery from the official residence.
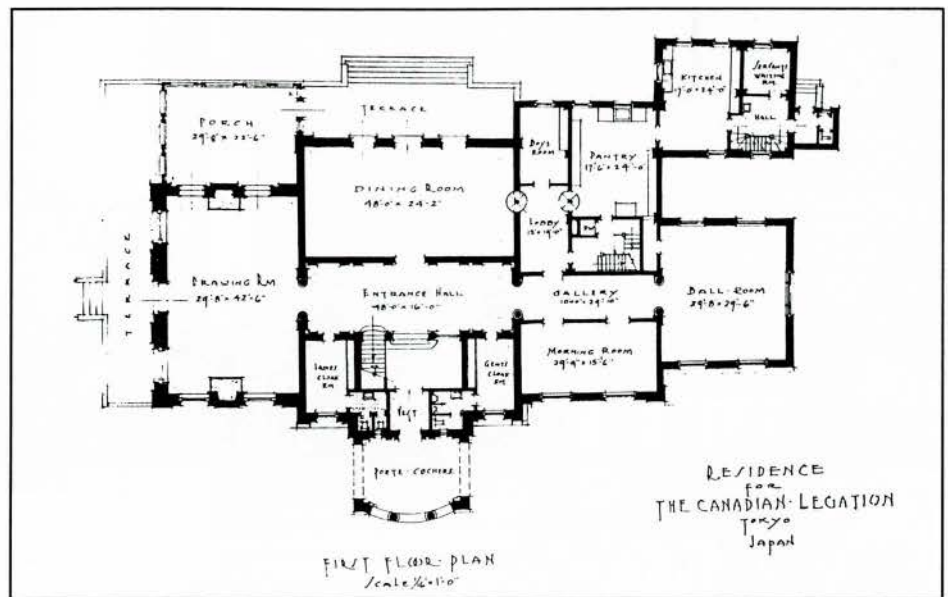
Marler was preoccupied with the symbolic impact of the building, as illustrated by the following extract from the project brief:

As a result of the review, the study and the inquiries to which he has alluded the Minister[18] is convinced in the most positive manner that it is particularly essential for the success of the Legation that it and the Chancellery should be of a proper and dignified nature.... This proper and dignified accommodation will have an effect on the Ministers of other countries now established at Tokyo and particularly on the minds of the people of Japan to whom he is accredited from a great Dominion. It will stand as visible evidence of the ability and permanence of Canada and will be a source of pride for the people of Canada.[19]

When Marler and his family left Canada for Tokyo, the minister already had in his mind a fairly definite idea of the legation's layout. Not only did he carry with him the notion of a Western space with fixed walls and closed rooms in a hierarchy of functions based on an upper-class lifestyle, he also had in mind a style that would express his social position and his British origins. For the Montreal lawyer, this meant using the language of Georgian architecture.

Marler took with him to Tokyo the project brief and Rea's proposal. Tokyo in 1929 was still devastated by an earthquake six years earlier. There were not many buildings that offered Westerners the comfort to which they were accustomed, and architects familiar with Western customs were rare in Tokyo. One notable exception was Antonin Raymond, a disciple of American architect Frank Lloyd Wright. He had come to Japan with the American master to build the Imperial Hotel between 1916 and 1920. Raymond decided to stay in Tokyo after the departure of Wright. Diplomats, foreign business companies and local inhabitants were among his clients.[20]

Raymond (1888-1976) had been trained in the Beaux-Arts tradition in Prague between 1904 and 1910. While in the school of architecture, he discovered the work of Wright in a German publication.[21] He left Europe in 1910 for New York, where he worked for Cass Gilbert, whose firm was then designing the Woolworth skyscraper. Raymond created for his employers what he called "pseudo-gothic" patterns for the terra-cotta tiles of the "medieval" skyscraper, an experience he did not enjoy.[22] In 1916, Raymond started to work for Wright and thereby joined the ranks of the pioneers of modern architecture.

When Marler approached Raymond to have Rea's proposal realized, the architect had already designed a few embassies, including stylistically modern ones such as the USSR and the French embassies (built in the late 1920s) and more traditional examples with classical elements, notably the American embassy built in 1932 in a joint venture with the New York firm Magonigle. Raymond's role for the latter was to adapt the design to local conditions and to manage the construction site.

Much like his role with the American embassy, Antonin Raymond was engaged to adapt the design created by Rea and to supervise the building site, closely watched
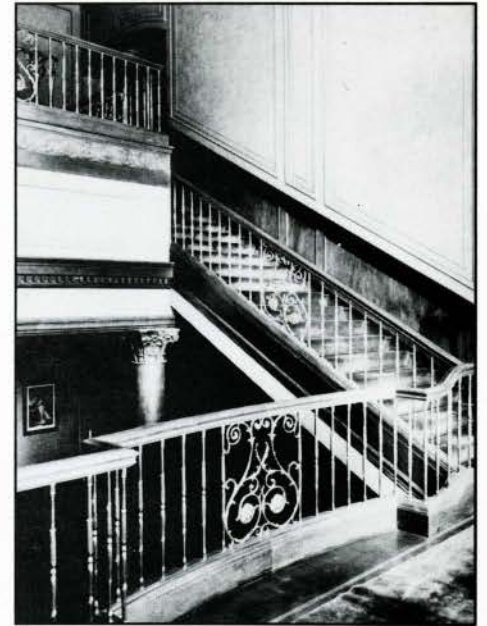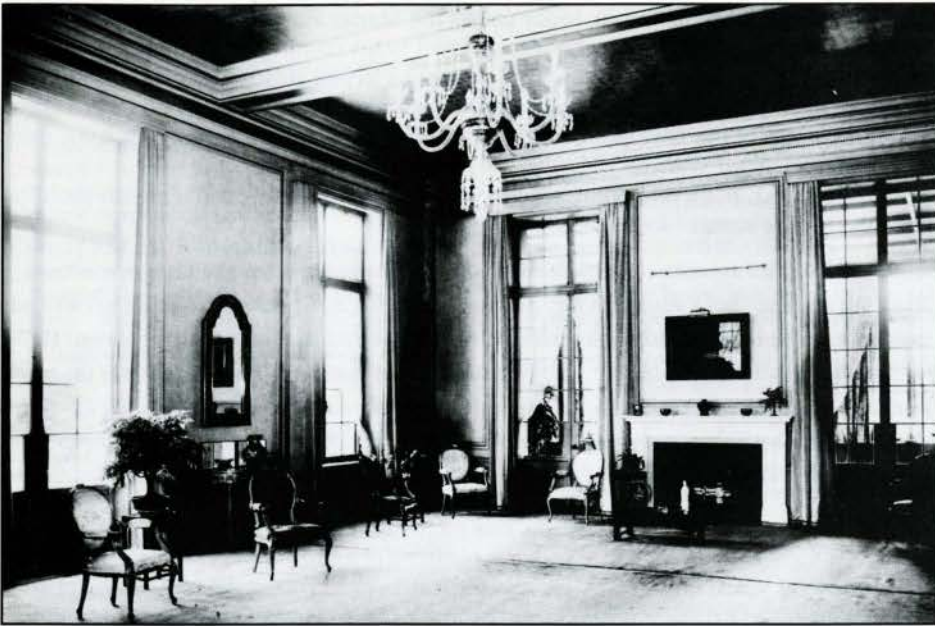
Figure 7 (above left). Drawing room, ground floor, the Canadian legation, Tokyo; Antonin Raymond, architect. (NA, PA-120401)

Figure 8 (left). Hallway, ground floor, the Canadian legation, Tokyo; Antonin Raymond, architect. (NA, PA-120406)
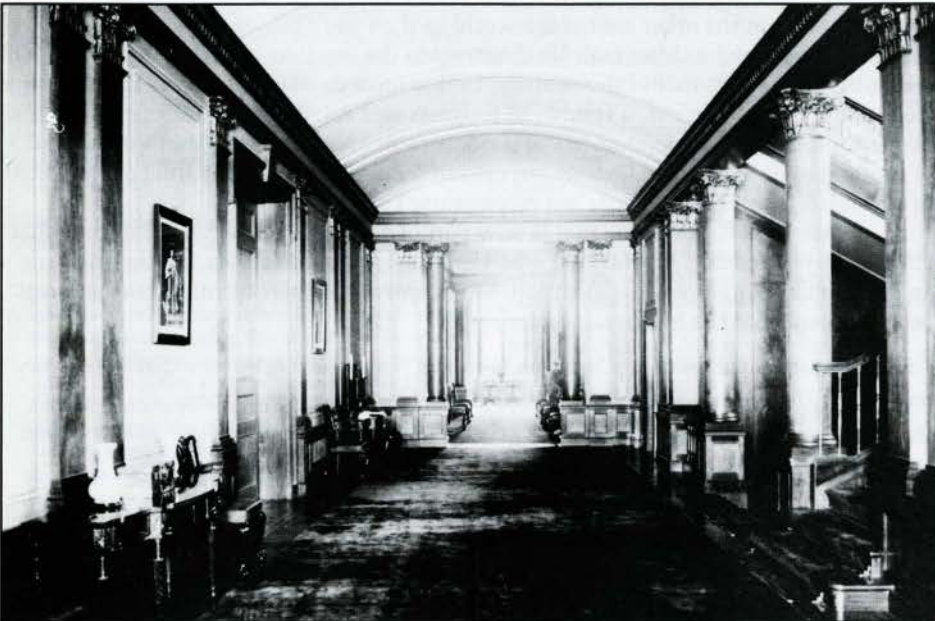
Figure 9 (above). Grand staircase, the Canadian legation, Tokyo; Antonin Raymond, architect. (NA, PA-120416)

by minister Marler. Raymond's role in the construction was rooted in compliance, rather than collaboration as with the French embassy.[23] Stucco was substituted for the intended wooden clapboarding for reasons of humidity, and the entire structure was built of earthquake-proof reinforced concrete (figure 1). The general outline of the residence remained within the lexicon of the classical language of architecture, though, but with a lesser emphasis on symmetry. As at Senneville, the residence featured classical elements such as a porch crowned by a monumental multi-pane sash window, Ionic pilasters, a pediment, and other decorative components.

The spacial organization of the interior was also modified slightly by Raymond (**figure 6**), but the principle of keeping the reception rooms on the main floor and the private rooms on the second was respected. As in Rea's plan, the floors were connected by a grand staircase, with a secondary stair for the domestics. The interior of the Gentleman's residence, as Marler called it, was "of the highest class" (**figures 7-9**):

The entrance hall and gallery and the main hall upstairs are finished in walnut. [In] Other principal rooms [on the] ground floor, the finish is American cypress painted, with panelled dados and plaster panelled walls. Floors are teak parquet or oak parquet.[24]

Marler and his family left Tokyo in 1937 to represent Canada in Washington.

The official residence in Tokyo, today called the Marler House, stands as a witness of the determination of one man who was devoted to his country yet, paradoxically and like many Anglo-Canadians of the time, continued to feel strong attachment to the British Empire. His diplomatic appointment transformed him, however, and he became a strong advocate of the new independent status that Canada was carving for itself prior to the Second Word War.

In 1932, in an attempt to set out what one would today call a nation-building strategy, Marler stated:

Canada is frequently spoken of as "A Young Country". In my opinion our youth is over-emphasized. We are really not a young country nor are we wanting in experience. Have we not welded together a great empire, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, into one united nation? Have we not, though small in population, achieved the position as the fifth trading nation of the whole world? Few nations who are called "old" are able to say as much. If we ponder over all this, we should realize that we are not young, but an experienced nation, quite capable of conducting our own affairs in foreign lands ....[25]

And of constructing our own legation, one might add.

Marler's long experience with the planning of luxurious residences taught him how important visual impact was. He selected a style that, to his eyes, best represented his attachment to British culture. While aware of the American versions of this style, he no doubt saw in it the lineage of Anglo-Saxon traditions. He transposed his architectural values to the other side of the world as if he were building a mansion in a rich neighbourhood in Montreal. He constructed the legation with the liberal-minded mentality of the first half of the century. In this respect, Marler saw the building of a house as a sign of success, a symbol of progress and accomplishment. As Claude Bergeron suggests, in reference to the residences in Montreal's Golden Square Mile, "l'expression de l'idéologie libérale qui croyait au progrès tant individuel que collectif et répandait le mythe du succès qui récompense l'effort."[26]

Marler left a building that is now part of our heritage abroad, a building that "immensely pleased" the person who had originally appointed him, Mackenzie King. In 1933, while leader of the opposition, King expressed his recognition in a personal letter addressed to the Marlers:

I am delighted beyond words that you have been able to do what you have for Canada in Japan, and to lay so firmly and splendidly the foundations of our diplomatic relations, and to give to them in the perfect form in which you have the outward and visible sign of our country in that little part of Japan which is now Canada.[27]

Without the personal and nationalistic ambitions of Herbert Marler,[28] who finally accepted Mackenzie King's position on Canadian autonomy, this diplomatic enclave in Tokyo would simply not exist.

ENDNOTES

1 This number does not include the properties purchased or rented by the Department of External Affairs.

2 The government of the day could not afford substantial salaries for its diplomatic representatives. Appointing wealthy Canadians was therefore considered an appropriate solution.

3 Eber H. Rice, "Sir Herbert Marler and the Canadian legation in Tokyo," in *Canada and Japan in The Twentieth Century* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1991), 75.

4 N. Hillmer and J.L. Granatstein, *Empire to Umpire, Canada and the World to 1990* (Toronto: Copp Clark Longman, 1994), 105.

5 Hillmer and Granatstein summarized the contradictions of Mackenzie King: "King was an amalgam of all views: nationalist, isolationist, imperialist, internationalist .... King had serious reservations about the direction in which English politicians might want to take Canada and the Empire. Yet the prime minister cherished and admired Great Britain and the imperial tradition for giving Canada its freedoms, ... and for keeping Canada out of the American orbit." The authors added: "He wished he could emulate the scope and style of British leaders," but unlike Marler, "He was in awe of the monarchy." *Ibid.*, 84, 90. As for Marler, he seemed more inclined to emulate the grand style of the British monarchy than of that its democratic leaders.

6 *For Better or for Worse, Canada and the United States to the 1990s* (Toronto: Copp, Clark Pitman, 1991), 112.

7 Canadian diplomat Hugh Keenleyside, who worked closely with Marler, wrote in his memoirs: "As preparations for the opening of the new Legation ... [Marler] wanted to go to England to buy clothes, including a full-dress court uniform complete with gold plating ...." He adds: "Mr. Marler also insisted that the senior members of his staff should obtain similar though less grandiose costume." H. L. Keenleyside, *Memoirs of Hugh L. Keenleyside, Hammer the Golden Day* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1981), 255-6. Marler was also a strong supporter of the British knighthood tradition, and later became Sir Herbert Marler; Mackenzie King strongly encouraged the abandonment of this practice for Canadian citizens.

8 As mentioned by Keenleyside, who writes: "By 1929 the passage of time or the prospect of diplomatic preferment, or both, had eroded these views." Keenleyside, *Memoirs*, 253.

9 Keenleyside, *Memoirs*, 253.

10 Including Keenleyside, who holds a PhD.

11 Alan Gowans, *Styles and Types of North American Architecture, Social Function and Cultural Expression* (New York: Harper Collins, 1992), 221.

12 Harold Kalman, *A History of Canadian Architecture* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 1994), 2:740.

13 Kenneth Rea was trained in the Beaux-Arts tradition. He started his architectural career as a apprentice in the office of A.F. Dunlop in Montreal in 1894. About 1900, he went to Boston and New York where he worked with the firm Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson, one of the leaders of the late phase of the Gothic Revival movement (see Rea's obituary, *Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada*, November 1941, p. 192). Rea was more inclined to design buildings in the medieval or Tudor styles, but, "clientele oblige," he also designed in the Classical Revival style favoured by Marler. He returned to Montreal in 1906, eventually joining the Royal Institute of British Architects about 1913. See Robert Lemire, dossier Kenneth G. Rea, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.

14 Wooden clapboarding of the type favoured for American mansions on the Eastern seashore was used, instead of stone as observed on the Redpath Crescent house.

15 "The Canadian Legation in Japan," National Archives of Canada [NA], RG 25, vol. 2611.

16 The initial compound included the official residence, the chancery, the local staff quarters, the guard house, and a garage. Only the residence is analyzed here.

17 Marler was reimbursed in 1935. See "Public Works Estimates 1935-36," NA, RG 25, vol. 5269, file 8620-Y-E-40, pt. 1, and "Properties abroad owned by the Canadian Government," no date, NA, RG 25, vol. 8215, file 8591-D-40-pt. 1.

18 Marler speaks about himself at the third person.

19 "The Canadian Legation in Japan," 33.

20 In 1924, Raymond was named Honourary Consul of Czechoslovakia to Japan. He received several commissions from the diplomatic representatives. See *Antonin Raymond, An Autobiography* (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle, 1973), 116.

21 *Ibid.*, 24.

22 In his autobiography, Raymond wrote: "I was unhappy about the absurdities, banality and childishness of our efforts in the architectural part of the design, which principally consisted of poring over books in the library in search of suitable motifs and precedents for the design of the building as a whole and in all its details." *Ibid.*, 28.

23 *Ibid.*, 123.

24 NA, Richard Bedford Bennett Papers, vol. M-892, p. 16675.

25 Herbert Marler, "The Importance of our Foreign Relations," NA, RG 25, G-1, vol. 1538, file 150-J, pp. 6, 7.

26 Claude Bergeron, *Architecture du XXe siècle au Québec* (Montreal: Musée de la civilisation, Éditions du Méridien, 1990), 46.

27 Letter from Mackenzie King to Herbert Marler, 27 December 1933, NA, MG 26, J28, vol. 26.

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