Abstract

Commemorations are a critical window for exploring the social, political, and cultural trends of a specific time period. Over the past two centuries, the commemorative landscape of Ontario reaffirmed the inclusion/exclusion of particular racial groups. Intended as static markers to the past, monuments in particular visually demonstrated the boundaries of a community and acted as ongoing memorials to existing social structures. Using a specific type of iconography and visual language, the creators of monuments imbued the physical markers of stone and bronze with racialized meanings. As builders were connected with their own time periods and social contexts, the ideas behind these commemorations shifted. Nonetheless, creators were intent on producing a memorial that educated present and future generations on the boundaries of their “imagined communities.” This dissertation considers the carefully chosen iconographies of Ontario’s monuments and how visual symbolism was attached to historical memory. Through the examination of five case studies, this dissertation examines the shifting commemorative landscape of Ontario and how memorials were used to mark the boundaries of communities. By integrating the visual analysis of monuments and related images, it bridges a methodological and theoretical gap between history and art history. This dissertation opens an important dialogue between these fields of study and demonstrates how monuments themselves are critical “documents” of the past.
Acknowledgements

This thesis is dedicated to the most inspirational women in my life: your hard work, determination, independence and fierce spirits have driven me every step of the way. For Johanna Bos (Oma): your courageous life has always been an incredible story of endurance. As I pushed to finish this degree, I remembered the opportunities you were denied and the dreams you could not follow. From the beginning you were always my biggest supporter and talked me through so many problems. I would have never accomplished anything if it was not for your love and constant support. For Carol Ericson: you were one of my strongest believers long before I even knew my own capabilities. Your knowledge and love of education imprinted me with a desire to constantly do more. For June Sterling: I have you to thank for the drive to succeed and live my own dreams independently. You taught me to be strong, level-headed, and determined to finish everything I started. You took me to the library and began this love-affair that I have with the written word. Your support (including driving me to probably hundreds of historic sites, plaques, and monuments) helped push me through to the end of this journey. To these three inspirational souls: I will continue to reach higher and higher for all of you.

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I acknowledge that this thesis was written on the unceded lands of the Anishinaabe peoples. Various parts of this thesis were researched on the ancestral lands of numerous other First Nations peoples throughout the area of what is now known as southern Ontario.
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BNA</td>
<td>British North America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAD</td>
<td>Canadian Dollars ($)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMS</td>
<td>His/Her Majesty’s Ship</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSMBC</td>
<td>Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>Library and Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPP</td>
<td>Member of Provincial Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPS</td>
<td>National Parks Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>OHS</td>
<td>Ontario Historical Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>RG</td>
<td>Record Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UEL</td>
<td>United Empire Loyalist(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UELA</td>
<td>United Empire Loyalist Association</td>
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<td>USD</td>
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Chapter 1: Introduction: Braiding Commemoration, Visual Analysis, and Race

The peoples who had settled in Canada sprang from races which had always stood out strongly for national identity… Our National heart was created and stirred in this century-old war, and the heartbeats have ever become stronger down to this day, and we now look back through the mists of one hundred years to Sir Isaac Brock as the first true source of national sentiment which fertilized our country, and stamped it as British and Canadian forever.¹

Monuments built on the occasion of a commemorative event stand as an everlasting symbol of triumph and domination. They can represent the heroic deeds of an individual; the success of a political system; the immigration and settlement of people; the values of a nation. Ideal peoples and their traits are commemorated within an “imagined community,”² while systematically excluding “Others”³ and pushing their values to the margins. With a sense of permanence, the hard stone and bronze of monuments forever alter the landscape and the memories of citizens. Angus Claude Macdonell captured the power of commemoration in his 1912 speech at the site of Ontario’s grandest memorial to date. Addressing the crowd gathered in the shadow of Brock’s mighty column at Queenston Heights, Macdonell remarked on the memory of the hero. The Major General’s deeds were not simply inspiration for generations of present and future citizens,

¹ Speech of Mr. Angus Claude Macdonell, in: Alexander Fraser (ed.), Brock Centenary 1812-1912: Account of the Celebration at Queenston Heights, Ontario, on the 12th October 1912 (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1913), 50.
² The concept of the “imagined community” was developed by Benedict Anderson to describe the unifying influences of nationalism. People from a nation (or “community”) may be separated by great geographic distances and never meet, but they are connected by abstract notions or values. The resulting “imagined community” artificially connects these otherwise unrelated people (Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, rev. ed. (New York: Verso, 2006)).
³ The “Other” is used to refer to the opposite of the “norm”. Theorized extensively by sociologists, the “Other” is a label applied to people (and their values and traits) that do not fit within the defined standard of the dominant group. The “Other” is often used to refer to non-white races and colonial subjects. For more on Otherness and race, specifically, see: Stuart Hall (ed.), Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices (London: SAGE Publications, 1997); Edward W. Said, Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient Anniversary Edition (New York: Vintage Books, 2014); Edward W. Said, Culture and Imperialism (New York: Vintage Books, 1994); Zygmunt Bauman, Modernity and Ambivalence (London: Polity, 1993); W.J.T. Mitchell, Seeing Through Race (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012).
but rather Brock’s commemoration was emblematic of Canada’s “national heart.” The gleaming shaft, carved with symbols of Classical greatness, represented the virile (white) races that forever stamped the landscape as British and Canadian. One hundred years after his death and a half-century after the column was erected, Sir Isaac Brock’s memory was re-invigorated with new meanings. At the centennial of his death, it was necessary to re-shape Brock as an everlasting yet ever-changing symbol of British and white dominance. The permanent triumphal column continued to dominate the landscape and was the perfect visual emblem for abstract national values. The seemingly timeless iconography connected selected members of the “imagined community” under a common imperial ideology.

Commemorations are intended to outlast their creators. They are designed to (re)construct the memory of an individual or narrative, as seen through the eyes of their creators. Those with social and/or political power often decide how these memories are shaped, but the process is not simply “top-down.” Individuals and specific groups have their own interpretations of commemorations, and especially monuments. As works of art, monuments invite the viewer to engage with the physical form. People are encouraged to discover their own meanings for the memorials and consider the works of art as they relate to their personal experiences. In fact, monuments rely on the interaction between built forms and interpretations of the viewing public. Nonetheless, using repeated symbols and visual forms (and textual aids, such as plaques), the meanings of monuments can still be directed in limiting ways. Although interpretations by individuals are encouraged (and even necessary for the continued relevance of

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4 This dissertation uses the terms “monuments” and “memorials” interchangeably to refer to the entire physical commemoration. While there is some artistic difference to these terms, they both refer to the entirety of the commemoration rather than specific parts. The term “statue” is used specifically to refer to the figurative artistic elements of the commemoration and do not usually include other related pieces (such as the pedestal, plaques, landscaping, etc.).

the commemoration), monuments are intended by their creators to have limited meanings. As Ontario and its elites were attempting to define the identity of the province, monuments were erected to its “founders” and defenders. These individuals and narratives shaped who belonged and who was excluded, and specifically what races were welcomed within the “imagined community” and what “Others” were systematically shut out.

The study of commemorations rarely considers the biography of the figure; rather, monuments are a gateway into understanding who directed the commemoration. Memorials to the past are critical for analyzing the goals and intentions of a particular people during a specific period. Studying what they chose to commemorate and how reveals the contemporary values they were looking to uphold. The shifting memory of historical figures and narratives demonstrates how the past is socially constructed by people of the present. Scholars and writers, social and political elites, and leaders of particular groups all influence how the past is remembered. They often use “history” in order to legitimize present social orders or (re)create cultural definitions. This dissertation analyzes commemorations that were influential in drawing Ontario’s racial boundaries. For the province’s social and political elites, the past served as a demonstration of their dominance and a call for its continuance in the future. For those attempting to define race, constructed collective memories limited who was included in the systems of power and who was excluded. Recognizing specific narratives from the past also emphasized particular traits and their supposed connections to racial groups. Commemoration was another tool at the disposal of elites who sought to create a white imperial nation. For many of those in power historical memory was not limited to defining the province; they were often concerned with much broader national and even international definitions. Regardless of the monument’s scale, vernacular or local commemorations were infused with global significance.
Historians began to embark on studies of commemorations over the past few decades. Every year, more research on different commemorations emerges in the historical field and the complexity of these studies is pushed further. However, very few studies actively engage with visual analysis in order to uncover the additional layers of meaning in commemorations. Many scholars extensively use speeches, pageants, parades, newspaper reports, correspondences, and other written or verbal sources. These documents enable them to tell the stories of commemorations and uncover the intended narratives and meanings of memorializations.

However, few scholars within the field of history use the monuments themselves as a rich source of information. By employing the methodology of visual analysis, this dissertation demonstrates that monuments and their accompanying images are not simply physical translations of memory; rather, the visual analysis of monuments offers new insights that cannot be found in other sources. By using the methodology of visual analysis, combined with the consideration of written sources, this dissertation traces the history of defining “race” in Ontario. I contend that racial definitions of who is included and excluded from the boundaries of the nation are visually displayed in commemorative monuments across the province. Monuments are an ideal method by which to define who is part of an “imagined community”, and specifically to delineate what values and traits are included within those borders.

This dissertation covers over 150 years of commemorative history in Ontario. The very wide historical scope of this project was chosen to demonstrate the changes in the province’s commemorative landscape. The selection of case studies from four key periods reveals how those in the present utilized narratives of the past in order to further their own political and social goals. While commemorators were certainly influenced by their own periods and changes within the province, there are also a number of similarities between the diverse case studies. In each
case study, organizers were concerned with the physical design of the monument; they were fixated on creating a representation that would outlast the present generation and speak to the future. Commemorators from each case study used the design of the monument in order to situate Ontario’s racial groups. Whiteness, Indigeneity, and “Otherness” were all components in each design. An underlying reason for each commemoration was to define the racial boundaries of Ontario, often positioning whiteness (and specifically Britishness) at the helm of power. Nonetheless, the case studies reveal that there is always fluidity in artistic works, even public monuments; meanings are shifted, interpretations change, and marginalized groups often use the spectacle to negotiate their own precarious positions.

The case studies chosen for this project trace the history of commemoration in Ontario through its formative years. The 150-year timeline reveals that commemorators of all eras are influenced by the period in which they operate; current events, concerns about citizenship and the nation, national and local politics, and even contemporary iconographies impacted their decisions. The reason for erecting commemorations and who was ultimately remembered changed over time, but there were numerous constants. In order to create monuments for present and future generations, commemorators ultimately turned to design and how the final monument would look. Creating the most readable, but also most symbolic, design within their budgetary constraints was the goal of each memorial project. To do this, organizers used their own knowledge of “representation” in order to select the best design amongst a variety of artistic interpretations. With contemporary concerns paramount in their minds, commemorators relied on familiar iconographies to create a memorial that would outlast their generation. These iconographies were based on European “ways of seeing” and representing the world, artistic modes constantly reshaped through the gaze of colonialism. In their attempt to delineate local
history, and ultimately the character of the Canadian nation, commemorators imprinted the landscape with artistic representations of “who” and “what” defined Canada.

Commemorations

Academic writings on commemoration and the (re)production of historical memory reveal the array of intended meanings assigned by those in power. They also reveal, however, that historical commemorations are not simply a “top-down” process; rather, marginalized “Others” are often able to negotiate their own voices in stories of the past. The result is often a tangled mix of intentions, interpretations, and numerous negotiations. Nonetheless, it is often the goal of commemorators to create and inspire “collective memories” amongst diverse populations spread over geographical distances. In order to position this dissertation within a larger theoretical framework, it is important to outline other scholarship in the field of commemoration and specifically how the memory of the past is used to foster connections to a particular place in the present.

The five case studies examined in this dissertation were all created with underlying sentiments of nationalism. In the case of Sir Isaac Brock’s column, the rising shaft over the colonial landscape represented triumph in war. Visitors were meant to feel awe at the power of the victory, but also a connectedness with other citizens. Similarly, John Graves Simcoe and the United Empire Loyalists (UELs) were intended to inspire pride in white British/Canadian institutions. Their presence in the middle of growing Canadian cities at the turn of the twentieth century was a reminder to both natives and newcomers that Canada was founded on “civilized” principles from the British Empire. All the commemorations examined in this dissertation also asserted the superiority of these British connections. In particular, commemorators often turned to
Figure 1.1: Brittney Anne Bos. Composite Photograph (left to right). “Major General Sir Isaac Brock’s Monument at Queenston,” May 2012; “Joseph Brant’s Monument at Brantford,” April 2011; “John Graves Simcoe’s Monument at Toronto,” October 2011.

Figure 1.2: Brittney Anne Bos. Composite Photograph (left to right). “John Graves Simcoe Monument at Toronto.” October 2011; “United Empire Loyalist Monument at Hamilton.” April 2011; “International Memorial to the Underground Railroad at Windsor.” May 2014.
comparisons with the United States of America in order to express British distinctiveness. The historic figures of Sir Isaac Brock, Joseph Brant, and John Graves Simcoe fought American foes and ultimately triumphed in the founding of British institutions. According to the commemorative narrative, both the UELs and the Underground Railroad users were escaping the tyranny of American Republicanism in favour of the tolerant British Crown. Regardless of the precise historical context, each case study examined in this dissertation placed the United States in direct opposition to Canadian/British institutions and ideologies. The shared past of Canada is positioned as a story of “opposition” to its southern neighbours. Commemoration was often a tool for nationalists to “prove” the triumph of one people over another and advocate for their own superiority.

The formation of collective memories is critical in the development of nationalism. The writings of Benedict Anderson, Paul Connerton, and Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, have informed commemorative scholars for the past few decades. These three critical texts argue that collective consciousness is shaped by (re)creating connections to a supposedly shared past. In his ground-breaking text, Benedict Anderson coined the term “imagined communities” to describe the artificial connections fostered by nationalism.  

Monuments and other historical commemorations are one of the primary methods to solidify these links and inspire a sense of belonging for geographically diverse populations. This process is extensively examined and theorized by Paul Connerton. He proves that present experiences, particularly of individuals within a collective, are influenced by “history” which is used to legitimize the present social order. In order to inform the collective of their “shared” past, elites often create rituals or traditions that bring contemporary populations together. In their edited text, Eric Hobsbawm and

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6 Anderson.
Terence Ranger explore the creation of “invented traditions.” According to Hobsbawm and Ranger, these traditions are constructed in the present in order to “inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.” These three influential discussions of how historical narratives are used in the present in order to mold the contemporary collective have framed numerous other writings on the subject.

This dissertation adds to the collection of case studies that demonstrates and expands the theoretical conclusions of these three foundational texts. The building of monuments is a physical tool used in the construction of “imagined communities.” The commemorative ceremonies surrounding these memorials are a form of ritual that brings populations together and connects them to their “shared past.” The monuments for each case study in this dissertation engage in the process of defining who is part of the nation and who is excluded. In the case of Joseph Brant, the memory of the Six Nations chief was narrowly defined within the discourse of the “good Indian.” The commemorative ceremony, through its inclusion of other “good Indians” and exclusion of “bad Indians,” ritualized the presence of certain Indigenous peoples while excluding others. Over forty years later, the United Empire Loyalist monument promoted a narrow definition of early Upper Canadian immigrants. The limited story of the Loyalists at this commemoration ignored many others from the past who did not fit the narrow mold, but also sought to exclude present non-British immigrants as well. As the commemorations in these case studies became myth, the collective memory of the nation was shaped in particular ways to include and exclude certain groups and especially the values they represented. This dissertation adds to the growing collection of case studies that examine how “imagined communities” are created and fostered through commemorations.

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Over time, other scholars have also used the conclusions of these early writers to inform their own analyses and expand much of the initial conclusions. Alan Gordon in particular considers the tangled commemorative landscape of Quebec. His writings challenge the idea of the singular elite that directs all commemorative activities. Nonetheless, his examples reinforce the idea that the “collective” uses the past in order to promote their own interests. For example, Gordon focuses on the commemoration of Jacques Cartier in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He reveals that competing groups (specifically Catholic nationalists and Anglophone elites) shaped their own versions of Cartier’s historical narrative and still managed to reach their corresponding collectives. Similar studies have been completed in the United States. In his consideration of American collective memory, John Bodnar argues that public memory actually emerges from the intersection of the “official” and the “vernacular.” He defines the “vernacular” as a collection of specialized interests, local groups, minorities, and competing voices. In different case studies completed by authors in the United States, it is revealed that immigrant and minority communities do contribute to commemorations directed by white elites.

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9 Alan Gordon, *The Hero and the Historian* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010); Alan Gordon, *Making Public Pasts: The Contested Terrain of Montreal’s Public Memories, 1891-1930* (Montreal, Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001); Alan Gordon, “Heroes, History and Two Nationalisms: Jacques Cartier,” *Canadian Historical Review* 10 (1999): 81-102. In these three texts, Gordon demonstrates that there were numerous competing interests in the Quebec commemorative landscape. Anglophone and Francophone groups were vying for control (particularly in Montreal) while competing visions of nationalism and even religion were also present in many ceremonies.

10 Gordon, *The Hero and the Historian*.


Often, the process is a complex negotiation whereby minority voices, informed by local circumstances, were negotiated into the margins of collective memory.\footnote{Bodnar, “Public Memory in An American City”, 78-83. For more, see: Paul Shackel, \textit{Memory in Black and White: Race, Commemoration and the Post-Bellum Landscape} (Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 2002); Robert Cook, \textit{Troubled Commemoration: the American Civil War Centennial, 1961-1965} (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007); Kirk Savage, \textit{Monument Wars: Washington D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).}

Representing the collective was largely up to the artists selected for the projects. Commemorative boards and designers alike were influenced by a long history of European “ways of seeing.”\footnote{“Ways of seeing” refers to how an image is constructed depending on who is making the image. Related to the “gaze”, the elements of an image and its boundaries are determined by the artist and then negotiated with the viewer. In terms of race, “ways of seeing” influences how the racial identity of an individual is constructed and subsequently interpreted.} The monumental art form itself is a Western concept, and expanding European nations fueled its spread into the modern period. In addition to the artistic influences, the commemorative boards were predominantly white elites. In all cases except for the Underground Railroad monument, the chair of the boards was a white community leader.\footnote{Although the Chair and most of the members of the UGRR committee were not white, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board was heavily involved in some aspects of the commemoration, including the plaque affixed to the front of the monument.} Their decisions about who to commemorate and how to represent those people and ideas distinctly imprinted the landscape with the white gaze. A European method of commemorating the past, designed by primarily white artists, has come to dominate the Ontario commemorative landscape. Nonetheless, these representations did leave some room for flexibility by “Other” populations.

Some case studies in Canada highlight the prevalence of these negotiations. For example, Robert Cupido considers the Diamond Jubilee in Winnipeg and specifically the place of newcomers in the British celebration. Originally intended as an assimilative event, immigrant groups used the opportunity of the grand spectacle to promote their own interests.\footnote{Robert Cupido, “Appropriating the Past: Pageants, Politics and the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation,” \textit{Journal of the Canadian Historical Association} 9 (1998): 155-186.}
of dissenting voices that were not part of the elite is an integral part of this dissertation’s analysis. Although their narratives are not always present in the “official” commemorations and documentation of these events, there often is a limited record of marginalized groups and their participation. Using existing documentation of the commemorative process and resulting ceremonies often continues to silence marginalized voices that were an integral part of the historical memory. Therefore, researchers must reconsider their methodology and possibilities for uncovering these silences.

Monuments themselves are a very rich source for revealing these dissenting voices. At times, these alternate versions of history are integrated into the monument’s design. For example, Victoria Gallagher and Margaret LaWare examine the monument to Joe Louis in the centre of Detroit. Designed as a giant fist, the monument visually embodies Black resistance, but simultaneously the perceived “threat” of Black power to the white citizens of Detroit. Intended as a complex symbol in a racially divided city, the Louis monument iconographically integrates multiple narratives.\(^\text{17}\) Such monuments are rare, however, especially prior to the mid twentieth century. In other instances, it is the interpretation of the monuments that can lead to the discovery of alternative voices. In his study of the George Etienne Cartier Monument in Montreal, Brian Osborne uncovers the presence of vernacular and local uses of the “official” monument.\(^\text{18}\) However, for some commemorators, adaptability could lead to the questioning of their power. As a result, other monuments were specifically designed to silence dissenting voices. Kirk Savage traces Black history as represented in post-Civil War era monuments.


Particularly in the South, Savage observes a deliberate silencing of counter-narratives by promoting specific individuals (notably, General Robert Lee). Nonetheless, static meanings attached to permanent monuments are simply not sustainable. Multiple voices inevitably enter the narrative and the dominant stories of the past are quickly supplemented with a multiplicity of rememberings.

In some studies selected for this dissertation, multiple and diverse voices entered the dialogue of commemoration. For the monument to Sir Isaac Brock, different Indigenous groups used the occasion of the commemoration to advocate for their own position within a newly developing “Canada.” Similarly, at the Joseph Brant ceremonies, the Six Nations argued for treaty and voting rights, proclaiming a spot within Canada’s shared past. Representations of the Six Nations themselves were even included on the monument, adding permanence to their perspectives. Despite these instances of early participation, dissenting voices were nearly completely silenced by the time of John Graves Simcoe and the United Empire Loyalist monuments. Indigenous speakers were not invited, nor were the new immigrant groups that supposedly threatened the social fabric of modern Ontario. Nearly a century later, however, dissenting voices did return. In the narrative of the Underground Railroad, Chair Andrea Moore advocated for recognition of Canada’s historic (and present) racism. Originally presented as a story of multicultural harmony, the Underground Railroad narrative was an opportunity for other voices to re-shape the “official” story. Whether intended by organizers or not, diverse voices are often attached to monuments and sometimes permeate the collective memory.

A number of scholars have turned to examining historical sites in order to consider the multiple voices in historical memory. Historic sites\(^{20}\) involve a complex relationship between history, memory, and landscape, and offer significant opportunities for inserting multiple perspectives. In some cases, the presence of numerous groups is increasingly acknowledged in interpretative programs. Particularly at “living history” sites, adding characters is a relatively simple method of inserting more voices.\(^{21}\) However, the presence of diverse groups at national historic sites is not often a straightforward process. Usually, a visitor’s own idealized version conflicts with the more diverse interpretative programs of the site. The general public often prefers to be entertained rather than educated.\(^{22}\) For example, in his specific study of slavery at American sites and museums, Eric Gable reveals that most visitors are unprepared for truthful representations of slavery. As a result, many issues (particularly miscegenation) are left out by interpreters in hopes of creating a more entertaining experience for white guests.\(^{23}\) Other sites try to add minority voices by setting aside a specific area for their interpretation. At Fort Battleford in Saskatchewan, early organizers hoped a separate “Native Museum” would compensate for a lack of First Nations interpretation. As a result, Indigenous stories were excluded from the main

\(^{20}\) “Historic Sites” is a designation often used to recognize sites that the government (local, provincial, federal, and other) has deemed significant. While monuments are not strictly “historical sites” they often commemorate historic individuals or places that are linked to specific sites. As such, this research considers the important discourse around historic sites and their interpretation, as they are closely related to other physical commemorations (such as monuments).


As observed in many of these case studies, simply adding diverse voices rarely changes the dominant narratives at historic sites.

The memory of historical individuals undergoes a similar process of (re)shaping as time passes. One of the most intriguing case studies in Canada is the changing meanings associated with Louis Riel. The commemoration of Riel transformed throughout the twentieth century from “anti-hero” to a symbol of Canada’s diversity. Riel was first used by Francophones as a symbol of resistance against Anglophone elites. Following the Second World War, Riel became a “hero” for the broader Canadian nation and was specifically used in anti-American campaigns. Jennifer Reid observes that his Metis background was not a primary feature of the narrative until the mid-twentieth century, when his “inbetweenness” was celebrated as an admirable feature of Canadian identity. During the same period, Riel’s new monument outside of the Legislature Buildings in Winnipeg was built to represent the dual role of Riel as both a victim of imperialism and a founder of the province. Other historic figures underwent a similar shaping and re-shaping of memory through the last two centuries. In many cases, the memory of these historic

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24 Walter Hildebrandt, Views from Fort Battleford: Constructed Visions of an Anglo-Canadian West (Regina: University of Regina, 1994).
27 Jennifer Reid, Louis Riel and the Creation of Modern Canada: Mythic Discourse and the Postcolonial State (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2008).
figures was tied to specific populations and definitive commemorative landscapes. As these studies demonstrate, the commemoration of historical figures undergo transformations in order to meet the needs of present generations. Not only are they (re)shaped by diverse groups, but are also ascribed new meanings as time passes.

Contrarily, monuments are often considered a permanent physical marker that cannot change over time. They appear static, physically connected to the same landscape forever. However, even the historical memory surrounding monuments changes over time to reflect contemporary needs. The shifting meanings of monuments are perhaps most vividly observed in South Africa, where commemorations from the Apartheid era remain in the contemporary landscape. Various scholars have deconstructed the symbolically rich Voortrekker monument built as a memorial to the Afrikaners. By using visual analysis, it becomes apparent that architecture was used to entrench particular myths about Afrikaner history and their rights to rule the land. The design choices of the monument were specifically intended to validate the past and mythologize Afrikaner control of the colonial landscape. In the post-Apartheid era, the meaning of the monument was required to undergo significant changes; it could no longer feasibly recognize the colonial underpinnings of Afrikaner nationalism. This transformation is part of the sanitization of the commemorative landscape in order to appeal to contemporary visitors. The Voortrekker monument is currently positioned as simply a tourist attraction, increasingly depoliticized from its Apartheid past. Nonetheless, the Voortrekker monument in

30 For examples, see: Colin Coates and Cecilia Morgan, Heroines and History: Representations of Madeleine de Vercheres and Laura Secord (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).
South Africa with its racist history continues to stand, its meaning changed to reflect contemporary needs and obscure historical racism.

The meanings of monuments change, but also the decisions of what to commemorate and how shift over time. The case studies in this dissertation reflect the transforming needs of Ontario’s social elites and their shifting focus over the past 150 years. Sir Isaac Brock was the ideal hero and perfect representative for colonial Upper Canada. He symbolized the triumph of Britishness and the conquering of American Republicanism. Joseph Brant was a military man in life, but his commemoration in 1886 focused primarily on his leadership and role of Chief. He was a social leader, the type of commemoration slowly replacing the grand military heroes of the century past. John Graves Simcoe was also representative of this shift. His military accomplishments were not mentioned in his Toronto commemoration. Instead, the main focus of his monument was the building of British institutions. He was among the growing number of political leaders being commemorated in Canada, particularly outside legislature buildings. The UELs, in contrast, were recognized as a group. This monument of anonymous individuals followed the dramatic changes to war memorials instigated by the First World War. Finally, the Underground Railroad was a perfect complement to the late twentieth-century Canadian value of “multiculturalism” and tolerance of diversity. Also a group monument to anonymous individuals, the Memorial recognized the role of everyday “heroes.” As commemorations react to their present context, the question arises of “who” determines that context.

Commemorations of the past are often directed by groups of elites. Whether they are government representatives, community leaders, or wealthy individuals, these elites use their social power in order to define collective memories. Often, people with power who assemble to direct remembrances of the past have their own political and ideological agendas. Communities
will often use the occasions of national or international celebrations in order to bring awareness to their own localities. For example, Norman Knowles argues that the UELs were a unifying symbol in the nineteenth century, but one that was ultimately (re)shaped to suit the needs of different communities. Similarly, H.V. Nelles uncovers the rich variety of groups involved in the Quebec tercentenary, each with their own (often competing) agendas. By untangling the various events and spectacles of the commemoration, Nelles reveals the complexity of commemorative celebrations by determining exactly “who” controls collective memory. Although groups of elites may have a similar agenda (often maintaining their own social order and positions of power) historical commemorations are ultimately shaped by the localities in which they are placed. It is often a complex negotiation of local, provincial, national and even international interests that ultimately direct a commemoration.

Narratives of the past are useful tools to inspire collective loyalty, but more importantly to legitimize current structures of power. By turning to the past as an idealized example, the organizers of commemorations justify their own social and/or political positions. Therefore, the selection of stories from the past is deliberate and narratives are (re)shaped in order to serve the intended purpose. National myths, in particular, control the content of narratives and how they are told in order to promote a specific set of values. Most of these historical narratives are passed along to the youth of the nation through the education system. Historically, the construction of education was a method by which to confirm the power of white (usually British)

33 For an example of local celebrations on an imperial scale, see: Ian Radforth, Royal Spectacle: The 1860 Visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada and the United States (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).
34 Norman Knowles, Inventing the Loyalist: The Ontario Loyalist Tradition and the Creation of Usable Pasts (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1997).
35 H.V. Nelles, The Art of Nation Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec’s Tercentenary (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).
36 Daniel Francis, National Dreams: Myth, Mystery and Canadian History (Vancouver: Arsenal, 1997).
elites and systematically exclude any other versions of the past. In particular, non-white narratives are often silenced in educational systems and the youth of the nation rarely hear alternatives from the perspective of “Other” races. In the contemporary period, these stories are often left out in order to avoid uncomfortable relationships between racism in the past and current national values.

One of the inspirations for commemorators is the belief that their memorial will live forever. As social memory fades, collective memory is developed in order to remember an event that was outside anyone’s living experience. Commemorations are a method by which to reach out to these future generations. All of the commemorators for the five case studies explored in this dissertation were concerned with their descendants. At each unveiling ceremony, speakers brought up these future generations and how the next wave of Canadians could learn from the iconography of the monument. None of the speakers recognized that collective memory is (re)shaped by each subsequent generation, but instead saw their memorial as having static and universal meanings. One of the primary goals in each case study was to leave a reminder of the past, but also a memory of that particular present.

**Memory, Landscapes and Colonialism**

To study the commemoration of the past, it is necessary to engage with theoretical discussions about memory and particularly how collectives construct their “shared” narratives. “Collective memory” or “historical memory” refers to how specific groups or societies (re)tell stories of their

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past, often to promote social order and unison. Primarily historians, sociologists, and political scientists have studied this process to show how those in power use the past in order to legitimize their positions in the present. In the first half of the twentieth century, Maurice Halbwachs produced a seminal text on the development of collective memory. In particular, Halbwachs explores how an individual’s own memories are transformed when influenced by collective memory. He argues that selective re-tellings of the past by the collective (re)shape an individual’s recollection and they eventually forget the previous version.\textsuperscript{40} “Forgetting” particular parts of the past has a significant impact on individuals and societies, especially in the formation of nationalism and associated values. When attempting to establish the memorial boundaries of a nation, “forgetting” is a critical tool for defining who and what values are parts of the collective.

Thus, the relationship between “history” and “memory” is an important consideration for commemoration scholars. Geoffrey Cubitt offers an essential distinction. He argues that social memory is the process through which the knowledge of the past is developed and sustained within a society.\textsuperscript{41} Cubitt contends that history is a part of social memory; it engages with individual memories and specifically refers to the discipline of studying and furthering knowledge of the past.\textsuperscript{42} Commemoration is very closely linked to social memory, often the physical manifestation of collective rememberings of the past. However, many individual commemorators blur the boundaries of commemoration and the intellectual discipline of history. Nonetheless, Cubitt argues that the past is a construction based on memories (both individual and collective) that seek to create a singular definition of what “happened.” He further questions if

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{41} Geoffrey Cubitt, \textit{History and Memory}, rev. ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 15.
  \item \textsuperscript{42} Ibid, 26.
\end{itemize}
the past can be detangled from memory, or if the past wholly depends on the present for its existence. In particular, the commemoration of the past reveals significant details about the ideological, social, and political systems of that particular period. Determining exactly what people remembered and why is a critical part of historical memory research.

The collective memory of a particular group also cannot be divorced from its specific location. In fact, many memories are intricately tied to “landscape.” This term refers to “a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing, structuring or symbolising surroundings.” Theorized by sociologists, geographers, historians, art historians, and other multi-disciplinary fields, landscape is used to refer to the cultural meanings of a particular place. It considers what place means, and specifically how these meanings are imposed or constructed upon a specific area. In his seminal text on the subject, Daniel Cosgrove defines landscape as the active engagement of a human subject with the material object: “…landscape is a social product, the consequence of a collective human transformation of nature.” Barbara Bender also argues that landscape is not a fixed or unchanging concept; rather, landscape is informed by a variety of factors, including the identity of the viewer, the context in which it is considered, the social conditions, institutions that construct meanings, etc. According to Bender, it is critical to consider the alternate readings of landscape in order to uncover “Other” stories that are often left out of popular imaginings. In addition, Pierre Nora identifies “lieux de memoires”, sites or realms of memory. These are physical and imaginary places where the more abstract memories of a society or group are embodied or displayed. Nora identifies that most of these “realms” are material, symbolic, and functional; these sites are not only physical displays, but come to “act”

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43 Ibid., 27.
as the memory themselves. Monuments are prime examples of the “realms” that Nora describes. Through the act of interpretation, humans transform the landscape and give it meaning. This process is particularly significant when paired with historical memory.

The precise environment in which memories are passed along to individuals further complicates the concept of “collective memory.” The colonial environment in particular demonstrates how memory involves a complex layering of identities. A comparative analysis across colonial encounters aids in the understanding of how social memory is impacted by colonialism and the specific local environment. The grand narrative of white settlers “discovering” the land is an important part of many colonial environments and their accompanying history. Such narratives not only silence the experiences of Indigenous populations, but these stories also uphold colonial practices in the present. Social memory in settler societies is a product of colonialism. Therefore, citizens of a settler society are bound together by “colonial memory.” The production of social memory in Canada is informed by its past (and present) colonialism. Memories of the nation cannot be separated from the settler society that produces them.

Within the colonial environment, the ascribed meanings of landscapes are tangled with colonial memories and foreign impositions on the land. Landscapes are a valuable “document” of colonialism and reveal the often hidden power structures holding up colonial elites. The meaning of landscapes is constructed, often by those in power, therefore offering a critical

48 Annie Coombes, Rethinking Settler Colonialism: History and Memory in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).
50 Chris Healy, From the Ruins of Colonialism: History as Social Memory (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
window into power relationships. The Canadian landscape is both gendered and racialized in order to aid the colonial project. Similar inscriptions were later applied to make the landscape more appealing for tourism, particularly white, middle-class men. The landscape of the Canadian wilderness is imbued with particular meanings in order to reflect nationalistic concerns of the period. When coupled with history, colonial landscapes are (re)shaped in order to confirm and legitimize the power of the ruling elite.

Every commemoration examined in this dissertation is part of Canada’s colonial memory. Each case study engages with the colonial environment and relies on the white European domination of Canada’s landscape. Through the sanitization of the colonial experience, each case study also effectively erases the presence of many Indigenous peoples. In many of the case studies, historical “forgetting” is a key component in the stories. For example, the displacement of Indigenous peoples is not present in the Simcoe or Loyalist story. The continued colonialism in Canada is not a feature in the “multicultural” vision of the Underground Railroad. Both Brock and Brant’s monument recognize the roles of the “good Indian” in the creation of Canada but exclude the horrors of colonial policies and genocide. The grand narratives of “founding” Ontario, which include the case studies of this dissertation, effectively erases any prior imprint on the landscape by Indigenous peoples. The continued commemoration of these stories, and the ongoing presence of the monuments that represent them, repeatedly silence Indigenous voices in the present and hide continued colonial policy.

**Iconography, Iconology, Visual Analysis**

In studying the colonial memories imposed on the Canadian landscape, the commemorations themselves are critical sources for analysis. Monuments can serve as important “documents”

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about the past, but their value reaches much deeper. Paul Connerton argues that commemorative ceremonies are “performative”; they involve a complex but ritualized performance of bodily habits. The collective performs these rituals together, reinforcing their “shared” connections through the landscape of commemoration. Connerton understands the commemorative ceremony as performative. However, I argue that monuments themselves are also performative. The people building, celebrating, maintaining, and interpreting monuments are all engaging in acts of performance. Specific types of monuments have been identified by other scholars as distinctly performative, encouraging the public to directly interact with the artistic creation. Although some monuments are constructed specifically for public interaction, all monuments seek some form of engagement. In this dissertation, I consider monuments invaluable documents for the historian. However, I also contend that these monuments (and the publics involved with them) are socially “performative.” They are not static representations of historic figures or narratives; rather, monuments (and their meanings) are constantly (re)interpreted by the public and the collective. The ideas symbolized in monuments and other commemorations (including ideas about race) are “performed” for the viewing public. Although they are constructed with fixed physical materials, the interpretation and interaction with the collective is fluid and changing.

Artists create visual representations in order to display a “thing”, usually accompanied by an idea. Artists are able to communicate ideas by using accepted and common “iconographies”. Iconography refers to the visual methods of portraying particular ideas, often through the use of symbols or icons. The study of iconography within the art history field (and other related

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53 Connerton, 5.
disciplines) traces the use of a particular representation (for example, the use of laurel to symbolize immortality after death). Iconology, as described by Erwin Panofsky, intends to identify the cultural meanings behind the production of a particular symbol (for example, why laurel was an important emblem and what broader national concerns it may reference). This dissertation engages in the study of iconology. It considers the meanings behind particular symbols and how these are intricately tied to both the figure being commemorated and those doing the remembering. Iconology also allows for the complex untangling of race, gender, social class, religion, etc., in the analysis of visual representations. Although this dissertation engages with the study of iconology, the term “iconography” is used throughout. Within this dissertation, the term “iconography” is used to describe the set of symbols or methods of representing a particular idea. Artists for the various monuments, as well as commemorators designing them, relied on established iconographies to create their designs: in order to communicate specific ideas, they used often-repeate symbols to stand in for more abstract concepts.

Artists did not design monuments away from other visual representations. Most Western artistic training within the last couple of centuries required a detailed knowledge of other artists and their methods of representing certain subjects. Commemorators were also influenced by other art: in their minds, a particular person or idea may only be represented a single way and their choice of “best design” was influenced by these pre-conceived notions. Interpretations are also informed by other representations. If one remembers that a particular idea was represented

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55 Daniels and Cosgrove, 2. This distinction made by Erwin Panofsky was to identify the difference between a basic layer of meaning (iconography), and a “deeper” understanding (iconology). The distinction is not always clear in scholarly writings on the subject, and most authors still employ iconography as a common theoretical framework to describe the consideration of symbols in visual representations.

56 “Representation” is an important term developed and theorized by a number of scholars in the past couple of decades. A key work in this area is Stuart Hall’s edited volume (Stuart Hall (ed.), Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices ed. Stuart Hall (London: Sage Publications, 2003). This research is also centered on the concept of “re-
using a certain symbol in another piece of artwork that influences how they interpret subsequent artistic productions. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the various visual influences that likely played a role in constructing a specific representation. A “visiography” is a term employed in this dissertation to describe the method of tracing visual iconographies in order to situate an individual work of art within a broader context. Similar to a historiography that outlines thematic relationships within academic literature on a specific subject, a visiography identifies major themes and iconographical trends. A visiography not only identifies common iconographies that may have influenced individual artists and commemorators, but also uncovers important symbols used within a specific historical context and its impact on interpretation.

**Methodology**

In order to introduce visual analysis into the traditional disciplinary confines of history, this dissertation developed a specific methodology. It engages with a variety of interpretive tools and multi-disciplinary methods in order to solidify a useful communication bridge between visual analysis and historical research. Specifically, it seeks to move beyond visual representations as simply illustrations within the history field. In his ground-breaking study, Raphael Samuel analyzes the significance of treating visual sources as a distinct piece of information. Often, Samuel argues, historians discount visual sources and do not adequately consider the depth of information they offer. In most history studies, visual sources are treated separately from written documents. Samuel contends that this practice limits our understanding of the past. Instead, he proposes that images and written documents be used in conjunction in order to fill missing gaps. He identifies the combination of both types of sources as a key methodology in discovering

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silences in the historic record. Opening the communication between the study of commemoration in history and the artistic deconstructive analysis of monuments is a key contribution of this dissertation. Both areas of study benefit from a multi-disciplined methodology that compares the historical and cultural circumstances with its expression in physical and visual forms.

In order to accurately develop a visual deconstructive approach, this dissertation turned to established methods originating from the art history discipline, which often cross with developments in cultural studies. W. J. T. Mitchell explores the relationship between various types of images and how people talk about them. His text interrogates the question of what an image is, but also considers the key differences between words and images. Mitchell also explores the use of images and their potential to represent things and ideas. Mitchell’s edited volume, *Art and the Public Sphere*, explores similar questions in relation to monuments and public art. He contends that commemorative statues are inscribed with political meanings that significantly challenge the relationship between art and its viewer. The deliberate construction of meanings, and especially the performances and ceremonies that revolve around a public monument, direct interpretation in a way rarely considered in the field of art history. Monuments are created to symbolize particular meanings, but their open situation in public squares and adherence to artistic interpretation complicates the intended symbols of creators. Understanding a public monument is not simply about interpreting its visual forms, but also about considering the complex rituals surrounding the piece of art. The relationship between visual and written/spoken forms is an important question for a number of disciplines, including history. The

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58 Ibid., 332.
61 W.J.T. Mitchell (ed.), *Art and the Public Sphere* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1993).
theoretical considerations by Mitchell guides how these images are interpreted in this dissertation, but also the meaning and importance of engaging in this practice. The development of a specific methodology in which to analyze monuments is one of the primary contributions of this dissertation. Within the traditional confines of the history discipline, visual source material is often treated in one of two ways: 1) as an illustration of a particular event or person, or 2) as a supplemental source that can add elements to the existing narrative. In this dissertation, I consider monuments as individual primary sources. On their own, monuments can yield considerable information about the commemoration; the physical forms of the monument, and their complementary written components, can be read as a “document”. As with other historical documents, there are three steps to this reading. First, the preliminary layer of “information gathering” reviews what the monument is about. This stage involves the discovery of basic elements, such as who/what is represented and how, what narrative components are employed, and what markers may be present (such as plaques, signatures, etc.). The second layer of reading the monument invokes analysis and interpretation. The viewer requires some background knowledge and tools in order to consider the “meaning” of the monument. This stage questions why the monument looks the way it does, is positioned where it is, includes/excludes certain elements, etc. The final stage of analysis evaluates its importance. This step considers the monument in its broader visiographical context, relationships with other related monuments, its connection to its time period, and its overall importance to the commemorative landscape.

I approached each case study in this dissertation using this methodology, and have presented the chapters employing this multi-layered approach. In each case, I have described the basic components of the monument and included a significant number of images to accompany
the first “information gathering” stage. Each chapter also outlines what the components mean, what the monument stands for, and how the individual symbols and iconographies are used to convey specific ideas. Finally, the chapters make definitive connections between the individual case studies and other monuments, the Ontario commemorative landscape, and especially the political/social context of the period in which it was built. Along with the pictures of the case study monuments, I used a number of related images to properly situate the visual analysis. I gathered examples of similar commemorations and other visual representations to demonstrate how and why a particular iconography is important. As a result, the images included in this dissertation are key documents and interpretative devices integrated within the broader historical analysis.

Although I analyzed visual sources (specifically the monuments and related images) with a specific methodology, I also included a number of written sources as well. In some of the case studies, I had access to the meeting minutes of committees where critical decisions were made. In other instances, I found correspondences about the commemoration. Both of these written sources were valuable troves of information, revealing considerable insight about the importance of these monumental projects. In most cases, the local press reported on the commemorative ceremonies and sometimes throughout the entire process. While newspapers certainly carry political and social biases, they were a critical source of information not only for context but also for the outline of the ceremonies. They often included valuable speech texts and comments from the committees. For some case studies I had access to the written design proposals from submitting artists. I used a combination of these various written sources in conjunction with the monument itself to reveal the multi-layered and tangled historical memory of Ontario.

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62 Unfortunately, I only had a small number of images to accompany these proposals and in most cases I was required to visualize precisely what the artist was describing.
In order to prove the argument of this dissertation and demonstrate the methodology, five illustrative case studies were chosen. A case study model offers a number of benefits for research. First, it allows the study to demonstrate similarities between individual cases. It creates a framework for comparison that situates specific examples within a broader historical and visiographical context. Second, case studies allow for the consideration of individual factors that influence each example. This model encourages the drawing of contrasts and differences that highlight local or vernacular conditions. Third, case studies allow for the coverage of a broader historical time period with the choice of representative examples. In this way, case studies offer the perfect opportunity to draw a timeline of development, while still recognizing the historical diversity of the examples. Finally, illustrative case studies necessitate a more in-depth consideration of a limited number of examples rather than the attempted coverage of entire sets. For these reasons, a case study methodology was the ideal selection for this project.\(^6\)

**The Case Studies**

A number of factors influenced the choice of these particular monuments. First, it was important that all five monuments contributed to the attempted definitions of Ontario’s racial history. Brock’s monument was an early statement about the presence of Britishness and the dominance of whiteness; the monuments to Joseph Brant and the Underground Railroad are both very rare examples of non-white commemorations in Ontario; and the monuments to Simcoe and the Loyalists were specifically about defining whiteness during a period of uncertainty for the provincial elite. Many historical monuments in Ontario reference race; however, these five were specifically designed by commemorators with these questions/concerns at the fore. When selecting the case studies, I also specifically chose monuments that were emblematic of their

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\(^6\) The majority of studies on commemorations use a similar case study methodology. In the field of commemorative studies, most publications are edited volumes with individual case studies. Single authored books also tend to use this model in order to illustrate broader overarching themes.
time period. For example, the commemoration of Loyalists dominated Ontario’s landscape in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and therefore I chose to include two monuments to Loyalists. Similarly, “heroic” figures were the primary focus of nineteenth-century commemorators, Brock being the crowning example of this period. Each case study is distinctive in its own way, but clearly relates to other monuments and broader political/social rhetoric from the same period.

On a geographical level, the five case studies are closely related, but also diverse. All are located in the southern part of Ontario; aside from the Windsor monument, the rest of the case studies are located within a 100km radius of each other. Despite their proximity, the exact situations of the case studies are different. Two were constructed in large cities, one was built in the countryside on a former battlefield, another was constructed in a growing town, and the fifth was conceived on both sides of an international border. Each case study demonstrates the importance of not only national and provincial influences, but local ones as well. I decided to select monuments in Ontario due to that province’s special connection with “national” and imperial interests. In the period covered by this study, Ontario was quickly becoming recognized as the British/Anglophone cultural centre of Canada. I chose to focus my case studies on Ontario to avoid the complexities of cross-provincial comparisons. Throughout this dissertation, the terms “Canadian” and “national” are used extensively. Most commemorators saw their projects as holding much broader significance, even if they were only situated in Ontario. In most cases, organizers, committees, and artists were attempting to create their version of the Canadian nation

64 It was important to exclude monuments in Ottawa. Many of these monuments were supported and even exclusively sponsored by the federal government. While not atypical of other capitals around the world, the monuments situated in Ottawa are very distinct in comparison to other Ontario examples. Further investigation of government sponsored monuments and particularly the commemorative landscape of Ottawa would be an interesting avenue for further research.

65 However, this study would also be very worthwhile in other provinces, most notably on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. A specific research project would also be interesting in Quebec and/or other Francophone communities in Canada.
within their limited provincial context. All five projects were primarily local initiatives, but commemorators viewed their memorials as having national (and even international) significance.

In terms of design, all five case studies vary in size but are relatively similar in form. Aside from Brock’s column, the other four monuments are portrait statues depicting “realistic” likenesses of characters (some identified and some anonymous). No “abstract” monuments were chosen for the case studies, as their interpretation involves additional layers of analysis.

I also chose the monuments based on their funding models. I selected examples that were funded from a variety of sources in order to demonstrate how ideas of race were embedded in diversely sponsored monuments. Most of the examples were a combination of public and private sponsorship, but others were solely funded by individuals or groups. Notably, none of the monuments were exclusively publicly funded. An inclusion of diverse funding sources for the case studies was intended to demonstrate that not only government-sponsored monuments serve national interests. Along with diverse funding, I included case studies that used a variety of planning models. A single committee conceived the majority, one was a negotiation between various committees, and another was designed privately, without public consultation. The groups making up the organizing committees were intentionally diverse, but there were still numerous cross-appointments as Ontario’s social and political elite was closely aligned with these projects.

66 There are also very few examples of more “abstract” monuments in Ontario, particularly for the period defined by this dissertation. From about the 1950s onwards, some artists used more abstract visual forms to represent historic people or events. These types of monuments often require more discursive elements (such as plaques or other interpretation). It would be possible to visually analyze these monuments, but the process is more challenging, especially within the discipline of history confines and the parameters of this thesis.

67 Brock’s monument was almost exclusively private, but a small amount of public funds were provided; Brant’s monument was a combination of private and different governmental sources (municipal, county, Six Nation, and federal); Simcoe’s monument was largely different government sources (municipal and provincial) and private donations; the Loyalists was exclusively funded by one individual family (Stanley Mills and his family); and the Underground Railroad Monument was funded by a corporation, Detroit 300 (that received donations from Casino Windsor).
Chapter Outline

Chapter Two of this dissertation focuses on the monument to Sir Isaac Brock at Queenston Heights. This chapter considers the various monuments constructed to Brock following his death, but particularly examines the final column built in the 1850s. The commemoration of Sir Isaac Brock is a prime example of “hero-worship” that occupied the minds of social and political elites in Upper Canada and throughout the British Empire. The commemorators were fixated on constructing a grand column to his memory; however, early organizers were hampered by monetary troubles and design logistics. The triumphal column was the ideal iconography to represent the fallen hero. It was used throughout the British Empire as a monumental symbol of victory, recalling Classical examples. Attached with ideas of heroism, self-sacrifice, immortality, and triumph, the placement of a column in the Upper Canadian commemorative landscape was a bold statement. It represented the triumph of Britishness and whiteness, a symbol of conquer and dominance. Using meeting minutes and extensive correspondences, this chapter considers the long process of planning and building the memorial, alongside a detailed visual analysis of the monument in relation to other columns of the period. This chapter contends that Brock’s column was a symbol of British triumph and the ideal white “gentleman hero”, but still a negotiable and flexible symbol that changed with its audience.

Chapter Three examines another hero from the nineteenth century: Joseph Brant’s portrait statue in the centre of Brantford, finished in 1886. This chapter examines how the rhetoric of “hero” was applied to the Indigenous leader by his primarily white commemorators. In a period of increased assimilation and attempted control of Indigenous populations, Brant was the perfect example of the “good Indian.” His own heroic accomplishments appeared in the final commemoration, and particularly the grand monument; however, the rhetoric of the “good
Indian” was a critical component to his recognition. Paired with the “bad Indians” of the Northwest, Brant represented the possibilities of civilization and assimilation. Nonetheless, Six Nations involvement in the commemoration ensured that the memorial was also a recognition of Indigenous cultures and contributions. The physical form of the monument is a myriad of iconographical references to Indigenous peoples as seen through the artistic lens of white artists and commemorators. Combining the noble savage with the new nineteenth-century archetypical Indian, Brant was stripped of his personal identity and instead remembered as a symbolic representative of the “good Indian” in nineteenth-century Canada.

Chapter Four combines two different case studies related to the subject of the UELs in Ontario: the monument to John Graves Simcoe in Toronto from 1903, and the monument to the United Empire Loyalists in Hamilton of 1929. Both of these monuments were created during a period of emphasis on the Loyalist story. (Re)shaped throughout the nineteenth century, the Loyalist narrative was about resilience and strength, but also the establishment of superior British values in the “virgin” landscape and away from the corruption of American Republicanism. The monument to Simcoe was directed by the Ontario Historical Society as a representation of the Loyalist leader and white “founder” of Toronto. It was emblematic of the move to commemorate British political and social leaders, and generally followed the artistic conventions of the period. In contrast, the Loyalist Monument from 30 years later was special; it was a group statue intended to represent a narrative rather than individuals. It was a direct response to the growing number of First World War memorials that sought to recognize diverse and multiple experiences in a single commemoration. Both of these monuments were directly responding to iconographical developments of their period that sought to represent individuals in new ways. Nonetheless, both were also symbolic of the conservative intentions of Ontario’s
white elite to root their power in the past (and argue for its continuance in the present). Simcoe and the Loyalists were stories of white and British victory in the past that was directly responding to perceived threats in the present.

Chapter Five presents the final and most recent case study: the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad from 2001 built in Windsor and Detroit. This very unconventional transnational memorial spans the international border in response to the changing narrative of the Underground Railroad. This chapter traces the development of the historical memory, from the first commemoration by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board (HSMBC) in the 1920s, through the renewed bi-national discussions between Canada and the United States that culminated in the final monument of 2001. The Underground Railroad story was a perfect complement to the HSMBC’s new focus on “ethnocultural” history and multicultural experiences. Nonetheless, the HSMBC was not involved in the monument’s conception; rather, a group of various private and public stakeholders influenced the final innovative design. The monument represents a much different direction in commemoration that involves the cooperation of multiple groups, including previously marginalized voices. The final design of the monument recognizes this diversity, responding to the difficulty of creating a single monument for an entire narrative. In its unconventional international context, the Underground Railroad monument contributes to the construction of “transnational memory;” a construction of memory that reaches outside the confines of nationalist-based memorials.
Chapter 2: “Perfect Justice to the Character of the Late Lamented General”: Commemorating Sir Isaac Brock at Queenston Heights, 1812-1859

Figure 2.1: Brittney Anne Bos. “View of Brock’s Column on Queenston Heights.” Photograph. May 2012.

1 Letter from Robert Nichol to William Brock, March 17 1825, RG 5, A1, Volume 71, page 37699-37702, Civil Secretary’s Correspondence, Upper Canada Sundries, LAC.
Introduction: Worshipping the Hero in Upper Canada

The Niagara River carves through rocky cliffs and lush farmland, connecting the Great Lakes system in the central part of the continent. The River was a critical transportation link for the Indigenous peoples of the area for thousands of years, and many sites along the banks were spiritual places of gathering. The rushing water from the dramatic falls fascinated European adventurers from the early days of exploration. The fertile land and connected waterways made the Niagara region a perfect spot for European settlement. As international boundaries were drawn, the Niagara River became a contested border between two North American powers. It was eventually the battleground between these two nations, each looking to forge their own favourable position. It was a war for territory, but also a conflict of political and social systems. Decades after the battle, a tall gleaming column rose above the landscape. Its presence forever changed the Niagara River, dominating the picturesque escarpments. Visible for miles, the monument was a bold statement of triumph. It was a tribute not only to military victory, but to the power of political and social systems. The monument was intended as homage to the deeds of one man, Major General Sir Isaac Brock. However, the historical memory of Brock was shaped and forged, as the stones of the column were placed higher and higher into the heavens. His conquest and the rise of the grand column looming over the Niagara region was representative of Britain’s valiant conquest of the colonial landscape.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, elites in Great Britain directed massive commemoration projects throughout the far reaches of the Empire. As colonial victories around the globe mounted, so did the need to erect monuments in honour of these triumphs.²

² For more on commemorations in Britain and other parts of the Empire, see: Joan Coutu, Persuasion and Propaganda: Monuments and the Eighteenth-Century British Empire (Montreal, Kingston: McGill-Queen’s
Britain was not the only Western nation to engage in a surge of monument building; France was immersed in its own project of national memorialization and other European powers soon followed suit. With new ideas of nationhood emerging, elites turned to commemoration as an important vehicle for defining societies. Encouraged by Enlightenment thinkers, they turned to the Classical past for inspiration. Concurrently, artistic preferences shifted away from the frivolous excessiveness of the previous century and re-focused on the strong and clean lines of ancient Greece and Rome. Inspired by the ideas of Classicism, elites and artists came together to construct massive structures as tributes to national glory. As the borders of the Empire expanded, so too did the reach of monuments. Classicism was ideally suited to inspire loyalism in the colonial environment: symbolically, Greek and Roman iconography were linked to ideas of “civilization” and conveniently justified the conquering of the “uncivilized”. When the final cannons quieted over the battlefields in 1814, commemorating the British victory was a priority for the young colony.


6 Although it is greatly disputed by historians who “won” the War of 1812, the common British narrative asserted that Upper Canada was “saved” from American invasion. Focusing on this aspect of the victory, officials directed attention to the victories on the Upper Canadian battlefront and obscured many historical realities.
Throughout Europe during this period, the primary form of commemoration was a grand monument to the hero. Individual wars and battles were remembered through the deeds of great commanders that fought for their nation and the constructed values of their race. Many were recognized for their ultimate sacrifice and death on the battlefield, while others who survived the conflict were welcomed home with stately commemorations. Hero-worship swept the British Empire and soon extraordinary mortal deeds were acknowledged on an immortal scale. Iconography from religious memorials was already engrained within broader European culture and commemorators drew on these rituals in order to honour modern heroes. By emphasizing the deeds of the individual, commemorators could easily speak to any citizen and inspire similar feelings of self-sacrifice. Commemorations from this period were intended for educational purposes, an object lesson to teach the masses about the good deeds of their white heroes. However, these lessons were also intricately tied with “civilized” social and political values. By watching the spectacle of the memorial or visiting the glorious monument, citizens were expected to show reverence and ultimately follow the lead of the hero. Through commemorations, social and political elites were able to show their power, but it also facilitated the transfer of national and cultural values to the viewing public. Through these bold statements of collective memory, “civilized” subjects were embraced within the folds of the nation while “Others” were quickly excluded.

As monuments were erected on the British mainland, Upper Canada was slowly transforming into a more stable colony. After surviving the War of 1812 and asserting the continued presence of the British Crown in North America, elites were quick to recognize such

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7 Admiral Horatio Nelson was the most recognized hero of the Napoleonic Wars in Britain. Other local heroes were sometimes the subject of monuments, but the commemoration of Nelson reached across the nation and Empire.
an important opportunity. Through the hero of Major General Sir Isaac Brock, a man credited with many of the early victories in the region, Upper Canada could commemorate their success. It displayed the superiority of one people over another, but more importantly it was the triumph of British values over foreign ones. For officials of British origin, it was an opportunity for public anti-Americanism, proclamations of Parliamentary and monarchial superiority, and a justification of white colonial domination over Indigenous populations. The self-sacrifice of the heroic Brock was the perfect commemorative symbol; he was a man that fought for British interests and showed his fidelity to the Crown by sacrificing his life. He was an example for present and future generations, a man to emulate and follow without question. He was a representative of the ideal British white “gentleman hero”, and his own victories in the War of 1812 were symbolic victories of British masculinity and ultimately the British race. Sir Isaac Brock was the perfect “local” hero during a period of imperial “hero-worship”. Keeping with traditions, Upper Canada’s savior would be inaugurated with the immortal trappings of Classical antiquity.

The design of the monument was a critical question that plagued committees for decades. The foremost vision for many was the triumphal column, now a common representation in the motherland. It was a Classical symbol used for mortals who accomplished immortal feats; it raised the hero high into the clouds and acted as a defiant reminder of self-sacrifice. The

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9 Major General Sir Isaac Brock had not spent significant time in Canada before the Battle of Queenston Heights. Even though he was not “from” Upper Canada, Brock was memorialized as a local rather than a foreigner. This was a curious position but relatively common in the colonial environment.

10 Members of the initial committee expressed interest in the triumphal column as early as the 1820s. When the second memorial was planned in the 1840s, many organizers also preferred a column to represent the hero. The preference for a column is explored later in the chapter.
iconography of the column was shaped around the study of Classical antiquity and applied to contemporary British life.\textsuperscript{11} The column served as a physical marker of the hero himself, but also the ideas that he represented. In Upper Canada, the monument to Brock was an emblem of colonial victory and a marker of whiteness. As the shaft rose to the clouds high above the Niagara region, Brock’s memory came to represent the ideal white masculine hero that dominated his territory. As an agent of the Crown, Brock’s win over the landscape of Upper Canada was also the conquest of the untamed colonial environment. The eventual column marking the spot of his final battle was like a flagstaff waving in the wind of a newly “discovered” land. It was a marker not only of Brock’s resting place, but an emblem of white British imperial values and their permanent imprint on the landscape.

This chapter outlines the various commemorations of Sir Isaac Brock at Queenston Heights, with a specific focus on the current monument erected in 1853-1859. It opens with an analysis of column building and its connections with hero-worship in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain and throughout the Empire. Triumphal columns were one of the primary methods used to spread the values and ideals of the hero to the masses. This chapter then considers the early commemorations of Brock in Britain and Queenston, including the monument in St Paul’s Cathedral in London, the first and second funerals of Brock at Queenston, and the first tower in the same location. The first permanent marker to Brock’s heroism was destroyed in 1840 by an act of vandalism. Therefore, the next portion of the chapter summarizes the efforts to rebuild the monument, including fundraising campaigns, committee politics, and the first design

competition. Although a sketch was chosen in 1843, the committee was not ready to move forward with the monument. The next section analyzes the revival of the committee and particularly the renewed discussions about design. The following portion of the chapter outlines the results of this design competition and connects the new monument with the iconography of Classicism. The combination of Classical and contemporary elements connected the heroism of Brock to great deeds of the ancient past while still remaining relevant to a nineteenth-century audience. Finally, this chapter considers the cornerstone event and the inaugurations of 1853 and 1859.

**Columns to Commemorate the Hero**

The monument to Sir Isaac Brock at Queenston Heights has important visual and ideological relationships with other commemorations, particularly those in Canada and Great Britain. Brock’s monument conforms to common representations of the white British “gentleman hero” of the nineteenth century. During this period, the monumental creation of a triumphal column was directly tied to ideas of heroism, Britishness, and white masculinity. These monuments, drawing on Classical examples, portrayed ideas of masculine military heroism intended as an example for other citizens to emulate. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries witnessed a dramatic increase in the number and scale of commemorations throughout Europe and Great Britain. Aligning individuals with “nations” was a growing task for Europe’s elite. Enlightenment thinkers writing in French, English, and German were spreading new ideas about the “nation” and the people within it. As political and social landscapes shifted, leaders sought

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new ways to inspire nationalism amongst the general public. One of the easiest methods to reach all citizens was through commissioning large-scale monuments. By focusing on the image of the hero, commemorators were able to showcase a mortal human, with the undertones of a religious martyrdom. Already familiar with Christian visual iconography, the resulting image of the lofty self-sacrificing, noble hero resonated with the general public. In particular, as Empires expanded and conquered new lands, commemorations symbolized the triumph of white institutions.

Supplemented with the arrival of Christianity, these new grand monuments reminded non-white colonial subjects of their inferiority. Commemorations were a method of uniting those adhering to British values around the world, while systematically excluding “Others” from its boundaries.

Elites throughout Western Europe were concerned with establishing “national values” that could unite their people, but also representing them on a national and international level. As the Empire continued to expand and more lands were occupied, the definition of “Britishness” was of particular importance. National values and characteristics, soon to be expanded to international imperial territories, were necessary for justifying cultural dominance and colonial practices. Ideal Britishness was intricately tied to ideas of “civilization”, whiteness, and Christianity. Although the concept of “Britishness” exploded in the late nineteenth and early

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13 Religious symbolism in European art was a very developed iconography, familiar across regions, by the eighteenth century. The symbol of the martyr, particularly Jesus Christ, was familiar to commemorators and the public alike. For Christian iconographies, see: Jolyon Mitchell, *Martyrdom: A very short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Rowena Loverance, *Christian Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).


twentieth centuries, its development began during the Napoleonic Wars. Faced with the spreading patriotism of France and the development of new French values, Britain began to conceive of an equivalent national identity. One of the primary vehicles for these new values was the heroic figures of the Napoleonic Wars. The white British hero was representative not only of the ideal masculine military man, but also the growing British identity more generally.\(^{16}\) His attributes of refinement, leadership, morality, dedication, and ultimately success, were linked to the imagined Classical heroes of the past. As elites searched to define “Britishness”, this type of hero emerged as the perfect representation of the ideal British subject both at home and abroad, for white citizens and “Others.”

As leaders became increasingly pre-occupied with showcasing victorious heroes, artists were called upon to contribute to a growing commemorative landscape. Development of a common iconography could visually connect citizens, even if they never physically met, and exclude “Others”.\(^{17}\) In the creation of this new visual language, artists emulated Enlightenment thinkers. Many of these intellectuals looked back to the “civilized” Classical past for ideological illumination. Greek and Roman history, particularly philosophy and culture, were popular subjects of study in the late eighteenth century. Artists also turned to the Classical past for iconographical inspiration. In her study of nineteenth-century military heroes of Britain, Alison

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17 According to Benedict Anderson, the idea of “imagined communities” is based on the idea that people feel a connection to one another without ever meeting (Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (New York: Verso, 2006)). Repeated iconography was one of the methods to unify geographically separated people, particularly within a “nation”.

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Yarrington argues that artists relied on Neo-Classical forms to connect contemporary heroes with their Classical counterparts. Through temples, columns, and arches, artists developed an iconography that recognized modern feats of heroism.¹⁸ The original inspiration was gained from Emperor Trajan’s column in Rome (Fig. 2.2), which featured a triumphant hero on top of an illustrated column. These selective Classical examples became important templates for contemporary artists wishing to represent similar ideologies. Buttressed by the writings of Enlightenment philosophers, Classical ideals were transplanted to the early nineteenth century, conveniently supplementing newly developing ideologies of “nation” and “nationalism”. By drawing on recognizable Classical iconographies for commemorations, elites were visually connecting contemporary heroes with idealized visions of the past.

A century before the Enlightenment and ideas of citizenship spread, Great Britain utilized the Classical column for commemoration. The first example of the British triumphal column is The Monument (1671-1677), commemorating the Great Fire of London (Fig. 2.3). It was later cited in the nineteenth century as the perfect example of this type of monument and its iconography was repeatedly emulated.\(^\text{19}\) An upper balcony, topped with a gilded urn and stylized fire, surrounds the fluted Doric column. On three sides of the base there are lengthy descriptions of the events surrounding the fire and work by King Charles II to rebuild London after its destruction. The fourth side has a large and detailed bas-relief of this rebuilding work. The

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\(^{19}\) Ibid., 21.
illustration is dominated by Charles II, who is joined by various personifications on the ground and in the heavens. This same basic visual form (a column capped with a thematic representation, resting on a square pedestal with bas-reliefs and descriptions) was eventually repeated throughout Great Britain and the expanding Empire.

British commemorators were not alone in identifying the value in erecting Classical monuments to their heroes. France, particularly under Napoleon, began a massive state-funded commemorative project that utilized Greek and Roman iconography. Also during this period, the city of Paris was undergoing large-scale architectural transformations. The cityscape was soon filled with columns, obelisks, and arches, constructed to glorify victories and inspire loyalty amongst the general public.

Neo-Classical architecture lined the expanded streets of Paris and Neo-Classical painting dominated the artistic competitions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in France. The paintings of Jacques Louis David in particular were intended to inspire loyalty to the Republican cause by depicting Roman stories of heroism and self-sacrifice. Later, similar paintings by David were created to promote the reign of Emperor Napoleon by connecting him to the glorified Classical past. This readable and understandable form of painting accompanied the complex ideas of the Enlightenment.

In art, personifications refer to human figures representing abstract ideas or qualities.

Starting around the French Revolution, Paris was transformed into a “modern” European city through careful urban planning. The ordered street patterns and uniform buildings were also supplemented with commemorative statues and structures. These developments are explored in: David P. Jordan, Transforming Paris: the Life and Labours of Baron Haussmann (New York: the Free Press, 1995); Nicholas Papayanis, Planning Paris before Haussmann (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2004); Allan Potofsky, Constructing Paris in the Age of Revolution (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009).

access Enlightenment thinkers, art provided important illustrations of the ideal citizen, while also justifying the emerging power structures.

With the Enlightenment thinkers providing the ideologies, British commemorators drew on the ideally suited Neo-Classical iconographies to commemorate a growing pantheon of heroes. During the Napoleonic Wars, the triumphal column quickly became the most popular and recognizable type of monument for white British heroes. One of the most widely commemorated individuals was Admiral Nelson, eventually the subject of one of London’s most famous commemorations. Long before his notable monument rose in the capital, Nelson was memorialized with columns throughout Britain. Less than two years after his death, work was already started on a round tower in Edinburgh. This iconographical hybrid of the Classical column and a medieval watch tower was specific to Scotland, combining timeless European iconography and local history. In 1808, a column was erected in the centre of Dublin, Ireland, in recognition of Nelson’s triumphant death. The Doric fluted pillar was topped with a statue of Nelson and rested on a pedestal with bas-reliefs. A decade later a similar column was constructed in Great Yarmouth. The base is simpler in design, devoid of any bas-reliefs or explanatory engravings and the top of the monument features a representation of Britannia, not Nelson. These three monuments reveal some variance in Classical interpretations in the early years of the nineteenth century; details were flexible in order to suit the specific needs of the community. Nonetheless, all three monuments still follow the general conventions of the triumphal column. As the century continued this Neo-Classical columnar form was perfected and increasingly standardized. By the time Nelson’s mighty monument was erected in Trafalgar

23 Yarrington, Commemoration of the Hero, 165.
24 There were a number of monuments to his honour that used a variety of visual forms. Other than the column, the obelisk was very common, the type of design used for early monuments to Nelson in Glasgow and Barbados.
25 This monument was destroyed by Irish Republicans in 1966.
Square, the commemorative column was a recognizable form of memorialization throughout Great Britain.

The column was not simply a marker of great men but also served to represent the idealized values of the nation. As the nineteenth century continued, the values of the nation were increasingly tied to ideas of white “civilization” and used as justification for colonial exploitation. Art was used to symbolize these abstract concepts. Alison Yarrington argues that outside of literature, sculpture was the most common and preferred methods of white “hero-worship” that was sweeping Britain during the same period.\(^{26}\) Hero-worship recognized the idealized characteristics of the British race and commemorated the accomplishments of their greatest victors. Yarrington also contends that public sculpture, particularly a monument to the hero, was a visible method of justifying war and inspiring nationalism amongst citizens.\(^{27}\) These types of public sculptures, particularly within the colonial environment, were also used to symbolize the dominance of whiteness and justify imperial expansion. Hero worship also corresponded with a shifting view of masculinity and the turn towards the white “gentleman hero.” Michèle Cohen considers the emergence of a “new” masculinity during the same period of the Napoleonic Wars, and notes a significant shift in the expectations for white men. She argues that masculinity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was characterized by chivalry


and politeness. Although white military heroes were singled out for commemoration and representatives of the nation, they were characterized as “civilized”. Virility and aggression was downplayed in favour of leadership and refinement, emphasizing notable differences with perceived “uncivilized” colonial cultures. Early nineteenth-century hero worship justified military might and colonial triumph by accentuating the victory of “civilized” masculinity and proclaiming the superiority of the British race.

The largest and most recognizable use of the triumphal column and sculptural “hero-worship” in Britain is the monument to Admiral Nelson in the centre of London (Fig. 2.4). A monument wrought with financial problems, design disputes, and work delays, it was initially finished around 1843 but the final pieces were not installed until two decades later. Like many monuments in Great Britain, it was initially funded by private subscriptions with the government offering public land at no cost. The final design perfectly matched the ideal triumphal column: a fluted Doric shaft atop a rectangular pedestal featuring bas-reliefs, and the whole design mounted by a statue of Nelson. A viewer from below only sees the outline of the hero set against the clouds, reaching towards the heavens like a martyred saint. Nonetheless, the basic form of Nelson is recognizable atop the column, standing in military uniform with face forward. His empty right sleeve represents the arm he lost in battle, and the left hand clutches a sword propped on the ground. Behind him is a coil of rope, symbolizing his history as a seaman. The precise details of the statue are obscured for the ground viewer, but the impressive rise of the hero above the streets of London is clear. As Yarrington states: “At its simplest level the physical elevation

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of the statue of the hero setting him against the sky raised his status in the mind of the onlooker from earthly and ordinary man to deified hero.\textsuperscript{30} By using the Classical column and a familiarization with Christian iconography, British elites raised the hero to the level of immortality.

The more accessible pedestal bas-reliefs educate the general public through illustrations. They were constructed from melted down captured French cannons, symbolically representing British victory and were designed in a similar style to religious images. Each relief shows Nelson centered and leading his people. By showing his heroism and leadership it was hoped that the viewer, no matter how common, would be moved to loyalty and service. Battle scenes are the

\textsuperscript{30} Yarrington, Commemoration of the Hero, 16.
subjects of three of the reliefs; however, the violent carnage of war is significantly downplayed in favour of depicting the leadership of Nelson. In two scenes amongst the chaos of battle Nelson is shown stoic and in control, leading other figures that look up to him for guidance. Another bas-relief shows him wounded during the Battle of the Nile. A soldier holds up his slouched figure, but he remains in control and continues to command his soldiers with a gesture of his hand. Despite his injury, others look to him for re-assurance, contrasting looks of worry and courage on their carved faces. The fourth bas-relief depicts the moment of his death upon the ship HMS Victory. His body is slumped over in the arms of two other soldiers and Nelson’s facial expression is distant. The other soldiers have a look of concern but continue their duty, determinedly carrying forward despite their fallen leader. This bas-relief completes the story of a triumphant hero dying in battle and being sacredly martyred after his fall.31

The triumphal column was not confined to the British mainland; other areas of the Empire were quickly dotted with monuments to fallen heroes. Ireland was one of the first places Nelson was commemorated, decades before the grand London column was unveiled. In India, columns were also erected to British victories and were used to visually mark the landscape as “white”. The Ochterlony Monument was opened in Kolkata in the 1840s, memorializing the victory of Major-General Sir David Ochterlony of the British East India Company.32 By this time, the fluted Doric column was recognizable, even as it reached towards the heavens on the other side of the world. While the columnar form of the monument is similar, it does not share the same level of detail as its British counterparts.33 By the early twentieth century, British

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31 The connections between Neo-Classical iconography and Christian art are seemingly contradictory. The relationship between these two forms of art, particularly in representing the dying hero, would be an interesting future avenue of exploration.
32 Like in Ireland, the monument has been modified after the de-colonization of India. Renamed the Shaheed Minar, it is now a monument to honour those who fought for India’s Freedom.
33 It could be that this monument was not used for the same intended purposes, being away from the British Isles. Or, more practically, it could have been scaled down due to a lack of funds or financial support.
columns were still part of the Indian commemorative landscape. In Delhi, a British artist was commissioned by the Maharaja of Jaipur to erect a column outside of the presidential residence. The transplanting of white British symbols to the colonial environment also included the transference of British values. As the gleaming columns towered over the native populations below, they came to represent the triumph of British “civilization”.

![Figure 2.5: James Pattison Cockburn. “Nelson’s Monument and Market Place of Montreal, July 20th 1829.” Watercolour. 1829. From Library and Archives Canada: Peter Winkworth Collection of Canadiana.](image)

The British column also had a history in the commemorative landscape of Canada. Before Brock fell on the Battlefields of Queenston Heights, a column was erected to the memory of Admiral Nelson in Montreal (Fig. 2.5). The monument was built in the same recognizable form that was quickly dominating heroic iconography: a rounded shaft (this one not fluted) atop a rectangular pedestal decorated with bas-reliefs and topped with a portrait statue of the hero. As with other places throughout the Empire, the column was funded by donations and spearheaded

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by leading British elites of the city. After its initial appearance on Canadian soil in Montreal, the popularity of the British column was never significantly reignited. Nonetheless, the column remained an important symbol for recognizing the hero throughout the British Empire as the nineteenth century wore on. The repetition of the columnar design was intended to speak to all colonial subjects, even the uneducated and “uncivilized”. The column was not only a way of representing the deeds of great men; it was a visual language that communicated ideas of heroism that were intricately tied to masculinity, Britishness, and ultimately whiteness. As Upper Canadians met to discuss the commemoration of Brock throughout the early nineteenth century, they held their meetings within a specific iconographical context. They recognized that the choice of visual language was not simply about Brock the man; rather, the choice of iconography was about visually stamping the colonial landscape with notions of ideal white Britishness.

**Early Markers of the Fallen Hero**

Major General Sir Isaac Brock fell at the base of Queenston Heights during a defensive assault against invading American troops on the morning of October 13 1812. His aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Colonel Macdonell, took his place at the lead but was also gunned down before the battle was over. Both the bodies of Brock and Macdonell were quickly brought back to Fort George and a memorial to the hero, his first funeral, was quickly planned amidst the chaos of war. British fears were calmed for a few days, when the two sides agreed to a cessation in the fighting, partially to exchange prisoners and tend to the wounded, but also to offer “the just tribute of respect to the gallant dead.” The American commander stationed at Fort Niagara

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35 This trend was likely due to the lack of large population centres and particularly the difficulty in raising funds for such large commemorations in the young colony.


ordered a salute to be fired from the United States in tribute to General Brock on the day of his funeral and committed to a continuation of the cease-fire until final burial services were over.\textsuperscript{38} With the immediate threat of invasion quieted for a moment, the British focused their attention on the heroic funeral.

According to a general order of October 16 1812, the funeral was set to begin at ten o’clock with a planned procession through the streets of Niagara.\textsuperscript{39} The general order also included instructions for the next month, stating “the officers will wear crape on the left arm and on their sword knots, and all officers throughout the Province will wear crape on their left arm for the space of one month.”\textsuperscript{40} Minute guns were fired throughout the procession as it moved from Government House to Fort George.\textsuperscript{41} In the coming weeks, those who had known and mourned Brock, including Indigenous leaders, visited the gravesite. In one instance, Chief Kodeaneyonte presented the staff at Fort George with eight strings of wampum in recognition of the fallen hero, and placed the gift over Brock’s grave to protect it from injury.\textsuperscript{42} The temporary burial spot of both Brock and Macdonell was located within Fort George, a place where they would remain for over a decade. Likely due to the continued conflict with the United State, no physical memorial was added to the gravesite.

Great Britain expeditiously recognized the importance of the fallen hero and the role of Brock in defending the far reaches of the Empire. A few years after the surge of commemorations of Nelson, large-scale memorials to fallen heroes were becoming increasingly commonplace throughout Britain. At the same time, the interior of St. Paul’s Cathedral in

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{39} The procession included members of the 41st, militia, Brock’s staff, and even his horse. The initial leaders were followed by the chief mourners and pall bearers of Macdonell, ending with the attendants of Brock.
\item \textsuperscript{40} “District General Order, Fort George, Oct 16, 1812,” reprinted in Cruikshank, Documenting History, 130-1.
\item \textsuperscript{41} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{42} Robert Malcolmson, \textit{Burying General Brock: A History of Brock’s Monuments} (Niagara-on-the-Lake: Friends of Fort George, 1996), 5.
\end{itemize}
London was renovated as a memorial space for British heroism. It was a site that recognized the importance of individuals but ultimately their collective contributions to the greater Empire. Sculptures eventually covered the floors and filled the walls, while the government of Great Britain played an increasingly prominent role in memorializing its heroes. In July of 1813, the British Parliament pledged public funds for the erection of a monument in St Paul’s to Sir Isaac Brock. Executed by renowned sculptor Richard Westmacott, Brock’s memorial deepened the imprint of the heroic ideal on the commemorative landscape of Britain.

Figure 2.6: Unknown Photographer. “Memorial to General Sir Isaac Brock in St. Paul’s Cathedral London England.” Photograph. 1989. From Niagara Falls Public Library.

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Brock’s commemoration in St Paul’s is iconographically related to other memorials for
dying British heroes from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that fill the walls of cathedrals
across the nation (Fig. 2.6). This much-repeated image of the lamented hero was inspired by
Classical representations and replicated by numerous artists in Britain and other parts of
Europe. In the Brock illustration, one figure crouches down to hold the body of another limp
figure sprawled in his arms. Both are dressed in a hybrid of clothing; a mixture of both Classical
and contemporary styles. For example, the sprawled figure (representative of Brock) is bare-
chested with swirling drapery but wears nineteenth-century breeches and boots. The figure
holding his limp body is dressed in a tight shirt that reveals his musculature. This type of
“modest nudity” was an important feature of Neo-Classical designs in the early nineteenth
century. Departing from the full nudity of their Classical predecessors, contemporary heroes
were discreetly draped in enough cloth to conceal some body parts but still reveal elements of the
idealized masculine body. The hybrid of period costuming served to connect the nineteenth-
century hero with their Classical predecessors, but within the confines of acceptable modesty.
However, the faces of both figures are not a hybrid. The two figures have a very similar
appearance that does not correspond with the portraits of Brock from his lifetime and instead
conform to the “ideal” Classical face. The artist was not creating a portrait statue of Brock that
represented his likeness; rather, he was modeling the facial features and expressions on well-
known Classical templates. The monument as a whole, like other commemorations of the hero in

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45 Chapter 4 examines the tribute to John Graves Simcoe in Exeter Cathedral. Simcoe did not die in battle and is
represented not as a lamented hero, but an influential statesman and military figure. Nonetheless, the basic form of
the memorial is very similar to others constructed in Britain at the time.
46 For more on the iconography of the dying hero, see: Alan McNairn, Behold the Hero: General Wolfe and the Arts
in the Eighteenth Century (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997); Alex Potts, “Beautiful Bodies and
1-21.
memorial spaces, connected contemporary figures with the Classical past by using select
iconographical elements suited for a modern audience.

One element that departs from the Classical style and also serves to geographically root
the commemoration is the inclusion of an Indigenous figure on the side of the memorial. The
figure does not display the same “modesty” of the others and instead is almost fully nude. The
anonymous Indigenous representative is marked as an “Other” by his nudity and accessories,
which include a loin cloth, a feathered headdress, and an axe. Much of this depiction matches the
common iconography of the noble savage, but there are noticeable departures. The Indigenous
figure is depicted standing in profile to the viewer, not in a crouched or kneeling position. His
body posture is stiff and affirmative, not contemplative or idle. The pose acts as a definitive and
practical artistic “frame” to the monument; however, the affirmative stance employed for an
Indigenous “Other” is rare for the period. His presence primarily serves to mark the monument
as “Canadian” and occurring within the colonies. The colonial body was a visual sign of the
colony itself, often marking the geography as “exotic.” Along with the inscription behind the
figures, the Indigenous warrior links Brock and his ideals of British heroism to the colony of
Upper Canada. The Classical iconography of the hero acknowledges Brock’s conformity to
white British ideals, but the body of the colonial subject further marks him as a civilizing force in
the wilds of Upper Canada.

With Upper Canada still engaged in conflict with the United States, the commemoration
of Brock was a bit slower to develop on the other side of the Atlantic. However, by March 1814,

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47 The Noble Savage is explored in depth in Chapter 3 on Joseph Brant
48 One of the most common representations of the colonial body by Europeans was in mapmaking. For more on
maps and the colonial body and mapping, see: Norman J.W. Thrower, *Maps and Civilization: Cartography in
Culture and Society*, 3rd Ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Jordan Branch, *The Cartographic State:
Maps, Territory and the Origins of Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Norma
Etherington, *Mapping Colonial Conquest: Australia and Southern Africa* (Crawley: University of Western
Australia, 2007); Jeremy Black, *Maps and History: Constructing Images of the Past* (New Haven: Yale University
Press, 2000).
the government of Upper Canada passed a motion to pledge £500 towards the creation of a monument to his honour.\textsuperscript{49} This sum was eventually increased to £1000 and a committee was formed for the purpose of finding and executing a suitable design. Robert Nichol, Thomas Dickson, and Thomas Clark were among the chief commissioners of the monument.\textsuperscript{50} The first task for the newly-formed committee was to secure additional funding and an appropriate design. They turned to guidance and examples from Great Britain in order to find a suitable person to execute the monument.\textsuperscript{51} In 1815, they wrote to Brock’s surviving family in Guernsey, but it would be two years until they finally received a reply from his brother, William Brock. He stated that Westmacott, the sculptor who designed the memorial in St. Paul’s Cathedral, created a new design for Upper Canada. William Brock also announced that John Savery Brock was carrying the design, plus an estimate, to Upper Canada for presentation to the committee.\textsuperscript{52} The letter prepared by Westmacott described an elaborate bronze statue placed upon a granite base. The pedestal was to include relics and a depiction of Brock’s successes. The design, at a total of eighteen feet, would cost £2,500; a scaled back design of sixteen feet would cost £2000.\textsuperscript{53} If the committee wanted to execute this heroic monument, they would need to raise additional money from private subscriptions.

The committee embarked on a campaign to solicit the additional funds from interested individuals. It was important, the committee argued, to build a worthy monument for

\textsuperscript{49} Malcomson, Burying General Brock, 9.
\textsuperscript{50} Based on surviving historical evidence, it is unclear who filled the other positions on the committee. It is clear from correspondences that there were multiple members on the board, but only the names of the commissioners survive.
\textsuperscript{51} Letter from Robert Nichol to William Brock, March 17 1825, RG 5, A1, Volume 71, page 37699-37702, Civil Secretary’s Correspondence, Upper Canada Sundries, LAC.
\textsuperscript{52} Letter from William Brock to Lt. Colonel Nichol, May 8 1817, RG 5, A1, Volume 71, page 37703-37705, Civil Secretary’s Correspondence, Upper Canada Sundries, LAC.
\textsuperscript{53} Unaddressed letter from Richard Westmacott, September 25 1816, RG 5, A1, Volume 71, Page 37706-37708, Civil Secretary’s Correspondence, Upper Canada Sundries, LAC.
memorializing the heroism of Brock. Despite the collection of numerous private subscriptions, the committee was still considerably short of their goal, and admitted in 1821 that the erection was postponed due to the high cost of the monument. The fund stood at £1500, but even the more modest Westmacott design was still out of reach. This same report expressed a desire to abandon the Westmacott design in favour of a more sustainable, but still elegant, monument. The committee reportedly had two designs forwarded to them: a tower sitting on a vault, and a triumphal column resembling the one to Lord Nelson in Montreal. Still short of funds, however, the committee further delayed their choice of design.

By February of 1824 the committee finally had enough funds to begin construction. Due to interest accrued on the initial sum, the fund now stood at £1900. The committee intended to scale down the memorial in order to match the state of the fund. In this same letter, Robert Nichol reported that the committee had also chosen a design. The letter states that Nichol requested the help of a Civil Engineer named Francis Hall, and he produced two designs for them. The winning choice was a Tuscan Tower with platform (Fig. 2.7). However, this was not the original choice or most desirable option favoured by the committee. They certainly approved of the Westmacott design, but Nichol had a much different idea in mind. In an undated

\[54\] Report by Thomas Clark, Robert Nichol and Thomas Dickson, December 1 1821, RG 5, A1, Volume 71, Page 37715-37720, Civil Secretary’s Correspondence, Upper Canada Sundries, LAC.
\[55\] Ibid.
\[56\] Report by Thomas Clack, Robert Nichol and Thomas Dickson, December 1 1821. The letter favours the ‘tower’ design. It is unclear who submitted the designs
\[57\] Malcomson states the committee submitted a public advertisement in 1823 and received two submissions. While an advertisement was produced in the Upper Canada Gazette Nov 4 1823, the letter from Nichol (Letter from Robert Nichol to Major Hillier, February 23 1824, RG 5, A1, Volume 65, page 34519-34522, Civil Secretary’s Correspondence, Upper Canada Sundries, LAC) clearly states that Hall was approached by the committee to submit a design.
\[58\] Not everyone was satisfied with the creation of a monument on the Heights. According to the Clark and Nichol, “various quarters” suggested the money be used for other purposes. One suggestion was the erection of a Church with a marble tablet inside that could suitably commemorate the heroism of Brock. The commissioners dismissed the proposal, adding that private subscribers would not support a departure from the original design (Letter from Robert Nichol and Thomas Clark, January 13 1824, RG5, A1, Volume 65, page 34146-34147, Civil Secretary’s Correspondence, Upper Canada Sundries, LAC)
letter shortly after the Provincial Legislature committed £1000, Nichol wrote to William Brock outlining the exciting news. Both Nichol and the other commissioners thought that there “should be a statue of the General on the top of a Monumental Column with appropriate ornaments and inscriptions on the pedestal.” Nichol was clearly describing the iconography of the monumental column that was already dotting the British landscape and commemorating notable heroes of the Napoleonic Wars. Although forced to scale back their original plans due to funding problems, the committee recognized the significance of the columnar design from the onset. Unknown to Nichols at the time, the monumental column to the hero would eventually be built on the Heights decades later.

After Hall’s Tuscan tower was chosen as the winning design, a reburial of Brock at the site of the monument was arranged. The Colonial Advocate wrote a descriptive and sensational account of the funeral in the October 24 1824 edition. By that account, the second funeral for

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59 Letter from Robert Nichol to William Brock, March 17 1825.
Brock was more grand and elaborate than the first, probably on account of the relative peace in Upper Canada at that time. Sources put the attendance between 6000 and 8000 people, a considerable number given the still sparsely populated region and under-developed transportation links. The funeral procession started at Fort George and featured many of the same groups as the original in 1812. Staff, Chief Mourners, Militia, Regulars from the 76th, the monument committee, and Indian Chiefs were among the individuals included in the procession that slowly marched to Queenston. The group paused at the spot where Brock fell and then continued to the top of the Heights. Nineteen guns were fired after the bodies were placed in the vault, and various parades then commenced back towards Fort George.

Based on the account in the Advocate, the second funeral was intended as a patriotic affair meant to stir colonial connections with the Empire. The writer opened: “Surely Divine Providence smiled on that morn on which a grateful people assembled to pay a mournful, yet pleasing tribute of affection, to the memory and virtues of those British heroes who fell, bravely defending their country from foreign invasion.” Upon seeing the Union Jack, the writer reflected upon the symbol and its connection with the Empire: “The Union Jack… is a sight well calculated to raise emotions of pleasure in the mind of a Briton; it is emblematical of the Christian faith…” Concluding his piece, the writer connected the heroism of Brock with the British Empire, expressing: “…[W]hen I returned to my home, I felt a pleasure in calling to mind, that Britain, to her farthest bounds, cherishes the memory of her departed Chieftains. To know assuredly, that such honours and trophies await his bones, is cheering and consoling to the mind of the defender of his country…”

The events of the second funeral were carefully planned to recognize Brock as a British hero that solidified the connection between motherland and

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60 Colonial Advocate, “Anniversary of the Battle of Kingston” October 14 1824.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
colony. As with subsequent commemorations, the second funeral also demonstrated the victory of Brock as a triumph of white British values over the Canadian colonial landscape.

It is unclear when the first monument to Brock by Francis Hall was completed. The final design was a simple Tuscan Tower with a platform, the entire monument surmounted by a plain ornament. The Tower was both shorter and much wider than the eventual column from later decades. There is no evidence that any of the inscriptions intended by the committee on the outside of the monument were ever completed. The final design was not the monumental column that Nichol originally envisioned, but it was still the largest monument in the Canadas at that time and set a lofty precedent for the second committee and other commemorators in the young colony.

“Like Wolves in the Night”\textsuperscript{64}: Destruction of the Monument

In the early morning hours of Good Friday, April 17 1840, a terrific explosion awoke the residents of Queenston. The sound jolted the surrounding countryside and startled villagers searched for the source. The crowds soon assembled on the Heights taking in the view of their beloved monument to Sir Isaac Brock. The top of the tower was shattered, the debris littering the ground below, and a deep crack ran the length of the shaft; it appeared the rest might topple over at any moment (Fig. 2.8). From the very beginning it looked like an act of sabotage, a deliberate attack on the memory of Sir Isaac Brock. The destruction of the monument was a strong symbolic gesture with historical precedent. Destroying commemorative symbols of past or

\textsuperscript{63} In his study of the monument, Malcomson states that the “project continued through the summer and into the fall, and was resumed the following year” (Malcomson, Burying General Brock, 16). No sources are provided for this paragraph, nor are there any accounts of its eventual completion and inauguration. It is unclear whether or not the monument was completed to its full extent (Malcomson argues that the monument was not completed to its prescribed design and cites the formation of a committee for an inspection of the monument and the state of its funding, but no evidence was located for this committee or its conclusions). From the many drawings and illustrations of the period the monument was certainly completed for the most part.

\textsuperscript{64} Letter from the Six Nations to George Arthur, 1840, F1151-6, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, First Nations Contributions and General Addresses, Archives of Ontario.
present regimes visually undermines their power. It changes the commemorative landscape, dismantling the intended meanings with the shattered stones of the memorial. Because Sir Isaac Brock was a symbol of the British Empire and loyalty to the Crown, an attack on his monument (and tomb) was a direct assault on the British Empire itself. Shortly after the monument’s destruction Benjamin Lett was identified as the probable perpetrator. An Irish-Canadian who had participated in the 1837 rebellion, Lett was a prime suspect with a significant motive. He was eventually held in the United States and brought to trial on a somewhat related charge: he was accused of placing a bomb on board the steamer *Great Britain*. Although he was sentenced, Lett evaded capture for months after a daring escape from custody. He was eventually arrested

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on another charge in Buffalo and spent four years in prison.\textsuperscript{66} Lett was never transferred to Upper Canada to face charges for the bombing of Brock’s monument and was never formally tried for the crime.\textsuperscript{67}

Defending the memory of their beloved Brock, the people of Upper Canada voiced displeasure in having their monument destroyed with the alleged culprit on the run. At a meeting a few months later on the Heights, various resolutions condemned the destruction. Part of the third resolution read: “That the destruction of the monument after Isaac Brock by a treacherous and felon hand is contemplated by the People of Upper Canada with… disgust and abhorrence.”\textsuperscript{68} At the same meeting, the attendees implied similar offence at the United States for not turning over the accused: “That the People of Upper Canada have a right to expect that the same sentiments of indignation must be entertained by the high minded and honourable by all nations at the craven and wanton outrage…”\textsuperscript{69} An undated resolution from 1840 is even stronger in its condemnation of Upper Canada’s neighbours: “… Some alleged defect in the constitution or laws of the United States of America persons committing the most revolting crimes within the territory of their neighbours are sure of finding protection and consequent impunity by taking refuge within the … Republic.”\textsuperscript{70} Although Lett had no direct connection to the United States, his asylum south of the border opened a flood of anti-Americanism. Intricately tied to the recognition of Brock’s heroism, anti-Americanism and the ultimate triumph of British values remained a constant feature of commemorations of Brock throughout the century and beyond.

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 23.
\textsuperscript{67} Based on limited historical records, it is unclear why Lett was suspected of the crime. He had been present in the area at the time of the bombing, had motivation, and had the capacity to commit the crime. It is unknown if there was other more incriminating evidence against Lett or if he simply remained a suspect by circumstance.
\textsuperscript{68} Proceedings of the Meeting at Queenston Heights, July 30 1840, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Committee Minutes and Resolutions, Archives of Ontario.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{70} Untitled Resolutions, 1840, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Committee Minutes and Resolutions, Archives of Ontario.
Writing in support of re-building Brock’s monument, many Indigenous groups also expressed outrage at the destruction. These groups directed their anger at the United States and simultaneously expressed loyalty to the British. In their letter, the Six Nations generally condemned the United States, stating: “… The Six Nations… heard with feelings of the greatest horror that white men from the American nation had desecrated the Grave of the brave and lamented warrior Sir Isaac Brock.”\textsuperscript{71} The Mississaguas and Chippewas expressed a similar sentiment: “…Our anger was great when we were informed that the Muck-o-Mour (long knives) had like wolves in the night stolen into our Country and destroyed the grave of a brave and gallant soldier Sir Isaac Brock.”\textsuperscript{72} Although Lett was the principal suspect, the destruction of the monument was tied to American values and the enemy’s Republican political system.

It was clear that the destroyed monument required action, not only for its physical problems but for its symbolic importance to the people of Upper Canada. An undated resolution from 1840 captures the importance of rebuilding the monument for the future of the colony:

> It has given to the people of Upper Canada an opportunity to show to the world that their affection for the memory of the lamented hero, who nobly fell on these heights in defence of their soil has not been weakened by the lapse of years, and that thousands who were then unborn have inherited the same feelings of veneration for his name...\textsuperscript{73}

The continuation of Brock’s memory as a hero, and symbolized by a monument, was directly tied to the continuation of the British Empire in the future. At a meeting chaired by Sir Allan MacNab, a resolution was passed stating:

... [T]he utmost exertions of the people of Upper Canada, aided by the British Nation shall, under the blessing of divine providence, preserve them from foreign dominions so long as shall there be maintained upon these heights a

\textsuperscript{71} Letter from the Six Nations to George Arthur, 1840, F1151-6, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, First Nations Contributions and General Addresses, Archives of Ontario.  
\textsuperscript{72} Letter from the Mississaugas to George Arthur, 1841, F1151-6, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, First Nations Contributions and General Addresses, Archives of Ontario.  
\textsuperscript{73} Untitled Resolutions, 1840.
monument to perpetuate the fame of that illustrious man who… used the civil and military authority with which he was invested with such singular intrepidity and uprightness that he inspired the loyal with a confidence which was invincible.\textsuperscript{74}

The reconstruction of Brock’s monument was envisioned as a key component in continued fidelity to the British Crown in future generations. It was necessary, not only for the memory of Brock as an individual, but for his inspiring example of loyalty, to preserve a magnificent monument to his honour in the young colony. A simple column of stone held monumental importance for a growing Upper Canada plagued by rebellion and divisions. The failure to rebuild could symbolically mark the failure of white British colonial values.\textsuperscript{75}

The outrage expressed by many citizens of Upper Canada and influential members of society quickly resulted in a call for action. On June 17 1840, under the advice and invitation of the Lieutenant Governor, a group of men gathered at the Queenston Hotel to discuss the possibilities for Brock’s monument. Chaired by Upper Canadian Parliamentary Member and superintendent of the Six Nations David Thorburn, the meeting considered how to proceed with the shattered memorial. It was resolved that the monument would be reconstructed in order to continue the memory of Brock. There was pressing worry that the monument would not stand the Canadian winter and an immediate plan was needed for its future. As with numerous commemorative statements about Brock, his death was linked to the preservation of the Empire and the patriotism of Upper Canada. “…[Brock’s] name can never die, so long as there flows a

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
drop of British blood in the veins of the people of that country he fell in defending.”

The gathering closed with a call for a public meeting, to be arranged by the Executive Government, where citizens of Upper Canada could come together in a show of solidarity and continued commitment to their fallen hero.

The public meeting was eventually scheduled for July 30 1840. People arrived from various corners of Upper Canada, numbering around 8000; likely more people than were present for the 1824 funeral. The Lieutenant Governor presided over the meeting and various speakers presented their resolutions, many of whom were informed by their own ideological agendas. Most speakers praised the valiant heroism of Brock and recognized the reasons for his continued commemoration. While some resolutions condemned the act of destruction, other sought to shape a better future. A resolution moved by Justice Hagerman called on the Legislature to ensure that the public memory of Brock was preserved and further injustice prevented. Numerous government officials presided over the ceremony, but the militia also played a prominent role. In recognition of their service, the Honorable William H. Draper called on militiamen of all kinds to donate a day’s wages to the reconstruction project. Other speakers used the meeting to promote the unity of the British Empire. A further resolution was moved by the Honorable R.B. Sullivan, speaking about a meeting recently held in Montreal discussing the destruction of the monument: “… We assure ourselves of the cordial cooperation of the people of the neighbouring British Colonies in the design of perpetuating the fame of an officer, whose character and services they must even hold in the most grateful and affectionate remembrance.”

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76 Letter from David Thorburn to unknown recipient, June 22 1840, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario.  
77 Malcomson, Burying General Brock, 24.  
78 Meeting Proceedings, July 30 1840.  
79 Ibid.  
80 Ibid.  
81 Ibid.
The presence of numerous high-ranking military professionals and government officials demonstrated the patriotic importance of the project.

Amidst this preliminary discussion there was some mention of design for the rebuilt monument. The reconstruction of the monument was universally acclaimed. The primary question was how to best represent Brock’s historic legacy. Shortly before the meeting, Captain B. Lett wrote to Sir Allan MacNab regarding the new design. He recognized the importance of rebuilding, and supported the general principal. However, he believed that Brock’s memory held significant importance in Upper Canada and pushed for an even grander memorial: “There may be a diversity of opinion as to what that tribute of respect shall be. The page of the Historian will be a monument whose fame – lasting as the English language – durable as the most splendid column or arch. Why not therefore combine usefulness with an Arch?”

Lett promoted building a “Seminary of Learning”, a project that he believed would garner more financial support than “Brock’s Column.” However, at the public meeting a week later, only one design was officially supported: an obelisk. Moved by the Honorable William H. Draper: “That in the opinion of this meeting the most suitable monument would be an obelisk upon the site of the present structure…” The preferred design was chosen in the very early stages of the re-design process; however, as discussed later in this chapter, the exact plan for the new monument remained in flux for over a decade. Official meeting minutes obscure the diversity of opinion regarding the design, a point of contention that deeply divided committee members for over a decade.

After the public meeting in July, another paramount question for the new committee was funding. Despite the Provincial Legislature’s strong presence at the public meeting and their
enthusiastic proposal of resolutions, the government did not commit any public money towards the project. The committee also sought some commitment from the Colonial Government, writing to the Governor General for some assistance. Thomas Murdoch, Chief Secretary, wrote back to the Honorable J. Macaulay in September of 1841, stating: “…His Excellency cannot propose to the Legislature a note for such a purpose.” With no money coming from public funds, the committee needed to raise a significant amount of private donations. Immediately after the devastating bomb dramatically imploded the memorial to the fallen hero, people were initially very eager to provide funds for the reconstruction.

Another major source of funding came from various Indigenous peoples throughout Upper Canada. Different First Nations councils wrote letters of support through their local Superintendents or other government officials. The form of these letters was formulaic, following an established template and expressing nearly identical sentiments. All of the groups offered sympathy and sadness about the destruction of the monument. Many of them, including the Six Nations, The Upper Indian Reserve (River St. Clair) and Rama, included their own peoples’ memories of Brock and his heroism. They presented these memories alongside the deeds of Brock, placing their own warriors on equal footing. For example, the River St. Clair Upper Indian Reserve recalled: “…some few still exist among us who have shared in his dangers and shed their blood with him in defence of this our common country.” Other groups used the opportunity to express continued devotion to the British Crown, including the Delaware, Oneidas, and Chippewas: “…It is our firm determination to retain the same great loyalty and

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85 There is no indication why the Legislature rejected the plan, and it is unclear how such prominent members of the committee, particularly the Chair Sir Allan MacNab, were unable to secure at least some money from public coffers. 86 Letter from Thomas Murdoch to J. Macaulay, September 8 1841, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario. 87 Brock Indian Papers, 1840, F1151-6, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, First Nations Addresses and Financial Contributions, Archives of Ontario. 88 Letter from Upper Indian Reserve to George Arthur, December 15 1840, F1151-6, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, First Nations Addresses and Financial Contributions, Archives of Ontario.
devotion that glowed in the bosoms of our forefathers who bravely defended the Royal Standard under which we have the happiness to live and to claim the proud distinction of British Subjects.” All groups used this opportunity to express their own contributions to the defence of Crown and colony, a subtle expression of their independence and equality as “subjects.” First Nations who pledged monetary support used the opportunity of commemorating Brock to forge their own place within the British confines of Upper Canada and affirm their continued presence. Speeches from later commemorations echoed a similar sentiment.

With additional funding pouring in through private donations, the committee carried significant momentum through the first couple years of their existence. There was, however, still a question of what to do with the old monument. According to Malcomson, Francis Hall attended the June 17 1840 meeting and presented an estimate to fix the present monument for a cost of £370. The members at the meeting were much more determined to create a new monument, however, and further resolutions indicated their intentions to raise a different commemoration. Despite its dilapidated state, no further action was taken to remove the old tower.

At one of the first meetings of the new committee held in November 1840, the committee was informed that the subscription collection was proceeding favourably. Attendees received various reports on private subscriptions that all appeared positive. It was also reported that the

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89 Letter from the Chiefs of the Delaware, Oneidas and Chippewas to unknown recipient, January 27 1841, F1151-6, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, First Nations Addresses and Financial Contributions, Archives of Ontario.
90 Malcomson, Burying General Brock, 19.
91 The ruined monument was again inspected on October 26 1840. Lieutenant Colonel W. Ward informed the Lieutenant Governor that Captain Briscoe, District Engineer at Niagara, observed that the damage to the monument was increasing. Based on the urgency of his letter, the Engineer was worried the monument may fall down completely (Letter from W.I. Ward to George Arthur, October 26 1840, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondences, Archives of Ontario). The prediction proved incorrect and the shattered monument continued to stand as the committee prepared for its reconstruction.
citizens of New Brunswick offered some donations for the reconstruction. More expressions of unity were proclaimed when it was announced that John Savery Brock had also committed funds for the rebuild. Thomas Ridout, Treasurer and employee of the Bank of Upper Canada, reported a sum of over £1700 collected in only five months. Two years later in June of 1842 the monument’s fund was even more promising: the investments and cash incurred had reached over £3200. The committee was confident with the current account and high rate of donations, and thus decided to move forward with the design competition.

The First Design Competition

After the Committee secured subscriptions and organized themselves for the rebuilding, a new design was needed. A public competition, with notices posted for interested artists, was announced. At a meeting on November 16 1842, the Committee formally released its official call for submissions. First, any interested artist was required to submit a design or drawing with estimates before January 16 1843. Second, the monument was to be placed at the same site, using as many old materials as possible. Third, the design was to be an obelisk on a pedestal, between 150 feet and 170 feet. Finally, the prospective architects were instructed their design had to be under £5000. No further instructions as to design or size were provided to the

92 Meeting of General Committee for the Brock Monument, November 18 1840, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Committee Minutes and Resolutions, Archives of Ontario.
93 Ibid.
94 Letter from Thomas Ridout to unknown recipient, June 15 1842, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondences, Archives of Ontario.
95 To Architects, November 16 1842, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondences, Archives of Ontario. It is unclear how the Committee arrived at this sum, but there is evidence that the amount was proposed in at least one earlier design. Two years before the competition, the Clerk of Works of the Royal Engineers Dept, W. Corbett, outlined an estimate of probable expenses for a new monument. This proposal was very similar in design to the destroyed version. This document appears is a design proposal in itself and the Committee likely took the £5000 estimate from Corbett (and perhaps other early competitors) for use in the competition (Letter from W. Corbett to L. Colonel Ward, July 9 1840, F1151-2, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Monument Design Proposals, Archives of Ontario).
Although the Committee specified an “obelisk”, the interpretation of this term was very broad. It is likely that the Committee intended the concept to be vague and artists not confined to the traditional definition of an obelisk (a square pillar with a triangular top). In their final submissions, artists did not limit themselves to the restrictive boundaries of an obelisk.

Many proposed a variety of different types of lofty monuments, most of which featured a representation of the hero either at the summit or on the base. A chart, created after all of the proposals were received, lists 35 individual submissions, with some competitors including multiple designs. Submissions came from numerous locations, but most of the artists lived in Upper Canada. A few designs were received from Lower Canada, a couple more from New York State and two others from England, but the majority of prospective designers resided within the same province as the site.

Many of the artists followed the instructions and suggested a traditional obelisk design. Of the surviving design submissions, approximately half were proposals for a standard obelisk. This basic artistic form was related to ancient Egyptian memorials, not Roman, which some artists mentioned. In Hythe’s submission (a pseudonym for the eventual winner, Thomas Young), he claims the proportions from his design’s shaft were “studied from the celebrated

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96 Despite the clear instructions from the Committee, not every submission followed the guidelines. Many included designs but no estimates, while others were missing a detailed design description or drawings.


98 This chart is likely incomplete as it does not directly correspond with all of the designs contained in the Brock Monument Committee Fonds Not all of these submissions survive; only 23 submissions are still within the Fonds and no drawings are included. Other designs that are contained in the Fonds are not included on the chart. It is possible that some artists submitted designs under pseudonyms that were either duplicated or not included in the chart. It is likely the total number of submissions was over 40.

99 Malcomson, Burying General Brock, claims that “Hythe” was the name used by Thomas Young for the competition. It is unclear what record he used to draw this conclusion, as no letters in the Monument committee Fonds disclose Hythe’s actual name. Based on the description provided in the submission, it is very likely that Hythe was Young, as the design specifications match the eventual winner.
Cleopatra’s Needle.” A submission from S. Square also mentions the Egyptian background of the obelisk, claiming his sketch adopts the ancient style. Within their design submissions some artists were particularly supportive of the obelisk. Square wrote extensively of the merits of the iconography, stating: “I was influenced by the conviction that when an obelisk was rendered imperative by the terms of the Advertisement it was most consistent with good taste that the style to which obelisks almost exclusively belong should be preserved…” An obelisk was certainly a common type of memorial by this time, even in Great Britain. However, as Yarrington notes, the obelisk was still greatly overshadowed by the prevalence of the column. It is unclear why the committee advised artists to submit an obelisk; the original monument was a tower and conformed to the general conventions of the triumphal cylinder design popular in Britain at the time.

Regardless of the instructions in the Advertisement, some artists still proposed a column, a much broader interpretation of the word “obelisk.” Five of the surviving designs explicitly propose a column or “circular obelisk”, and other more vague submissions may also refer to a columnar design. Another artist submitted an obelisk sketch, but promoted the higher merits of a column. In his letter, Bennett questions the committee “whether a column might not be erected”, claiming the design “is a much more elegant edifice than the Obelisk…”

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100 Letter and specifications from Hythe, December 1842, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Monument Design Proposals, Archives of Ontario.
101 Letter and specifications from Square, undated, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Monument Design Proposals, Archives of Ontario.
102 Ibid.
103 Yarrington, Commemoration of the Hero, 62.
104 A traditional obelisk has a square base, making the shaft have four sides, and is commonly topped with a pyramid. However, artistically ‘obelisk’ can also simply refer to a shaft design, regardless of the base, and thus can include a column.
105 Letter and Specifications from Bennett to Colonel Richard Bullock, January 11 1843, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Monument Design Proposals, Archives of Ontario.
progress Nelson column. Bennett, like many of the other prospective artists, understood the commemoration of Sir Isaac Brock to be of a British character, and thus suggested to the committee that a column (the most popular contemporary design for British memorials) was the better choice. Columns were the preference of many artists, including John Boardman, an American sculptor. His design very clearly describes the standard British triumphal column with an illustrated base. Boardman recognizes his design is not an obelisk, but claims: “... I was informed that a column was intended” rather than the obelisk in the Advertisement. Whether it was due to ambiguity or artistic preference, the committee received not only obelisks but numerous other types of designs. Each artist sought to produce a suitable design for the grand commemoration of the hero, utilizing common iconographies available at their disposal.

Many of the artists recognized the importance of the project and also the significance of their own design in commemorating Brock. For example, two of the artists promoted their simple design with little ornamentation to distract the viewer. An anonymous submission, known simply as B___, intended to remove all unnecessary decoration. Similarly, Springle’s proposal “avoided introducing any ornament incompatible with the object of situation of the Monument.” In Classical iconography, details are limited and used only when contributing to the design or symbolism. Unnecessary distractions might confuse the viewer or overshadow the clear meanings intended by clean lines and simple details. Nonetheless, certain symbols were repeated between designs and were important inclusions in the minds of the artists. One of these

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106 Ibid.
107 Letter and Specifications from John Boardman to Richard Bulock [sic], January 7 1843, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Monument Design Proposals, Archives of Ontario.
108 Some artists submitted very unclear proposal descriptions and without drawings it is nearly impossible to determine the details of the design. Two artists appear to suggest a wider pyramid design, more squat than a traditional obelisk.
110 Letter and Specifications from James Springle, undated, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Monument Design Proposals, Archives of Ontario.
symbols was the lion, a common element in British monuments that stood for the power of the Crown. B____ promotes the placement of lions, stating: “Lions are symbolical of the British Empire which [Brock] assisted with his valour in preserving unimpaired in its integrity.”¹¹¹ Lions were also suggested by Matthison, who proclaimed they “[are] a fine denotation of defiance and strength.”¹¹² Lions were closely associated with the hero, and had an important place in the new iconography of Brock’s monument. A distinct symbol in defiance of the American eagle, the lion stood in place of the Empire, an internationally recognized emblem that connected Brock to the British Crown. Laurel was another symbol mentioned in different designs. The Classical emblem of immortality, laurel was included by “V” to “crown the victor in glory”¹¹³, and by B____ to “indicate that he died covered with Laurels.”¹¹⁴ Hopeful architects were aware of the symbolism of their designs in representing the hero and chose particular emblems that signified the British character and Classical heroism of Brock.

Almost all of the surviving submissions contained important statements about the valourization of the hero and his commemoration. In his design submission, B____ writes that he intended to create a memorial that would imbue “the mind of the observers with sensations of pleasure and… dignity of demeanor which is the Distinguishing trait of all Great and good men.”¹¹⁵ Similarly, Square attempts to justify the placing of a statue of Brock inside the obelisk pedestal, and likens Brock’s heroism to Greeks “who place their most exquisite works of sculpture in the cellar.”¹¹⁶ Matthison also wanted to portray the heroism and character of Brock through the statue on the summit of his design: “A representation of General Sir Isaac Brock in a

¹¹¹ Letter and Specifications from B____, January 16 1842.
¹¹³ Letter and Specifications from V, undated, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Monument Design Proposals, Archives of Ontario.
¹¹⁴ Letter and Specifications from B____, January 16 1842.
¹¹⁵ Letter and Specifications from B____, January 16 1842.
¹¹⁶ Letter and Specifications from Square, undated.
position of deep meditation and is at first sight commanding in the highest degree of the monument… who so nobly died in the service of his King and Country.” The commemoration of Brock was intended to memorialize the hero and prospective artists sought the best iconography to communicate these ideas. The committee needed to select the best response to this commemorative challenge from an array of prospects. Thomas Young, likely working under the pseudonym of “Hythe,” submitted the eventual winning design proposal and was officially declared the architect in March 1843.

Although they chose a monument that would cost under £5000, the committee was not ready to move forward due to a lack of funds. Thomas Young was at least partially aware of these problems and openly questioned whether he could execute his design. In a letter sent shortly after winning the competition, Young noted that a troubling resolution was passed, stating the committee was looking to modify the design. He expressed: “…doubt has arisen in the minds of many as to whether it is the intention of the committee to employ me to carry out the creation of my design.” Later records reveal that there was dissent regarding the design and some committee members may have deliberately slowed the process. However, it is likely that a lack of funds was the primary reason for inaction. Although a number of private subscriptions were received from people across the Canadas, other colonies, Great Britain, and even Guernsey, the fund still lacked the necessary money. A report from June 1842 from

117 Letter and Specifications from Matthison, January 2 1843.
118 Thomas writes that he learned of winning from public advertisement. His letter dates from March 8 1843 (letter from Thomas Young to Colonel Bullock, March 8 1843, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brockie Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario), but it is unknown when this advertisement appeared. The historical record is also silent on why his design held the most merit and was the eventual finalist. It is known that Young produced an obelisk, a square design with the proper dimensions that was within the height confines. His submission, as existing in the Brock Committee Fonds, was complete with estimate and drawings (although now lost). No further commentary is provided on why Thomas was selected.
119 The resolution referred to by Young does not survive. There are incomplete meeting minutes from this period in the Committee’s history. Information about this resolution is only available from Young’s letter.
120 Letter from Thomas Young to Colonel Bullock, May 3 1843, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario.
Thomas Ridout of the Bank of Upper Canada stated the fund was at £3203.5.5 in total investments and cash,\textsuperscript{121} well below the required amount of £5000. If they wanted to execute such a grand design, the Committee needed to wait until the funds increased over time. After an initial explosion of success and a good design competition, the new monument to the heroic Brock stalled.

**The Resurrection of Brock and His Column**

It is unknown when the original committee held their last meeting, but the first meeting of the revival was called in November of 1849. The Honorable William H. Merritt, Captain W. H. Dickson, and Captain Thomas C. Street were added to the Building Committee, all three of whom would eventually take very prominent roles in the committee of the 1850s.\textsuperscript{122} Sir Allan MacNab was still Chair, but there appeared to be some dissatisfaction published in public accounts with his leadership.\textsuperscript{123} Little was accomplished at the first meeting, except to express interest in reviving the plan for rebuilding the monument. Two months after the meeting adjourned, the committee received a favourable report from the Treasurer. Private subscriptions had reached nearly £3400 and the interest accrued over the decade put the fund at over £5100.\textsuperscript{124} It was more than enough to move forward with the monument and finally reconstruct the shattered tower. With the funding firmly secured and looking more promising, the committee returned to the question of design.

The best way to ensure Brock’s legacy lasted into the future was by choosing the perfect iconography. There was dissent on the committee regarding the obelisk design from the

\textsuperscript{121} Letter from Thomas Ridout, June 15 1842.
\textsuperscript{122} Meeting of the Building Committee for the Reconstruction of Brock’s Monument, November 1 1849, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Minutes and Resolutions, Archives of Ontario.
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid. The resolutions from the meeting do not provide a clear source or reason for his decreasing popularity.
\textsuperscript{124} The Committee of Subscribers to the Brock Monument Fund, January 19 1850, Microfilm Reel MS 74, William Hamilton Merritt Fonds, Archives of Ontario.
beginning. Even though Young won the competition and the obelisk was the chosen sketch, not everyone on the committee was convinced the obelisk was the best choice. Two days after the close of the 1843 competition, William H. Merritt wrote a letter to the secretary of the committee, Richard Bullock. In this letter, Merritt proclaimed support for the design of Milne Roberts, who submitted a column of 170 feet and an estimate under £5000. Merritt clearly expressed concern over the obelisk design: “An Obelisk has been preferred by many in preference to a column – as there are no erections of that kind in America and few in Europe the public cannot judge of the effect…”\textsuperscript{125} He advocates that a column leaves a more distinct impression and “… a high column can be seen of a great distance.”\textsuperscript{126} Merritt warns the committee that the choice of a pyramid will not leave a lasting impression: “… but if a pile of stones is to be squatted down on top of the mountain, attempting to ape a Pyramid, the contrast will not I fear be very creditable to the Committee.”\textsuperscript{127} The committee of 1843 did not follow the advice of Merritt and chose an obelisk. However, there is further evidence that the choice was not satisfactory to other committee members.

When the committee was revived by an increase in their funding account in 1850, it was accompanied with a new discussion of design. There are no meeting minutes that reveal exactly why the committee wanted to hold another design competition when a winner was already chosen. Thomas Young was still alive, his proposal was still viable, and he seemed prepared to continue with the work. Nonetheless, by January 1850, the obelisk idea was already abandoned. A letter composed by David Thornburn, Chief Justice Robinson, and W. Allan suggest a new design was the best course: “… the resolution should be reconsidered for they think it can hardly

\textsuperscript{125} Letter from Merritt to Bullock, January 18 1843, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel 57690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondences, Archives of Ontario.
\textsuperscript{126} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{127} Ibid
have been meant that the monument shall be really an obelisk, by which is understood a four
sided pillar of solid stone; but that it shall be constructed of mason work.”128 They go on to state
that the obelisk “would not be so well suited to the beautiful site which it is to occupy, as a
monument of another character would be.”129 The letter also mentions that many competent and
experienced architects reside in Canada and could produce “a much better design.”130 This idea
was eventually approved, and a new building committee was appointed to find a different design.

Two years later, the decision to seek different proposals was confirmed. In a letter to the
Honourable A. N. Morin, Chairman Allan MacNab outlines some of the monument’s design
history. He notes: “The design of an obelisk was obtained several years ago.”131 MacNab states
that the committee had recently thought of the harsh winter and “it has since been considered that
an obelisk should not be so well adopted in this situation… and be so satisfactory in public
estimation as some other design…”132 Based on MacNab’s account, it is unclear why the obelisk
fell into disfavor with the committee and specifically who instigated the change in design. As
mentioned previously, Merritt expressed concern before the original design was chosen, but there
is no evidence that the committee formally noted his critiques.

An awareness of international commemorations likely caused the committee to reconsider
the iconography connected to the obelisk. In the period between the original choice of design in
1843 and the revival of 1850, a large-scale obelisk was started south of the border: The
Washington Monument.133 It is probable that the committee recognized the large-scale iconic

128 Ibid.
129 The Committee of Subscribers to the Brock Monument Fund, January 19 1850.
130 Ibid.
131 Letter from Allan MacNab to A.N. Morin, August 31 1852, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock
Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario.
132 Ibid.
133 The Washington Monument likely put pressure on the committee to change the design for Brock’s column. While
this concern is not noted in the committee minutes, the design for the Washington Monument was already
announced and fundraising efforts were under way. The Washington Monument is also cited as a reason for the new
obelisk would soon be associated with American Republicanism. Given their strong support for the British Crown, the committee did not want their design to be visually related to Republican and Revolutionary ideas. While never mentioned explicitly in committee minutes, it is probable that the construction of the Washington Monument reverberated in Upper Canada. If the monument to Sir Isaac Brock was to symbolize loyalism and fidelity to the British Crown, it could not be the same physical design as the Washington Monument. Moreover, the monument to Brock was about the triumph of the Monarchy over Republicanism. A similar iconography could not be constructed in both Washington and Upper Canada to memorialize their respective heroes, standing for contrasting ideas. As Merritt recognized earlier, few obelisks could be found in Europe or America. The most prominent and largest obelisk was now being constructed as a tribute for a British traitor. As a result the committee was likely forced to change their design.\footnote{It is possible that the construction of the Washington Monument was another factor driving the revival of the committee in 1848. The plans for the American memorial were formally announced the same year as the Brock committee’s first meeting after a long hiatus. Although these events were most certainly linked, there is no surviving historical record that confirms this deduction.}

With the obelisk soon to symbolize American Republicanism, the committee instigated another design competition. By June of 1852 the committee passed a motion to signal the new contest, stating that designs would be received at a meeting on August 2. The committee was anxious to begin construction, further encouraged by the growing funds that now stood at nearly £5800.\footnote{Brock Monument Committee Meeting, June 8 1852, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Minutes and Resolutions, Archives of Ontario} The winning design would again receive a £25 prize, but there was no mention of where the competition was advertised.\footnote{A submission from Ball Hughes (Letter and specifications from Ball Hughes to Building Committee, August 2 (n.d.), F1151-2, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Design Proposals, Archives of Ontario) mentions he read about the competition in a “Public Journal”. It does appear, therefore, that it was advertised.} The \textit{Canadian Journal} reported that seven designs

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\footnote{design in Glenn McArthur and Annie Szamosi, \textit{William Thomas, Architect} (Canada: Archives of Canadian Art, 1996); however, the authors provide no evidence for this contention. For more on the Washington Monument, see: John Steele Gordon, \textit{Washington’s Monument: and the Fascinating History of the Obelisk} (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016); Kirk Savage, \textit{Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).}]{It is possible that the construction of the Washington Monument was another factor driving the revival of the committee in 1848. The plans for the American memorial were formally announced the same year as the Brock committee’s first meeting after a long hiatus. Although these events were most certainly linked, there is no surviving historical record that confirms this deduction.}
\item[\footnote{Brock Monument Committee Meeting, June 8 1852, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Minutes and Resolutions, Archives of Ontario}{135}]{Brock Monument Committee Meeting, June 8 1852, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Minutes and Resolutions, Archives of Ontario}
\item[\footnote{A submission from Ball Hughes (Letter and specifications from Ball Hughes to Building Committee, August 2 (n.d.), F1151-2, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Design Proposals, Archives of Ontario) mentions he read about the competition in a “Public Journal”. It does appear, therefore, that it was advertised.}{136}]{A submission from Ball Hughes (Letter and specifications from Ball Hughes to Building Committee, August 2 (n.d.), F1151-2, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Design Proposals, Archives of Ontario) mentions he read about the competition in a “Public Journal”. It does appear, therefore, that it was advertised.}
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were received from a total of five people: four architects and one sculptor.\textsuperscript{137} The \textit{Journal} speculated that few designs were received due to a professional outcry since a winner was already selected for the project years earlier.\textsuperscript{138} Whether others participated in a professional boycott or not, Thomas Young, the original winner from 1843, did submit another design. He was aware of the shifted iconographical preference and submitted a memorial that was much different from his first, matching the current tastes of the committee.

Even though the \textit{Canadian Journal} declared that “the competition appears to have failed,”\textsuperscript{139} the committee did receive a number of favourable designs. The original call for submissions does not survive, but based on the dominant production of columns, artists were likely instructed to produce a column. The preference for an obelisk from the previous decade had completely vanished. Thomas Young re-situated his own submission to produce a “Grecian Doric” column, which the \textit{Canadian Journal} described as “chaste and effective in character.”\textsuperscript{140} Hutchinson Clarke also submitted a Greek column of an unspecified order. Another column was received by a man titled “Thomas Monro,”\textsuperscript{141} this time of the Corinthian style “with a garland wreathed around the shaft.”\textsuperscript{142} This same man proposed a radically different second design, which the \textit{Canadian Journal} described as “a Gothic Mausoleum of most wretched character and

\textsuperscript{137} There are three submissions surviving in the Brock Committee Fonds, received from Ball Hughes, Thomas Monro, and William Thomas. As with the earlier competition, no drawings survive.
\textsuperscript{138} “The Brock Monument,” \textit{Canadian Journal} 1, no. 1 (Aug. 1852): 22. It is possible that few submissions were received due to a professional boycott, but there are other possible explanations as well. The turnaround required for submissions was incredibly quick (under two months) and the committee demanded a design, sketches and an estimate. It is also unclear how widely the call was distributed, and unlikely that prospective artists outside of Upper Canada received the advertisement in time. Submissions from Britain were effectively nullified with the quickly approaching deadline coupled with slow Atlantic crossing times.
\textsuperscript{139} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{140} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{141} The \textit{Canadian Journal} identifies this as an “anonymous submission” (22), but the letter to the committee is clearly from Thomas Monro (Letter from Thomas Monro to Gentlemen of Committee, August 2 1852, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario). It is unknown if this name was used as a pseudonym or if the \textit{Canadian Journal} was not supplied with the name.
\textsuperscript{142} “The Brock Monument,” \textit{Canadian Journal}, 22.
miserably rendered.”

Another sculptor, identified in the Brock Committee Fonds as Ball Hughes and the *Canadian Journal* as a “Boston Sculptor”, also submitted a column for the committee’s consideration. A bronze statue of Brock was to cap the column, and bronze lions emblematic of “British Courage in every quarter of the globe” were to surround the base. Familiar with British symbolism and representations of the British monarchy, Ball Hughes proposed a triumphal column imbued with ideas of loyalty. Proud of being a “British Subject”, Hughes emphasized his professional acquaintance with various prominent individuals, including the Duke of Sussex of Cambridge and the Duke of Wellington.

The winning design, submitted by William Thomas, was nearly £600 cheaper than the grand proposal from Hughes but was fairly similar in design. Thomas originally sent two submissions, the second being an equestrian statue on a pedestal, which the *Canadian Journal* remarked as being not suitable competition for his columnar design. The entire height of the equestrian statue was to be 100 feet, a very imposing portrait statue of its kind. In his submission letter Thomas also favours the column, remarking that its height would make it visible from greater distances. The column he proposed was of the Roman-composite design, a more free interpretation of the rigid ancient column orders. In his submission, Thomas recognized the importance of the design and proclaimed: “The great height and rich massive proportions of it will in my opinion if carried into execution give great satisfaction and is of that proportion and

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143 Ibid; Letter from Thomas Monro to Gentlemen of Committee, August 2 1852.
144 Based on evidence available, it appears this is Robert Ball Hughes, a prominent British sculptor active in the United States during the same period.
145 Letter from Ball Hughes to Building Committee, August 2 (n.d.).
146 Ibid. It is unclear why the very prominent submission from the famous sculptor Ball Hughes and his patriotic British design was not chosen. It was perhaps simply a question of cost: the estimate for Hughes’ proposal was £5300.
148 Letter from William Thomas to Capt. Munro Hamilton, September 24 1852, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario.
character the unequaled situation demands.” The design was to include a vault for the remains of Brock and Macdonell in the large pedestal supporting the massive column. This pedestal was to include “Lions supporting shields with the Armorial bearings of the Hero.” Impressed with his submission, drawings, and budget, the committee officially proclaimed William Thomas as the winner. A triumphal British column was finally planned for the Heights.

**William Thomas’ Column to the Lamented General**

Figure 2.9: “Brock’s Monument, Queenston Heights, Canada.” Postcard. N.d. S.H. Knox & Co., no. 22.

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149 Ibid.
150 Ibid
Thomas’ design was simple in its form and composition, but effective in memorializing the hero of Sir Isaac Brock within the commemorative landscape of mid-nineteenth-century Upper Canada. The entire monument rests on a large platform that also contains the doorway to enter the interior space (Fig. 2.9). Inside is a small area now used for interpretation, the walls covered in various plaques dating from the original inception of the monument to the present day. The small room also serves as a foyer to the winding staircase that leads to the top viewing platform. The exterior walls of the sub-basement are plain in design with no elaborate decoration except for a few courses of rough stone, a number of portholes surrounded by laurel, a simple cornice with additional portholes, and a single stone inscription. Sitting on the upper corners of the sub-basement are four lions holding shields. The pedestal, with a smaller base than the basement, sits on top. The four sides feature carvings contained within a simple border. A plain graded cornice caps the pedestal, the top of which features more portholes interspersed with lion heads and laurel. The column itself is fluted with tiny slits ordered up the shaft to provide lighting for the interior. The capital of the column has one of the more elaborately carved elements: four representations of winged Victory, the arms of which rest on shields. Above the capital is a platform punctured by the portholes at the top of the stairway. Atop the platform formed by the capital, at the highest peak of the monument, is the statue to Sir Isaac Brock. This representation of the Major General shows him with outstretched arm surveying the landscape of Queenston below.

When William Thomas submitted a design to the Brock Monument Committee in 1852, he was already an established architect in Upper Canada. Born and trained in Britain, Thomas brought his architectural skills to Canada the same year as Brock’s first design competition.151

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151 There is no evidence that William Thomas participated in the first design competition. It is highly unlikely that he was able to submit a design, having arrived in Canada the same year as the competition was held.
Since crossing the Atlantic, Thomas quickly gained a quality reputation in the growing built environment of Upper Canada. On one hand, Thomas was recognized for his buildings designed in the Gothic style. He was responsible for numerous large-scale churches in growing urban environments in Upper Canada, including London, Toronto, and Hamilton. However, Thomas was also responsible for designing numerous buildings in a Neo-Classical style, including the Niagara District Courthouse and St. Lawrence Hall in Toronto. There is no evidence that Thomas created any monuments before submitting his design for Brock’s column. However, he was familiar with Neo-Classical architecture and was aware of monuments in his home country of Great Britain. Although Thomas was not an experienced monument-builder, he was recognized as a competent architect and aware of symbolic Classical designs. His Neo-Classical facades displayed the order, simplicity, and power consistent with that style, elements he applied to Brock’s commemoration.

Thomas’ position as an architect gave him distinct vision in producing a design for the new column. The Canadian Journal identified Thomas’ design as an important link between the visual arts that would serve as an effective commemoration of the heroic subject matter. “In the preparation of this design, the endeavor has been to combine Architecture with Sculpture, so as to render it characteristic and appropriate, avoiding plagiarism, but without affecting that novelty of character…”¹⁵² Not only grand in design, the monument utilized heroic Classical iconography and would inevitably leave a lasting impression on the public. These timeless symbols were linked with Brock’s accomplishments and loyalty, providing a lasting testament to British values and triumphs in Upper Canada. Ancient Classicism was linked to contemporary “civilized” virtues by Enlightenment thinkers and visually displayed by artists. Within the colonies

especially, the imposition of Classical iconography was also an icon for growing Empires claiming to bring “civilization” to the non-white corners of the globe.

The final monument to Sir Isaac Brock leaves a distinctive imprint on the landscape (Fig. 2.10). Even in the twenty-first century, its presence at the top of the Heights is imposing. The design of a column, and particularly a tall monumental column, is meant to dwarf the surrounding landscape. As the Canadian Journal noted in 1852, the height of the proposed monument (185 feet) would make it second in height only to the Great Fire column in London.¹⁵³

![Figure 2.10: Francis George Coleridge. “Brock’s Monument, Niagara River on Lake Ontario.” Watercolour. 1865. From Library and Archives Canada: Francis George Coleridge Collection.](image)

It was certainly the largest commemoration in British North America, and at that time could rival any American memorial as well.¹⁵⁴ The grand height of the monument positioned on top of the rocky Heights was easily spotted from miles away, including across the border. As a commemoration of the War of 1812, the column was a valiant message of victory and triumph. Committee members were certainly aware that the grand monument served as a “border” into

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¹⁵³ Ibid.
¹⁵⁴ The Washington Monument construction was halted at this time due to a lack of funding. Its eventual scale would far surpass the Brock Monument; however, it is not positioned on the border. The height of the Brock monument combined with its geographical position still makes a bold statement.
Canada, and symbolically to British values. The grand height also raised the heroic Brock far above the Battlefield where he fell. As the highest structure in Canada at the time, reaching heights only previously imagined, the monument pushed beyond the earthly realm. This column was a commemoration of immortal proportions, not only for the hero himself, but the ideas he represented. Brock’s dramatic rise above the conquered wilds of Upper Canada was emblematic of British triumph over the colonial landscape and both the past and future superiority of whiteness.\footnote{The monument to Sir Isaac Brock and the extensive grounds surrounding it was increasingly promoted as a tourist destination. For more on the dynamics of Brock’s column as a tourist site, see: Patricia Jansen, \textit{Wild Things: Nature, Culture and Tourism in Ontario, 1870-1914} (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1995); Elaine Young, \textit{Placing Battlefields: Ontario’s War of 1812 Niagara Frontier, 1885-1930} Dissertation (Guelph: University of Guelph, 2015); Elaine Young, “Battlefield to Baseball Diamond: The Niagara Parks Commission and Queenston Heights Park,” \textit{London Journal of Canadian Studies} vol.29, iss. 1 (Nov. 2014): 170-203.}

One feature contributing to the imposing height of the monument is the large basement and pedestal: the shaft of the column is nearly 100 feet and the pedestal is 65 feet. Like the triumphal columns in London, the larger pedestal facilitated the inclusion of bas-reliefs and other narrative devices closer to the viewer. The taller and imposing pedestal also gives the illusion of greater height for the column. When standing at the base, the perspective from the pedestal leading up the shaft makes the column appear taller and the figure of Brock capping the top is even more unattainable. The new design is described as a “column” rather than a “tower”, a distinction attributable to the reduced girth and fluting. Both the \textit{Canadian Journal} and William Thomas identified the 1850s column as belonging to the “Roman Composite order.” A relatively rare interpretation of Classical iconography, Thomas’ sketch was the only example of this style proposed to the committee in either competition.\footnote{“The Brock Monument,” \textit{Canadian Journal}, 22; Letter from William Thomas to Capt. Munro Hamilton, September 24 1853.} This type of column features elements of both the Greek Ionic and Corinthian styles in the capital. The dimensions of this order also make the column appear slimmer and less heavy than strict Greek designs. The choice of the Roman
Composite order contributed to the illusion of height, but also gave Thomas more creative allowance in the design of the capital. He used this artistic freedom to create a design that included Classical emblems of heroism and immortality.

While officially declared a Roman Composite column, the capital is more decorated than its Classical examples and other subsequent interpretations throughout Europe. Far from the human eye, these elaborately carved elements are difficult to identify from the ground (Fig. 2.11). The capital includes the standard volutes of the Ionic order and the acanthus leaves of the Corinthian order, but these are stunted by the other decorations. Four large figures of Victory, with wings and arms outstretched, form a square top for the capital. The volutes are nearly
covered by round shields, and the acanthus leaves are freely used to fill empty spaces. The figures of Victory, triumphantly framing the top of the column, symbolize the military success of Sir Isaac Brock and his domination on the Heights. The personification of Victory stood not only for individual accomplishments, but favour from the gods. More broadly, the strong use of Classical iconography and symbols of Victory represented the successes of “civilization” and the domination of the white hero over the colonial landscape. Classicism was tied to ancient civilizations and the iconography of these cultures transplanted to modern Empires. The figures of Victory on Brock’s column were icons of “civilized” values and its white defenders.

Other Classical elements throughout the monument connect Brock’s nineteenth-century victories with the triumph of ancient “civilization.” Classically dressed warrior figures are situated at the bottom of the monument, in closer view of the public on the ground (Fig. 2.12).
They guard the four corners of the monument’s squat stone wall, larger than life and looming over all viewers below. The Victory figures are unattainable (even un-viewable) from the ground, but these ordinary Classical soldiers are within reach. They are depicted only from the knee level up, the ‘legs’ of the figures subsumed within the flattened pedestals upon which they rest. These figures do not have a distinct identity, the helmets covering any facial features. Rather, they are portrayed simply as costumed “guards”, or simply the costumes themselves with no intended person underneath. Their helmets and shields identify them as Classical soldiers, not contemporaries of Brock that fought alongside him. Their purpose is to link Brock with Classical

Figure 2.13: Brittney Anne Bos. “Detail of Lions and Armorial Bearings on Pedestal.” Photograph. May 2012.
heroes, not recognize the other soldiers that fought and died at Queenston. However, being close to the viewer means that ordinary members of the public can aspire to be these guards, shielding the values of Brock from outside attack. Although Brock was far beyond the reaches of most mortals, every citizen of Upper Canada was invited to be the Classical “guards” at the base who defended Brock’s memory and legacy.

Along with the distinctive Classical elements that served to link Brock to the Greek and Roman past, a particularly British symbol was prominently displayed on the monument: the Imperial lion. Four lions, each holding armorial bearings, are placed on the roof of the sub-basement (Fig. 2.13). The lions, mouths open and bearing their fangs, grip the armorial bearings in their paws and sit upright on all four corners. Their inclusion is not unprecedented; as discussed previously, in the 1843 competition the lion was one of the most commonly used symbols in the artistic submissions. At least two sketches in the 1852 competition included lions, Hughes identifying them as a symbol of “British Courage.”\footnote{Letter from Ball Hughes to the Gentlemen of the Committee, August 2 (n.d.).} The lion motif of Thomas’ design is continued on the plinth of the pedestal, interspersed with laurel. The lion heads accompanied by the symbol of Classical apotheosis appear at the base of the column, just as the shaft rises to the heavens. The plinth acts as an intermediary between the earthly and heavenly realms, linking the ordinary people visiting the Heights to the immortal hero who conquered them. His immortal rise is due to his personal virtues of courage and fidelity, aptly symbolized by the British Imperial lion.
In the standard monumental column, as discussed previously, the large faces of the pedestal were meant to frame bas-reliefs. These scenes would depict moments from the hero’s life and serve to educate the public on the deeds and values of the memorialized figure. Because the pedestal of Brock’s monument is raised on a basement, the bas-reliefs are not at eye level with the viewer, nor are they accessible by any staircases around the monument (as is the case with Nelson’s column in London) (Fig. 2.14). Although this placement is less effective for educational purposes, the high reliefs put the hero’s accomplishments above the earthly realm of mortals. The front relief is plain in design, featuring a military trophy consisting of a nineteenth-century hat and various weapons from the period. The opposite relief, facing west, consists of a military trophy with a Classical helmet and weapons. As with other iconographical elements, the
east and west pedestal facades connect Classical and contemporary military symbols. The relief facing north, down to the village of Queenston, is more elaborate and depicts Brock leading a group of soldiers. Based on how they are depicted, only British regulars are included in the relief; no members of the militia or First Nations are denoted by costuming or accessories. Four upright figures, one carrying a banner, follow Brock’s lead, but two figures appear dead or wounded on the ground. In the background, carved in only subtle relief, is a depiction of additional figures engaged in battle. The exact location is not clearly marked, but a forest looms above the scene. This is the only relief carving that recounts the life of the hero.

The heroic story of Brock is not extensively narrated in the bas-reliefs, but his leadership is an emphasis of the statue at the top of the column (Fig. 2.10). Although difficult to view from the bottom, the public on the ground can see the basic outline of Brock framed against the clouds. The unprecedented heights of the column place him on the same level as the heavens, his figure becoming one with the lofty sky. Brock is depicted in contemporary military uniform, similar to the costuming he wore on the day of his death. He is shown in tall boots, a cloak around his neck, and a distinctive hat with a plume. His outstretched hand, facing towards Queenston, the spot where he fell, and further in the distance to Fort George, clutches a “baton”. His left hand discreetly holds the handle of a sword. Although he is depicted with a

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158 It is possible that the militia was intended to be part of the bas-relief. The role of the militia was a very prominent theme in the funerals and other commemorations of Brock. However, the carving does not use any specific accessory or costuming to identify them as individual figures. Rather, all of the figures in the bas-relief are wearing the same clothing, a representation of early nineteenth-century British military garb. Although the First Nations were not represented in the original memorial, a temporary monument to their involvement was eventually erected.

159 The original plan may have included more. For example, the death of Brock is curiously excluded from the monument. The moment of the hero’s death was a very common subject for commemorations from the period. The reliefs were finished at the very end of the project when the money from the fund was gone. It is possible the other reliefs were scaled back due to a lack of funds.

160 The Daily Globe from 1859 (the inauguration of the monument) calls this object a “baton”. The object appears to be a cylinder of some kind, but it is unclear what it is meant to represent. The right arm of Brock was hit in a lightning strike in the 1930s. It is possible that when it was replaced the object in his hand was carved differently. No surviving images from before the 1930s clearly show the object in Brock’s hand. The new carving, whether modeled on the old or not, more closely resembles a scroll of paper or perhaps a telescope.
weapon, it is not a prominent feature in the design and is barely noticeable from the ground.\textsuperscript{161} As with other depictions of the nineteenth-century military hero, any form of weaponry is barely visible. His figure is not wielding a sword or shooting a musket; any reference to his ability on the violent battlefield is obscured. Even the ambiguous “baton” in his right hand symbolizes his leadership and abilities as a statesman. Downplaying the violence of war and particularly his role as a military leader corresponds with other British triumphal columns and related commemorations of the same period. The bas-relief has only subtle allusions to death, but otherwise the carnage of war is absent. Subsequent speeches also diminished any references to violence or death, focusing instead on Brock’s intellectual and leadership capabilities. In both

\textsuperscript{161} The handle of the sword is the only element seen from ground level. The blade and point of the sword are obscured by the angle of the capital.
iconography and spoken rhetoric, Brock fits the description of a white “gentlemanly hero” who displayed the ideals of British militarism and heroism.

Numerous plaques and other interpretative devices were added throughout the decades and even into the twenty-first century. The interior of the monument’s base features a number of dedication plaques, recognitions of the original builders, and also of the soldiers, militia and Indigenous peoples that fought at Queenston Heights. The only original inscription on the exterior is a stone carving on one side of the basement. It reads:

Upper Canada has dedicated this monument to the memory of the late Major-General Sir Isaac Brock K.B. Provisional Lieut. Governor and Commander of the forces in this Province whose remains are deposited in the vault beneath. Opposing the invading enemy he fell in action near these Heights on the 13th October 1812 in the 43rd year of his age revered and lamented by the People who he governed. And deplored by the sovreign [sic] to whose service his life had been devoted.

The inscription, simple in design and text, includes various references to Brock’s accomplishments under the British Crown. It recognizes his heroism as a leader, but also expresses the sadness and grief of his death. The emphasis of the inscription marks the monument foremost as a tomb for Brock, not a triumph of his accomplishments. The iconography of the monument, prepared as an elaborate display of victory and immortality seems to contradict the solemn simplicity of the carving. Nonetheless, the inscription reminds the public that they are standing on the hero’s final resting place. Unlike most British triumphal columns of the period, this memorial served as a tombstone. The dual identity of the monument as both a symbol of triumph and a lamented space of death initially seems conflicting. However, the Classical elements of the memorial remind the viewer that heroic deaths are not the end of life. More importantly, mortal death is the beginning of immortal life for the values and deeds accomplished by the hero. The monument, therefore, acts as the intermediary between the lamented earthly death of Brock’s body and his eventual rise to immortal heroic fame. With
Classicism intricately tied to notions of “civilization” and whiteness, it also cemented Brock’s memory as a recognition of more than mortal death; the monument was an ongoing legacy to British colonial dominance.

(Re)Commemorating the Gentleman Hero of Upper Canada

With enough funds raised for the new design estimate, the committee focused on the logistics of building the monument. It was also decided that a grand commemorative ceremony would be held on the next anniversary of the Battle of Queenston Heights, October 13 1853. This event would act as a third funeral for Sir Isaac Brock and his remains would finally be interred in the new monument. As planning commenced for the commemoration that would be the biggest in the Heights’ brief but busy history, the committee also secured contracts with William Thomas and eventually the contractor. On August 9 1852, the committee officially resolved that Thomas’ design was accepted.\(^{162}\) At the same meeting the committee moved to strike a sub-committee with other “competent authorities” to determine any possible modifications to Thomas’ design.\(^{163}\)

By December 1852 William Thomas agreed to a total sum of £6495 for the execution of his design.\(^{164}\) At the same time, contractors submitted their own estimates for executing the work. In August 1852, the committee outlined the job of the contractor and the specific requirements for building the monument. The committee also laid out the exact process of taking down and then putting up the new commemoration; a very detailed instructional account of how

\(^{162}\) Brock Monument Committee Minutes, August 9 1852, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Minutes and Resolutions, Archives of Ontario.

\(^{163}\) Ibid. As the original drawings by Thomas are not available, and the sketch produced in the *Canadian Journal* the next month may have been altered, it is unknown if any major or notable changes were made to the original.

\(^{164}\) This estimate was separate of the wall that was to cost an additional £880. This sum is over £1500 more than his original estimate and there is no explanation of what the additional funds covered.
the contractor was to complete the work. The committee, in an undated letter from 1852, received a total of four applications. The four submissions varied significantly in their price; the least expensive estimated £5425 and the most expensive proposed £8940. The committee decided on the most cost efficient option, presented by John Worthington. According to that proposal, the design by Thomas was to cost £4875, while the additional expenses (the wall and figures) were totaled at £550. Worthington’s submission was the most desirable due to the low cost, but the committee did not act right away.

Before any significant construction was completed, the third funeral of Brock was scheduled on the Heights. Despite the importance of the ceremony and the eventual scale of the celebration, the committee was slow in developing their plans. In early September, Chief Justice Robinson wrote to William H. Merritt regarding the cornerstone laying ceremony and implied that a firm date was not in place. By October 6, a primary speaker for the event was still not secured but Merritt eventually took on the task. Some vague resolutions regarding the ceremony were finally passed at the end of September, but the committee was still in disarray.

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165 The contractor was fully responsible for building the monument. Unlike other smaller designs, the Architect was barely involved in the process after passing along the specification drawings. He was not responsible for any of the carvings or construction work that was usually the task of the artist in smaller designs.

166 Letter from Hector Munro to Chief Justice Robinson, undated, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario.

167 Letter from John Worthington to Committee for the Erection of the Brock Monument, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario.

168 The contractor did not receive notice of winning the contract until June 12 1853, nearly six months after the original estimates were forwarded (Letter from unknown author to Worthington, June 21 1853, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario).

169 Letter from W. B. Robinson to W. H. Merritt, September 5 1853, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario. Another letter to Merritt early the next month expressed further concern over invitations and distress about people unable to attend from other parts of the Province (Letter from unknown author to W.H. Merritt, October 5 1853, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario).

170 Regrets were received from A. F. Atkinson, citing other personal business. He suggested Merritt as the best choice to deliver the address, which was the eventual decision of the committee (Letter from A. F. Atkinson to W. H. Merritt, October 6 1853, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario).

171 Meeting of Building Committee, September 20 1853, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Minutes and Resolutions, Archives of Ontario.
According to the *Niagara Mail*, the Committee of Arrangements did not meet until October 10\textsuperscript{th}, and only sent out invitations on October 12.\textsuperscript{172} With considerable significance assigned to the rebuilding of the monument and the re-internment of Brock’s remains, it is a mystery why the committee was so slow in creating a viable program.

Despite the lack of notice, 12000-15000 people participated in the third funeral for Brock, nearly double the amount from the second funeral three decades before.\textsuperscript{173} The day’s events started with a funeral procession from the village of Queenston. However, with so many people attending from Niagara, the *Daily Mail* reported that the road was filled with crowds making their way to the Heights.\textsuperscript{174} The procession included similar participants to the previous two funerals; Colonels as pall bearers, veterans as chief mourners, militiamen, and various prominent citizens from the area. The building committee and the architect were also included in the procession, while thousands of others lined the route up to the Heights. One of the most prominent and (according to the *Niagara Mail*) the most popular attractions was the funeral car. Designed by William Thomas, the funeral car included many of the same symbols from the proposed monument. According to the newspaper reports, the car featured wreaths of laurel and the armorial bearings of Brock. All four sides were decorated in a “military trophy of muskets, bayonets, swords and other weapons actually used at Queenston…”\textsuperscript{175} The car was also covered in black cloth, with large black plumes. Six black horses, with trappings and other details that matched those of Brock, led the car.

In addition to the car, the entire site was decorated with a variety of flags and other colours. The newspaper report from the day repeatedly mentioned the presence of these colours,

\textsuperscript{172} *Niagara Mail*, “The Brock Celebration” October 19 1853.
\textsuperscript{173} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{174} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{175} Ibid.
noting the distinct impression they left on the spectators. In the village of Queenston itself, the individual citizens, all placed their Union Jacks at half-mast for the occasion.¹⁷⁶ The funeral car was also decorated by numerous flags: “Each corner of the Car was draped with Union Jacks, and on the centre were the British Colours, folded in mourning bands.”¹⁷⁷ The newspaper remarked that the “most striking object was the Heights, surmounted with three loft Flag-staffs, from which streamed the British Colours…”¹⁷⁸ The prominent display of the British Colours and Union Jack reminded the gathering that this was a patriotic affair. Speakers delivered addresses against the backdrop of these numerous emblems, which together emphasized the connections between Brock’s heroism and British patriotism and loyalty.

Following the car’s arrival at the main site, the bodies were officially interred in a vault in the new monument. An engraved plate, with the same engraving that originally appeared on the coffin of Brock from 1812, was placed on the new coffin. Along with the original engraving was a new text indicating the re-internment from 1824 and a final plate explaining the reason for the 1853 internment. Macdonell’s coffin was less decorated, with a single plate modeled on the original that graced his first. Both wood coffins were placed in a stone vault inside of the foundation of the monument. Following their internment, Lieutenant Colonel Donald Macdonell, brother of Brock’s Aide-de-camp, performed the cornerstone laying ceremony. The Niagara Mail reported that papers, coins, and other items were placed inside the hollow of the stone before it was officially laid, saluted by the artillery and three volleys from the military.

After the stone was in place, various speakers were invited to the podium to deliver their addresses. The Niagara Mail reported on four different speeches that day: William H. Merritt, David Thorburn, John S. Johnson (Chief from the Six Nations), and Colonel Taché. The reporter

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.
¹⁷⁷ Ibid.
¹⁷⁸ Ibid.
also included some of their own views interspersed amidst recordings of official addresses. Taken together, these five commentaries presented on a number of similar themes. For example, the character and personality of Sir Isaac Brock was a prominent subject in the speeches by Merritt and Thorburn. It was also mentioned by Johnson, the Chief of the Six Nations: “He was a true friend to the red man…” According to Merritt, Brock was not only a friend to the Indigenous warriors, but also to the regular militia men serving under him. “…[H]e directed his personal attention to the clothing, arms, equipments, mess, and personal comfort of the militia, and took every opportunity of gaining the good will of the Indians.” According to the speakers, Brock knew his allies so well that he took the enemy with their own weapons, calculating the best road to victory. Although he was a military man, none of the speakers emphasized his accomplishments directly in battle. There was no inclusion of how many men he killed or captured, nor his dominance as a battlefield General, even when discussing his military accomplishments. The character of Brock in the 1853 commemoration conformed to nineteenth-century ideals of the white British “gentleman hero”. Brock was to be praised for his intellectual capabilities in leading the people (“civilized” qualities), not ruthless military violence (“uncivilized” qualities).

The message of Brock’s third funeral was also centered on the idea of “cooperation”. This rhetoric promoted the idea that the War of 1812 was won due to a variety of individuals coming together as one unified people under the guidance of the British Crown. While the other funerals and events recognized the roles of other participants, particularly the militia, this was the first commemoration where the heroism of Brock was paired alongside the service of other

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179 Ibid.
180 Ibid.
181 Ibid. Merritt said: “Gen. Brock possessed energy, decision, tact, in short every attribute which constitutes a high order of talent.”
groups. The reason for this new emphasis on the ordinary citizen was partially due to a shift in politics. Although Brock was still the immortal hero, there was a need to recognize his connection with other ordinary people in Upper Canada, particularly to foster future loyalty to the Crown. Merritt spoke at length about the cooperation between the United Empire Loyalists, the native warriors, the militia, and the few British regulars, who came together to defeat the invading enemy. As with previous commemorations, the role of the militia was included in many of the speeches, but was more prominent in 1853. For example, David Thorburn commented on the tremendous price paid by many militiamen in defence of Upper Canada. Indigenous peoples were also regarded for their contributions. John Johnson used the notion of common battlegrounds and values to proclaim the equality of the First Nations with their white brethren: “We may truly expect that the pale race and the red man will meet together at God’s right hand.” He spoke at length of the bonds between the races, and particularly how both were invested in the defence of Canada.

Johnson was not the only speaker to include the role of Indigenous warriors in his talk. Merritt commented on the cruel treatment natives received from white settlers and called for these injuries to be redressed. He identified a lack of commemoration for their contributions: “They have no monuments to point out their departed chiefs – no written history to record their heroic deeds.” David Thorburn also recognized the contributions of the First Nations in “defence of their common liberty and common country.” The reporter for the Niagara Mail

182 Ibid. The Niagara Mail reported that William Woodruff, a man who served in the War of 1812, was shunned at the 1840 meeting due to politics: “Party feeling ran high in those days, and many of the Tories forgot, in the blindness of party rage, Mr. Woodruff’s services…” Party politics had not completely disappeared of course. Many of the original members of the 1840 committee were still serving in 1853.

183 Ibid.

184 Ibid.

185 Ibid.
commented on the presence of warriors, particularly John Johnson, in full costume. Using the spectacle, Johnson took the opportunity during his speech to affirm the First Nations presence not only on the War of 1812 battlefields, but in historic and contemporary Upper Canada. Johnson reminded that crowd: “Many of our brave warriors, too, shed their blood on the battle ground.” The conclusion to his speech recognized the power of the British Monarchy, but it also emphasized the continued presence of the First Nations: “… nor have we forgotten the treaty of peace between us and Great Britain. We too love our great Mother the Queen – and we humbly pray that she may never forget her forest children, nor turn a deaf ear to the appeals of the red man.”

The monument to Brock was a triumphal statement of British dominance in Upper Canada and the conquering of savage values (both “primitive” and Republican). However, the First Nations speaker used the occasion of loyalty in order to proclaim their continued presence in the colonial landscape. Although the gleaming white tower would soon loom over them, the Indigenous peoples of Canada were still present in Upper Canada.

One of the principal reasons for the commemoration of the past is to pass along a legacy of values to the future. In the design phase of the monument, the committee members acknowledged the importance of creating a grand design that would last generations. Colonel Taché was adamant that commemorations helped the present generation understand their role in defending the nation and was confident “should an emergency arise, they could still set an example of duty and valor to the younger generation.”

The memorial was about ensuring historical memory survived. However, commemorators were also trying to pass along the

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186 The newspaper mentions that the sight of the warriors was also very popular in the 1824 funeral. The Colonial Advocate from that period makes not a single mention of the gathered First Nations groups. It is unclear whether this reporter gleaned this information from other gathered spectators who remembered the 1824 funeral, or if they simply presumed.
187 Ibid.
188 Ibid.
189 Ibid.
feelings of loyalism and patriotism that were imbued in the narrative of the War of 1812.

Thorburn remarked that citizens of Upper Canada came together to show their continued patriotism and was warmed “to see so many old soldiers and young citizens come together to do honor to the illustrious Brock and McDonell [sic], and warm their bosoms with the fire of true patriotism on these Heights.”\(^{190}\) Similarly Merritt saw the commemoration as a task “for the next generation at least keep up a feeling of patriotism, a love of country, which every right minded man should cherish.”\(^{191}\) By commemorating past deeds, they were ensuring those ideals, intricately intertwined with virtues of Britishness and white “civilization”, would stand as long as the column.

Patriotism and loyalty to the British Crown was the most dominant theme of the speeches reported in the *Niagara Mail* and was emphasized by every speaker on numerous occasions. In their summary of the day, the *Mail* exclaimed: “It was a proud day, and exhibited beyond anything imaginable, the true British heart’s core of Upper Canada.”\(^{192}\) The newspaper also recognized the patriotic pride that Canadians took in the past accomplishments of their fathers and the heroism of Brock. Merritt emphasized this sentiment in his speech, expressing that this commemoration was about “supply[ing] its place with feelings of devotion and patriotism, for the purpose of performing the last solemn duty to the ever to be lamented Brock.”\(^{193}\) Colonel Taché proclaimed: “There is not in the whole dominion of Britain, a more loyal and more devoted class of subjects to be found.”\(^{194}\) The messages of patriotism were forged with a look towards a distinctly British (and white) future, offering a reminder of the everlasting power of commemoration. Near the closing of the article, the *Niagara Mail* emphasized: “While its mortal

\(^{190}\) Ibid.
\(^{191}\) Ibid.
\(^{192}\) Ibid.
\(^{193}\) Ibid.
\(^{194}\) Ibid.
effects will lasting upon the minds of the young men of Canada, by teaching them what their
gallant fathers did and sufferance in defence of the Country, and how true patriotism and fidelity
to our flag is honored by the Canadian people.” Commemorating Brock through a mighty
memorial was an education in loyalty for the present but especially the future generations. It was
an opportunity to ensure the legacy of Brock and his white British ideals remained long after his
bones withered.

After the speakers had concluded, the main gathering departed for the day and special
dignitaries were invited to an exclusive banquet. The third funeral and cornerstone ceremony was
complete, but the construction of the new monument was just beginning. The architect handed
over the work to the contractor, John Worthington. The re-building was started in the spring of
1854, over fourteen years after the bombing of the original. A year into the project, there was
already major financial problems. William Merritt noted in the winter of 1855 that the architect
was withdrawing large sums of money. Everything was supposed to be finished that November,
and the money was to ensure the monument was completed on time. However, by October the
committee reported that additional money was already due to the contractor. Paying that amount,
however, would put him well above the original agreed price. The architect supported the
contractor and advocated for additional funds. In the same letter, Thomas noted the monument
was nearly complete and should be finished within the next month. In December, the
contractor Worthington wrote a long plea of his own for additional money. According to his

195 Ibid.  
196 Most of the contractor’s letters come from Toronto. A few letters also allude to visiting the site, revealing that he
was not always present during the building.
197 Letter from W. H. Merritt to unknown recipient, March 12 1855, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock
Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario  
198 Committee for the Erection of the Brock Monument at Queenston, October 15 1855, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S
7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Minutes and Resolutions, Archives of Ontario  
199 Letter from William Thomas to W. H. Merritt, November 13 1855, Microfilm Reel MS 74, William Hamilton
Merritt Fonds, Archives of Ontario.
letter, the cost of labour had skyrocketed in the three years since his original estimate and the materials were far more expensive than anticipated due to difficulties with delivery. Worthington claimed that he would lose £500 for the project, not including his own time and expenses.

The committee somewhat agreed with the contractor and awarded him some additional money at their meeting in December 1855. However, the financial problems were not over yet. In March of the next year, the committee revealed that the project was over £1200 more than originally estimated. Worthington once again appealed to the committee for additional funds to cover his own expenses, still claiming to be at a personal loss for the project. Despite all of the promises for a finished monument in 1855, it was still not complete in the summer of 1856. Worthington promised the finished monument by the end of August of that year, but there were even more delays. By December, Thomas reported to the committee that nearly everything was completed, except for “a few trifling matters.” He wrote that the inscriptions plates and some other details needed completion. The stone wall and entranceway also needed to be finished, a project estimated for the next summer. By 1857 the committee was focused on completing the grounds of the monument, including a lodge for the caretaker of Brock’s column. The task of laying out the landscape design was awarded to William Mundie. The

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200 Letter from John Worthington to the Building Committee for the Erection of the Brock Monument, December 1855, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario.
201 Subcommittee of the Brock Building Committee, March 5 1856, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Minutes and Resolutions, Archives of Ontario.
202 Letter from John Worthington to the Subcommittee, March 3 1856, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario.
203 Letter from John Worthington to the Committee for the erection of the Brock Monument, July 2 1856, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario.
204 Letter from William Thomas to the Committee for Brock Monument, December 18 1856, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario.
205 Meeting of the Brock Monument Building Committee, October 22 1857, F1151-3, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Minutes and Resolutions, Archives of Ontario.
206 There is no evidence to indicate if he competed in a design competition or was simply chosen by Merritt for the position.
monument committee was still having significant financial issues, as the amount owed to Mundie was still left unpaid after his death. William Thomas finally reported the whole of the monument, including the grounds, complete in June 1859, six years after the third funeral. With the grounds completed, Thomas suggested an inauguration for the monument in the fall of 1859. Based on the newspaper report from the Daily Globe, this ceremony was also planned at the last moment and fewer could attend as a result.

The 1859 inauguration was not planned as a funeral like in 1853, but instead focused on the long process of commemorating the hero. The Daily Globe extensively covered the entire commemorative process of Brock, dating back to the original funeral in 1812. It also covered the inauguration address, delivered by Sir Allan MacNab. Both the coverage and the speeches reveal that the commemorative discourse surrounding Brock had not changed since the third funeral six years prior. Instead, both the newspaper and MacNab prominently covered the same themes. As with the earlier commemorations, the character of Brock was emphasized numerous times. The writer for the Daily Globe proclaimed:

Nature had been very bountiful to Sir Isaac Brock in those personal gifts which appear to such peculiar advantage in the army, and at the first glance the soldier and the gentleman were seen… His manners were courteous, frank and engaging. Brave, liberal and humane – devoted to his sovereign and loving his country with romantic fondness.

MacNab also chose to emphasize the character of Brock as a leader of the people and all classes: “The militia were… inspired with confidence and self-reliance by the encouraging example of Brock; that his example and influence were... the foundation of all that followed his untimely

207 Letter from William Mundie to W. Merritt, July 14 1859, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario.
208 Letter from William Thomas to W. H. Merritt, June 3 1859, F1151-1-0-1, Microfilm reel S 7690, Brock Committee Fonds, Correspondence, Archives of Ontario.
210 Ibid.
death.” As the ideal white “gentleman hero” shifted in the mid nineteenth century, the memory of Brock still coincided with “civilized” British virtues.

As in 1853, there was also significant emphasis placed on the cooperation of various ordinary people inspired by Brock’s heroic example. MacNab evoked the symbol of common origin, stating: “… the blood of our Militia and of our valiant Indian allies was freely shed, and mingled with the blood of regular soldiers, with whom they fought and died side by side in defence of Canada.” He continued by emphasizing that it was left to the present generation to continue the good fellowship and partnerships that were formed during the War of 1812. It was even important to recognize the untold sacrifices of wives and mothers, children and the infirm, during the war years. Cooperation also extended to the role of Indigenous peoples. MacNab acknowledged the role of First Nations in shedding blood alongside Brock, and also contributing funds to the new monument. Unlike Johnson’s 1853 speech, however, the figure of Brock was the only leader and a civilizing force of Britishness. The newspaper reporter commented that Brock “engaged them to throw aside the scalping knife, implanted in their breasts the virtues of clemency and forbearance, and taught them to feel pleasure and pride in the compassion extended to a vanquished enemy; in return they loved him as their common father, and while under his command were guilty of no excess.” This account positioned Brock as a marker of civilization that led the “savages” towards humanity. This rhetoric from a British Canadian speaker was a striking contrast to Chief Johnson’s speech about equality between the First Peoples and the white British hero six years earlier.

The largest emphasis in 1859 was again placed on imbuing the present and future generation with the same feelings of patriotism. The monument, according to MacNab, had lived

211 Ibid.
212 Ibid.
213 Ibid.
up to its purpose. It was an ever-present reminder that the death of Brock and others was in defence of their country and “invigorated and encouraged by their example, the loyal inhabitants of Canada proudly exult in it.”214 The monument alone was not the commemoration, continued MacNab, but the patriotic feeling amongst Upper Canada’s population was proof that Brock’s legacy continued. Along with MacNab, the *Daily Globe* also emphasized the patriotism of the event and the importance for Upper Canada’s short history. The coverage remarked: “History, indeed, offers few parallels of such long cherished public attachment.”215 The rhetoric of the final inauguration of the monument matched the looming tower now completed above the crowds. It fit the idealized memory of Brock that was shaped and re-shaped throughout the nineteenth century. The monument was to commemorate one remarkable individual, but importantly it was an example for future generations. From the early days of commemoration nearly fifty years earlier, officials were concerned with continuing Brock’s legacy to the future. The grand column on top of Queenston Heights ensured that the people of the Niagara region would remember Brock the man. However, the design of the column and the values attached to the Neo-Classical design ensured that any visitor to the site would understand what he represented.

**Conclusion**

The commemoration of Major General Sir Isaac Brock began shortly after his death, with an elaborate funeral staged amidst the horrors of the ongoing war. For decades, citizens of Upper Canada would turn out to more funerals, dedications, services, and memorials to their fallen hero. They would pledge money, participate in design competitions, serve on committees, and offer addresses, all in the hopes of recognizing their hero and everything he represented. The

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214 Ibid.  
215 Ibid.
elites of the community knew that it was critical to shape the young colony with white British values, and Brock’s memorial offered the perfect opportunity. A man revered in life and even more recognized in death was the ideal chance to shape the masses. It was also necessary to create a bold international statement. Positioned on the border of their southern foes and high above the “savage” colonial landscape, Queenston Heights was the perfect site to place the biggest marker possible. As Brock’s monument claimed the land, British values also triumphed.

With so much importance placed on Brock’s memory, the committee spent endless hours dedicated to finding the perfect design. Tower and obelisk memorials were proposed in great number, but committee members consistently turned to one design: the triumphal column. It was the perfect representation of the hero, a much-repeated memorial throughout Britain and the Empire. The use of Classical iconography offered an ideal link between the greatness of ancient civilizations and the contemporary British Crown. By combining the elements of Classical
iconography with modern British symbols, Thomas lifted Brock to a level of immortality reserved for the gods. The Classical design was the perfect complement to the values his memory represented and the ultimate victory of “civilization”. Addresses at meetings, funerals and inaugurations confirmed that Brock was a representative of the ideal white “gentleman hero”, an exemplary figure that symbolized “civilized” British values and duties of citizenship. As represented on his grand column, Brock was akin to a Classical god but rooted in the realm of nineteenth-century Britishness. The distinctive imprint of the column was an everlasting reminder of Britishness on the Canadian landscape.

It was nearly the semi-centennial of the Battle of Queenston Heights, but commemorators finally had their long imagined monument. After countless financial delays, numerous prospective designs, and even a bomb, Major General Sir Isaac Brock was commemorated at the site of his final victory. Much had changed in the span of nearly five decades. Upper Canada was officially Canada West, soon to be known as the province of Ontario in the newly formed Dominion of Canada. The colony was rapidly growing and immigration continued to feed the Niagara region. Column building in Great Britain was waning as the final touches were put on Nelson’s Column in Trafalgar Square. The dominant recognition of military figures was giving way to an increasing number of memorials to political and social leaders. Amidst all of this change, the commemoration of Brock remained. The mighty column would stand through lightning strikes and renovations, servings its purpose as an everlasting memorial to the fallen hero and the “civilized” virtues he stood for. Ascribed values would shift with the times as new commemorators from different periods added their own meanings. However, the gleaming shaft would continue to reign over the landscape below, a constant reminder of the ideal British “gentleman hero” from the nineteenth century.
Chapter 3: “The Monument is Intended to be of a Strictly Indian Character”: The Monument to Joseph Brant in Brantford, 1886

[Image of the Monument to Joseph Brant in Brantford]

Figure 3.1: Brittney Anne Bos. “View of Brant’s Monument in Brantford.” Photograph. May 2013.

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1 Circular from the Brant Memorial Association, July 10 1883, Enclosure in letter from G.H. Muirhead to John A. Macdonald, January 15 1884, Microfilm reel 1701, Volume 320, page 144517 to 144523, Political Papers (miscellaneous), Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.
October 13 1886: The cannons on Queenston Heights had been silent for seventy-four years. The great hero Sir Isaac Brock had long ago been buried for the last time, and an imposing column was set above his eternal resting place. Upper Canada was safe from American invasion and was now an important stronghold of the British Empire. Nonetheless, the historical memory of Ontario reminded its people that they needed to thank Brock for the continued preservation of the nation. The newly created Ontario, within the young Dominion of Canada, was commemorating another hero on the anniversary of the great immortal Brock. This hero was singled out for his own acts of bravery that defended the British Crown. He was noted for his role in creating the province that Brock and others worked so hard to preserve. He was memorialized for his dedication to British values, the spread of Christianity, and civil obedience. The hero was marked with a physical likeness on a large pedestal, much smaller in scale than Brock, but still grand in appearance. His presence was to loom over the citizens of Canada for decades, serving as an exceptional example for the masses to emulate. He was commemorated with all of the trimmings of a British hero, complete with military parades, prayers of dedication, songs of celebration, and erections in bronze. However, this hero was not quite British: Joseph Brant, Thayendanegea⁰, was a racial “Other”.

The commemoration of notable individuals that accomplished significant feats of bravery remained a primary subject in the Canadian commemorative landscape throughout the nineteenth century.³ Sir Isaac Brock’s grand column was the largest commemoration of its kind, but similar

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² Joseph Brant’s Mohawk name was Thayendanegea. Historical documents reveal that he personally used both names interchangeably throughout his life. Commemorators (both European and Six Nations) from the nineteenth century primarily used his English name when referring to him (however, the final monument only includes his Mohawk name). For consistency, I will only be using his English name unless documents refer to his Mohawk name.

³ Military heroes (those from the War of 1812, the Seven Years war and the American Revolution in particular) were the primary subjects of commemoration until the mid nineteenth century. Around the time of Confederation,
subjects were taken up throughout the province as Canada transitioned from colony to nation. Ordinary citizens were largely excluded from memorials, the focus being on “founding fathers,” explorers, military heroes, and, increasingly, politicians. As each community in Ontario searched for its own hero of national importance, Brantford turned its attention to its namesake: Joseph Brant. Recognized as the original leader of the Six Nations and a loyal Christian adherent to the British Crown, Brant was already considered the ideal colonial subject. Despite increased tensions with British officials in the latter part of his life, Brant was remembered for his fidelity to British values. Although specific commemorations were slow to develop, the memory of Brant remained relatively strong in the area surrounding Brantford after his death.⁴

The memory of Joseph Brant offered particular appeal for colonial officials in Canada. Brant was Mohawk by birth, but it was argued that with successful education and Christianization, he became the ideal colonial subject. On one hand, Brant was a political figure that appeared to adhere to European conventions and values. His deeds and personal ideology was an example for other First Nations, and served as proof for white officials that assimilation did work. Not only was Brant an accomplished cultural leader, he was also a perfect example of the military hero. The European-imagined attributes of his race, particularly his strength and “warrior” qualities, were applied to British ideas of heroism. When used in defense of British values, the stereotypical “savage” was a useful asset.⁵ However, linking Brant’s military

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⁴ Tecumseh was the only other Aboriginal figure to gain any significant heroic recognition during the nineteenth century in Upper Canada/Ontario. Despite the mention of his name at War of 1812 commemorations, Tecumseh was never formally recognized through a physical memorial until the middle of the twentieth century.

accomplishments to standard British heroism of the nineteenth century required some flexibility. As a Mohawk, Brant could not conform to the ideals of the white “gentleman hero” in the same way as Brock. Nonetheless, like Brock, the leadership qualities of Brant were the primary focus for commemorators throughout the nineteenth century. His specific military feats were downplayed, and significant attention was directed to his loyalty to British institutions and values. Joseph Brant was distinctly commemorated as a First Nations leader, but he was also memorialized as an individual who had successfully assimilated.

The various commemorations of Joseph Brant are unconventional examples of recognizing a First Nations leader who straddled ideas about European heroism and racialized “Othering.” Brant was clearly Mohawk, an identity that was a consistent feature in both portraits painted during his lifetime and physical commemorations erected after his death. However, Brant was not simply Mohawk in the eyes of his European commemorators. Rather, he was a unconventional example, from a seemingly “primitive” race, who had attained a level of civilization through exposure to British (and Christian) values. In this way Joseph Brant was not memorialized as a “noble savage”, a popular stereotypical representation of First Nations in the English-speaking world from the seventeenth century onwards that characterized some Indigenous peoples as naturally pure and uncorrupted (but ultimately uncivilized). Instead, Joseph Brant was symbolic of the project of assimilation and the possibilities of civilization for Indigenous cultures. He was proof, through his perceived heroic dedication to British

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6 The Noble Savage first appeared in Great Britain in the late seventeenth century. The idea of the “primitive”, close to nature and uncorrupted by modernity, remained popular throughout the nineteenth century and culminated in Charles Dicken’s *The Noble Savage*. These representations were often based in romantic primitivism that looked to “uncivilized” colonies as curiosities to be recorded before they disappeared forever. The passive and non-threatening symbol of the noble savage was often placed in contrast to the more dangerous colonial threats that defied the “civilizing” process.
institutions, that exceptional examples of the “savage” could attain greatness.\(^7\) In the eyes of late nineteenth-century commemorators, proper European education and religious instruction had converted Joseph Brant and elevated his racial status.\(^8\) He was a hero who met European standards and would be memorialized as such, but more importantly he was an example for his race.

When he was commemorated with a monument in 1886, the figure of Joseph Brant was a significant symbol for the position of Indigenous peoples in Canada. The Indian Act was barely a decade old, the North West Rebellion was present in everyone’s memory, residential schools were spreading throughout the young country, reserves and treaties were being carved out, and oppressive policies were continuously enacted. Questions about voting in the Six Nations were answered in the local newspaper immediately adjacent to a call for contributions to the commemoration of Brant.\(^9\) In the *Brantford Expositor*, reports on the Brant Memorial’s progress ran alongside stories of the Dominion government’s policies of starving the North West Indigenous peoples.\(^10\) The “good Indian” of Joseph Brant was strategically placed alongside stories of the “bad Indians” from the North West. Joseph Brant was commemorated for his

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\(^7\) This was one of the final goals of assimilation and the “civilization” process. For more on these policies, see: Andrew Armitage, *Comparing the Policy of Aboriginal Assimilation: Australia, Canada and New Zealand* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1995); Celia Haig-Brown and David A. Nock (eds.), *With Good Intentions: Euro-Canadian and Aboriginal Relations in Colonial Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006); Mark Francis, “The ‘Civilizing’ of Indigenous People in Nineteenth-Century Canada,” *Journal of World History* 9, issue 1 (1998): 51-87.

\(^8\) There is ambiguous historical evidence regarding the degree to which Brant was actually assimilated into British Upper Canada culture. He corresponded with colonial officials in eloquent English, founded and remained a member of the Church of England in the Brantford area, and cooperated with political officials when settled in Upper Canada. Nonetheless, he remained a strong advocate for Six Nations rights and self-determination. Further study is required, using the sparse documents about Brant, to determine how much his memory after his death differed from his actual life, particularly regarding the question of his assimilation, an idea so often evoked by white commemorators.


dedication to British values and his adherence to the British Crown only months after significant Indigenous rebellions in the western provinces and the enactment of new policies to quell discontent. The bronze figure of Brant was not simply about heroic deeds accomplished by an exceptional Mohawk man a century previous; rather, the monument symbolized support for assimilation and the conversion of Indigenous peoples to European values.

This chapter first considers the early commemorations of Joseph Brant immediately after his death and into the mid nineteenth century. Starting with his original tomb in Burlington, the memory of Brant waned after the War of 1812 offered new heroes, but was quickly reinvigorated by mid century. His re-entombment at the Mohawk Chapel was accompanied by a fresh wave of publications that pushed for a monument. The next portion of this chapter outlines the plans for this commemoration and particularly the political context in which it happened. Amidst the shifting political landscape, commemorators in the Brantford area sought the perfect visual language for representing their local hero, who was also Mohawk. A significant portion of this chapter is dedicated to the design competition and eventual selection process. Because the committee was seeking a specific iconography for an Indigenous leader, the choice of design was an important reflection of their political goals. This section also documents a visiography of Indigenous representation in British and Canadian art, including a discussion of notable portraits of Joseph Brant. Painted numerous times during his lifetime, Brant left a lengthy visual record before his death in 1807. This chapter then analyzes the ceremonies accompanying the monument and particularly the speeches offered at the cornerstone laying and the unveiling in the autumn of 1886. The monument to Joseph Brant is a culmination of multiple iconographies that visually links the memory of Brant with the changing position of First Nations peoples in late nineteenth-century Canada.
Admirers of His Fidelity: The First Commemorations of Brant

The monument to Joseph Brant, unveiled in 1886, was a suitable conclusion to a century of commemorative interest by white Canadians in the life of the Mohawk leader. During his lifetime, Brant was artistically depicted more than most heroes, eliciting significant attention from British and Canadian elites. However, following Joseph Brant’s death in 1807, efforts to commemorate his life by white Canadians were marginal. He faded from British collective memory as other heroes came to dominate commemorations. The War of 1812 created a new class of heroes that quickly became the focus of Upper Canada’s memorials. As discussed previously, this war served as an important historical memory in the colony’s young collective consciousness, symbolizing unification and loyalism, and the ultimate triumph of white Britishness. Many in the region were focused on the continuation of Sir Isaac Brock’s legacy, but the memory of Joseph Brant never completely left the commemorative landscape of the area.11

Throughout the mid-nineteenth century, there were attempts to revitalize the memory of Joseph Brant. From his re-entombment in 1850 to the establishment of a dedicated committee for his monument in the late 1870s, various individuals and groups endeavored to add Brant’s name to the colonial memory of heroic loyalism in the area.

After Joseph Brant’s death his body was placed in a tomb and buried in Burlington, Ontario. Writing decades later, the author Ke-Che-Ah-Gah-Me-Qua referred to the grave as “humble” and “obscure.”12 By mid century, a public campaign was instigated to move the remains of Brant to a more suitable location. It was eventually agreed that the tomb of Joseph

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11 This research did not consider the commemorations of Joseph Brant by the Six Nations themselves. However, upon preliminary investigation, it appears that while Brant remained a common name and an important historical figure, there were no significant European-style commemorations of his memory by the Six Nations. Notably, his name or heroism is not recorded by the Six Nations in any War of 1812 commemorations. Further comparative research would be an interesting avenue to pursue.

Brant would be brought to the Mohawk Chapel just outside Brantford. Declared as the first Protestant Church in Upper Canada, the Mohawk Chapel was an enduring symbol of Six Nations loyalism to the British Crown and their successful Christian conversion.\textsuperscript{13} Donated and erected by the British government as a tribute of thanks in 1785, the Chapel was a suiting place for the final resting place of Joseph Brant. On November 25 1850, a procession began on the outskirts of Brantford that included both European members of the community and residents from the Six Nations reserve. Symbols of Brant’s loyalism were featured in the ceremony including a banner, which read: “God Save the Queen.”\textsuperscript{14}

Church of England representatives conducted the primary religious service and linked Brant’s Christian identity with his adherence to European values.\textsuperscript{15} The Rev. Nelles, a Church of England Missionary, commented that Brant was a valuable ally of the British Crown and his services were greatly valued by the Dominion Government. The Reverend praised Brant as a warrior, but also commented on the important role he played in Christianizing the Six Nations, an equally significant task in the eyes of the British colonizers.\textsuperscript{16} David Thorburn, then Chief Indian Commissioner, focused part of his talk on the time Brant spent in England following the


\textsuperscript{14} Ke-Che-Ah-Gah-Me-Qua, The Life of Capt. Joseph Brant, 30-32.

\textsuperscript{15} The “civilizing” process was intricately tied to religious conversion. As commemorators recognized Brant as a “civilized” Indigenous leader, this was also carefully tied with Christian values. For more on these religious connections, see: Rowan Strong, \textit{Anglicanism and the British Empire, c.1700-1850} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Alvyn Austin and Jamie S. Scott (eds.), \textit{Canadian Missionaries, Indigenous Peoples: Representing Religion at Home and Abroad} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005); Tolly Bradford and Chelsea Horton (eds.), \textit{Mixed Blessings: Indigenous Encounters with Christianity in Canada} (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016).

During his visit, according to Thorburn, Brant was accepted as “Nature’s Nobleman,” greatly respected and treated equally by those of noble birth in Britain. Both of these speeches, as well as others delivered at the re-internment, spoke to Brant’s unconventional position. Each speaker mentioned his identity as Mohawk, but also characterized him as an ideal loyal subject. This contrast of his racialized identity and British values aligned with policies of assimilation that argued Christianizing and “civilizing” the savage would elevate them to a position close to whites. Even in this earlier period, the memory of Brant was evidence for European policy makers that assimilation would lead to higher achievements of civilization by the First Peoples.

Figure 3.2: Brittney Anne Bos. “Joseph Brant’s Tomb Located Outside of the Mohawk Chapel, Six Nations Territory.” Photograph. April 2011.

17 At the same time as the re-internment, David Thorburn was also a leading member of the committee rebuilding Brock’s monument on Queenston Heights.
The re-interment was an opportunity to visually recognize the memory of Joseph Brant at his final resting place. The tomb containing Brant’s remains in the yard of the Mohawk Chapel is very simple in design with limited iconographical references (Fig. 3.2). There are no images appearing on the outside of the tomb or around any of the plaques, nor are there any statues on or near the site. The form of the tomb is recognizable to Western viewers; a Classical-inspired rectangular container with moldings and marked edges but no further embellishments.\(^{19}\) Although there is a distinct lack of visual iconography, there are a number of plaques on the site and surrounding the tomb. All of these plaques are later additions, including a tablet on the surrounding fence from the Masonic Foundation of Ontario (1984). This text includes the carved inscription originally appearing on the top of the tomb, now nearly eroded by weather. This inscription begins: “This tomb is erected to the memory of Thayendanegea, or Captain Joseph Brant, Principal Chief and Warrior of the Six Nations Indians, by his Fellow-Subjects, admirers of his fidelity and attachment to the British Crown.”\(^{20}\) This original inscription matches the surviving written account of the re-interment as an event emphasizing Brant’s loyal service. The re-interment at the Mohawk Chapel was the first large-scale commemoration of Brant and would serve as a useful template for subsequent nineteenth-century memorials.

One of the few major written accounts of the re-interment was featured in a commemorative memoir of Joseph Brant released in 1886 by Ke-Che-Ah-Gah-Me-Qua. An English woman married to Ojibway missionary Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby), Elizabeth Field

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\(^{20}\) This same inscription is captured on an additional plaque on the side of the tomb. This plaque is undated, but also appears to be a transcription to aid in the reading of the eroded text on the top of the stone.
wrote under her designated Aboriginal name.\textsuperscript{21} Over a decade earlier, she released one of the first biographies of Joseph Brant.\textsuperscript{22} That same year, Brant was also the subject of a biography by publisher C.E. Stewart.\textsuperscript{23} Both authors claim to be writing against un-cited American historians who vilified Joseph Brant as responsible for significant massacres during the American Revolution. These publications are notable for the language they employ in perpetuating the memory of Brant. C.E. Stewart proclaims: “… In all accounts of his character, [Joseph Brant] was the most celebrated of all the Aborigines who have distinguished themselves in the eyes of Europeans on this continent since the work of civilization began.”\textsuperscript{24} Ke-Che-Ah-Gah-Me-Qua reaches further in her praise, likening Joseph Brant to the celebrated British heroes of the nineteenth century: “… Whose mighty arm had been so frequently uplifted with unequalled success in defence of the country whose very name was dreaded by our foes, and whose valour, patriotism and mercy towards the vanquished were scarcely ever excelled…”\textsuperscript{25} She also calls Brant: “One of the most valiant and distinguished military leaders.”\textsuperscript{26}

To appeal to their white audiences, both of these authors likened Brant to British military heroes that were popular in other literature. Primarily writing for a European Canadian market, these publications pushed for the revitalization and increased interest in Brant’s memory in order to serve as a symbol of broader imperial loyalties. Ke-Che-Ah-Gah-Me-Qua used the wider interest in loyalism and heroism during this period to spark a much bigger idea: a monument to Joseph Brant. It appears that she was the first person to suggest a monument, noting: “Would it

\textsuperscript{21} For more on Ke-Che-Ah-Gah-Me-Qua and her husband, see: Donald B. Smith, \textit{Sacred Feathers: the Reverend Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby) and the Mississauga Indians} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987).

\textsuperscript{22} Ke-Che-Ah-Gah-Me-Qua, \textit{Sketch of the Life of Captain Joseph Brant, Thayendanagea} (Montreal: J. Dougall, 1872).

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Memoir of the Distinguished Mohawk Indian Chief, Sachem and Warrior, Capt. Joseph Brant: Compiled from the Most Reliable and Authentic Records, Including a Brief History of the Principal Events of His Life, with an Appendix and Portrait} (Brantford: C.E. Stewart, 1872).

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., unnumbered page.

\textsuperscript{25} Ke-Che-Ah-Gah-Me-Qua, \textit{Sketch of the Life}, 29.

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 29-30.
not do credit to the white population of the country to erect a monument to the memory of Thayendanagea, that succeeding generations may see and know the hero after whom the fast rising town of Brantford and our beautiful county is named?"27 Her personal motivations for this suggestion are revealed throughout the rest of her text. She emphasizes the need to commemorate the hero that inspired ideas of “civilization” among the native populations. Consequently, she uses Joseph Brant as an example to prove “the Indian mind is capable of a high state of civilization. The subject of this paper … is a wonderful instance of what Indian intellect can accomplish when sharpened and polished by intercourse with the better class of European society.”28 For her, Joseph Brant was not only an emblem of loyalty, but also evidence of what civilization could accomplish in the Indigenous population. Similar to the speeches on the day of the re-entombment, she was confident that assimilation was the best policy for Indigenous peoples, and the heroic Brant served as proof. This viewpoint was replicated by commemorators erecting the monument to Brant a decade later.

Only two years after the publication of the biographies on Brant, a royal visit inspired more people to push for a national commemoration. In 1874, Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught, visited Canada. His tour included a trip to the Six Nations reserve. During his visit, the Six Nations presented an address and attached petition, asking for His Royal Highness to be the designated patron for a memorial by the Dominion government to their hero. They wrote of Joseph Brant, who:

…[L]oyally and gallantly led their fathers as allies of the Crown in defence of it and the Empire, and when all was lost, with them maintained his allegiance, sacrificing and giving up all, and finding his way to the then wilds of Canada, where he remained to the end of his eventful career animating and inspiring them with them same loyalty and attachment to

27 Ibid., 3.
28 Ibid.
the Crown and its institutions which always characterized him and them whenever their services were required.29

As with the 1850 re-internment, the justification for commemoration was focused on Brant’s position as a loyal servant of the British Crown and an exemplary leader who inspired his own people. The Six Nations concluded the letter by proclaiming their own continued “fidelity and attachment to Her Royal person and Government.”30 They implicitly argued that a commemoration was required not only to recognize the enduring memory of loyalty, but more importantly to inspire future generations of Six Nations.

The Brantford Daily Expositor wrote that Prince Arthur gave a “favourable reply”31 to the request, but no immediate action was taken. While support for the monument remained strong, the impetus driving its erection weakened throughout the 1870s. Two years after the letter was presented to Prince Arthur, a committee was finally formed. David Christie, speaker of the Senate, was chosen as Chairman, while Allan Cleghorn (the future Chairman) served as Vice President on the first committee. Along with a strong executive council, the first committee also had a number of First Nations Chiefs. This special portion of the committee included one leader from each Six Nation and an additional Chief from the Mississaugas of the New Credit.

This first committee was focused on securing the necessary funding for the project and thus devoted most of their first years searching for both private and public subscriptions. Early in the committee’s history, the Six Nations voted to commit some of their funds for the creation of the monument. In 1877, the Council of the Six Nations pledged $5000 worth of support to the monument, a very substantial sum that was only equaled by the Dominion Government.32

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29 Brantford Daily Expositor Brant Memorial Number, Oct 13 1886.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
years after the establishment of the committee, Allan Cleghorn, Chief Johnson, and J.T. Gilkison, Superintendent of the Six Nations, travelled to Ottawa in order to enlist support for the monument. By this time, Sir John A. Macdonald had already agreed to be a Vice Patron of the memorial, and was considered an important influence to gather more support in Ottawa.\textsuperscript{33} It is unclear exactly when the Dominion Government voted to provide funds for the Brant memorial, but the delegates from Brantford likely had some influence in the decision.\textsuperscript{34} In the end, the government provided $5000 for the monument.

Due to the state of the memorial’s fund, the committee remained largely inactive through the final years of the 1870s and into the early part of the 1880s. It is unclear if other factors influenced the committee’s lack of activity in this period, but a new committee was formed in June 1883, this time with Allan Cleghorn as President.\textsuperscript{35} The new committee was immediately more active. By this time, much of the necessary funds were secured and the committee focused on choosing a design.\textsuperscript{36} From the beginning, however, politics were threatening to pull the committee apart. The original Chairman, David Christie, was a Liberal and the new President, Allan Cleghorn, was a self-proclaimed Grit.\textsuperscript{37} However, others on the committee, notably J.T.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[33] Letter from A. Robertson to John A. Macdonald, April 16 1879, MG26-A, Microfilm reel 1716, volume 357, page 164926-164927, Sir John A. Macdonald Papers, LAC.
\item[34] Based on a petition from May 8 1883, it appears that funding was finally voted on in May 1883. A letter from Sam Gardner at the end of the month references that a “liberal grant from the Government” was received for the monument (Letter from S. Gardner to John A. Macdonald, May 26 1883, MG26-A, Microfilm reel C-1699, volume 316, page 142985-142986, Sir John A. Macdonald Papers, LAC).
\item[35] Letter from J.T. Gilkison to John A. Macdonald, June 25 1883, MG26-A, Microfilm reel C-1699, Volume 316, Page 142981-142984, Sir John A. Macdonald Papers, LAC. The list enclosed in this letter included: Patrons: His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, His Excellency the Governor General; Directors: Allan Cleghorn (President), Ignatius Cockshutt (Vice President), The Honorable Archdeacon William Paterson MP, A. Robertson (Manager of Bank of BNA), J.T. Gilkison, Robert Henry (Treasurer), Hugh McKay Wilson (Barrister), David Thompson (M.D.), James W. Digby (M.D.), Reginald Herrold (M.D.), William Beck (Manufacturer), Alfred J. Wilkes (Barrister), John H. Stratford, William Watt (Mayor Ex-Officio), Henry Clench (Chief), John Buck (Chief), William Wage (Chief), G.H.M. Johnson (Chief), Josiah Hill (Chief), John Hill (Chief), Geo. H. Muirhead (Secretary).
\item[37] The History of the County of Brant, Ontario (Toronto: Warner, Beers, 1883).
\end{footnotes}
Gilkison, Robert Henry, and Thomas Elliott, were Conservatives, with close ties to the Macdonald government.  

Early in the work of this new committee, political interests came to the fore. Robert Henry, former Mayor of Brantford and a future Conservative MP for Brant South, wrote to Macdonald regarding his concern for the funds. He was worried that the money, particularly the amount provided by the Dominion Government, would be misused if not placed in the proper hands. Gilkison was also concerned with the Liberal dominance and invited Macdonald to appoint someone to “represent your Government on the Board.” Concurrently, Thomas Elliott was providing an inside perspective on the committee, even though he did not appear on the official list of members from June 1883. Local president of the South Brant Liberal Conservative Association and future Mayor of Brantford, Elliott wrote to Macdonald with updates on the workings of the board throughout the monument’s progress. The first surviving letter from Thomas Elliott is blunt, remarking that since the “parties who have been interesting themselves greatly in this concern are all Grits, deep dyed too, we hope you will see that the money is judiciously spent.” Shortly after the naming of the new committee in June, Elliott responded to another letter from Macdonald and wanted to clarify the political background of the

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38 Given the number of correspondences with Macdonald, it seems that the Prime Minister was very interested in the monument and requested frequent updates on its progress. Only one correspondence from Macdonald himself survives. However, based on the replies, it appears he was in active correspondence with numerous members of the committee regarding its progress. As the Minister of Indian Affairs, he was likely interested in the monument as part of his Cabinet portfolio, but other events surrounding First Nations across Canada also likely influenced his interest in commemorating Joseph Brant.


41 His father, John Elliott, was a member of the first committee in 1876. John Elliott does not appear on any of the other committee lists, nor does Thomas. It is possible that Thomas simply attended the meetings as a member of the public; however, he conveys information to Macdonald that would have only, likely, been available to a member of the committee.

committee. He notes that: “The president is one Allan Cleghorn a noted Grit and schemer and the party who has been soliciting the subscriptions.” According to his letter, Elliott believed that Cleghorn and others on the committee had been collecting funds that were not forwarded to the Secretary or Treasurer. Elliott was pushing for Tory political interests, but he does mention an incident that may have sparked concerns from all supporters. According to Elliott, a model was placed on display in order to solicit subscriptions. The unnamed artist demanded a fee that the committee was not prepared to pay. As a result of the ensuing lawsuit, the committee was forced to pay $100 to this artist for their submission and legal fees.

The fundraising efforts from the first committee produced a sizable fund that was now available to secure an artist. The correspondences from this period give conflicting accounts as to the amount of money raised, but the committee had at least $12,500. After the formation of the second committee and before the design selection began, Gilkison suggested to Macdonald that a petition should be forwarded to the British government, asking for their support. He reported writing a petition himself, which was to be signed by the Six Nations Chiefs, “allud[ing] to the services of Brant and of the Six Nations as deserving of recognition by the Home Government.” Gilkison believed that they could secure at least £2000. It is unclear if the petition was ever endorsed by Macdonald and forwarded to the Colonial Secretary, Lord Derby, as requested. Nonetheless, the Imperial government did not provide any funding for the

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43 Ibid.
45 Ibid. The artist is not named in the letter, nor is a date given for this incident. However, an artist did submit a design in 1880 (discussed later in the chapter) that does provide some evidence for this occurrence.
46 The City of Brantford passed a motion in Council to pledge $5000. However, as noted in subsequent correspondences and the Brantford Daily Expositor, the City eventually decreased the amount to $2500. Brantford Daily Expositor Brant Memorial Number, October 13 1886, lists the contribution of the City Council of Brantford as $2500. A letter from J.T. Gilkison to John A. Macdonald, June 25 1883, Gilkison notes that the city renewed the amount for only $2500, down from its original $5000 pledge. He expressed confidence that the city would restore the full amount when needed, but it is unlikely the City contributed any additional funds.
47 Letter from J.T. Gilkison, June 25 1883.
monument, but instead donated thirteen bronze cannons that were eventually melted to form the
dfinal figures.

**Searching for “Other” Iconographies**

When the Committee embarked on creating the monument to Joseph Brant, there was already a
long history of European iconography which depicted Indigenous peoples. Individual leaders,
such as Brant, were not marked by a monumental creation; however, Indigenous peoples were a
standard feature in art about the colonies since the early eighteenth century. The iconography
employed to depict these figures matched the broader social and political ideologies of the
period, and therefore changed as the centuries wore on. Nonetheless, Indigenous figures
remained an important symbol in European and Canadian art until the end of the nineteenth
century. When the committee gathered the submission guidelines for artists, they were aware of
this existing iconography and certainly would judge final submissions based on familiar
iconographical references. However, Joseph Brant was an exceptional case. Not only was he a
recognized individual (most Indigenous figures in art were “anonymous”), he was also
artistically represented numerous times during his life. There were multiple iconographies used
by Europeans to depict Indigenous peoples in Canada, but there were also numerous portraits of
Brant to provide inspiration.

Both the committee members and the artists had a large selection of various
iconographies to choose from in depicting Brant. Commemorators were therefore required to
choose the best method of depicting Indigenous peoples that would match their reasons for

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commemorating Joseph Brant. Choosing a certain iconography was required for all monuments, but in some cases the choice was more complex than others. For example, in the creation of Sir Isaac Brock’s monument thirty years earlier, commemorators used the limited iconography assigned to depicting military heroes of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The triumphal column attached with Classical symbols was the standard method of memorializing the British hero and was a suitable choice for recognizing Brock. Contrastingly, with Joseph Brant the commemorators were confronted with a much larger and broader collection of iconographies that were assigned multiple racialized meanings depending on the context. Commemorators had a significant collection of iconographies at their disposal, but a new visual language was required to depict an individual Indigenous person through the medium of a monument.  

Within the commemorative landscape of the British Empire, this was a truly unconventional situation.

Years before the committee filed the official call to artists and launched the design competition, a different sketch was submitted for consideration. C.E. Zollicoffer created a design that was reported and described in 1880. According to the History of the County of Brant, the estimated cost was $20,000, nearly double the available funds at the time. It was reported by both the History of the County of Brant and the Brantford Daily Expositor that a lack of funds was the primary reason for the design’s rejection. Zollicoffer had worked on the Parliament

49 Colonial bodies/subjects were a frequent inclusion in European art, but did not often feature in monuments. Small sculptural works (such as the Cathedral wall tablets explored in Chapter 2 and 4) did include Indigenous subjects; however, monuments to specific Indigenous individuals were nearly non-existent by the mid nineteenth century.

50 There is no indication if Zollicoffer was invited to submit a design by the committee or if he decided to send one himself. With his political connections, it is possible that Macdonald or some members of the committee requested him to complete a design. There is no evidence of any other designs submitted prior to the 1883 competition.

51 The History of the County of Brant, Ontario (Toronto: Warner, Beers & Co., 1883), 144.

52 Norman Knowles (Inventing the Loyalists: The Ontario Loyalist Tradition and the Creation of Usable Pasts (Toronto: University of Toronto), 122), states that the design by Zollicoffer was favoured by the Conservatives in the competition of 1883, and the Liberals supported Wood’s design. There is no evidence that Zollicoffer submitted a proposal for 1883 – he is not listed among the artists for that year, and his name is not mentioned in any correspondence regarding the artist selection process. By accounts from both the History of the County of Brant and the Brantford Daily Expositor, Zollicoffer submitted his design in 1880 and was rejected due to lack of funds. It is
Buildings in Ottawa and was already a respected sculptor throughout the province. *The History of the County of Brant* proclaimed: “It is indeed a rare specimen of the beautiful art, and reflects the highest credit on the genius of Mr. Zollicoffer, who designed and executed it.”\(^{53}\) The design was elaborate and very large in comparison to the eventual monument selected. A hexagonal layout was proposed, the six sides representing the tribes of the Six Nations. Each corner was to feature a life-sized marble figure in costume. Steps were situated in the pedestal to lead the viewer up to the main structure. The most dominant feature of the monument was a forty-five-foot column, capped with a colossal statue of Joseph Brant in “war costume.” The entire monument was to be executed with the finest marbles and stones.\(^{54}\)

In the search for a method of depicting Brant, it is significant that Zollicoffer chose a columnar design for his elaborate monument. As discussed previously, there is a long history of columns associated with war heroes in the British Empire. The imposing column symbolized triumph, leadership, and ultimately the continuation of white British institutions. The columnar design, intricately connected with Classical heroism and “civilization” in the British Empire, was proposed to symbolize Joseph Brant; his monument would look like the memorials to Sir Isaac Brock and the other white British war heroes of the period. In the search for a new iconography for depicting an Indigenous leader with a monument, Zollicoffer suggested the type of monuments specifically used for the depiction of white heroes. Sir Isaac Brock was commemorated with this type of monument due to his service to the British Crown and his commitment to British values. He was a white hero and was therefore ascribed the associated meanings of whiteness and Britishness of the early nineteenth century. As the previous chapter

\(^{53}\) *History of the County of Brant*, 144.

\(^{54}\) A description of the proposal is reprinted in the *Brantford Daily Expositor Brant Memorial Number*, October 15 1886.
demonstrated, these ideas were symbolized through the elaborate column in his honour, dominating the battlefield of his final triumph. The gleaming white column was not only a commemoration of Brock and his services, but also the ideas of whiteness and Britishness that he symbolized.

The attempt to apply this same iconographical language to an Indigenous leader is particular notable. Based on all accounts available, the proposed Zollicoffer monument was received with great praise. The connection between the elaborate design and the heroic services of Brant is noted in the *History of the County of Brant*:

> The taste displayed by this gentleman in the design of the intended structure is hardly less to be appreciated than the artistic skill and genius of those citizens who designed the memorial to be erected in grateful acknowledgement of the patriotic services of one of nature’s truest noblemen, and his compatriots whose manly and heroic action adorn British colonial history on this continent.\(^{55}\)

While this design was never executed, Brant was associated with European iconographies of representing the hero without any evidence of dissenting voices. The monumental iconography of the hero was explicitly tied to whiteness, and more particularly Britishness. Although not fully white, the proposal to commemorate Brant in the same distinct method as a nineteenth-century British hero linked him with a monumental symbol of whiteness and colonialism. Brant’s loyalism in the eyes of the colonial government earned him an apotheosis reserved for military heroes, and limited his Otherness.

Zollicoffer’s proposal was too expensive for the meager funds at the disposal of the committee, so it was abandoned. The *History of the County of Brant*, published in 1883, reported that a smaller design was chosen the previous year; however, the official design competition was

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\(^{55}\) *History of the County of Brant*, 144.
not proclaimed until the summer of 1883. The new committee was gathering increased momentum, likely due to the promising state of the funds. Letters were sent out to leading artists in Canada and around the world. Each artist received a standardized letter from the committee outlining the requirements and conditions, as well as a general description of the elements to be included in the monument. The Brant committee had strict requirements for those wishing to compete and were clearly provided for the artists in a letter. This package also included a number of enclosures with supplementary information that was intended to help the artists complete their models. These materials guided artists through the array of iconographies available to them. Portraits of Joseph Brant contained within a memoir, a photograph of an Indigenous person, descriptions of the Six Nations, and the physical requirements for the monument were all components intended by the committee to guide artists in their final design.

First, the letter to artists very specifically requested a portrait statue. This type of monument was becoming increasingly common in Europe and North America for depicting political and cultural figures, as well as military heroes. A surge in public commemorations spread throughout Europe, the United States, and Canada in the late nineteenth century. However, the elaborate columns of the previous decades were no longer economically viable. Additionally, the increased memorialization of political and cultural leaders did not suit the iconography of a godly column. Recognized as mortals who accomplished notable tasks,

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56 Ibid. It is unclear if the Association reported on a new design, or if the authors assumed it was secured. The book does not name the artist for this new design, and therefore it was unlikely that another design was chosen at this time. The design competition, where the eventual winner was selected, had not been held at the time of this book’s publication.
57 The existing historical record is silent on how artists were chosen or if individuals sought inclusion themselves. In a January 1884 correspondence (Letter from G.H. Muirhead to John A. Macdonald, January 15 1884, MG26-A, Microfilm reel C-1701, Volume 320, page 144517-144523, Sir John A. Macdonald Papers, LAC) Muirhead states that “we have sent [circulars] to the leading sculptors of England, France, Italy, Canada and the United States.” He gives no indication of how artists were selected to be part of the competition or if artists were permitted to submit without a formal invitation.
58 Circular from the Brant Memorial Association, July 10 1883.
59 The rise in popularity of the portrait statue, as well as the various iconographical considerations for Canadian/European artists, is covered in depth in Chapter 4.
political and cultural leaders were not distinguished with the incredible reverence reserved for the immortal hero atop a lofty shaft. With both cost and symbolism as factors, commemorators embraced the portrait statue. Using this type of iconography, they could still raise the figure above the masses, but in a cost-efficient and less elaborate fashion. The form of a portrait statue also allowed for the distinctive recognition of individuals, whether through facial features, costuming, or attributes.

The increased popularity and economy of portrait statues is likely why the committee specifically requested this type of monument in their letter to artists. However, in suggesting this type of memorial, the commemorators were recognizing the importance of Brant on the scale of other white leaders. Although the elaborate column by Zollicoffer was abandoned, the portrait statue was still tied to ideologies reserved for whites. The letter to artists described a pedestal surmounted by a nine-foot figure of Brant, a total height not exceeding thirty-five feet.\(^{60}\) The statue to Brant was to be executed in high quality bronze.\(^{61}\) While there were no specific requirements for what the statue would look like, artists were certainly expected to depict his likeness. For artists familiar with portrait statues, the requirements were formulaic; however, Brant’s Indigenous background offered some additional challenges to perspective designers.

In the letter to artists there were additional requirements for the pedestal, likely requested by the Six Nations members of the committee.\(^{62}\) The proposed stone pedestal needed insignia or mementos of the different tribes and scenes in bas-relief representing the life of Brant or the Six Nations. Bas-reliefs depicting the life of the commemorated figure were not uncommon in

\(^{60}\) Height limits may have been provided in order to keep the total cost within their budget. It is also possible that the committee was simply adhering to standard monument heights. By this time, nine-foot sculptors on raised pedestals were standard height for life sized portrait sculptors placed outside. The Simcoe Monument in Toronto, the Loyalist Monument in Hamilton, and the Underground Railroad Monument in Windsor all feature nine-foot figures.

\(^{61}\) Ibid.

\(^{62}\) Brantford Expositor Brant Memorial Number, October 15 1886.
portrait statues. These scenes often aided the viewer in understanding the importance of the commemorated individual and marked notable scenes from their life. Bas-reliefs were a standard inclusion in different European monuments, and were particularly useful in commemorating individuals who had accomplished extraordinary feats. However, according to the letter to artists, the proposals were also to include symbols or scenes of the Six Nations. This requirement indicated that Joseph Brant was commemorated not only as an individual in the style of European portrait statues, but also a representative of his culture. The iconography requested for the monument to Joseph Brant meant that his figure was to be treated as a European leader of distinction, but attached with the symbols of his Indigeneity. Faced with these additional requirements, the artists also needed to submit a model, at least two feet three inches in height, of their proposed design. The original date for submission was October 1 1883, but it was quickly extended to March 1 1884 to allow suitable time for the delivery of models.

To aid the artists in creating a sketch, the letter also contained information regarding the Six Nations. A separate enclosure included a brief description of the Confederacy, with a list of the six groups. In a short paragraph, the committee included a description of cultural totems and suggested how the Six Nations might be included in a design. There is no information about the history of the Six Nations or a differentiation between the six groups. The letter also has no mention of their loyalty to the British Crown, rhetoric that was already deeply entrenched in the memory of Brant. A photograph of an “Indian figure” supplemented this basic information regarding the Six Nations. Because the photograph does not survive, it is unclear if this image depicted a member of the Six Nations or a different Indigenous group. There is no indication of what is featured in this photograph or the additional cultural elements likely included (such as

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63 Circular from the Brant Memorial Association, July 10 1883.
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid.
costuming, artifacts, etc.). For European artists in particular, this photograph was a critical source of information in designing the monument. Without direct exposure to Indigenous cultures, European artists relied on other iconographical references in order to create their designs.

Nonetheless, artists were not limited to the short description and photograph included in the package. British and Canadian artists in particular were likely aware of the various iconographies used to depict Indigenous peoples over the past century. Prior to the nineteenth century, the primary method employed by European artists for the representation of North American Indigenous peoples (and other “primitive” cultures) was through the language of the “noble savage.” This term was popularized in eighteenth-century “Primitive Romanticism” which idealized cultures connected to nature that were outside of civilization. Increasing colonization and further contact with exotic “Others” throughout the expanding Empire furthered these meanings within British thought. The romantic image of the noble savage, which was strategically reinforced through art and literature, countered common fears of unknown and dangerous colonial subjects. As imperial control tightened, the romantic naivety of the natives was reinforced in order to justify the push for civilization and colonial dominance. The noble savage quickly became one of the most common iconographical methods of depicting the “Other”, a method of visually supplementing paternal colonial policy.66

Concurrently, in the late eighteenth century, Indigenous peoples in British art were often portrayed as heroes and useful allies. The iconic image of the Seven Years War, “The Death of General Wolfe” by Benjamin West, depicts the prominent figure of a Mohawk warrior. The

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66 There are numerous studies on the “noble savage” and the persuasiveness of the historic/modern myth. This thesis maintains that the “noble savage” was a common type of representing the Indigenous “Other”, regardless of the background of the historical myth. For more on the noble savage, and particularly the discursive debate over this concept, see: Ter Ellingson, The Myth of the Noble Savage (Berkeley: University of California, 2001); Hayden White, Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1985); Stelio Cro, The Noble Savage: Allegory of Freedom (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1990).
visual iconography of the kneeling and contemplating “savage” was a common feature in art of the period. As the Empire continued to expand, the noble savage eventually came to represent the colonies themselves and served to mark a particular image as originating from the colony. The commemoration of Sir Isaac Brock in St. Paul’s Cathedral, analyzed in the previous chapter, featured the same type of imagery.⁶⁷ Although the noble savage in that case is standing (a notable departure from the standard sitting or kneeling position), his presence was used to symbolize the colonial environment. The audience at St. Paul’s Cathedral was familiar with these idealized representations of the loyal colonial subject. Although the land represented was foreign, and the people within it were “Others,” they were still within the reaches of the Empire. The “Indian warrior,” both in West’s painting and the St. Paul’s monument, iconographically confirmed Indigenous loyalty during a period of colonial uncertainty.

As colonial tensions gradually increased, the methods of depicting Indigenous peoples also shifted. In her analysis of eighteenth-century British portrayals of the American Indian, Stephanie Pratt identifies the decline of the Indigenous military ally in art. She pinpoints the American Revolution as a significant turning point in iconography, as treaties and negotiations with Indigenous populations and the British colonists failed.⁶⁸ During the same period, visiting British artists increasingly produced ethnographic-style images. For example, John Webber served as an official artist on the voyages of Captain James Cook in the 1770s. Webber sought to capture details of Indigenous cultures in order to accurately portray them to a British audience at home. He recorded costumes, shelters, and various cultural practices similar to the scientific and realist recording of plants and animals. This type of ethnographic depiction strived for realistic

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⁶⁷ See Chapter 2, Memorial to General Sir Isaac Brock St. Paul’s Cathedral (Figure 2.6), and Chapter 4, Simcoe Memorial in Exeter Cathedral (Figure 4.6).
⁶⁸ Stephanie Pratt, American Indians in British Art 1700-1840 (University of Oklahoma Press, 2005), 92.
and accurate portrayals of cultural elements and practices with the goal of recording these features before they were subsumed by European civilization.

These ethnographic iconographies were most famously depicted in the images of Paul Kane (Fig. 3.3). Embarking on a quest in the 1830s to record the perceived disappearing Indigenous cultures of the west, Kane completed numerous sketches and small-scale paintings on site. Committed to the accurate and thorough depiction of the cultures he encountered, Kane was also driven by a desire to portray the “unknown.” The need to record cultures was encouraged by the spreading idea that “savage” culture was dying. Indeed, one of Paul Kane’s justifications for recording Indigenous people of the west was his thought that the Indian was being obliterated

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69 For more on Paul Kane, see: Diane Eaton and Sheila Urbanek, Paul Kane’s Great Nor-West (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1996). For a personal account by the artist of his travels, see: Paul Kane, “Wanderings of an Artist,” in Paul Kane’s Frontier, ed. J. Russell Harper (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971).

by spreading European settlement.\textsuperscript{71} Despite his artistic tendencies to depict and record the details of Indigenous cultures, Kane also sought to make these images relatable to his European audience. For example, Kane’s style was heavily influenced by the Romantic movement in Western European art. Emphasizing emotional reactions from the viewer, Romantic images combined picturesque and sublime landscapes that reflected on themes of mortality and humanity. Through his artistic technique, Kane was able to relate the “Othered” world of North American Indigenous cultures to more standard European artistic conventions.\textsuperscript{72}

Following the detailed ethnographic recordings of the early nineteenth century, artists increasingly turned to the “archetypical Indian” in their depiction of Indigenous subjects. Stephanie Pratt remarks that, for viewers today, the American Indian is visually recognizable, almost instantly, due to the selective and repeated iconography of a singular Indigenous culture (in this case, a narrow view of Plains Indians dressed in nineteenth-century garb).\textsuperscript{73} By the time of the Brant monument’s unveiling, most British and Canadian white viewers were familiar with this archetypical image. Indigenous peoples were no longer depicted as distinctive individual cultures. This new image represented a notable break with the ethnographical-based images of the early nineteenth century. As the depiction of the “archetypical Indian” spread, the idea of the vanishing Indigenous culture firmly took hold throughout the west. Photography was utilized to capture the “Other” before they disappeared as a result of perceived cultural degeneration and assimilation policies. Traditional archetypical lifestyles were emphasized, while the adaptation

\textsuperscript{71} Paul Kane, 51.
\textsuperscript{72} Some artists were also working in the United States and completing similar work. The American artist George Catlin was recording native culture primarily in the West during this period. Many of his images became iconic representations of native culture. Similar to Paul Kane, Catlin travelled primarily through the West to capture primitive culture before it was subsumed by modernity. For more on his influential works, see: Benita Eisler, \textit{The Red Man’s Bones: George Catlin, Artist and Showman} (New York: W.W. Norton, 2013).
\textsuperscript{73} Pratt, 3; Francis, The Imaginary Indian.
and reactions to European contact was ignored. As Daniel Francis outlines, the idea of the “vanishing Indian” became a persuasive idea for many Canadians in the late nineteenth century. These stereotypes even helped promote tourism to western Canada that promised to offer glimpses of the disappearing primitive before he vanished forever. A significant growth in photographic depictions and museum collections also reflected the spreading cultural ideology of the dying savage culture threatened by modernity. On one hand, this idea promoted a Romantic anti-modernist sentiment popular among groups of the middle and upper classes in the late nineteenth century. However, the actual vanishing of Indigenous cultures were largely a result of official governmental policy.

Around the time of the Brant committee’s letter to artists, the Indigenous figure had largely disappeared from Canadian high art. There was increasing emphasis on empty landscapes and wilderness that was uninhabited and untamed by humans. One notable exception to the disappearance of the Indigenous figure from Canadian high art is in the creation of monuments (Fig. 3.4). Other than Joseph Brant, no monument in Canada was created for an Indigenous individual until the middle of the twentieth century; however, Indigenous figures were featured in numerous commemorations of explorers. Monuments to Samuel de Champlain in Quebec City, Orillia, and Ottawa, along with the commemoration of Maisonneuve in Montreal, all

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74 Francis, Imaginary Indian, 24.
75 Ibid., 45.
76 Indigenous peoples do not seem to disappear from popular or vernacular depictions and also remain a popular subject for photography. However, Emily Carr is the only notable Canadian artist of the late nineteenth to early twentieth century who prominently features Indigenous culture as her primary subject matter. Otherwise, art was dominated by empty landscapes. The continuance of such influences is visible in the 1920s emergence of the Group of Seven who premised their artistic style on the absence of humans. Through art, specifically of the Group of Seven, Canada was repositioned as a land of untamed wilderness, masculinity, and triumph. For more on the Group of Seven, see: John O’Brien and Peter White (eds.), Beyond Wilderness: The Group of Seven, Canadian Identity and Contemporary Art (Montreal: McGill-Queens Press, 2007).
featured the quintessential noble savage. Positioned on the lower portion of the pedestal, these figures resembled the Indigenous military ally that had dominated eighteenth-century depictions. The monuments in Ottawa and Montreal featured the crouching scout, armed with bow and arrow, eyes forward and looking out for danger in aid of the European figure looming above. The

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Quebec City and Orillia commemorations, on the other hand, feature the noble savage in the process of civilization, listening to dominant white settlers. Despite the two different scenes in these four monuments, the characteristics of the figures are the same. All are semi-nude with muscular bodies and exaggerated facial features that emphasize their non-European identities. They do not carry implements connected to their individual cultures, nor do they reveal their regional origin. None of the figures are standing or are placed in a position of authority or dominance, and despite carrying weapons, none of the figures are using physical power. The continuance of the noble savage imagery, particularly in forming colonial myths of settlement, served late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century commemorators by casting Indigenous peoples as docile images of the past.

Although the letter to the artists of the Brant Memorial and its enclosures were comparatively sparse, the individual sculptors had multiple sources of inspiration if they looked through Canadian and British art history. To further aid the artists, the committee also forwarded a biography of Brant that included two portraits. Each artist had access to at least two visual representations of Brant; however, there were many more at their disposal. Joseph Brant was depicted numerous times throughout his life; at least ten different representations of Brant survive, with a variety of interpretive copies. Most military heroes of the period did not have so many portraits. Comparatively, Sir Isaac Brock was only represented in two notable artistic works during his life.

George Romney, leading court painter in England at the time, created the earliest and

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78 It is unclear if some of these copies simply resemble other works, or are copies where the second artist took their own liberties with the image.
79 Comparatively, Sir Isaac Brock was only represented in two notable artistic works during his life.
most notable image of Brant in 1776 (Fig. 3.5). This painting features a standing figure of
Brant facing to the right with head turned towards the viewer. His left hand holds a draped cloak
while his right clutches a barely visible tomahawk. The setting of the portrait is ambiguous with
only vaguely defined natural elements in the background. The costume of Brant features a
combination of European and Mohawk dress. Brant’s facial features are emphasized and
individualized, comparable to aristocratic and political portraits of the period, and his skin tone is
strikingly pale. Brant is not depicted using the traditional modes of representing the noble

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80 For more on George Romney and his art, see: Jennifer C. Watson, *George Romney in Canada* (Kitchener-
Waterloo: Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, 1985); Alex Kidson, *George Romney, 1734-1802* (Princeton: Princeton
University Press, 2002).
savage; rather, Brant’s portrait is more consistent with European models for portraiture. The ornamentations of his dress are the only elements within Romney’s painting that appear “exotic” within the formal portraiture style. This mode of representing the “Other” is a significant break with the noble savage imagery that dominated concurrent representations. Brant was positioned as the exception, a notable case of an Indigenous person that reached some levels of “civilization” in the eyes of his European contemporaries and thus was afforded symbolic representation in portraiture.

A decade after the Romney portrait, Gilbert Stuart was commissioned to produce two portraits of Brant. The portraits are similar in composition, with Brant sitting to one side with face turned towards the viewer. His skin is not as pale as in the Romney portraits, and his feathered head-dress is more prominent. Nonetheless, in both images, Brant is once again wearing a hybrid costume of European and Mohawk clothing. While it is possible that Romney set a precedent for future artists in their depictions of Brant, the similarities between depictions are more likely attributable to Brant’s own self fashioning of his identity. The hybrid dress, a common feature between the three portraits, was a significant symbol in depicting the Indigenous leader. The costume allowed the European viewer to see Brant as both Indigenous and loyal to British institutions. If he was depicted in the manner of the noble savage (semi-nude with foreign costuming), the figure of Brant was not attributed the same leadership status. As a symbol of loyalty and fidelity, even during his lifetime, Brant’s costuming as both Mohawk and European allowed him to straddle the border between white and “Other.”

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81 Joseph Brant’s costuming in his many portraits was likely chosen for symbolic purposes. By dressing in a hybrid of European and Mohawk clothing, Brant confirmed himself as a man of both worlds. For more on this important self-fashioning and its significance in diplomatic relations, see: Elizabeth Hutchinson, “‘The Dress of His Nation’: Romney’s Portrait of Joseph Brant,” Winterthur Portfolio, University of Chicago Press 45, no.2/3 (Summer/Autumn 2011): 209-228.
With the exception of Berczy’s sketches, the portraits of Brant became increasingly more “Othered” and less European as time progressed. While this could be attributable to individual artistic style, this development corresponded with the shifting iconographies for depicting Indigenous peoples in the late eighteenth century. Additionally, the British perception of Brant became increasingly negative as negotiations between the Crown and the Six Nations broke down. The later portraits are all completed by artists residing for a significant portion of their careers in Canada, meaning they had regular contact with the colonial environment. Unlike Romney and Stuart who resided in Great Britain and created images for British people, the other artists were intimately aware of colonial relations with Indigenous peoples and were depicting subjects for a Canadian audience. The combination of these factors most likely explains the shift in Brant’s portraits as he neared the end of his life. The images by Peale, Ames, and Berczy feature a less Europeanized Brant. His costume in all three images is more distinctly Mohawk and those details are emphasized. The hybrid elements have almost completely disappeared and it is clear to the viewer that Brant is no longer symbolically British and Indigenous, but rather he is now just Mohawk. The skin tone in the later images is notably different, with Brant appearing much darker and less pale. The iconography of these images, with the emphasis on “exotic” details and less personality, matches with the emergence of the ethnographic style of the early nineteenth century.

Although Brant was increasingly “Othered” in artistic depictions, some portraits still portrayed him using European symbolism. Berczy’s 1807 image in particular shows Brant in a heroic posture akin to European military leaders that were linked to Classical examples (Fig. 3.6). The image of Brant formally resembles depictions of British and French aristocracy of the eighteenth century and military heroes of the nineteenth century. His dominant stance with
outstretched arm communicates his leadership role. Brant’s pose was is relatively standard for military commemorations of the period; Sir Isaac Brock’s statue on the top of his triumphal column took a similar pose a few decades later. Brant’s posture affords him a role previously not ascribed to individual Indigenous peoples. However, in the Berczy image Brant is still portrayed as an “Other”, particularly through his costume and presence within a foreign landscape. Although Brant’s image had significantly changed throughout his life, increasingly becoming more “Othered” as time went on, he was still depicted using iconography that resembled the European hero.

In the case of the Brant monument, it is unknown which portraits the artists used. It is unclear exactly which images were sent to the artists as a part of Stone’s memoir; different editions of the text featured different portraits. One of the portraits is likely a sketch of Ezra
Ames’ 1806 painting, the last known portrait of Brant (Fig. 3.7). The other portrait in the memoirs is much more uncertain. It is likely that the artists had both the Romney and Ames images, with very notable iconographical differences between the two. Regardless of what portraits were forwarded, the artists of the monument competition received only a selective piece of the significant collection of likenesses painted during Brant’s life.

By March 1 1884, the committee had received at least nine models from various sources. The purpose was to exhibit the models to the general public, gauge the majority

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82 This sketch appears as the cover for multiple editions of Volume 2. The circular to artists also describes this portrait being an image of Brant much later in life.
83 The committee described Brant as being forty years of age in the image. Brant was only thirty-three at the time of the famous Romney portrait, which is featured on the cover of later editions of Stone’s text, including the 1865 version. The portraits by Gilbert Stuart more accurately reflect the age stated by the committee, but there is no evidence that an edition of Stone’s memoir used either of those images.
84 It is possible that the committee received additional submissions, but only nine were put on display. In a January 15 1884 letter from G.H. Muirhead to John A. Macdonald, Muirhead states that there were two models coming form
opinion, and then appoint Thomas Fuller, Dominion Chief Architect, to choose the winner. There is some suggestion that political tensions existed during the exhibition; however, there is no evidence to support this claim. In fact, in a letter to Macdonald, Thomas Elliott stated his support for Percy Wood’s design and also noted that it was the favourite of the majority. He stated that Robert Henry was also in favour of Wood’s model, and even implored Macdonald: “I trust you will, if possible, give us the Wood monument. I am positive it will pledge the greater number and justly so.”

According to Robert Henry, Thomas Fuller decided on Wood’s design by May 1, 1884. His letter requested Macdonald to formally announce the winner, which would allow Wood to return to England. There was no resulting controversy when the committee, along with Thomas Fuller, declared Percy Wood as the winner of the competition on May 8, 1884. Peyrol and Bonheur of Paris were announced as runners-up, while Louis-Philippe Hébert of Montreal placed third.

It appears that there were no dissenting voices on the choice of Percy Wood because he had submitted the most favourable design. Nonetheless, Percy Wood was just beginning his career in London, two from Paris, one from Rome, and several from the United States. In the final competition outlined in the Brantford Expositor (Oct 15, 1885) there are no listed models from the USA or Italy. Thomas Elliott confirms in a letter from March 1884 that there were nine models on display at that time.

As mentioned previously, Knowles (Inventing the Loyalists, 122) claims that Liberals and Conservatives on the committee were politically divided on the choice of winner and the Liberal choice (Wood) won due to the position of Cleghorn, the President. There appears to be no evidence to support this contention.

The only evidence of dissention came from another artist following the announcement of the winner. Over a week before the competition results were formally announced, Frederick Dunbar of Toronto wrote Macdonald. In the
career at the time of the competition. There is no evidence that Wood had completed a major monument before receiving the Brant commission. Although he had yet to establish himself, his father Marshall Wood was already a well-known artist with Canadian connections. Marshall Wood was famous for creating monuments of Queen Victoria throughout the Empire, and was especially notable for his marble statue of 1871 which graced the Library of Parliament in Ottawa. Marshall Wood had important connections with the monarchy that also made him famous throughout the Empire, a position that he maintained until his early death in 1882.

It is unknown if Marshall Wood’s position in Canada influenced the decision of the committee, but the choice of Percy Wood was questionable. The artist was very young and had no major commissions before the Brant memorial. Wood would eventually execute a small number of monuments in Canada and Great Britain, but he never achieved the fame of his father and appears to have ended his career early. His artistic style throughout his short career mostly fit within the standard portrait statue model. He completed the figures in bronze and placed them on stone pedestals, sometimes decorated with bas-reliefs or inscriptions. By the end of his career, the Brant monument was still the most complex and innovative. Despite the standard style and execution of Wood’s later works, he did depart from the static poses of portrait statues on a few occasions.

Incoherent letter, Dunbar seems to suggest a personal connection to Macdonald. He questions how he has personally offended Macdonald, and ultimately what he did to lose the competition. Dunbar claims to have the “best of all” the models and believes that Wood’s was not among the top three forwarded to Ottawa (Letter from F. Dunbar to John A. Macdonald, April 29 1884, MG26-A, Microfilm reel C-1766, Volume 403, page 194420-194424, Sir John A. Macdonald Papers, LAC). His largely illegible letter mentions a conspiracy supporting Wood, charging that his father’s name (renowned British sculptor Marshall Wood) was the only factor that had won him the top prize. Dunbar even vaguely suggests that bribes were involved. The appeal to Macdonald did not have an effect, and Dunbar went on to fulfill minor commissions in Ontario, constantly overshadowed by his more successful brother, Ulrich Dunbar.

90 One of his early Victoria monuments was erected in Montreal (1869).
91 Based on correspondences during the design selection process, the exhibit of the models was not anonymous. Therefore, anyone looking at or commenting on the designs would have known the identity of the submitting artist. It is possible that bias based on names may have occurred, but without knowing the identity of the other competitors, it is impossible to know if this played a significant factor.
92 There is very little biographical information available on Percy Wood. Based on information available, he was most active immediately following the completion of the Brant monument, but his last known commission was unveiled in Scotland in 1894.
occasions. His monument to the sharp shooters of the North West Rebellion, erected in Ottawa in 1889, features a soldier leaning heavily on his weapon. The head of the soldier is slightly bowed and the still pose communicates quiet remembrance. There is no triumph in this military statue, but rather a private moment of mourning. Contrasting, in his later monument to the heroic British sailor Jack Crawford in Sunderland (1890), the figure is dynamic and engaged in activity. His gun is being used as a hammer to drive the British colours into a mast. The viewer feels the heroism of the act through the dramatic motion. With the strong vertical element of the mast and the action of the figure, Wood drastically departs from the standard portrait statue models.

Although he employed the accepted conventions of portrait statues, Wood creatively used the bodies of figures in his designs to communicate emotion and inspire a connection with the viewer.

In the case of the Joseph Brant monument, Wood also somewhat stepped outside the traditional bounds of a portrait statue. Brant is not simply a figure standing atop a stone pedestal decorated in bas-reliefs; rather, the pedestal itself is an active component in the overall design. The first level of the multi-tiered pedestal is decorated on all four sides with a bas-relief; two sides feature the totems of the Six Nations (a bear and a wolf) and the other sides feature scenes related to the Six Nations (a council meeting with Brant as leader and a war dance). These bas-reliefs are at standard eye level for the viewer on all sides. The second tier of the pedestal is smaller, and it contains a narrow platform on all sides. On the front and back of the monument, bronze trophies with cultural objects from the Six Nations appear to rest on this platform. The First Nations name of Joseph Brant (Thayendanegea) is carved in the centre of the front trophy, while the names of the Six Nations are carved on the rear. On the platform running along the second tier of the monument also sits six life sized human representations, meant to denote the
Six Nations. The second tier of the pedestal rises into a pyramid, on top of which stands a life-sized figure of Joseph Brant.

The basic form of the portrait statue matches the expectations of the committee and other viewers in the late nineteenth century. The life-sized figure is placed on top of a stone pedestal that also features some bas-reliefs symbolizing important meanings. However, the inclusion of the life sized Six Nations figures on the platform between the tiers offers an innovative element that likely made Wood’s design exceptional and matched the intended meanings of the monument by the commemorators. Figures at the base of portrait statues were not uncommon; in fact, allegories were often placed at the base in order to add additional layers of meaning and help the viewer interpret the narrative of the monument. However, Wood’s design featured six life-sized figures in the middle of the pedestal above the bas-reliefs, a subtle yet significant departure from the standard style of portrait statues. While the focus remains on the highest figure (Brant), the six other life-sized representations also demand attention from the viewer. In the case of the Brant memorial, the other figures confirmed that this monument was not simply about recognizing the heroic contributions of Brant as an individual, but the Six Nations as a whole. In including cultural elements of the Six Nations in their call to artists, the committee was making an unprecedented request. Wood responded by producing an unconventional design that corresponded with the desire of the commemorators to produce an unconventional iconographical language for their unmatched subject.
After the design competition was completed, the committee turned their attention to planning the casting of the monument, its arrival in Canada, the laying of the cornerstone, and eventually the unveiling ceremony.\textsuperscript{93} The plan for the monument remained on track and, by all indications, on budget.\textsuperscript{94} Public funds would eventually near $16,000 (not including a number of private donations), collected from a combination of various levels of government and several First Nations.

\textsuperscript{93} Immediately after the choice of Wood’s design, the historical record is silent regarding the committee’s activities until nearly two years later. The committee was likely working in preparation for the monument, but due to a lack of committee meeting minutes, their precise activities are unknown. While Wood was in England executing the modeling and casting, there was little else for the committee to plan. Funding was mostly secured, the competition was complete without any major contestation, and the project was on time. Some discussions were likely held regarding the details of receiving and constructing the monument in Canada, but it unlikely the committee met regularly during this period. It is also likely that political tensions continued to divide committee members, as later correspondences and newspaper reports indicate such conflicts continued until the monument’s unveiling.

\textsuperscript{94} According to the \textit{Brantford Courier} ("The Brant Monument: Mr. Percy Wood's Design Selected" May 3 1884), the original contract required the completion and installation of the monument by October 1 1886. The contract also
Nations. Although the final amount was secured, the committee did not have the funds at their immediate disposal; private donations were not collected until the summer of 1886. There was a delay in receiving public funds as well. Correspondences in the winter of 1884 reveal that the Dominion government would not provide funding until the artist was selected and the monument formally approved. Due to this delay in tangible funds, Percy Wood agreed to payment upon completion of the monument, an odd practice that nonetheless reflected the state of the committee’s funds at the time. By April 1885, Wood wrote Macdonald asking for some of the money promised from the committee. Forced to take on the expenses of the monument himself, Wood’s financial position was compromised over the course of its creation. Other concerns regarding funding are not found in any correspondence from 1885, nor in any newspaper reports from the period. The committee was more concerned about supplementing their funding by May 1886. During a meeting of the Finance Committee for the monument, it was pointed out that there was still a $2000 shortfall. The committee resolved that some urgency was needed to collect funds from additional sources to meet the monument’s cost. The funding list from May 1886 does not include the later reported contributions from the Mississauga of the New Credit, the County of Brant, the County of Bruce, and private subscriptions. An article in the *Brantford Courier*, May 8 1884.

awarded Wood $16,000: $1000 as prize money, and the remainder for expenses. There are no correspondences that indicate an increased price for the monument.

95 Collection pamphlet produced by the Office of the Brant Monument Association, June 1 1886, MG26-A, Microfilm Reel C-1703, Volume 325, Page 147250-147251, Sir John A. Macdonald Papers, LAC.
96 It is unknown if the committee had received funding from its other public sources by this time, but the Dominion government refused to hand over funds, at least initially, as indicated in an 1884 correspondence (Letter from John A. Macdonald to G.H. Muirhead, January 7 1884, MG26-A, Reel C-34, Volume 525/2, Page 335, Letterbook, LAC.)
97 *Brantford Courier*, May 8 1884.
98 There is no indication if his wish for earlier funds was granted or not. A letter from Hector Langevin (Letter from Hector Langevin to John A. Macdonald, October 27 1887, MG26-A, Microfilm Reel C-1657, Volume 227, Page 97678-97679, Sir John A. Macdonald Papers, LAC) mentions a letter from Wood for an outstanding amount of $1000. The original letter from Wood does not survive. It appears there may have been some difficulty paying Wood, or perhaps the artist never received his $1000 prize money (separate of the costs of the monument). There are no further letters discussing the issue of payment.
99 *Brantford Weekly Expositor*, “The Brant Memorial” May 7 1886.
Weekly Expositor strongly argued that it was necessary for the county to contribute to the monument of their namesake, which would soon stand in front of the county buildings.\textsuperscript{100} The County of Brant finally announced its contribution of $500 in the June 25 1886 edition of the Brantford Daily Expositor. In the same article the newspaper made a point of raising objection to such a small sum.\textsuperscript{101}

Although the committee in Canada was still very quiet, England was filled with activity and preparation for the monument in 1885. More than a year after his selection as the winner, Percy Wood was busy adding the final touches to his masterpiece. On track for completion and shipping to Canada, Wood announced the formal casting of the monument in December 1885, inviting Sir John A. Macdonald and his wife to attend.\textsuperscript{102} While the Macdonal ds were unable to make the transatlantic journey in January 1886, Sir Charles Tupper acted as representative and was in attendance when the first bronzes were cast and the monument was finally born. Chief Waubuno, leader of the Delawares, represented the Six Nations at the casting.

Before the casting, the thirteen cannons donated by “Her Majesty’s government” were smelted into liquid bronze. Part of this material would form the bodies of Joseph Brant and the accompanying Six Nations figures on Wood’s monument. The cannons, according to the Brantford Expositor, were fired in the Crimean War.\textsuperscript{103} Surplus bronze cannons were often used to make monuments following a conflict. They were either melted to make the figures for the memorials, or else placed intact at the base. Although this practice was primarily for cost saving and the recycling of redundant materials, it also provided additional symbols for the memorial. In the case of Brant’s monument, the figure was made from cannons that were used to successfully

\textsuperscript{100} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{101} Brantford Daily Expositor, “Brant Memorial” June 25 1886.
\textsuperscript{102} Letter from Percy Woods to John A. Macdonald, December 19 1885, MG26-A, Microfilm reel C-1580, Volume 166/2, page 67833-67835, Sir John A. Macdonald Papers, LAC.
\textsuperscript{103} Brantford Daily Expositor Brant Memorial Number, October 15 1886.
defend the Empire’s interests. The bronze bodies of the monument (Brant and the Six Nations representatives) were made out of objects that defended the Empire, offering more layers of material symbolism to the story of imperial loyalty.

The bronze was not the only material used from an imperially significant source. The stone for the pedestal, according to the Brantford Expositor, was gathered from the same quarry as the monuments of Trafalgar Square. The bronze bodies of the monument (Brant and the Six Nations representatives) were made out of objects that defended the Empire, offering more layers of material symbolism to the story of imperial loyalty.

The bronze was not the only material used from an imperially significant source. The stone for the pedestal, according to the Brantford Expositor, was gathered from the same quarry as the monuments of Trafalgar Square.104 Designed by F. and H. Francis of London, the stone pedestal was an important element in the overall design. The daily newspaper does not provide the name of the quarry, so it is unclear how the stone is connected to monuments in London. Nonetheless, having materials from the same source as the grand monuments in Trafalgar Square, most notably the Nelson column, was another important imperial connection. As discussed in Chapter two, the Nelson monument was a grand example of commemorating the imperial hero. The lofty column was the culmination of over a century’s worth of memorials in Britain that linked heroism with Classicism. Symbolically, it meant that the Indigenous leader Joseph Brant was made out of the same substance as the great British Nelson.

Percy Wood arrived in Brantford in June 1886 to personally superintend the laying of the foundation and the eventual installation of the bronzes that were to be shipped in September.105 A slight delay to Wood’s schedule was caused by a visit from the Duke of Connaught, the primary patron of the monument, to his studio on June 2 1886. In a letter published in the Brantford Daily Expositor, the artist expresses excitement “that the Memorial at length is recognized by royalty.”106 The artist eventually reached Canada and was able to prepare the site

104 Brantford Daily Expositor Brant Memorial Number, October 15 1886.
105 Brantford Daily Expositor, “The Brant Memorial” May 29 1886.
106 Brantford Daily Expositor, “The Brant Memorial” June 1 1886.
in anticipation for the arrival of the treasured bronzes. By September 21 1886, they arrived on North American soil at Boston.\textsuperscript{107}

As site preparations began, a slight controversy erupted in the press. In July 1886, the \textit{Brantford Daily Expositor} reported on an article in the \textit{Brantford Telegram}. Unfortunately, no copies from this period of the \textit{Telegram} exist, but the \textit{Expositor} mentions a dispute over the site of the monument. Someone at the newspaper office, perhaps connected to the committee, preferred a site at the corner of the park near the registry office, not in the centre of the park as originally planned.\textsuperscript{108} Thomas Elliott first mentioned controversy regarding the site plan in a letter from June 1883. While he accused the Grits on the committee of scheming and “control[ing] the thing to their own interest and ends,”\textsuperscript{109} he was in favour of the proposed site in the centre of the park. Three years later the \textit{Brantford Daily Expositor} commented on this same question and accused the \textit{Telegram} of trying to re-ignite an old issue. The two newspapers were not strangers to disputes, something that likely arose from differing political support.\textsuperscript{110} Another disagreement was played out in print in August of the same year. According to the \textit{Daily Expositor}, the \textit{Telegram} frequently attacked the progress of the committee and reported on minor disputes in order to ignite frustration with the lack of progress. The \textit{Expositor} expressed surprise that the \textit{Telegram} was continually fighting Allan Cleghorn, and those associated with the committee.\textsuperscript{111} Local and national politics continued to cloud the creation of Brant’s memorial.

Planning for the Joseph Brant monument was also set against a backdrop of changing policy towards Canada’s Indigenous peoples throughout the Dominion. In August 1886, the local

\textsuperscript{107} \textit{Brantford Daily Expositor}, “What to Expect” Sept 21 1886.
\textsuperscript{108} \textit{Brantford Weekly Expositor}, “The Brantford Memorial Site” July 16 1886.
\textsuperscript{109} Letter from T. Elliott to John A. Macdonald, June 21 1883.
\textsuperscript{110} Based on selected readings from the period, the \textit{Brantford Expositor} tended to be a Liberal newspaper, generally supporting Liberal candidates, although not blatantly attacking Conservative members, even during election time.
\textsuperscript{111} \textit{Brantford Daily Expositor}, “The Brant Memorial” August 20 1886.
press covered the final stages of planning and the laying of the cornerstone at the monument site. That same month the newspapers also reported on Indian voting rights, land claims, the conflict in the North West, and the systematic starving of western reserves. The press did not report on the expansion of the Residential School system, but the Mohawk Institute, located on the border of Brantford and the Six Nations reserve, served as a model for the spread of institutions across the country. 112 Neither the press, speakers, nor correspondences made any direct link between the commemoration of Joseph Brant and the new policies passing through the Dominion government. However, the first large-scale commemoration of an Indigenous figure by white Canadians cannot be divorced from its political backdrop.

The North West Rebellion of 1885 unfolded at the same time as Wood carved his sculpture to Brant. 113 The “Indian problem” in the North West was continuing to rage in 1886, and the press continuously reported on various developments. In April 1886, a couple months before Percy Wood arrived in Brantford for the construction of the monument, the Brantford Weekly Expositor reported on MP M.C. Cameron of Huron and his argument for a deliberate policy of starving the North West. He claimed that the North West had attracted enough public funds and was being wholly mismanaged by Indian officials. 114 A few months later, William Paterson (MP for the Brantford area) called the government’s attention to an inadequate supply

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112 Students of the Mohawk Institute actively participated in the re-internment. It is unclear what, if any, role they played in any of the monument’s ceremonies. In October, the visiting Northwest Chiefs would tour the Institute. Within a decade, Residential schools were opened on their reserves.


114 Brantford Weekly Expositor, “The Frauds upon the Indians” April 23 1886.
and quality of flour sent to the North West.\textsuperscript{115} The sympathetic \textit{Brantford Weekly Expositor} charged that it was “no wonder that [the North West Indian] is dissatisfied.”\textsuperscript{116} In September, the \textit{Expositor} featured another article outlining the unfair dealings with North West bands, encouraging the government to do more about the mismanagement of funds and oppressive treatment received at the hands of officials.\textsuperscript{117}

The \textit{Expositor} featured a number of articles on the mistreatment of North West Indigenous peoples and called for sympathy for their plight; however, the \textit{Courier} offered a different perspective only ten days before the unveiling of Brant’s monument. The \textit{Courier} reported on Macdonald’s visit to the Six Nations, where he demonstrated the adequate food provided to Indians in Canada. Using the Six Nations as an example, the \textit{Courier} disputed the reports of food shortages among Indigenous populations and argued that reports of inadequacies were untrue.\textsuperscript{118} Whichever position individual citizens chose to adopt, the residents of Brantford continually opened up their daily newspapers to reports from the North West placed alongside updates about the Brant monument’s progress. Brantford’s white citizens were simultaneously reading about the historical memory of Brant, the “good Indian”, and the current plight of other Indigenous groups.

The iconography employed for the final monument not only reflected methods of depicting Indigenous peoples of the period but also corresponded with this broader governmental policy. The bas-reliefs on the front and rear of the monument resemble the ethnographic style of portraying Indigenous culture popular in the early nineteenth century (Fig. 3.9, Fig. 3.10). The

\textsuperscript{115} The official governmental policy of starving North West Indigenous peoples has been documented by historians. For more on this, see: James W. Daschuk, \textit{Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation and the Loss of Aboriginal Life} (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2014).
\textsuperscript{116} \textit{Brantford Weekly Expositor}, “Indian Food” June 4 1886.
\textsuperscript{117} \textit{Brantford Weekly Expositor}, “The North West Indian Policy” September 3 1886.
\textsuperscript{118} \textit{Brantford Courier}, “Indian Food” October 2 1886.
shallow depth with attention on cultural practices, artifacts, costumes, and details all recall images by Paul Kane and others. However, the bas-reliefs on the monument do not conform to the same practices of accuracy as the traditional ethnographic images. Upon closer examination, the bas-reliefs are actually archetypical representations of Indigenous culture and not specifically tied to the Six Nations. These representations are based on broad interpretations of contemporary North West cultures. Although Percy Wood visited Canada on multiple occasions, there is no evidence that he observed Six Nations practices (such as the war dance and council meeting.

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Pratt; Francis, Imaginary Indian.
depicted in the bas-reliefs). Instead, Wood relied on the stereotypical image of Indigenous culture that was sweeping Europe, primarily due to the ease of photography. For example, in the bas-relief on the front of the monument showing a council meeting, Brant is shown speaking to a number of seated Six Nations men. Behind these figures are some faint carvings of wigwams or teepees. The more commonly used longhouse of the Six Nations cultures (and especially Brant’s Mohawk background) was swapped in favour of the archetypical teepee tent. Not only was this type of shelter largely foreign to the Six Nations, but it represented the singular Indigenous culture promoted by stereotypical images. Within the context of the period, the circular teepee also recalled the North West, a site of increasing tension and colonial uncertainty.

Wood also employed archetypical imagery for his depiction of Brant on the final monument. As mentioned previously, the package to artists contained a “photo of Indian figure

Figure 3.11: Unknown Photographer. “Canadian Indian Portrait – Indian Life.” Photograph. N.d. From Library and Archives Canada: Canadian National Railways Collection.
showing dress that might have been worn by Brant with war club and tomahawk.”

Although it is unclear what photo was forwarded to Wood, it was likely a contemporary image of the archetypical Indian (Fig. 3.11). By relying on this photo (and likely other archetypical images), the monument to Joseph Brant was divorced from its cultural context. The final bronze statue of Brant is depicted in a costume that does not resemble any of the portraits painted during his lifetime. His figure is adorned in a tunic and pants made of animal skin with fringes on the seams. Around his neck is a necklace of animal teeth, and his head is decorated with a small feathered head dress. The Europeanized clothing that Brant self-fashioned for himself in the earlier Romney and Stuart portraits is completely absent. That individual attire is replaced by an archetypical representation of Indigenous costuming. Brant’s iconic metal and shell plate necklace decorated with a Christian cross, present in many portraits, is replaced with the archetypical string of teeth. The result is a Brant figure that could adhere to the archetypical image of the period and the ideas surrounding that iconography. The archetypical Indian was the perfect image to accompany assimilation policies and help promote the “good Indian” that conformed to colonial control.

**Commemorating the “Good Indians” of Past and Present**

The first major event associated with the unveiling was the laying of the cornerstone on August 11 1886. This ceremony took place against the backdrop of Indigenous issues in the North West, but local questions and conflicts as well. There was a recent push for the enfranchisement of

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120 Ibid.  
various Indigenous groups, particularly those that may remain loyal to the Conservative government. One of the main purposes of Sir John A. Macdonald’s visit to the Six Nations reserve in September 1886 was to campaign for Indian male enfranchisement and dispel any fears among the population. Thomas Elliott implored Macdonald in August 1886 to come for a visit, remarking: “Paterson and others have taken advantage of [the Indian’s] suspicious nature and have frightened a large number by telling them that they will sacrifice their Indian rights by voting and it will require your presence… to remove their fears.”¹²² Macdonald’s arrival was feted by Conservative citizens and extensively reported by the Courier. The Grit supported Expositor contained very little coverage of the visit. The Courier reported on the speeches delivered by those in attendance, including Macdonald. The speeches contained numerous reassurances that voting rights were a step towards equality between all men regardless of race. There was also an emphasis on dispelling myths that enfranchisement was a scheme to undermine Indian rights.¹²³ Regardless of their positions on the political spectrum, Brantford citizens were listening to similar rhetoric applied to both the past and present situation of the Six Nations. Contemporary Six Nations individuals played an important role in the cornerstone ceremony, but they also featured prominently in the final monument. The six figures on the platform of the tiered pedestal were meant to embody both the historical and current culture of the Six Nations, as perceived by the white creators. The Six Nations were positioned as the “good Indians” during a period of significant racial conflict and the expansion of governmental

¹²² Letter from T. Elliott to John A. Macdonald, August 14 1886.
policies. However, the Six Nations themselves also played an active role in the committee and shaped some of their own representation.

According to the *Brantford Daily Expositor*, 2000 people were in attendance at the cornerstone ceremony; the *Brantford Courier* estimated the number at closer to 4000. Both newspapers commented that the ceremony was well attended by the Six Nations, consisting of men, women and children. Most of the ceremony was led and conducted by the Six Nations, a notable departure for the original plan that called for the Masonic Order to direct the events. The cornerstone ceremony was filled with references to the Six Nations and their past contributions, present condition, and continued loyalty. As with other events, the procession and speeches spoke about Six Nations loyalism to the British Crown. However, there was also a significant degree of agency presented by members of the Six Nations who led the procession and chose to speak about their own issues. The ceremony, according to the press, was conducted as a burial and mourning event by the Six Nations. It contained much of the solemnity and reverence as the re-interment of Brant, and echoed the funerary processions at the Brock memorial from previous decades.

The ceremony commenced with a procession marshaled and led by Six Nations Chiefs, including William Wedge who proudly displayed the medal presented to him by the Prince of Wales. The procession was led from the Six Nations Superintendent’s office, through the streets of Brantford, and finally arriving at Victoria Square. According to the Superintendent Gilkison, the Chiefs “inspired a lively interest and were punctual in arrival on the grounds of my

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126 It is unclear why the decision was made to allow the Six Nations Chiefs to present the August ceremony. Nonetheless, it was a notable change from other commemorative ceremonies in Canada where Six Nations speakers were frequently invitees, but not the primary focus.
127 *Brantford Daily Expositor*, August 12 1886.
office." The procession was headed by standard bearers carrying the Union Jack, followed by Six Nations Chiefs, the Band, Warriors, and the Council of the Six Nations. It was only at this point in the procession that the Brant Memorial Association made an appearance, a diminished position at the back of the march behind the members of the Six Nations.

Upon arrival at the site, a number of speakers addressed the gathered crowd. Allan Cleghorn was the first to speak, offering words of welcome to all gathered. He confirmed that it was a fitting ceremony and commemoration of Brant, a man that should be celebrated for his accomplishments. However, the final memorial was also a recognition of the strength of the Six

Figure 3.12: Brittney Anne Bos. “Detail of Pedestal and Figures.” Photograph. April 2011.

129 Brantford Daily Expositor, August 12 1886.
Nations confederacy.\textsuperscript{130} He further remarked that the solid materials of the monument – bronze and stone – were linked to the unwavering loyalty of the Six Nations and their adherence to treaties with the Crown.\textsuperscript{131} These ideas were eventually displayed in the final monument. The iconography of the noble savage was long associated with the loyal, romantic Indigenous figure that supported the march of civilization by colonists. The six bronze figures on the tier of the pedestal, representing the Six Nations, are depicted using this visual language (Fig. 3.12). In particular, four of the figures are seated in the contemplative pose typical of the noble savage. They are semi-nude and hold weapons, but are not threatening or imposing figures. Typical of the noble savage, they are not brandishing their weapons and their stance is docile and passive. Most viewers aware of the noble savage would easily make the connection between the romantic image of the primitive culture that was gradually subsumed through assimilation. As represented, these Indigenous figures were clearly not the resistant North West bands. Instead, they were depicted as the loyal and docile “good Indian”.

The iconographical connection between the loyal Six Nations and the “good Indian” was also referenced in speeches. Mayor Heyd remarked that this harmonious gathering for the cornerstone ceremony was evidence that treaty rights were respected. Heyd affirmed that the Indian populations of Canada exhibited great loyalty when dealt with fairly, as evidenced by the Six Nations. The Mayor advocated for a similar policy to apply in the North West.\textsuperscript{132} William Paterson, Liberal MP for Brant South, also commented on the friendship between the citizens of Brantford and the Six Nations, suggesting a shared history that was symbolized through Joseph Brant.\textsuperscript{133} It was clear from the speeches that Joseph Brant’s memory was a testament not only to

\textsuperscript{130} Brantford Courier, August 12 1886.
\textsuperscript{131} Brantford Daily Expositor, August 12 1886.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid.; Brantford Courier, August 12 1886.
past heroism, but also to the continued friendship between the city of Brantford and its Six Nations reserve neighbours. This friendship was, in part, due to the perceived docility of the Six Nations and their apparent willingness to cooperate with governmental policies. Their representation on the monument also confirmed this perception of the white commemorators. Despite the reverence for the Six Nations as gifted warriors, there is a distinct lack of warrior elements on the monument. Joseph Brant himself passively holds his weapon to his side, a feature that is barely visible from most angles. As mentioned previously, the Six Nations figures are not actively using any of their weapons and it does not appear any of them are engaged in war. Additionally, one of the bas-reliefs depicts a war dance, the moment before a conflict rather than the battle itself. The Six Nations and Brant are represented on the monument and in the speeches at the cornerstone ceremony as harmonious partners rather than military allies.

Although white leaders of the Brantford community primarily controlled the committee, a number of Six Nations Chiefs were also on the organizing board. It is likely that their advocacy created a forum not only for the representation of their own history but contemporary issues as well. Along with white community leaders, there were a number of First Nations speakers at the laying of the cornerstone. All three Indigenous Chiefs spoke in their native tongue, which was simultaneously translated by an interpreter into English. Speaking in their language, the Six Nations addressed their own people and conducted the ceremony on their own cultural terms. The Chiefs all spoke fluent English, and two of them were active on the Brant Memorial Association. By conducting a significant part of the ceremony in different native languages, the Six Nations were not only affirming their presence, but the continuation of their culture as well. Increasingly faced with policies that promoted assimilation, the Six Nations were making an
important cultural stance by not only leading the ceremony and heading the procession, but doing so in the words of their own culture.

Like their white counterparts, many of the Chiefs spoke about the relationship between the city of Brantford and their respective bands. Chief Clench noted the friendship between the “white and red man” was evident in the varied attendance at the event. He called on the Six Nations to show the same loyalty as Brant, noting his adherence to the British Crown; however, Chief Clench also mentioned that Brant was an important ambassador for his own people and worked for their benefit as well.\footnote{Ibid.} Chief John Buck also echoed this dual sentiment, noting that Brant was loyal to the British Crown, but also loyal to his own people.\footnote{Brantford Daily Expositor, August 12 1886.} Both of these speakers emphasized the link between past and present loyalties, similar to their white counterparts. However, both Chiefs also mentioned Joseph Brant as a hero for his own race. In mentioning the Six Nations continued loyalty and faithfulness, the Chiefs were also campaigning for recognition of their rights. As with the unveiling of the Brock monument a few decades earlier, the Indigenous speakers were using the frame of loyalism (in this case connected to Brant) in order to push for present recognition of their important contributions to the Dominion.

The speeches from white commemorators and the Six Nations both emphasized the continued loyalty of the Indigenous peoples surrounding Brantford. The monument was not simply a historic nod to past loyalism, but also a contemporary acknowledgement. The six figures on the tier of the pedestal are not imagined representations, but are modeled on actual Six Nations peoples (Fig. 3.13).\footnote{It is unknown who made the decision or why it was decided to model the faces on contemporary Indigenous peoples.} Sculptors frequently used models to aid in their creations, but the allegorical and anonymous figures in monuments (or paintings) were rarely tied to specific...
people. Likely keeping with this tradition, nowhere on the monument are the names or their nation identified. However, there is a surviving record of their participation: six photographs that identify the Six Nations individuals who sat for Brant’s memorial.137 These figures not only provided the artist with a visual reference, but also iconographically connected the historic representation of the Six Nations with their contemporary leadership and loyalty.

None of the models for the monument were part of the committee, and none of them spoke during the cornerstone ceremony. However, the father of one of the models did supervise the memorialization and was the most honoured Six Nations guest. In the middle of the ceremony’s proceedings, the cornerstone was laid by Chief Clench and supervised by Chief

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137 The figures are identified in photographs held at the Library and Archives Canada, all captured by Park & Co. in c. 1884: Abraham Hill (Mohawk), Peter Newhouse (Onondaga), Vanevery (Seneca), Elias Lewis (identified as Six Nations), son of J.S. Johnson (Oneida), and David Given (Mohawk).
Smoke Johnson, one of the last men alive to have personally known Brant. A silver trowel was presented to the Chiefs in recognition of the ceremony, featuring a commemorative engraving and the emblem of a beaver.\textsuperscript{138} The cornerstone itself was deposited with a number of documents and items of importance, chosen by both the Brant Memorial Association and the Six Nations Chiefs. One jar contained items chosen by the Association that primarily referenced the city of Brantford and their activities. The second jar was tied to the Six Nations, containing documents and items significant to their culture. Of particular significance was a wampum belt, donated by the Six Nations, containing four strings. Each string was a journey in the process of death and mourning, recognizing the transformation of sorrow to a sense of duty to continue the memory.

Figure 3.14: Brittney Anne Bos. “Detail of Figures with Six Nations Totems.” Photograph. April 2011.

\textsuperscript{138} Brantford Daily Expositor, August 12 1886.
and loyalty of the deceased.\textsuperscript{139} The wampum was a tribute to Brant, but also an affirmation of the future loyalty of the Six Nations, a fidelity expressed in their own material culture.

The imprint of the Six Nations Chiefs was also left on the physical form of the monument. Although the bronze was forged by a white artist and primarily directed by a white committee, the Six Nations advocated for their own self-representation. For example, the statue also includes the animal totems of the bear and the wolf (Fig. 3.14). The \textit{Brantford Expositor} identified this idea as originating with the Six Nations.\textsuperscript{140} The original call to artists and the accompanying list of requirements included the Six Nations animal totems. Regarded as a necessary part of the winning monument design, the Six Nations totems were a spiritual and cultural embodiment chosen by the Six Nations themselves. Although the monument was a form of European commemoration and memorialization, the animal totems were an important cultural symbol for the Six Nations. Through the speeches at the cornerstone ceremony and even the final bronzes of the monument, the Six Nations marked Joseph Brant’s memorial not only as a symbol of loyalism but one of cultural continuance.

With the cornerstone event complete, committee members focused on planning the unveiling and members did not delay in considering what events to hold on that day. However, by the summer of 1886, there was considerable confusion regarding who was in charge of the planning. On July 23 1886, the Brant Memorial Association decided that a general citizens committee would be responsible for planning the unveiling ceremony. This committee was to include representatives from the Association, the City Council, the County Council, Board of Trades, Six Nations members, and prominent citizens.\textsuperscript{141} A day after printing the call for a

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid.; \textit{Brantford Courier}, August 12 1886.
\textsuperscript{140} \textit{Brantford Daily Expositor Brant Memorial Number}, October 15 1886.
\textsuperscript{141} \textit{Brantford Daily Expositor}, “Brant Memorial Association” July 23 1886.
general citizens meeting, the *Brantford Daily Expositor* favourably reported on the gathering.\(^{142}\) By the meeting at the end of August, the Memorial Association officially withdrew from the unveiling planning duties, leaving the task in the hands of the citizens.\(^{143}\) According to Cleghorn, the Association wanted to recognize the “national character” of the monument and therefore decided that a citizen’s committee was most appropriate.\(^{144}\) Despite his reassurances, considerable tension continued to separate the work of the citizen’s committee and the Association. The *Brantford Courier* called upon the people of Brantford to attend in greater numbers and create an unveiling worthy of the commemoration.\(^{145}\) The *Expositor* also reported on the disappointing attendance, particularly by prominent members of the business community.\(^{146}\) Both newspapers remarked that the citizen’s committee had no operating budget, no voice to demand money for the project, and thus very little power.\(^{147}\)

The next week’s meeting showed considerably more promise, as individual committees were declared and roles were finally designated.\(^{148}\) The *Expositor* featured a short but spirited call to action that encouraged members to create a demonstration worthy of the monument.\(^{149}\) The *Courier* recognized that the question of finances was still unanswered, but was positive that a dedicated group of businessmen and other locals would support the ceremony.\(^{150}\) This optimism was short lived, and soon the tensions between the Association and the citizen’s committee came to the fore. During a meeting on September 3 1886, Allan Cleghorn announced

\(^{142}\) *Brantford Daily Expositor*, “The Brant Memorial” July 28 1886.

\(^{143}\) The President, Allan Cleghorn, remained on the unveiling committee, but the Association was not formally involved.

\(^{144}\) *Brantford Courier*, “The Brant Memorial: Another Adjourned Meeting for Want of Greater Interest” August 25 1886.

\(^{145}\) Ibid.

\(^{146}\) *Brantford Daily Expositor*, “The Brant Memorial” August 25 1886.

\(^{147}\) The Mayor would not propose a motion in City Council to pledge up to $1000 for the unveiling as requested. Without an operating budget, the group could not carry on with its plans.

\(^{148}\) *Brantford Daily Expositor*, “The Brant Memorial” August 29 1886.

\(^{149}\) *Brantford Daily Expositor*, “Round Town Rambles: Tonight’s Meeting” August 30 1886.

\(^{150}\) *Brantford Courier*, “Immediate Action Needed” August 31 1886.
that the Memorial Association had decided on a program for the unveiling without consulting the citizen’s committee. It was eventually moved that the Association’s program be adopted, but the power to control the unveiling still remained with the citizen’s committee.\textsuperscript{151} Despite continued strain for the next few weeks, on September 10 1886 the committee released a harmonious joint plan for the unveiling, much to the relief of the local newspapers and Brantford citizens.\textsuperscript{152}

Both Brantford newspapers reported extensively on the committee’s progress and particularly the tensions that hindered the process. Many people were interested in the unveiling and the event was regarded with high importance in the small city of Brantford. Numerous commentators, throughout the process, advocated that this event reached far beyond local importance; this was a national, and even imperial, affair. Even during the design phase, the Association considered the significance of the monument not only to Brantford, but to Canada. In a letter to Sir John A. Macdonald, updating him on the design selection process, the Secretary of the Association wrote: “We fully recognize the very great importance of having a national work of this kind of such a character as will fully represent the important events which it is designed to perpetuate.”\textsuperscript{153} As the unveiling date drew closer, the small city of Brantford was anticipating the great spectacle. Noted by Gilkison in September of that year: “The people of Brantford are now alive to the probable value of the work of art and its importance to their small city and area taking steps to receive the thousands of expected visitors on the occasion and do

\textsuperscript{151} Brantford Courier, “The Memorial Proceedings” September 4 1886. The Brantford Expositor (“Citizen’s Committee” September 4 1886) reported on the meeting, but did not record the tension between the citizen’s committee and the association in the same detail as the Courier. Given the previous criticism of the Association (and Cleghorn’s Grit politics), the Courier may have pointed out a subtle political tension existing between the groups. Brantford Courier, “The Memorial Celebration” Sept 9 1886, places additional blame on the Association, but recommended a harmonious solution.

\textsuperscript{152} Brantford Courier, “Harmony at Last” September 11 1886; Brantford Daily Expositor, “Demonstration Committee” September 11 1886.

\textsuperscript{153} Letter from G.H. Muirhead to John A. Macdonald, January 15 1884, MG26-A, Microfilm reel C-1701, volume 320, page 144517-144523, Sir John A. Macdonald Papers, LAC.
certain acts in honour of the events.”¹⁵⁴ Letters of invitation sent to Macdonald from both Cleghorn and Henry emphasized the “historical” character of the event, and the important gathering of both white and native brethren.¹⁵⁵ The local newspapers also reported statements from citizens that highlighted the national importance of the event. Writing in the Brantford Daily Expositor, A.H. Dymond proclaimed: “The event may well be regarded as Imperial even more than Canadian, and certainly Canadian rather than local.”¹⁵⁶ Members of the Association also felt the unveiling was beyond local significance. According to the Courier, Cleghorn believed the eyes of the world were on the committee and it was important to create an inspiring program for the large crowd.¹⁵⁷ Although he was later mocked at the meeting for over-emphasizing the imperial importance of the event, Brantford citizens were aware of the monument’s significance. Claimed to be the first monument to an Indigenous leader in the British Empire, the unveiling was notable. It also allowed the young nation to proclaim its own place within the broader imperial world.

Committee members agreed about the importance of the event, but still had considerable disagreements over politics. The existing tensions that plagued the Association from the beginning came to the fore when the Governor General officially declined the invitation to unveil the monument due to conflicting obligations outside the country. The first mention of Sir John A. Macdonald taking on the duties appears to be from J. T. Gilkison, the Superintendent of the Six Nations. In a letter from August 14 1886, he informally invited Macdonald’s presence and

¹⁵⁶ A.H. Dymond, letter to the editor, Brantford Daily Expositor, July 30 1886.
¹⁵⁷ Brantford Courier, “Memorial Ceremonies: The Association Committee Separate themselves from the Citizens” September 4 1886.
suggested he could perform the unveiling. He proposed this idea to the citizen’s committee a few weeks later. He reported: “But it was opposed by the Mayor and a Mr. Buck, not as they said, upon personal grounds, but of your political position as they feared it would break in upon the harmony which prevails in connection with the memorial.”

This tension was also recorded by Robert Henry, noting: “There was a little friction at the mention of your name some weeks ago, but the fault finders have seen the error of their ways.” It appears that many citizens, including Robert Henry, still wanted Macdonald to perform the unveiling. Nonetheless, to avoid further political divisions, it was decided he would receive an invitation as a special guest.

Macdonald chose not to attend the unveiling of the monument, despite his political and financial support for the endeavor.

Another important invitation was extended to different Chiefs from the North West. The origins of this idea are unclear, but both the Association and Macdonald supported the plan.

Robert Henry sent a brief correspondence to Macdonald on September 19 1886 concerning the matter. This letter reveals that the idea was well established before a final program for the unveiling was chosen. A few weeks later, Thomas Elliott proposed his idea for the visit. He remarked that a meeting between the North West and the Six Nations Chiefs should be planned, along with a visit of the model New England Co. School (later known as the Mohawk Institute

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159 Letter from G.T. Gilkison to John A. Macdonald, September 1 1886. He also mentions the Lieut. Governor was chosen as the person to unveil the monument.

160 Letter from R. Henry to John A. Macdonald, October 7 1886.

161 Letter from R. Henry to John A. Macdonald, September 19 1886, MG26-A, Microfilm reel C-1778, volume 429, page 210236-210239, Sir John A. Macdonald Papers, LAC. On October 7, less than a week before the unveiling, Cleghorn sent a telegram on that subject (Letter from A. Cleghorn to John A. Macdonald, October 7 1886). However, this telegram is quickly supplemented with a letter from Robert Henry, urging Macdonald to accept the invitation, but if he cannot make it someone else would be to blame: “I will see that…the blame will rest on the proper parties not on you.” (Letter from R. Henry to John A. Macdonald, October 7 1886)

162 It is unclear why Macdonald decided not to attend. It seems, based on correspondences, that many of his supporters assumed he would attend and were upset when he was absent.

163 Letter from R. Henry to John A. Macdonald, October 7 1886.
Residential School). Specific Chiefs were selected to attend the unveiling due to their non-participation in the North West Rebellion. As the Chiefs were removed from their cultural context, an English translator accompanied them to the foreign lands of Eastern Ontario. With significant problems still brewing in the North West, the unveiling of the monument was an important political demonstration regarding the position of the Indigenous peoples in the young Dominion.

The iconography of the final monument positioned Joseph Brant, and the Six Nations more broadly, as “good Indians” in the eyes of the white colonial government. The selected

![Image](image_url)

Figure 3.15: John Woodruff. “Blackfoot Chiefs at Earnescliffe during a visit to Ottawa.” Photograph. 1886. From Library and Archives Canada: Geological Survey of Canada. Library and Archives Canada.

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Chiefs from the North West were also promoted as the “good Indians” that did not participate in the rebellion. It was clear, both from speeches and the visual iconography, that Brant was perceived as a passive recipient of white civilization. The pose of the final monument is docile and relaxed. The body of Brant is not positioned as stiff or forceful, but rather he is resting on a contra-posto stance. Both of his hands are positioned downwards, one holding the barely visible weapon and the other pointed towards the ground. The representation of Brant is deliberately relaxed and non-threatening, an important iconographical reference to the docility of the “good Indian.” This was the perfect pose to accompany a monument about contemporary loyalism amongst the Indigenous peoples. It is also an explanation of why the Dominion government decided to sponsor the transportation of five Chiefs, far removed from the Six Nations, to the commemoration of Joseph Brant. Touted as loyal and non-aggressive, these Chiefs were also meant to be representative of the “good Indian” that was absorbing civilization and assimilation.

A total of five Chiefs from the North West were eventually transported by rail to Ontario. The first to arrive were Crowfoot and Three Bulls of the Blackfoot Nation. According to the “Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs”, they toured various cities in Eastern Canada and returned west shortly after the arrival of more Chiefs: Red Crow and One Spot of the Blood Nation, and North Axe of the Peigan Nation. Those three representatives eventually travelled to Brantford for the unveiling. However, the written record does not address the events surrounding a photograph, captured sometime before the unveiling (Fig. 3.15). The photograph depicts all five Chiefs at Earnescliffe, the residence of Sir John A. Macdonald, sitting on the grass outside of the building. The caption, added later by Ed Tompkins and Jeffrey Thomas of the National Archives of Canada, states that the Chiefs had decided “to come to Ottawa to

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165 Parliament of Canada, “Dominion of Canada Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the year ending December 31 1886” (Ottawa: Mclean, Rogers and Co., 1886) page x.
present their grievances and concerns about treaty violations directly to the federal government.”

The written historical record is curiously silent on this visit. Crowfoot and Three Bulls were supposed to attend the unveiling of the Brant Memorial, but were sent home early. The *Expositor* blamed their absence on an unexpected illness. However, a telegram, that has not survived, was sent to Gilkison by Macdonald at the same time as the unveiling, partially stating: “Chiefs must go west at once.” It appears that the Chiefs did not comply with the iconographical and ideal image of the “good Indian” demanded by white government officials.

The missing telegram from Macdonald does reveal that there was friction regarding the visit, but it did not significantly affect the plans of commemorators. Both Gilkison and the “Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs” commented positively on the visit of the three remaining Chiefs. Neither source mentions the absence of Crowfoot at the unveiling, who was originally promoted as a major guest and speaker. Given the presence of the photograph at Earnescliffe, it is highly probable that the changed course taken by the Chiefs to visit Ottawa and present their demands for action created friction. In this case, only the visual record speaks to this curious incident. The written records, controlled by commemorators and government officials, barely allude to the conflict. Instead, the myth of the “good Indian” image of Joseph Brant and other loyal North West Chiefs is upheld. The dissenting voices are largely

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167 *Brantford Daily Expositor Brant Memorial Number*, October 15 1886.


170 *Brantford Daily Expositor*, “Brantford Memorial” September 27 1886. The annual report simply says Crowfoot left early, while Gilkison only discusses the remaining three Chiefs.

171 The Aboriginal Portraits Exhibition has no references or footnotes to direct the researcher to the information used for the caption of the Earnescliffe photo.
silenced in the historical record and visual iconography of the monument: except for the defiant photograph of five Indigenous Chiefs sitting on the Prime Minister’s lawn.

**True Heroism and Loyalty**

After preparing for Joseph Brant’s commemoration for over a decade, the city of Brantford was finally ready for its grand reveal on October 13 1886. The city was expecting a large number of people to enjoy the three days of festivities, which not only included the unveiling of the monument, but also a showcase of the city’s businesses, agriculture, and industry. Although the friction between the Association and the citizen’s committee never fully dissipated, there was new urgency to place the final touches on the program and prepare for the large spectacle. On October 8 the *Brantford Daily Expositor* reported the monument was finished and ready for its unveiling. By October 12 the official program was printed and the citizens of Brantford waited for their moment on the Empire’s stage.

According to both local newspapers, the weather on the morning of October 13 was perfect, satisfying the thousands of visitors still arriving in the city. The procession met at the Indian Office and started making its way through the city at noon. Leading the procession was Chief William Wage, followed immediately by the visiting North West Chiefs. They led the rest of the Indigenous representatives, including the musical band, council, and a group of warriors. Following them were prominent Brantford citizens, including the Association members and the Mayor’s entourage. The procession eventually arrived at Victoria Square, already full of spectators anticipating the unveiling. A Guard of Honour greeted all of the spectators at the gates of the park. Upon arrival, people found that the monument was covered in a combination of white cloth and Union Jacks, the final design hidden from public view. As the honoured guests

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172 *Brantford Courier*, “Brant Memorial Demonstration” September 29 1886.
173 *Brantford Daily Expositor*, “Completed” October 8 1886.
took their places on the platform, the program of speeches, prayers, songs, dances, and other tributes began.

There were four primary addresses that afternoon, offered by Allan Cleghorn, the Lieutenant Governor Robinson, Firekeeper John Buck, and Mayor Heyd. Each speech remarked on the importance of loyalism and the patriotism of Brant in adhering his beliefs to the British Crown. Cleghorn proclaimed that the monument itself was a testament to fidelity: “It is constructed of imperishable material, and will stand as a testimony to this and secondary generations, that true heroism and loyalty have been rewarded.”\(^\text{174}\) By linking the physical permanence of the monument to the ever-lasting loyalty of the British subjects, Cleghorn was

Figure 3.16: Brittney Anne Bos. “Detail of Brant Statue.” Photograph. April 2011.

\(^{174}\) *Brantford Expositor Brant Memorial Number*, October 15, 1886.
linking the commemoration itself to the ideas it represented. The remaining three speakers each
presented the loyalism of Brant as the primary reason for recognizing him and encouraged
others, whether it be the Six Nations or other citizens, to follow his example.

The iconography employed by Wood positioned Brant as a loyal example for all to
emulate. As with the Brock monument decades before, the figure of Brant was a representative
for future generations (Fig. 3.16). The pose chosen for the figure of Brant is one example of this
physical manifestation. Joseph Brant is positioned in a standing pose, foot forward, with his
weapon downplayed. Although his arm is not forward in a motion of leadership, his hand is
modeled in a gesture of direction. With the Six Nations figures below on the pedestal, it appears
that he is leading them and they are listening to him. The subtle gesture of the figure’s left hand
commands loyalty from his followers. The bas-relief at the front of the monument that depicts
Brant leading a council is very similar. Brant is once again the focus of a gathering of Six
Nations. They are positioned around him and, due to the depth of the relief, Brant’s figure is the
emphasis in the foreground. Similar to the bronze statue, Brant’s arm is communicating a gesture
of leadership. This time his arm is outstretched, hand pointing forward. As the commemorators
emphasized the loyalty of Joseph Brant and the importance of his example, current and later
generations could look to the iconography of the monument to see a similar message.

Along with the emphasis on loyalty, the speakers also addressed the broader theme of
“cooperation” and the important relationship between the whites of Brantford and the Six
Nations. In the Mayor’s address, he emphasized: “We desire to perpetuate the memory of that
illustrious chief and warrior… and to continue those friendly relations which have always existed
between the Six Nations Indians and ourselves.”175 According to Cleghorn’s address, it was not
simply a cooperative relationship, but rather the British needed to thank Brant and the Six

175 Ibid.
Nations for the survival of the Empire. He stated: “It is now very generally admitted that the adhesion of Brant and the Six Nations Indians to British interests at that time facilitated a settlement of the dispute and was the means of ultimately saving to Britain one half of this American continent.”176

At the unveiling of Brant’s monument, the relationship between the Six Nations and the whites of Brantford was meant to be symbolic of the broader ideal relationship between the whites of Canada and Indigenous peoples across the continent. In this version of white and Indian relations, the control of the nation had been passed from one race to the other, the former slowly dying out in a noble fashion. Promoted by Allen Cleghorn:

Your Honor, these Indian tribes that you now see before you, are from various parts of America, and are the descendants and living representatives of that great and powerful race which for so many centuries controlled the destinies of the American continent, you see them to-day meeting peaceable with their white brethren who represent the new.177

During his speech, Cleghorn was joined on the main platform by the North West Chiefs. As he pointed to the Indigenous peoples present, it is likely he was also referencing this other cultural group from across Canada. Although not historically tied to Joseph Brant, according to the white commentators the North West Chiefs also represented the “peaceable brethren.”

The only Six Nations speaker, Firekeeper of the council John Buck, also carried the message of loyalty: “The memorial would be a further incentive to the Six Nations to be ever loyal to the British Crown. As Thayendenagea was loyal, so he knew that the Six Nations now are just as loyal as those whom Capt Brant led to battle in days gone by.”178 As he did at the cornerstone laying ceremony, Buck connected the historic loyalty of the Six Nations with the present generation, emphasizing continued adherence. However, Buck also highlighted the

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176 Ibid.
177 Ibid.
178 Ibid.
important role the Six Nations had played in the creation of the monument. He thanked the other
groups for their support of the original Six Nations grant, pointing out that it was pledged before
any others. He spoke in his own language and emphasized the agency of the Six Nations as a
group, a subtle feature not present in the other speeches. The Six Nations participated in other
ways during the ceremony. Twelve representatives of the Six Nations were chosen to aid in the
unveiling of the monument. While the Lieutenant Governor was the first and primary unveiler of
the Brant statue, the twelve representatives revealed the remaining and larger portions of the
memorial. After the monument was unveiled, a war dance and “whoop” was performed.\footnote{According to the \textit{Courier} it was an impulsive gesture, but earlier programs suggest it was planned.}

The individualism of Brant was a significant part of the speeches by white commentators
and Indigenous alike; his leadership qualities and heroic feats was a primary subject in most of
the addresses. However, the iconography of the monument was not as individualized as the
accompanying rhetoric. Not only was Brant depicted in generic archetypical Indian costuming,
but also his portraits were not significantly utilized in the creation of the monument. The facial
features of Brant were distinctly recorded in numerous portraits completed from life. While the
skin tone and some of his features changed as time went on, the basic facial structure of Brant
remained recognizable throughout the years. Curiously, Wood’s portrayal of Brant does not
resemble these portraits. The high, rounded cheekbones are not a distinctive feature in Wood’s
depiction; neither is the narrow nose of Brant. Instead, Brant’s nose is large and round, his lips
full and his eyes wide. The broad neck of Brant’s portraits is also missing, replaced with a long
and narrow neck that does not correspond with other images. The lack of realistic facial features
is also curious in the case of the portrait statue genre more generally. Most artists spent
considerable time rendering the face from known portraits to ensure instant recognition. In the
case of Brant, the recognizable face from the numerous sketches and paintings is far removed from the eventual bronze manifestation.

Many prominent members of the community were invited to participate in the commemoration of Brant. An already well-known Canadian poet, Pauline Johnson, and granddaughter of the late Chief Smoke Johnson, was invited to write a poem for the occasion. She occupied a similar position to that of Brant: a hybrid figure that was at once a representative of her culture, but also a symbol of the civilizing process. Touted as a member of the Six Nations but also a prominent poetess, Johnson’s position at the unveiling was another indication of contemporary Indian policy. In the introduction to her poem, W.F. Cockshutt emphasized the importance of her words, saying: “… they are creditable alike to the young Indian poetess and the race for whom she speaks, and serve to prove that our Six Nations are capable of fine literary culture, and fully able to handle the pen as well as the sword.”¹⁸⁰ Her accomplishment proved the merits of civilization and the ability of First Nations people to succeed in the modern world within white institutions. As Cockshutt went on to state, her words also demonstrated the loyalism that was emphasized throughout the afternoon. “They contain a fitting tribute to Brant and his contemporaries who fought so nobly and sacrificed so much to prove allegiance to the British flag.”¹⁸¹ After his introduction, Cockshutt himself read the poem. No words from Pauline Johnson herself, about the background of the poem or her own inspiration, were recorded on that day.

After the formalities of the unveiling and various speeches in Victoria Square, the crowd broke off to enjoy the other activities happening throughout Brantford for the next few days. Along with the monument, there were banquets and formal dinners for the special guests, a fair

¹⁸⁰ *Brantford Expositor Brant Memorial Number*, October 15 1886.
¹⁸¹ Ibid
and agricultural show for the citizens and visitors alike, and a variety of other spontaneous activities. By the end of the week, it seemed that the reason for the celebration (the unveiling of the monument) was a distant memory for most of the participants. Nonetheless, the daily newspapers and correspondences seemed to agree that the week was a success, bringing the city together for the entertainment of the thousands of visitors received.

**Conclusion**

In their call for submissions, the Brant Memorial Association advised the artists that the monument was “intended to be of a strictly Indian character.” Based on the submission package, commemorators expected artists to draw on the image of the archetypical Indian and their general knowledge of depicting Indigenous peoples in art. With the biography of Joseph Brant in hand, artists were also expected to produce the image of a leader with heroic qualities. With so many competing iconographies, commemorators were seeking a new iconographical language for the representation of an Indigenous leader, unchartered territory for British colonists. The purpose was to position Joseph Brant as the “good Indian” and a figure to emulate for present and future generations. Governments believed that in the face of increasing cultural contact, conflicts were best resolved through assimilation. The “good Indian” embodied by Brant was the perfect historical figure to promote this idea not only among Indigenous peoples but their white counterparts as well.

The iconography of the Joseph Brant memorial was a visual representation of late nineteenth-century policies regarding Indigenous peoples in Canada. Many of the committee members responsible for the commemoration were politically involved in Canada’s rapidly changing social environment. They brought not only their own political biases, but influences from governmental policies as well. The archetypical Indian was the perfect representation to

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182 Circular from the Brant Memorial Association, July 10 1883.
suit the goals of commemorators and governmental policy makers alike. However, in his creation of a new iconographical language, Wood also turned to other forms of representing Indigenous peoples, most notably the docile noble savage. Other representations of Brant, particularly the many portraits painted during his life, were discarded in favour of stereotypical images. This not only detached the memory of Brant from his cultural context, but served to connect contemporary “good Indians” to the historic example of Brant.

Despite commemorators’ efforts to mold the memory of Brant into a singular representation, Indigenous peoples used the opportunity to affirm their own cultural identity. The Six Nations on the committee shaped their own representations and dictated the terms of their “loyalty” at the ceremonies. Indigenous peoples resisted the image of the “good Indian” and used the forum to protest for cultural recognition. The memory of Brant, forged in bronze, was not only an embodiment of white policy for the Indigenous of Canada, but was also representative of the struggle for Indigenous recognition. Most of the iconography was still dictated by white commemorators, but the Six Nations were actively involved in placing their own cultural importance in the symbols of the monument.

In 1874, the Duke of Connaught was presented with a petition from the Six Nations to commemorate the loyal ally to the British, Joseph Brant. Local commemorators took up the idea, creating a memorial that was suiting for a nineteenth-century hero; however, this leader was different. He would be commemorated like a white hero, following the principles of memorials from the previous century. Brant was imbued with values similar to the illustrious Brock and held up as the ideal example for future generations. However, his Indigenous identity made Joseph Brant an “Other,” unworthy of recognition on the same scale as Europeans due to his race. Commemorators recognized that this inherent contradiction needed negotiation and turned
to the creation of a unconventional iconography. This visual language recognized Brant as a hero and an important leader, but also connected him to the “good Indian” of the late nineteenth century. The constructed memory of Joseph Brant as the ideal and loyal Indigenous figure was forged in bronze as an enduring example for future generations.
Chapter 4: “Their Character and Devotion have entered into the very fabric of this Nation”: Monuments to John Graves Simcoe in Toronto, 1903, and the United Empire Loyalists in Hamilton, 1929

Figure 4.1: Brittney Anne Bos. “View of Monument to Simcoe on the Grounds of Queen’s Park.” Photograph. April 2014.

1 Hamilton Spectator, “Great Spirit lives again in Hamilton” May 25 1929.
Figure 4.2: Brittney Anne Bos. “View of United Empire Loyalist Monument in Hamilton.” Photograph. April 2011.
Introduction

…[The] people who create the Government, who infuse their spirit into the rulers and who embody in their institutions and their national emblems the high ideals of service, of truth, and justice and liberty. We are constantly in danger of forgetting these things and our forgetfulness leads our immigrating brethren to grow up in ignorance of the spirit and fashion of our national life. We were taught by the great men of our past that Britain and her Empire would be a uniting and fraternal influence throughout the world.²

There was significant change happening in the Canadian landscape. For many, it appeared that age-old traditions and systems of power were increasingly eroded with the spread of modernity. Industrialization was drawing people to growing urban centres where they met newly arrived immigrants from different cultures. The British fabric of the Canadian nation appeared to be unravelling. In the eyes of Canadian imperialists, the British heritage and identity of Canada was threatened by the rise of modernization. Large immigration numbers, increased urbanization, and the perceived erosion of the elite’s political and social power was de-stabilizing the nation.

Groups of concerned elites met in small towns and growing cities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, intent on spreading pride in inherited white British institutions. National holidays, such as Empire Day, were created to remind native British citizens of their connections to imperial glory. However, these celebrations were also intended as a spectacle to arriving immigrants, another tool of assimilation and the creation of new imperial subjects.

As with their predecessors, elites also used monuments to act as everlasting symbols to the values of the nation. The construction of memorials exploded throughout the Western world as elites sought to confirm their power through erections in bronze and stone. The white military hero, an individual who accomplished great feats, was gradually replaced by the commemoration of those who represented white institutions. Governmental figures, social and cultural leaders,

² Hamilton Herald, “Empire Mission” May 23 1933.
and even the first white “pioneers” of Canada were the new representatives of national values. However, in order to recognize ordinary citizens, artists needed to develop a new iconography. Designers adapted to the modern focus on individuals and gradually created a visual language that promoted the role of everyday citizens. In Canada, the “civilized” values of the British Empire were embodied in every new erection; soon, numerous growing communities across Ontario featured a monument to a white “founder” or local leader. For Canadian imperialists, the representation of these figures was a critical part in justifying their own power and promoting connections to the greater Empire.

Canadian imperialists were also focused on a mission to recognize Canada’s specific identity under the broader imperial umbrella. Faced with a rapidly changing world, Canadian imperialists searched for a unifying brand of nationalism that would preserve their own power and unite a diversifying population.3 Throughout the nineteenth century, “history” played a growing role in defining the nation and precisely who belonged in the “imagined community.” The century witnessed a large increase in the number of historic commemorations across the British Empire that sought to confirm imperial power and define the values of diverse imperial subjects.4 When these “invented traditions” appealed to popular taste, they were especially effective in rallying citizens to a common cause. Canadian imperialists followed examples throughout the British Empire, establishing a new holiday focused primarily on school children, directing countless commemorative ceremonies, creating new symbols to represent their nation, and unveiling numerous manifestations of their heroes.

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The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Ontario were filled with commemorations of great individuals and events that symbolically represented the values promoted by Canadian imperialists. The threat of foreign ethnicities, and particularly the values they represented, was met with a stronger assertion of Canada’s Britishness by its elites. A steady stream of immigrants was arriving on Canadian shores, rapidly changing the ethnic makeup of the former British colony (imagined as an exclusively white space). For some, industrialization and urbanization threatened the Empire, as individuals were frequently exposed to new people and different ways of life. Middle and upper class white elites turned to the past for idealized examples of traditional and “civilized” values. They sponsored monuments that acted as an everlasting testament to this past, but also provided a romanticized example for future citizens to follow. During this period of social and political uncertainty for Ontario’s elites, the steady leadership of John Graves Simcoe and unwavering dedication of the United Empire Loyalists (UELs) were suiting historic narratives. The monuments erected in their honour further marked the historic landscape as white and British, but also were meant to inculcate future citizens’ with similar values.

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Canadian imperialists turned to public history and commemoration in order to spread their ideology to the masses. Visual commemorations, such as monuments, could speak to any viewer across time and place. The seemingly permanent markers of granite, bronze, and stone loomed over citizens and symbolized the dominance of those powerful enough to build them. In large numbers, monuments were built across the country to recognize “founding fathers” and community elites. The iconography of the statues and rhetoric surrounding the ceremonies aligned these individuals with superior white British values. Through the vehicle of historic commemoration, elites were attempting to direct the collective memories of the nation. The stories of non-British settlement, most predominantly by the French, were erased from the commemorative landscape in favour of a homogenous white Anglophone story. The roles and presence of Indigenous peoples were also systematically excluded from the increasingly exclusive “imagined community” of Ontario. Instead, the conquering of the First Nations peoples and their “primitive” lifestyle was a marker of British civilization and its superiority. By the early twentieth century, commemorative ceremonies in Ontario, directed by a small group of social elites, were focused almost exclusively on British contributions to the development of the white nation. Historical narratives, and the rituals of commemoration, were perfectly suited to educate the masses on ideal British values and justify the continued power of white elites.

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7 Commemorators often view monuments and their meanings as timeless; however, many studies have demonstrated that these meanings are flexible and change over time. For more on this particular dynamic, see: Ladina Bezzola Lambert and Andrea Ochsner (eds.), Moment to Monument: the Making and Unmaking of Cultural Significance (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2009); Sanford Levinson, Written in Stone: Public Monuments in Changing Societies (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 1998); Brian S. Osborne, Constructing Landscapes of Power.

8 In the early twentieth century, Samuel de Champlain, George Etienne Cartier, Jacques Cartier and Paul de Chomedey (Sieur de Maisonneuve) were subjects of major commemorations in Quebec. Some of these occasions were used by Francophones, particularly in Quebec, to assert their presence in Canada’s commemorative landscape. See: Alan Gordon, The Hero and the Historians: Historiography and the Uses of Jacques Cartier (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010); H.V. Nelles; Alan Gordon, Making Public Pasts: The Contested Terrain of Montreal’s Public Memories, 1891-1930 (Montreal, Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001).
The first section of this chapter considers how “history” and especially commemorations were considered in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It also outlines the connections between Canadian imperialism and public history by examining a few brief examples of commemorations from this period. This chapter then focuses on an examination of the monument to John Graves Simcoe in Toronto from 1903. The monument’s beginnings, its correspondence with other portrait statues of the period, and the various values it was intended to represent are documented. Using visual analysis, artist submissions, and newspaper coverage, this section examines the values communicated through Simcoe as a white leader and how this was presented in bronze. The final section of this chapter considers the monument to the United Empire Loyalists in Hamilton from 1929. In this section I chronicle the monument’s connections to the broader United Empire Loyalist narrative, its visual correspondence with early twentieth-century monuments, and conclude with an analysis of its imperial message. Unveiled on Empire Day, the monument to the Loyalists was intended as a physical manifestation of the white settlement and struggle narrative that dominated Canadian imperialist “history.”

“Public History” and “Statuemania”\(^9\): Commemorating the Glory of the British Empire

The monuments to both John Graves Simcoe and the UELs were erected during a period of significant change in research and presentation of Canadian history was researched and presented to the public. The growing field of professionals challenged amateur historians. These early researchers, found in almost every small community in Ontario, were concerned with

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\(^9\) Brian Osborne identifies “statuemania” as the period from 1874 until 1914, where monument building in Canada was at its peak (Brian Osborne, “Landscapes, Memory, Monuments and Commemoration: Putting Identity in its Place” Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal 33, issue 3 (2001)). Statuemania was not exclusive to Canada and is identified as the period of increased monument building in a variety of contexts around the world, most notably France where the term was popularized (Michael Garval, “A Dream of Stone”: Fame, Vision, and Monumentality in Nineteenth Century French Literary Culture (Newark: University of Delaware, 2004)); This period is explored in the United States in: Erika Doss, Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America (Chicago, University of Chicago, 2012).
creating a history of their own place and formed groups dedicated to this goal. The narratives they produced were often focused on local citizens and highlighted the difficulties they overcame in establishing (often British) institutions. Dominated by both middle class men and women, these historical societies were forums reserved for social elites. The historical societies often used their position to educate other members of the community, holding public lectures, organizing pageants or parades, funding commemorations, and producing publications. Numerous local historical societies were established throughout the province, but there was no central body where local groups could come together and create provincial narratives. In 1888, the Ontario Historical Society was created to educate people across the province and to bring together these local societies. In addition to writing publications and hosting annual meetings, the Ontario Historical Society was also committed to erecting plaques and tablets across the province to recognize important places, people, and events.

During this same period there were calls for a national governmental organization to oversee Canada’s commemorative efforts. Although the idea was proposed for decades, it was


11 These organizations also offered an important place for women to participate in their communities. Many of these women produced some of the first comprehensive studies of the province’s past; however, as professionalization became more widespread, many were not taken seriously due to their position as “amateurs”. The role of women in these historical societies is covered by Cecilia Morgan (*Creating Colonial Pasts: History, Memory and Commemoration in Southern Ontario, 1860-1980*) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), and in the anthology Beverly Boutilier and Alison Prentice (eds.) *Creating Historical Memory: English-Canadian Women and the Work of History* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997).


13 In the first decade of their existence, the OHS was involved with numerous public commemoration projects. The Monuments and Tablets Committee, appearing in the first available meeting minutes of 1899, was one of the largest and most active committees at the turn of the century. However, by the dawn of the First World War, the position of the amateur historian and particularly their role in directing public history was changing.
only after the First World War that the Historic Sites and Monuments Board (HSMBC) was created. Promoted by Alexander Cruikshank, this Board was purposed with preserving Canada’s history and finding people, places, and events that held national significance.14 Within their first decade, the HSMBC designated over 100 sites, people and events. Using scientific-based research methods and brief plaque texts, the HSMBC was closely aligned with the growing historical profession. Although amateur historians continued their own work, particularly at the local level, academic standards gradually came to dominate the work of the HSMBC.15

Along with a surge in local historical societies and publications, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries witnessed a number of large-scale historical commemorations. Numerous local communities held their own pageants, parades, speeches, and monument unveilings. Accurately titled “statuemania” by Brian Osborne,16 this period was characterized by substantial monumental growth and a more united commemorative landscape. The focus of monuments was still on “great men”: individuals (predominantly male, and almost exclusively white) that shaped or formed key institutions. White military heroes remained a common subject, but a new group of “great men” gradually emerged during this period: political, social, and cultural leaders. The advent of the Dominion and its gradual expansion provided new uses

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15 Nonetheless, “amateur” historians created both main case studies in this chapter. The OHS sub-committee, responsible for Simcoe’s monument in 1903, was comprised of individuals very active in Ontario’s “amateur” organizations. Over two decades later, an “amateur” historian donated the United Empire Loyalists monument to the people of Hamilton.

16 Osborne, Landscapes Memory Monuments, 15.
for historical narratives. They also helped to define who was part of the nation and who was an “Other.”¹⁷ During a time of political, social and cultural development in Canada, commemorations and particularly monuments were used to shape a clear vision of a white national future.

In the decades before the First World War, Canadian imperialists used public commemorations as a tool for furthering their ideology. They carefully selected the perfect individuals and events to recognize, shaping the narratives to serve their own positions of power. The myth of the UELs was perfectly suited for the imperial cause; a story of struggle and self-sacrifice in the name of the British Crown and upholding white “civilized” virtues and institutions. The story of the Loyalists promoted a single narrative that affirmed uncontested connections to the British Crown.¹⁸ As the political and social environment of Ontario shifted, the Loyalist narrative was re-shaped in response.¹⁹ The Loyalist narrative was prominently on display during one of the largest historical commemorations in Ontario during this period: the celebration of the Loyalist centennial in Adolphustown, Toronto, and the Niagara region. As with many other commemorations, the elites directing the activities were anxious to legitimize their own power by using historical narratives.²⁰ At the 1884 Centennial, elites tried to focus on

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¹⁷ Commemorations are often presented as a group of elites directing the minds and opinions of the masses. However, the events are more complex than the intended and “official” message of one single group. As discussed in the introduction, marginalized groups often negotiated their own positions in “official” commemorations by elites. However, both case studies examined in this chapter were characterized by their lack of diverse participation. ¹⁸ Norman Knowles, Inventing the Loyalists: The Ontario Loyalist Tradition and the Creation of Usable Pasts (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 18-20. ¹⁹ Ibid., 60. For more on Loyalism throughout the British Empire during the same period, see: Allan Blackstock and Frank O’Gorman (eds.), Loyalism and the Formation of the British World, 1775-1914 (Rochester: Boydell Press, 2014); Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan (eds.), The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012). ²⁰ However, Norman Knowles disrupts common understandings of these events and reveals that they are far more complex than originally studied. He recognizes that many people involved were concerned and connected with imperialism and nationalism, but contends that others used the commemorative events for their own social causes. Women and the Six Nations in particular used the opportunity to advocate for their own position in Canada’s future (Knowles, 49).
the Loyalists as bringers of important white British traditions.\textsuperscript{21} Celebrations in Toronto and Niagara were intended as imperial and anti-American affairs. However, Norman Knowles contends that the “pioneer” image of the Loyalists was more appealing to the masses.\textsuperscript{22} Although commemorators sought to direct activities and meanings, the masses ultimately determined the enduring lessons of the story.\textsuperscript{23} Nonetheless, elites used grand commemorations to unite growing numbers of Ontario citizens under a common cause.

The building of monuments was an important component in defending imperial power. Shortly after the North West Rebellion, numerous monuments were erected in honour of the Canadian forces that had served and fell in defence of “Empire.” Outside of the Ontario Legislature buildings, in direct view of the front door and eventually adjacent to the Simcoe monument, is a tribute to “The Officers and Men who fell in the Battlefields of the North-West in 1885.” The monument design is similar to a portrait statue. However, the figure at the peak is an allegorical woman. Her costume is Classical, a sword is sheathed to her side, and her outstretched arms hold a small piece of laurel. Walter Allward, who would eventually win the commission for the Simcoe monument, designed the statue on top of the high pedestal, which was completed in 1895. Similar monuments were constructed throughout the nation, marking the colonial triumph of white forces over their native foes. Monuments to the North West Rebellion triumphantly marked the victory of “civilization” on the colonial landscape.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 62.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 83.
\textsuperscript{23} In addition, not everyone involved was directly tied to Canadian imperialism and nationalism. Although the majority of board members and organizing committees had imperial ties and direct links to Ontario’s elites, the masses participating in the events were often not aware of such ideologies.
\textsuperscript{24} The memory of First Nations and Metis individuals fighting on the other side was excluded from the commemorative landscape until the 1960s, when the figure of Louis Riel was complexly memorialized on the ground of Manitoba’s Legislature buildings. For more on Riel and commemorations of his memory, see: Jennifer Reid, \textit{Louis Riel and the Creation of Modern Canada: Mythic Discourse and the Postcolonial State} (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2008).
Other imperial conflicts offered opportunities to mark the collective memory of the nation as “civilized” and white. After Canadian volunteers returned from South Africa in the midst of statuemania, there were numerous calls for grand monuments to commemorate the imperial victory. The war was a considerable embarrassment for Great Britain, but the eventual triumph of the Empire over colonial unrest was the perfect narrative of white superiority. One of the grandest commemorations of the conflict was built in Toronto, the commission again awarded to Walter Allward (Fig. 4.3). Planned nearly ten years after the war’s completion,

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Allward’s grand triumphal obelisk recalls military monuments of the previous century. An angelic figure with outstretched wings and the familiar band of laurel sits at the peak, while an allegorical woman is flanked by two representations of Canadian soldiers at the base. Imperial lions decorate numerous parts of the memorial, which towers over the middle of the street leading towards Queen’s Park. One of Toronto’s grandest and largest monuments, the South Africa War Memorial by Allward represents the triumphant combination of statuemania and imperialism in the Ontario commemorative landscape. The monument was intended as a permanent display of imperial victory and the ultimate domination of British values over “inferior” races.

War victories offered the perfect opportunity to celebrate the triumph of imperialism on the global stage. However, a number of monuments dedicated to individuals that showcased these same values were also erected during this period. Imperialists directed their attention to figures who symbolically fought for the British Crown and quickly focused on Laura Secord. A monument to Secord was discussed for over a decade before the Ontario Historical Society accepted the project. Sarah Anne Curzon wrote extensively about Laura Secord and championed the movement to have her heroic deed recognized in a statue. Amateur women’s historians were seeking their own female heroes and promoted their insertion in nationalist narratives. 26 These women also used the historical ideas of self-sacrifice and devotion to the British Crown that was already familiar in other imperialist commemorations. The idea for a monument, supplemented by Curzon’s writings on the subject, received some attention and support but she died before any

Elizabeth Jane Thompson inherited the cause, eventually enlisting the support of the Ontario Historical Society in 1899.

The Tablets and Monuments Committee of the Ontario Historical Society accepted primary responsibility for the monument, the Chair occupied by Thompson. The priority for the committee was to raise the necessary funds required to erect a suitable monument at Secord’s gravesite at Lundy’s Lane (Fig 4.4). Much of these fundraising efforts were directed at women and schoolchildren. Laura Dunn of the United Empire Loyalist Association (UEL) of Toronto

27 Knowles, 129.
urged women from across Canada to support “bravery in woman… to whom we owe so much”. Dunn’s campaign managed to raise some money for the monument; however, the fund lacked significant sponsors. Without a government or major private donation, the monument was scaled back. One year after its inception, the fund only stood at $450. The Committee hoped to raise at least $1000 for a suitable monument, but now recognized their goal was unachievable.

One year later, the monument was unveiled at Lundy’s Lane. It featured a stone pedestal surmounted by a carving of Laura Secord executed by the female artist Mildred Peel. The Ontario Historical Society expressed appreciation to the artist and particularly noted the significance of a woman creating the commemoration of the heroic Secord.

Two years after a different monument to Laura Secord was erected on Queenston Heights, crowds returned to the same spot to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Queenston Heights. An elaborate program of speeches was planned, heavily focused on the role of the UELs. The individualism and heroic character of the white military hero Sir Isaac Brock was mostly gone, replaced with a celebration of Upper Canada’s British pioneers. As leader of the provincial Loyalist Association, George Ryerson produced a very clear message for the

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28 Ibid., 130.
30 Colin M. Coates and Cecilia Morgan, Heroines and History: Representations of Madeleine de Vercheres and Laura Secord (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 197. The commemoration of Laura Secord was rife with conflict. Only a couple months after the unveiling, Thompson reported that the carving was inadequate and the stone needed replacing. This was noticed at the unveiling, when it was determined that the dates on the monument were incorrect. Additionally, the project suffered enduring financial problems. When all work was complete, Thompson noted a small outstanding amounted required to settle liabilities. (Meeting of the Subcommittee of the Simcoe Monument Committee, August 12 1901, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario) However, conflict was already present in the first days of the Committee’s establishment. By the time of the general council meeting in January 1900, there was evidence of friction within the committee and its partner organizations. R.E.A. Land of the United Empire Loyalist Association supported a much more costly monument on the Niagara frontier and urged the Ontario Historical Society to redirect their subscribed funds to his effort instead. The OHS responded by stating their own legal obligations to their present subscribers; that they had enlisted funds for a monument at the gravesite at Lundy’s Lane and needed to remain committed to that project (Council of the Ontario Historical Society, January 11 1901, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario). Land responded by forming his own separate committee and eventually secured $2000 worth of federal funding for a monument unveiled a decade later at the site of Queenston Heights (Coates and Morgan, 196-200).
assembled crowd and his entire speech emphasized the role of the UELs. He promoted their attributes as admirable and worthy of praise:

The United Empire Loyalists came to this country not as those who desired to better their condition in life, nor were they possessed by land hunger, nor by ideas of political and social aggrandizement. They came solely because of their devotion to the British Crown and Constitution, and because they preferred to live in peace and poverty under a monarchical Government rather than in wealth and discord under republic institutions.\(^\text{31}\)

The military heroism of Brock does not appear in Ryerson’s address.\(^\text{32}\) Instead, the leadership qualities of the Major General and his responsibility for inspiring his fellow British citizens is the emphasis:

Why do we single out Brock as a hero among so many who have rendered good service to the country?... because he had within him the power to inspire others with the spirit of patriotism and self-sacrifice; and above and beyond all, it is due to his efforts, and to the spirit of resistance and Imperialism to which he gave form and substance, that Canada to-day is an integral part of the British Empire…\(^\text{33}\)

The memory of Brock, the man, faded within the collective memory of Ontario and the Canadian imperial elites of the province used the opportunity to rally citizens around British values.

As with their predecessors, speakers at the centennial were primarily focused on the future. They consistently used the past in order to justify their own power and urged the continuation of white institutions to ensure stable subsequent generations of white citizens. The

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\(^\text{31}\) Alexander Fraser (ed.), *Brock Centenary 1812-1912: Account of the Celebration at Queenston Heights, Ontario, on the 12\(^{\text{th}}\) October 1912* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1913), 45.

\(^\text{32}\) Few other speakers dedicate any considerable length to Sir Isaac Brock specifically. One exception is Macdonnell, who includes an important message on the leadership of Brock: “Our hero was ever dutiful. He always performed his duty and saw that others did likewise. The performance of duty was ever uppermost in his mind, and his ideals were always high, his aspirations noble” (Ibid., 51). As with previous commemorations, Brock was an example of the broader British values of fidelity and self-sacrifice. These values were an example for all who gathered and admired his mighty monument.

\(^\text{33}\) Ibid., 48.
study and presentation of history was an important tool for imperialists to inspire loyalism. Dr. James Hughes, Chief Inspector of Schools, recognized the role of history:

The history of the past is valuable chiefly for the opportunities it gives to be stirred to deep, true enthusiasm for heroism, for honour, for patriotism, for love of freedom, for devotion to duty, and for sublime self-sacrifice for high ideals. Whatever else we may neglect in the training of the young, I trust we shall never fail to fill their hearts with profound reverence for the men and women of the past to whom they owe so much.\(^{34}\)

Brock’s story, and the inspiring people who followed his example, demonstrated what imperialism and loyalty could accomplish. Whether in classrooms or at the foot of the great monument, education promoted fidelity amongst present and future citizens. By using the lessons of the Brock narrative, commemorators ensured that everyone gathered connected the loyalty of the past with the present.

Figure 4.5: Alexander Fraser. “Six Nations Confederacy Chiefs and Members at the 1812 Centennial at Queenston Heights.” Photograph. 1912. From Six Nations Public Library.

\(^{34}\) Ibid., 69.
Not all invited speakers conformed to the official rhetoric promoted by organizers. As with many other commemorations, the public display was an opportunity for various groups to voice their own issues. The Six Nations speakers in particular used the occasion to raise their own grievances and rally for a better future. They undermined the commemorators promotion of an idealized past that erased colonial struggles. Over fifty years after the last speech at Brock’s monument, governmental policy towards Indigenous peoples significantly changed. The Indian Act was passed and enforced, western expansion was bringing significant social changes, and the Residential School system was slowing reaching its height. Both Ryerson and Macdonnell acknowledged the importance of First Nations warriors in the Battle of Queenston Heights, commenting on the significance of their role. However, Chief A. G. Smith of the Six Nations proclaimed: “I think I may truthfully say that had it not been for the bravery of the Six Nations the Union Jack would not to-day be waving over these historic heights.”35 Warrior F. Onondeyoh Loft of the Six Nations also advocated for the proper treatment of Six Nations memory, arguing that their heroes deserved similar recognitions as Brock. Speaking about Tecumseh, Onondeyoh Loft said: “Like General Brock, this noble red man, as a leader of his kinsmen, also sacrificed his life in the cause of his king and country. And sad is it to say that not even a heave of the turf marks his last resting place.”36 After noting the role of the Six Nations in the Battle of Queenston Heights, Chief A.G. Smith used the opportunity to openly advocate for voting rights:

And there was the very strong inducement that [Six Nations] would be guaranteed a perpetual independence and self-government… Now we know that these pledges were not adequately fulfilled, yet, notwithstanding this fact, the Six Nations remained faithful in their adherence to the British Crown… I contend that if Canada is to do justice… to the Six Nations, it will have to give them representation on the floor of the House of Commons… [I] will refrain from

35 Ibid., 72.
36 Ibid., 75.
giving all the examples of our loyalty I would have liked to present to this vast assemblage.\footnote{Ibid., 73.}

It is unclear how the crowd reacted to the speech, but according to \textit{The Globe} the First Nations speakers received loud fanfare from the gathered crowd: “Of all the eloquent utterances not the least notable were those of the Indians, which were delivered with characteristic sincerity and coolness, and received with frequent outbursts of applause.”\footnote{\textit{The Globe}, “In Memory of Gen. Brock” October 14 1912.} As with their ancestors at the previous Brock commemorations and the Brant unveiling, Six Nations speakers used the occasion and its intended values of loyalty to advocate for their own communities.

As the twentieth century continued, the nature and purpose of commemorations shifted. Brian Osborne argues that “statuemania” slowly halted as pageants and other displays became more popular and widespread. Additionally, emerging totalitarian regimes used monuments in their creation and reinforcement of oppressive power structures. In the West, covering cities with triumphant statues of leaders and their institutions quickly declined.\footnote{Osborne, Constructing Landscapes, 437-438.} Nonetheless, the outbreak of the First World War had the most dramatic effect on commemoration in the broader British Empire. Numerous commemorative projects were put on hold or discarded as the nation re-defined the meanings of memorials. Most communities focused on commemorating the dead and solemn cenotaphs were erected in localities both large and small.\footnote{For more on commemoration during the First World War, see: Jonathan Vance, \textit{Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War} (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997); Suzanne Evans, \textit{Mothers of Heroes, Mothers of Martyrs: World War I and the Politics of Grief} (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2007); Robert Shipley, \textit{To Mark Our Place: A History of Canadian War Memorials} (Toronto: NC Press, 1987); Maria Tippett, \textit{Art at the Service of War: Canada, Art and the Great War} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013).} The individual leaders and heroes were mostly gone, replaced by the everyday soldier mourned by entire communities. Prominent names were rarely highlighted, and instead every individual was listed on group monuments. The triumphal column with the gleaming white hero on top vanished from the
The commemorative landscape, and even the portrait statue was largely shelved. As the nation mourned, artists reacted and aided individuals in their grief; new iconographies for war commemorations replaced the celebrations and optimism of “statuemania”.

The Monument to John Graves Simcoe in Toronto, 1903

During the period when monuments were still favoured by Western governments, the new Legislature Buildings in Toronto were completed. Over the course of the next decade, the grounds were formally redesigned to frame the new structure. Government officials used this opportunity to shape the memory of Ontario’s capital through the display of public memorials. Some monuments (including the one to Queen Victoria) pre-dated the new building. Others, such as the North-West Rebellion memorial and a statue to Sir John A. Macdonald, were completed when the building was opened. Ten years after the scaffolding was removed, Ontario’s first British political leader took his place adjacent to the front façade: John Graves Simcoe. Monuments to Premiers John Macdonald and Sir Oliver Mowat followed later in the decade. The same sculptor designed the three monuments to notable provincial statesmen: the rising local artist Walter Allward.

The placement of numerous political portrait statues on the grounds of the new Legislature Buildings at Queen’s Park mimicked the scene on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. The design of government buildings surrounded by monuments to prominent leaders was growing in

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both Britain and the United States.\textsuperscript{43} Previous centuries witnessed the creation of pantheons for military heroes; however, in the late nineteenth century the commemorative landscape shifted to included prominent political actors. War memorials were still popular subjects, even at Queen’s Park. However, portrait statues to political figures significantly outnumbered all other subjects. These commemorations legitimized the white governmental systems of power in Ontario and justified the position of white elites. By the late nineteenth century, the province (and nation) faced significant changes as it transformed into a modern, urban, and industrial place. With increased uncertainty, elites turned to the past to uphold their power. Placing monuments to white political leaders on the site of the legislature buildings confirmed the continued power of the government into the future. Much like the white military heroes of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the political figures were meant to inspire loyalty among the population and encourage fidelity of future generations. John Graves Simcoe, the white “founding father” of Ontario, was among those political leaders commemorated on the grounds of Queen’s Park.

The monument to Simcoe was directed and executed by the Ontario Historical Society (OHS) shortly after their establishment. With the erection of the Laura Secord monument, the collection of historic artifacts, and the production of numerous articles, the OHS was primarily a group of amateur historians that sought to highlight Ontario’s provincial history. Much of the OHS membership were also connected with related organizations, most notably the Loyalists. Although there was individual diversity, the OHS in general had strong imperialist leanings. Early organizers were concerned with disseminating collective memories of the past to the

\textsuperscript{43} Statues to “ordinary” individuals (especially political and social leaders) were growing throughout the Western world. For more on this development during this time period, see: Paul A. Pickering and Alex Tyrrell, \textit{Contested Sites: Commemoration, Memorial and Popular Politics in Nineteenth Century Britain} (Farnham: Ashgate, 2004); John Price, \textit{Everyday Heroism: Victorian Constructions of the Heroic Civilian} (London: Bloomsbury, 2014); John Bodnar, \textit{Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).
masses through public commemorations and speaking events. The early OHS was also intent on inspiring younger generations through education and school projects. Only a decade after the group’s formal establishment, the OHS was tasked with the creation of Simcoe’s commemoration.

The monument to John Graves Simcoe is a typical example of a portrait statue created during “statuemania” to commemorate a political figure. Its iconography matches other portrait statues to primarily white politicians and conforms to numerous other erections throughout the province in the previous decades. Although the individual iconography is hardly distinctive, this type of monument is representative of most commemorations during this period. Arguably more recognizable than the triumphal column, the political portrait statue (such as the one to John Graves Simcoe in Toronto) was a universal iconography for recognizing Western white leaders. For most viewers from the West, the political portrait statue is immediately recognizable and readable due to its repetition in the commemorative landscape. Its position as the “norm” obscures its implicit connections with whiteness and the ideals of “civilization.” The repeated iconography of the standardized political portrait statue conceals the iconographical connection with whiteness that was firmly established during “statuemania.” The choice of the standard political portrait statue for the monument to Simcoe aligned him with these character traits and ideals. Moreover, using the established iconography of whiteness continued to erase colonial memories from Ontario’s historical narratives.

**Memorializing the “Founding Father” of Ontario**

A monument and public commemoration in Ontario to its European “founding father” was long overdue in the province. John Graves Simcoe was memorialized in mapping, his surname spread
throughout the area, as streets, towns, and even a county. Members of the UELAs across the province recognized his contribution to the province’s history and there were numerous studies of his life by amateur historians. However, no monument or suitable memorial was erected to his memory in Canada by the close of the nineteenth century. At the time, the only monument to Ontario’s first British leader was at Exeter Cathedral in South West England.

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44 For more on the history of Simcoe County and some notes on its naming, see: Andrew Frederick Hunter, *A History of Simcoe County* (Simcoe: The County Council, 1909); Lewis Brown, *A History of Simcoe, 1829-1929* (Simcoe: Pearce, 1929).

45 Early biographies on John Graves Simcoe include: David Breakenridge Read, *The Life and Times of Gen. John Graves Simcoe, Commander of the “Queen’s Rangers” during the Revolutionary War and first Governor of Upper Canada* (Toronto: George Virtue Publisher, 1890); In the mid nineteenth century, the military journals of Simcoe were published in: *Simcoe’s Military Journal: A History of the Operations of a Partisan Corps, Called the Queen’s Rangers* (New York: Bartlett and Welford, 1844). Around the same time as the monument was finished, the following was published, see: Duncan Campbell Scott, *John Graves Simcoe* (Toronto: Morang, 1905). For a more recent biography on Simcoe, see: Mary Beacock Fryer and Christopher Dracott, *John Graves Simcoe, 1752-1806: A Biography* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1998).

46 A publically funded memorial was placed inside the cathedral, marking the life and death of Simcoe. His final resting place is outside Exeter in his family’s Wolford chapel. The Wolford Chapel in Devon is the burial place of...
A recognition of his life and service by Great Britain was planned immediately after his death, placed in the Cathedral around 1812 (Fig. 4.6). The monument is a typical Cathedral wall tablet, popular to commemorate British war heroes across the country. A few years later, Major General Sir Isaac Brock would be similarly commemorated in Saint Paul’s Cathedral in London. The iconography used in this type of monument was standardized by the early nineteenth century. The motif was based on Classical examples and typically featured a representation of the hero with an engraved slate outlining his accomplishments. In the Simcoe tablet, the standing figures of a British solider and an Indigenous man frame a carved slate. Both figures are posed and designed using Classical inspiration but are dressed in contemporary costume. The British solider is depicted in standard military clothing of the period and is holding a musket at his side. The weapon is pointed downwards and he is using it as a crutch; it is not aimed upwards in a moment of battle. The contemporary British soldier connects General Simcoe with the military deeds of his life. The top of the monument features armorial bearings and drapery hanging over rods. This drapery could symbolize the sails of a ship, connecting John Graves Simcoe to the colonial environment. Similarly, the cloth could recall flags or other markers of the Empire. Regardless of their specific intentions, these details conform to standardized Neo-Classical iconography that often included armorial bearings, shields, and flags. These inclusions signified military accomplishment.

John Graves Simcoe and his immediate family. Constructed a few years before his death, the Wolford Chapel was eventually transferred to the Ontario Heritage Trust in 1966. This organization still administers the property. An engraving notes that Simcoe’s son was killed in 1812 while the monument was being completed. For another example of a cathedral wall tablet from the same period, see Chapter 2 and the monument to Sir Isaac Brock in St. Paul’s Cathedral, London. Also, see: Katharine Ada Esdaile, English Church Monuments, 1510-1840 (London: B.T. Batsford, 1946).

It is unlikely that this figure is meant to represent Simcoe. Normally the face of the hero would be paid particular attention in order to achieve a likeness, which is not done in this case. Also, although the carving is very faint, it does not appear that this figure is dressed in the distinguishing costume of a General.

The monument to Simcoe, however, also features Gothic details, an architectural acknowledgement of the Gothic Exeter Cathedral. For example, the frame for the monument is a series of Gothic arches and both of the standing figures appear on a decorated Gothic platform. These Gothic elements also frame the largest part of the memorial: a flat tablet with a textual engraving, topped by a portrait relief of Simcoe on a Gothic inspired pattern. The flat tablet reads:

Sacred to the memory of John Grave Simcoe, Lieutenant General in the Army, and Colonel of the 22d Regiment of Foot, who died on the 26th day of October 1806, aged 54. Whose life and character the virtues of the hero, the patriot and the Christian, were so eminently conspicuous, that it may justly be said he served his king and his county with a zeal exceeded only by his piety towards his God.

The tablet specifically mentions the virtues of Simcoe (his dedication, but also his humility), conforming to the nineteenth century ideas of the white “gentleman hero.” There are no textual references to the colonial environment; the exact location of Simcoe’s successes is a mystery, and there is no mention of his role in “founding” white Upper Canada. In early eighteenth-century Britain, the memory of Simcoe was another chapter in the heroic narratives of notable Generals. His political role, and especially his diplomatic accomplishments in Upper Canada, was not a point of emphasis. In 1812, General Simcoe was commemorated in relation to his context; a white gentleman hero that fought for the British Crown. Nearly a century later in Ontario, Simcoe would be recognized within a very different context.

As with Brock’s memorial in St Paul’s Cathedral from the same decade (discussed in Chapter 2), there is one distinct inclusion in the design: an Indigenous figure. This representation frames the tablet, standing in equal height as the British military figure on the opposite side. The

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51 For more on the nineteenth-century British “gentleman hero”, see Chapter 2.
52 A short inscription was added sometime after the Ontario Heritage Foundation took over the management of Wolford Chapel. This addition recognizes Simcoe as the first Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, and asserts that the Chapel is a “place of pilgrimage”
Indigenous representation partially conforms to the iconography of the noble savage.\textsuperscript{53} He is depicted in a semi-nude state, clutching a weapon pointing downwards. There are no Indigenous denotations of this figure other than his discreet weapon, nudity, and baldhead. In contrast with the British representative on the opposite side of the tablet, he is clearly marked as an “Other”. Nonetheless, the Indigenous man is not confined to the traditional crouched or kneeling position of the noble savage; instead, he is represented at full height. The pose of the figure, notably his contra-posto position and manner of holding his cloak over his left arm, is Classically inspired. Although the repeated iconography of the noble savage would make him immediately recognizable, the figure does not fully conform to these restrictions. Nonetheless, the primary purpose of the Indigenous figure was to mark the monument as “colonial.” As with the Brock memorial, the Indigenous representation was a symbol for the colony, the Indigenous body directly tied to the colonial landscape.

The monument in Exeter was finished only a few years after Simcoe’s death, but Upper Canadians were not as eager to recognize their first Governor. A movement to create a similar commemoration in Upper Canada was likely slowed due to the limited growth and development of the colony in the early nineteenth century. After the War of 1812, commemorations of that conflict dominated the colonial landscape and the memory of Simcoe was marked in other ways (most notably in mapping markers). For nearly a century, there was no significant monument or memorial to the first Lieutenant Governor.\textsuperscript{54} In the late nineteenth century, the York Pioneers pushed for a memorial to Simcoe. Founded two years after Confederation, the York Pioneers

\textsuperscript{53} For more on the noble savage, see Chapter three.

\textsuperscript{54} This was likely due to Upper Canada’s status as a British colony until the time of Confederation. Part of the larger British Empire, there was little need to recognize early political founders, and the military accomplishments of Simcoe were quickly eclipsed by the War of 1812 veterans. Once Ontario was a province within the Dominion of Canada, it was more imperative to recognize Simcoe, one of the first figures that represented important connection with the British Crown.
was an early local historical society that sought to collect and preserve memories of the past. They were a driving force in the creation of a provincial organization, eventually pushing for the establishment of the OHS. Prominent writer Reverend Henry Scadding, President of the York Pioneers, encouraged the construction of a monument to Simcoe in the latter decades of the nineteenth century.\(^5\)

Due to the push of the York Pioneers and other interested groups, the province of Ontario decided to commemorate the first Governor nearly a century after his departure from Upper Canada. The idea to create a monument to John Graves Simcoe formally originated in the Ontario Legislature during a discussion of the new grounds design. The first Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, recognized as the province’s “founder”, John Graves Simcoe was a suitable fit for the new building’s entranceway. His memorial would be a necessary component in the sculpture garden of Ontario’s history. The work was immediately entrusted to the Ontario Historical Society, with John Ross Robertson holding the initial position of Chairman.\(^6\) At that time, Robertson was still serving as a Member of Parliament for Toronto East and was a familiar face on the public landscape of Toronto for decades. He founded the *Toronto Evening Telegram* in the late nineteenth century and was known to advocate for imperialist causes. In the summer

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\(^5\) Address of the Simcoe Monument Committee Read by the Rev. C.E. Thomson, May 27 1903, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario. The historical record is silent on the precise recommendations he provided the Legislature, and it is unclear if the province decided to erect the monument due to his persuasion.

\(^6\) The Ontario Historical Society was an ideal group to direct the monument building process. Simcoe was intended as a political leader for the entire province, not an individual community or group. Also, during this period, the OHS was particularly interested in monument building and other commemorative initiatives. The OHS contributed to monuments that suited their mandate, but did decline other requests. On at least one occasion, the Society campaigned against the creation of a monument. In June 1902, Clementina Fessenden presented a paper entitled “The Monument that Failed” at the general meeting of the Society. The subject was about “the events leading up to and connected with the project of erecting a monument to the memory of the traitor Montgomery who was killed in an attempt to take Quebec.” Not only was this monument denied funding by the OHS, but its eventual failure was celebrated. Fessenden directed the efforts opposed to this monument and was commended for “contributing to that end.” (General Meeting of the Ontario Historical Society, June 4 1902, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario). The OHS was selective and specific in its commemorative efforts, choosing to support historical displays that confirmed the imperialist vision of Canada.
of 1900, Robertson visited Great Britain and met with a number of artists. He was in contact with Albert Bruce-Joy, a very well-known portrait sculptor active in England. However, in the middle of the design selection process Robertson suddenly resigned. While the reason for Robertson’s resignation remains unclear, there was some conflict at the meeting when he chose to step aside. Members urged him to stay, even passing a motion expressing their interest in him keeping the Chairman’s spot. All was in vain, however, and John Ross Robertson effectively disappeared from the OHS.

After Robertson’s departure the Chair was occupied by Reverend C. E. Thompson, a member of the York Pioneers and also one of the first executives of the UELA of Ontario. Thompson served as Chair until the completion of the monument in May 1903. Other committee members were also prominent individuals in the local and provincial historical societies and important figures in the cultural life of Toronto. The secretary of the committee (also serving as the secretary of the OHS) was David Boyle, an important Canadian archaeologist who was also a leading figure in the Provincial Museum of Ontario during his appointment with the Simcoe committee. Allan Maclean Howard, President of a local UEL chapter, was an active member of the committee, attending nearly every documented meeting. Additionally, James Laughlin Hughes, a prominent figure in the educational sector in Toronto, was also a member of

57 Meeting of the Simcoe Monument Committee, December 8 1900, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario.
58 The Council of the Ontario Historical Society, January 11 1900; Minutes of the Simcoe Monument Committee, April 1 1901, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario. Not citing any specific reasons, Robertson vacated the Chair in January 1900. Robertson does not appear on the list of committee members for any meetings after his resignation, and it is likely he no longer played any role in the committee.
60 It is likely Robertson favoured an award of the commission without competition, which might have influenced his decision to leave. Indeed, the prominent artist Albert Bruce-Joy agreed (although very reluctantly) to create the monument within budget. Based on their numerous correspondences, Bruce-Joy and Robertson communicated repeatedly about the proposed monument. There was also the estimate of esteemed Canadian / Parisian sculptor Louis-Philippe Hébert, a very prominent artist known for his works on Parliament Hill. The meeting minutes do not reveal Robertson’s opinion on a design competition, but he resigned without reason the following month. Not only did he resign Chairmanship, but he abruptly stopped work on the committee altogether.
committee. Mary Agnes Fitzgibbon was active in various women’s history societies in the region during her time on the Simcoe committee. Finally, in the early years of the committee, D. B. Read, former Mayor of Toronto, also served a prominent role. Having produced a biography of Simcoe in 1890, Read was a recognized Canadian imperialist who used his writings about the past in order to advocate for the preservation of old traditions into the present.61

Armed with a strong ideological belief in Canadian imperial values, the committee began work on the Simcoe monument. Most monument committees were hampered by the need to fundraise significant amounts of money to erect their memorials.62 The Simcoe committee did not have these same initial challenges. The first budget estimate from 1900 totaled the cost at $6000 including the granite pedestal. When the committee started on the design proposal, they already had $4150 at their disposal. Most of this money was from a vote by the provincial government, which granted $3000 to the scheme. The City of Toronto also supported the venture, pledging $1000. The remaining balance of just over $1800 was expected to come from private subscriptions including school collections. The meeting minutes from this time boasted that if one penny was collected from every school child in Ontario, the fund would easily collect over $2000.63 However, over a year later, the drive for more funds was not progressing as the committee initially expected. The ease of collecting one cent from every school child in Ontario did not materialize.64 One of the committee members, B.E. Walker, set out to raise funds from Toronto’s elite through $100 subscriptions. He managed to find fourteen such donors, raising

61 Read also published a biography of Brock (Life and Times of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock (Toronto, 1894)).
62 Both the Brock (Chapter 2) and Brant (Chapter 3) committees were slowed by financial burdens, concerns that lasted throughout the building process and eventually resulted in an overdraft of funds.
64 At the general meeting following the unveiling, it was revealed that only two school districts had answered the call: two schools in Galt contributed a total of $4.00, and the Frontenac County Public School gave a total of $11.14 (Meeting of the Simcoe Monument Committee, July 8 1903, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario).
enough money to cover the cost of the pedestal. There were still other expenses to meet, however, and the committee ran a deficit. Before the unveiling ceremonies, the province of Ontario pledged an additional $500, the final amount needed for the committee to pay all expenses.\footnote{The final expense report (Meeting of the Simcoe Monument Committee, July 8 1903) reveals that the monument cost was a total of $6120.43, and the money raised was $6020.43. The committee was dismissed, having completed their duties, despite the $100 shortfall. The line for the OHS donation was listed as only $50 in the money raised column, which is $100 less than the original contribution. It is likely that the OHS provided the additional $100 needed for the committee to strike even.}

**Designing the Simcoe Monument**

With the estimated $5000\footnote{This initial amount did not include all of the expenses. Eventually the monument’s price would top just over $6000.} for the statue nearly pledged, the committee sparked a design competition. The first step for the committee was to collect initial estimates from a number of prominent artists. John Ross Robertson had travelled to Europe and collected a number of preliminary estimates from esteemed artists while he was still Chair of the committee. The result was likely disappointing; Robertson quickly learned that $5000 would not attract a prominent sculptor. However, the committee already had a commitment from a notable artist. Louis-Philippe Hébert, a Canadian born sculptor then living in Paris, was the first to be contacted. A letter from the early months of the 1900 (one year before the competition was announced) indicates that John Ross Robertson contacted Hébert shortly after the committee’s establishment. Hébert agreed to erect the monument, without competition, within the required budget.\footnote{Letter from Philippe Hébert to Ross Robertson, February 23 1900, F1139-3, container B244045, file “Simcoe Monument Correspondences”, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Archives of Ontario.} Despite a commitment from a notable sculptor, the committee sought other designs. The initial search was largely unsuccessful. Albert Bruce-Joy refused to erect a statue for such a small price. He briefly reconsidered, but only if there was no formal competition.\footnote{Albert Bruce-Joy was a well-known portrait statue and sculptor artist. Originally from Ireland but working in Britain, Bruce-Joy was a prominent artist in Britain’s commemorative landscape. No comprehensive compilations}
would complete the monument for £800, and justified the discount: “I would really very much like to be known by an important statue in Canada.”

By the autumn of 1900, a collection of other artists was contacted in order to supply their estimates for the monument. The committee collected a number of preliminary estimates, but only a few fell within their prescribed budget. In December 1900, the committee considered the various proposals. Although they seemed to receive all submissions favourably, B.E. Walker noted: “Canadian artists should have an opportunity to compete.”

The minutes reported: “…in this contention he was upheld by most of the committee.” It is unknown how many invitation letters were sent to artists around the world, but the committee received nine entries in return.

The original letter sent to the artists does not survive, so it is unclear what was included in the design specifications. However, based on the submissions received, the committee was clearly seeking a standardized figurative statue. Every artist submitted a “portrait statue”, the most common form of monument during the period. It was a standardized method of recognizing any leader and their personal contributions, but was also cost effective. First used in the Classical period, a portrait statue included the likeness of an individual, often with a few attributes, placed on top of a pedestal. Sometimes this platform was decorated with additional items signifying their importance or written plaques relating the narrative of their life. The Classical form of the portrait statue was revived in Great Britain in the eighteenth century.

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69 Letter from Albert Bruce-Joy to Ross Robertson, August 24 1900, F1139-3, container B244045, file “Simcoe Monument Correspondences”, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Archives of Ontario. When the design competition was announced a few months later, Bruce-Joy did not make further contact with the committee. E. Onslow Ford, initially contacted by the committee in the fall of 1900, also declined to submit a piece for competition (Letter from E. Onslow Ford to Ross Robertson, February 24 1901, F1139-3, container B244045, file “Simcoe Monument Correspondences”, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Archives of Ontario).

60 It appears that either the Chair or the Secretary of the committee directly contacted all responding artists, and therefore it is unlikely there was any public advertisement.

71 Meeting of the Simcoe Monument Committee, December 8 1900.

72 Ibid.
During this early period, political figures and prominent thinkers were often commemorated with a statue of their likeness placed on a pedestal. By the late nineteenth century, even monarchs were increasingly choosing this form of commemoration to easily spread their likeness across vast territories. The portrait statue remained popular as a relatively inexpensive method of commemorating individuals and inspiring the masses. Smaller and generally less expensive than a triumphal column or an arch, they were a useful method of education and confirming white imperial greatness. Repetition on the commemorative landscape throughout the West and colonial territories furthered the popularity of the portrait statue well into the twentieth century.

The design of the portrait statue also offered additional iconographical and symbolic meanings. Yarrington notes that this form of monument remained the most popular in Great Britain, largely due to its accessibility in the commemorative landscape.\(^\text{73}\) While commemorators often preferred the grand triumphal columns, as they offered sheer size and dominated the landscape, practical questions influenced the decision of public officials. With columns generally reserved for military triumph, the iconographical language of the portrait statue made more practical sense for commemorators of alternate subjects. When commemorating political or cultural figures in particular, the emphasis on the likeness of the individual offered some advantages. A focus on their facial features made these individuals recognizable across place, but also confirmed their mortality. Military heroes were positioned as heroic and god-like beings, sitting atop columns high in the sky. Positioning the portrait statue individual closer to the viewer, rather than atop an unattainable monumental column, inspired identification from the masses. Finally, the repeated form of the portrait statue was easily tied to specific values and virtues. Through the use of gestures, pose, attributes, and other narrative

devices, commemorators intended to inspire others through the example of the portrait statue. Within the context of the British Empire, these values were intricately tied to ideas of Britishness, “civilization”, whiteness, and colonial control.\(^{74}\)

The popularity of the portrait statue even extended to royalty and was the chosen design for statues of Queen Victoria in the late nineteenth century. Grand columns and other Classical structures were expensive and not particularly suitable for the growing British colonial landscape.\(^{75}\) The portrait statue offered a cost effective alternative that was easily replicated throughout the Empire. Soon, recognizable repetitions of Queen Victoria were found throughout the colonies. Both Ottawa and Toronto’s government structures were surrounded with a prominent monument to Queen Victoria. The commemorations in both Ottawa and Toronto are very similar in iconography and match numerous other colonial examples. In Toronto, Victoria is seated on a large thrown; in Ottawa, she is standing. Despite the different poses, both Victorias have identical facial features, are adorned in similar costuming, and both have the monarchical symbols of the Crown and staff. The pedestal of the Ottawa monument is decorated with additional figures, alluding to Victoria’s role as the first Queen of Canada.\(^{76}\) Both monuments, and others throughout the Empire, are the largest and most decorative portrait


\(^{75}\) Queen Victoria was one of the most common subjects for monuments in the nineteenth century (and into the early twentieth century). For more on these statues, see: Felix Driver and David Gilbert (eds.), _Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity_ (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Margaret Homans, _Royal Representations: Queen Victoria and British Culture, 1837-1876_ (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1998); Eoin Martin, “Framing Victoria: Royal Portraiture and Architectural Sculpture in Victorian Britain,” _Sculpture Journal_ 23, issue 2 (2014): 197-207; Mary Ann Steggles, “Set in Stone: Victoria’s Monuments in India,” _History Today_ 51, issue 2 (Feb 2001): 44-49.

\(^{76}\) The Victoria monument in Toronto was created before the building was completed and was resituated once the grounds were formally laid out. Simcoe’s monument was finished over a decade after the building was completed.
statues from the period. Their repeated iconography meant that a nearly identical physical
manifestation of Victoria marked even the far reaches of the Empire.

The popularity and ease of the portrait statue was likely why the Simcoe committee
selected this type of design for their competition. The portrait statue included a likeness of the
represented figure, with particular attention to their facial features, elements of their costuming,
and other attributes. Because no images of the submissions survive, it is unclear how closely the
artists represented the known likeness of Simcoe. The selected artists received a few portraits of
Simcoe, although it is unknown which versions were forwarded. It is likely that competitors
received prints of a portrait painting and an image of the carving at Exeter Cathedral. The artist
Birnie Rhind wrote that he received photos of the Exeter monument and a portrait showing “the
costume.” Unlike representations of Brant, only a limited number of portraits of Simcoe were
produced during and immediately after his life. While his likeness was recorded in at least four
portraits, the paintings lack the same character as those of Brant. The facial features vary widely
between them, making Simcoe’s defining qualities very unclear. Depicted in the style of the
standard eighteenth-century white military portrait, none of the images of Simcoe offer insight
into his character. With no determined likeness and very little expression that would differentiate
Simcoe from other military leaders of the time, the portraits offered limited inspiration for
sculptors.

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77 There are at least three known surviving original artworks of Simcoe created during his life time: a painting by
William Pars (1770); an unattributed drawing (c. 1790); and a painting by Jean Laurent Mosnier (1791). There was
another likeness on the tablet in Exeter Cathedral, likely taken from life or previous likenesses. Arguably the most
well-known portrait of Simcoe was painted after he died by George Theodore Berthon. It is impossible to determine
exactly what portrait was forwarded to prospective artists, but all were similar in style and did not reveal significant
information about Simcoe’s personality or character (unlike the numerous portraits of Joseph Brant discussed in
Chapter 3).

78 Letter from Birnie Rhind to David Boyle, January 22 1901, F1139-3, container B244045, file “Simcoe Monument
At the meeting where the selection was chosen on May 14 1901, the committee reported receiving a total of eight submissions.\(^79\) The designs included: W. G. Stevenson (Edinburgh), D.W. Stevenson (Edinburgh), W.B. Rhind (Edinburgh), Albert Loft (London, England), J.C. Banks (Toronto), W. Allward (Toronto), Thomas Mowbray (Toronto), and Philippe Hébert (Paris). According to the meeting minutes, three finalists were immediately chosen based on their plaster representations.\(^80\) After narrowing down to three, ballots were taken from the nine committee members present,\(^81\) whereby Walter Allward was chosen by a vote of eight to one.\(^82\) With such a large count in favour of Allward’s design, it is unlikely there were any questions regarding its quality or suitability. The committee members voted primarily on design, as artists were provided with a clear budget. Allward agreed to erect the monument for $4000, the price in his original estimate from the previous autumn.\(^83\)

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\(^{79}\) There is some discrepancy regarding the number of submissions according to the OHS minutes. In one report, the submissions are totaled at eight, another identifies nine. However, it is likely the entry from Hamilton MacCarthy had not arrived. The son of the artist wrote a letter to the Simcoe monument committee on the day of its meeting that the model was on its way, due to arrive May 15 (Letter from MacCarthy to C.E. Thomson, May 14 1901, F1139-3, container B244045, file “Simcoe Monument Correspondences”, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Archives of Ontario). MacCarthy’s proposal was therefore not part of the selection process, but was included in a later count of the submissions received.

\(^{80}\) It is unknown which designs were singled out, but it appeared to be uncontested. Both J.C. Banks and W.G. Stevenson remarked that their models were “sketches” of the final proposal and were created to give a general idea of their design. The lack of a quality finish likely excluded them as finalists, but the rest of the selection process is undocumented.

\(^{81}\) There are ten names on the attendance record, so it is likely either the Chairman or the Secretary abstained.

\(^{82}\) Meeting of the Simcoe Monument Committee, May 10 1901, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario.

\(^{83}\) Meeting of the Simcoe Monument Committee, June 29 1901, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario; Letter from Walter Allward to the Simcoe Monument Committee, October 18 1900, F1139-3, container B244045, file “Simcoe Monument Correspondences”, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Archives of Ontario. When he originally submitted this price, Allward was the lowest bidder, with most others estimating at least $5000, but some as high as $10,000. The committee had a favourable view of Allward’s budget, but by the time of their spring 1901 submission, all of the other artists fell at or below $5000.
“Conveying the Idea of Power and Thoughtfulness”\textsuperscript{84}

Figure 4.7: Brittney Anne Bos. “Side View of Simcoe Monument.” Photograph. April 2014.

In 1903, John Graves Simcoe was remembered as a political statesman and leader of the UELs. He was the white “founding father” of Upper Canada, and helped establish white institutions that were imposed on the colonial landscape. For his commemorators, it was imperative that the design of the monument conveyed ideas about Canadian imperialism, and particularly how Simcoe embodied these attributes and institutions. While Brock was remembered a half century before for his military leadership, Simcoe was the bringer of “civilized” virtues. These abstract

\textsuperscript{84} Meeting of the Simcoe Monument Committee, April 24 1902, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario
ideas of character needed to be communicated through the design of the monument. At the unveiling ceremony in May 1903, Premier George W. Ross confirmed Simcoe’s position as a political “hero” of his own time and place. Similarly, the Lieutenant Governor closed his address with the regret that Canadians tend to overlook their local heroes, looking abroad for guidance.  

Mayor Urquhart also expressed the importance of Simcoe’s memory, stating: “the city could spend money in no better way than by perpetuating the memory of such great men.” For commemorators in the early twentieth century, Simcoe was a different type of hero; he was a great man that embodied important traditional values. He was memorialized as the bringer of British institutions, the upholder of the British Crown, and a leader of the new British colony. In 1903, the figure of Simcoe was the embodiment of British colonialism and justification for its continuation.

With the new focus on portrait statues, artists required a specific iconography to construct their figures. Artists need to choose what pose and what attributes to include, selecting the most important visual markers to communicate to the viewing public. Many artists chose small objects or emblems to accompany political and cultural figures that confirmed their power. One of the most common attributes was some form of paper. At Queen’s Park, before Simcoe’s monument was erected, a tribute was created to George Brown, a Father of Confederation. As founder of the *Globe*, Brown is clutching a scroll of paper in his one hand. Similarly, a monument to Sir Oliver Mowat, created two years later at Queen’s Park, depicts the figure clutching some books. Attributes of paper, either appearing as a scroll, flat slate, or books, were very common in depictions of politicians, and are visible in numerous examples on both Parliament Hill and the grounds of Queen’s Park. The paper symbolized important legislation.

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85 *The Globe*, “Monument to First Governor” May 28 1903.
86 Ibid.
installed by that particular politician, or marked the broader constitution or political system that they represented. Because the representation of the paper was often blank, what was written on the paper is left open for the viewer’s interpretation. Therefore, the attribute of paper could take different meanings depending on the commemorative context. Regardless of its interpretation, the symbol of paper broadly represented the legitimacy of the political ruler. In the representation of white British leaders, it also symbolized their ruling power over other insubordinate groups. The subtle inclusion of the written word in monuments coincided with other symbolic papers (such as books, statutes, treaties, maps, etc.) that marked colonial dominance.

Representing “character” in portrait statues was another important concern for artists, as commemorators often wanted to depict the admirable qualities of their political leaders. The character of an individual is often portrayed by facial expression in most artistic representations. However, a monument towers over individuals on the ground and faces are usually unclear to the viewer. Instead, many sculptors turned to pose and stature to display “character.” Figures are almost always standing, often in a relaxed contra-posto position that indicates forward movement. To convey narratives of the commemorated figure, artists used gestures, particularly with hands or movements of the head (an outstretched arm to communicate leadership, a hand on the hip to represent determination, an arm raised to convey oratory skills, a casual and relaxed arm to portray thoughtfulness, etc.). More elaborate portrait statues featured other figures attached to the pedestal, often representing the accomplishments or virtues of that individual.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ For example, on Parliament Hill George Brown’s monument features a member of the working class, denoted by costume, casting a ballot. The figure represents Brown’s campaign for working class rights. Sir John A. Macdonald’s monument at the same location features the personification of “young Canada”, an allegorical woman representing the new Dominion with continued connections to the British Monarchy.
For the designers of portrait statues, capturing abstract notions of “character” was one of the most difficult but important tasks.

Walter Allward, the winner of the Simcoe competition, was certainly familiar with portrait statues when he submitted his design but was still relatively young. Walter Allward was not completely unknown in Toronto at the time of his selection. He proved his skill in the North West Memorial at Queen’s Park and a figure outside the Temple Building in Toronto. However, his career in 1901 certainly did not compare to the reputations of his European counterparts. It is remarkable that the committee chose to contact him initially in the autumn of 1900 for an estimate, given that his career was just beginning. Only aged 24 at the time of the competition, Allward was starting his long career that would span decades. After the Simcoe monument commission, Allward’s accomplishments quickly mounted. Before the outbreak of the First World War, Allward was already incorporating a distinct Art Deco style into his monuments that matched popular architectural and design trends of the period. He was eventually chosen as the sculptor for the Vimy Memorial in France, one of the largest and most prominent monuments created by a Canadian in the early twentieth century. After designing countless memorials and establishing an innovative personal style, Allward eventually became one of the most famous Canadian sculptors of the twentieth century. However, at the time of the Simcoe commission, Allward was a newcomer. He produced a relatively traditional portrait statue for consideration by the committee: a standing figure on a granite pedestal, rendered with precise details and standard attributes. The individuality of his own sculptural style was not yet developed at the time of the Simcoe monument, although he did subtly experiment with forms and pose. Perhaps because of his immaturity on the artistic scene, the OHS decided that the Guild of Civic Art of Toronto would supervise and provide advice on the design as it was executed. Throughout the
process, the Guild of Civic Art continuously expressed satisfaction with the design and endorsed it without alteration upon its completion.  

As Allward worked through the final touches on his design, the committee coordinated with the provincial government in order to find the most suitable place for the monument on the newly opened grounds of Queen’s Park. The choice of site was significant, as Simcoe was one of the first installations in the new sculpture park that soon contained numerous other monuments. The statue to Sir John A. Macdonald occupied a very prominent spot in the centre of the front walkway leading up towards the building just a few years prior. However, it appears that the provincial government already picked a spot for Simcoe when they commissioned the project. A meeting in 1900 reported that the original spot was now occupied by another monument, likely the statue to Queen Victoria. Early in the planning stages, the OHS considered multiple alternatives and even suggested a marble statue to Simcoe placed inside the buildings. The Premier immediately dismissed this idea, asserting: “Anything else than a bronze statue placed outside the Buildings, would, I am sure to be disappointing, as the House was assured, when the appropriation was made, that such was the intention of the committee, in charge.” The same month, the committee met with the Mayor of Toronto, who approved a Simcoe statue for the front of the new City Hall. That site was a secondary plan in case no suitable spot was found at Queen’s Park. The sculpture garden outside of the new Legislature Buildings was quickly filling with other monuments.

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88 Address of the Simcoe Monument committee read by the Rev. C.E. Thomson, May 27 1903.
89 Meeting of the Simcoe Monument Committee, August 12 1902, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario; Meeting of the Simcoe Monument Committee, June 26 1900, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario.
90 Ibid.
In August of 1902 the committee was finally able to choose a site at the suggestion of the provincial government.\textsuperscript{91} Statues directly off to the sides of buildings were often the most prominent location for commemorations.\textsuperscript{92} However, the design layout of Queen’s Park was altered at the beginning of the century, placing more emphasis on the front walkway. Because of the contemporary prominent central sidewalk, made even more distinct by plantings from the twentieth century, the monument to Simcoe does not occupy the notable spot intended by the original creators. Other monuments were eventually erected adjacent to the central sidewalk, becoming a lined procession of statues leading up to the main doors. Simcoe’s monument, while still within close sight of the building, is positioned away from the formal laid-out gardens. The result is a much less eminent site for the first Lieutenant Governor. Today, that position is further obscured by large trees and the modern layout of the roads surrounding Queen’s Park.

The Simcoe committee and provincial government were both intent on finding the best site for the monument, but this was also an important consideration for Allward. He proved his artistic competence by incorporating the specific site of Queen’s Park into his winning design. Allward remarked that he carefully considered the pose of other monuments in Queen’s Park and sought to create a diversity of sculptures at the site. Allward mentions that Queen’s Park already had “two bronze statues each of which has one hand extended in an oratorical pose.”\textsuperscript{93} He therefore sought to introduce a different element: the cane. By incorporating this attribute into his design, Allward disrupted the repeated conventions of existing portrait statues at Queen’s

\textsuperscript{91} There are no further discussions of the site in the meeting minutes, so it is likely that the choice from August 1902 was the present site occupied by the monument. Photos from the period reveal that the monument was never moved and therefore erected directly on its present site on the east side of the front lawn.

\textsuperscript{92} This is seen in the placement of monuments on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. The flanking prominent positions are occupied by monuments to Sir John A. Macdonald, George Etienne Cartier, and Queen Victoria.

\textsuperscript{93} Letter from Walter Allward to the Governor Simcoe Monument Committee, April 10 1901, F1139-3, container B244045, file “Simcoe Monument Correspondences”, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Archives of Ontario.
Park. Working in Toronto, Allward was able to use his position as a local artist to find the best suitable pose and site relationship for the Simcoe monument.

With the design nearly complete, the necessary funds secured, and the site finally chosen, the committee turned its attention to the unveiling ceremonies. Allward’s completion of the final monument was on schedule, set for delivery to the committee exactly two years after his original contract was drawn. Like many commemorations before, the unveiling ceremony was planned very quickly, without significant notice for many of the attendees. By April of 1903 the committee finally began to plan a date for the unveiling. The Chair of the committee suggested a few possibilities: mid-May, the time of Simcoe’s appointment, or July 8, when he was officially sworn in. The Chair, also an active member of the UELs, was seeking a symbolic date for the unveiling that would correspond with Simcoe’s life and recognized Ontario celebrations. At a committee meeting without surviving minutes, the date of May 27 was formally chosen. There is no background of why this particular date was selected, but it is likely that May 27 was chosen because it was close Empire Day and Queen Victoria’s birthday.

Following the selection of the date, there was also discussion regarding the possible attendees, and specifically who would occupy the important spots on the platform. In the early planning stages, Thompson expressed his desire to invite a strong contingent of the primary

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95 Even though plans were made in haste, numerous prominent individuals were able to attend and contribute to the event. The imperial celebration of Canada’s place within the Empire, primarily intended for school children, was celebrated on a date near Queen Victoria’s birthday. C.E. Thompson mentioned that Empire Day in Toronto schools for 1903 was scheduled for May 29, and expressed his desire to possibly amalgamate the two celebrations. (Letter from C.E. Thomson to David Boyle, May 7 1903, F1139-3, container B244045, file “Simcoe Monument Correspondences”, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Archives of Ontario). May 27 was perhaps selected to accommodate the attendance of the Governor General of Canada, Lord Minto. While the precise background of the date selected is unknown, the last week of May held particular significance to imperialists and was quickly becoming an important time on the calendar to celebrate Canada’s place within the Empire. Empire Day was traditionally celebrated on the last school day before Queen Victoria’s birthday (May 24). Because this is very early in the holiday’s history (the first recognized celebration was in 1898), it is likely there were no prescribed dates for its celebration, as it was not proclaimed by Lord Meath until 1904 as an official recognition across the Empire. It is likely that Empire Day in Toronto in 1903 was simply celebrated during the same week as Victoria’s birthday.
organizations associated with the building of the monument: The York Pioneers, the Ontario Historical Society, and the UELs.\textsuperscript{96} Invitations were sent to the executives of those organizations, and many of their general members attended in the audience. Thompson expressed a special desire for the York Pioneers to receive recognition at the ceremony, due to their early connections with the monument.\textsuperscript{97} Other organizations, including educational groups and women’s societies, were also extended formal invitations in early May. Despite the late planning for the unveiling, the committee generally received eager replies to their letters.

Based on a historical photograph from the unveiling (Fig. 4.8), the platform was crowded with a number of prominent individuals representing the various organizations and levels of

\begin{figure}[h]
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\caption{Alexander W. Galbraith. “Unveiling of General John Graves Simcoe Monument, Queen’s Park, Premier George Ross Speaking.” May 27 1903. Photograph. From City of Toronto Archives: Alexander W. Galbraith Fonds.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{96} Letter from C.E. Thomson to David Boyle, April 9 1903.
government. A Guard of Honour was present at the ceremony, accompanied by a band that was secured by the York Pioneers. The day’s events commenced at 2 o’clock in the afternoon and featured the standard program of notable speakers, the presentation of the monument from the committee, the unveiling, and a few closing remarks. During the unveiling, the memory of Simcoe was closely related to the narrative of the UELs. Because of this connection, there was a decidedly imperial overtone to the event. Simcoe was noted for his adherence to British principles, but primarily as the leader of the UELs fleeing the Republic to the south. His “character,” evidenced in the monument’s physical form, was a dominant subject for many of the speakers. The work of Simcoe proved the superiority of white British institutions and justified their continuance in the future, even in the face of a rapidly modernizing and diversifying world.

During the evening following the unveiling, two hundred guests attended a banquet to honour the presence of Lord and Lady Minto. Premier Ross delivered the primary address of the evening, which was also imperialist in tone. The importance of Canada’s present place in the Empire, as evidenced by contributions from the past, was the theme of his speech. Ross posed troubling questions about the future of the United Kingdom, but proclaimed that Canada would occupy an important position within the Empire. He, like many Canadian imperialists, assured the world that Canada was ready to defend imperial greatness:

[Canada] is prepared to take her share in the fortunes of the Empire on whatever scale they may be projected, just as she is prepared with her own right hand to carve out her own fortunes, believing that the Providence which gave to us this goodly land, with its untold possibilities, will guide us in promoting that greater statesmanship…

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98 *The Toronto Star*, “One Council for United Empire” May 29 1903.
On the occasion of Simcoe’s commemoration, Canadian imperialists were making their pledge to the Empire’s future. Simcoe brought the great British institutions to Canadian soil over a century before, but it was up to the present generation to uphold them. This narrative of Simcoe and his Empire confirmed the superiority of white British “civilization” and their continued rule over “Other” subjects.

The imperial rhetoric offered by Premier Ross at this banquet was a repetition from the unveiling events a couple days earlier. The monument now stood in front of the Legislature Buildings as an everlasting tribute to imperial values, which were partially represented in the choice of pose for Simcoe. Many of the artists submitting original designs were concerned with pose and the ideas it conveyed. For example, W. Grant Stevenson mentioned the use of a cloak in his design in order to block out the sun between the legs of the figure. Traditional portrait statues avoided the use of too much light around the legs so the monument did not appear meager against the sky.\footnote{Letter from Birnie Rhind to David Boyle, F1139-3, container B244045, file “Simcoe Monument Correspondences”, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Archives of Ontario.} He stated that his choice of pose for Simcoe was determined by the need to block out the sun in order to create a more imposing presence. Less light did mean a more dominant silhouette and a considerably larger monument. However, Allward’s winning design directly contradicted this traditional wisdom. His version of Simcoe is depicted with one foot prominently ahead of the other, his back hand resting on a thin cane connected with the ground. The legs of Simcoe and the cane produce a very slim silhouette, contrary to the conventions of portrait sculptures of the period. Allward partially explains this pose in his competition letter, remarking that he endeavoured “to make the pose interesting from all sides.”\footnote{Letter from Walter Allward to the Governor Simcoe Monument Committee, April 10 1901.} The pose of the figure, although on an exaggerated contra posto, is determinedly set with head up and eyes forward. The light between the legs effectively conveyed Simcoe as a
figure close to the people and not an imposing entity against the sky. Looking up at the monument, the viewer sees a figure that resembles a living man, not a chunk of carved bronze. The overall pose is not one of heroic proportions with unparalleled triumph, but rather a human scale.

The meeting minutes do not reveal if this distinctive pose was a factor in choosing Allward’s design. It was certainly unconventional but held artistic merit. However, the nationality of Allward may have also played a role in his final selection. Even before the start of the competition there was a push from the committee to include “Canadian” artists in the design process.101 Following Allward’s selection, the committee repeatedly mentioned his national status, remarking on the significance of a Canadian erecting the monument to Simcoe.102 While the meeting minutes do not highlight any other reasons for the choice of Allward, it appeared important to the committee (at least after the selection) that the winner was a man of their own nation. At the unveiling ceremony, numerous statements mentioned the artistic skill of the monument, but particularly referenced Allward’s position as a Canadian. B.E. Walker, a prominent member of the committee, assured those gathered that Allward’s design was the best in the competition, and was not selected only due to his nationality: “It was a happy thing that Mr. Allward was a Canadian but his model was chosen because it was the best, and that is the real reason.”103 Earlier in the ceremony the Premier of Ontario, Hon. George W. Ross, also mentioned the Canadian nationality of the artist as a source of pride. The emphasis on Allward’s nationality dominated comments regarding his artistic skill; his comparable youth was never

101 Meeting of the Simcoe Monument committee, December 8 1900.
102 Meeting of the Simcoe Monument Committee, May 14 1901, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario.
103 *Globe*, May 28 1903. While Walker assures the crowd that the selection process was a blind one, there is no mention of this aspect of the process in the meeting minutes.
mentioned as an equally impressive factor. Instead, his status as a born “Canadian” was a
glorious attribute and commemorators were eager to showcase local talent.

The committee was presented with a number of Canadian designs; in fact, Canadian
artists created the majority of the submissions. Choosing a Canadian artist would serve as
another symbolic connection to loyalism. Imperialists frequently pointed to Canada’s important
position within the British Empire and promoted the assets of home grown individuals.104
However, their conception of “Canadian” was limited. One of the most prominent artistic
submissions received by the Simcoe committee was from Louis-Philippe Hébert.105 Born and
primarily employed in Canada for his entire career, Hébert was responsible for numerous
 commissions throughout the country, including many on Parliament Hill and at the Quebec
Legislature.106 At the time of the Simcoe competition, Hébert was spending a brief period in
Paris. The committee members listed him as a “French” artist, despite his prominence and fame
in Canada.107 Hébert was not afforded the same “Canadian” label by the committee because of
his French Canadian origins, an ethnicity that threatened the united imperialist vision of
Canada’s British elites. By choosing Allward, the committee could emphasize these British

104 For historical writings by Canadian Imperialists on the position of Canada within the broader British Empire in
relation to commemoration, see: J. George Hodgins, Ryerson Memorial Volume: Prepared on the Occasion of the
Unveiling of the Ryerson Statue in the Grounds of the Education Department on the Queen’s Birthday, 1889
(Toronto: Warwick and Sons, 1889); Alexander Fraser, Brock Centenary, 1812-1912 (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1913);
The Centennial Committee, The Centennial of the Settlement of Upper Canada by the United Empire Loyalists,
1784-1884 (Toronto: Rose Publishing Company, 1885). For general historical writings on Canada’s position within
the British Empire during the period, see: George Taylor Denison, The Struggle for Imperial Unity: Recollections
and Experiences (Toronto: Macmillan and company, 1909); John Foster Fraser, Canada as it is (London: Cassell,
1905).
105 Hébert recognizes himself as a Canadian in his Feb. 1900 letter to Robertson (Letter from Philippe Hébert to
Ross Robertson, F1139-2, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of
Ontario); however, he is consistently labeled as French by the committee in the subsequent competition.
106 For more on Louis-Philippe Hébert and his art, see: Daniel Drouin (ed), Louis-Philippe Hébert (Quebec, 2001);
Ronald Rudin, Founding Fathers: The Celebration of Champlain and Laval in the Streets of Quebec, 1878-1908
(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003); Bruno Hébert, Philippe Hébert, sculpteur (Montreal: Fides, 1973);
Lawrence Hayward, Louis Philippe Hébert 1850-1917 (Kingston: L. Hayward, 2003).
107 Meeting of the Simcoe Monument Committee, May 10 1901, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical
Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario.
origins without the added complications of French Canada. Allward, a native Torontonian with British roots, was an uncontested “Canadian”, a status reserved for white Anglophones.

Allward’s Canadian nationality was perhaps a convenient coincidence for the committee, but his design was still the central concern. According to the committee, one of the most important considerations for the monument of Simcoe was the portrayal of his “character”. For many creators of portrait statues, this was the most difficult question, a problem that most artists solved with the right preparatory materials. Most designers relied on biographies and portraits created during their lifetime. These supplies were given to prospective artists of the Simcoe competition, but they were not all adequate. For example, Grant Stevenson remarked that it was very difficult to use the portrait supplied due to its obscure angle and asked for others to aid his submission. Based on the possibility of portraits supplied, it is likely that Simcoe was depicted in his forties, when he served as the first Lieutenant Governor. Without a specific likeness to draw on, it is possible that many of the artists took liberties with designs of the facial features. This type of artistic license was not possible with other figures from the later nineteenth century due to the advent of photography. Statues of notable figures, such as Queen Victoria throughout the Empire and Sir John A. Macdonald within Canada, had the same notable facial features due to the availability of photography and the easy distribution of “objective” images. Without photographs, the artists for Simcoe relied on subjective paintings that revealed few defining facial features.

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109 Albert Loft specifically comments on age, noting that he depicted Simcoe at forty years of age, a time when he was “youthful and stern” (Letter from Albert Loft to David Boyle, March 11 1901, F1139-3, container B244045, file “Simcoe Monument Correspondences”, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Archives of Ontario).

110 In contrast to the Brant portraits, the paintings of Simcoe depicted his facial features very inconsistently. The defining features of the face are not as clear as many aristocratic portraits of the period and show considerable diversity between artists. In addition, because Simcoe was painted using standard military modes of representation, his personality and other elements of his character do not show as clearly as the Brant images.
Materials provided to the artists were also inadequate in depicting what Simcoe wore during his life. Portrait statues of the period required a careful attention to the detail of the facial features, but also the elements of their clothing that marked the position of an individual. Three artists noted that their depiction of the uniform was inaccurate because there was no adequate image of a General’s clothing from the period. For example, Grant Stevenson remarked that the supplied photo was not sufficient and that he required a full depiction of the Queen’s Rangers. Many of the artists promised to pay closer attention to this detail if their design was chosen, even acquiring period costumes if necessary. Nonetheless, many artists tried to re-create the uniform in order to accurately portray the character of Simcoe. Birnie Rhind expressed his commitment to creating an accurate depiction of the General, noting that he was paying close attention to the “uniform of the Army at the proper period.” An accurate General’s uniform was an important attribute of Simcoe and therefore the artists strived to create authentic representations. The General uniform denoted Simcoe as a leader, but attention paid to the precise details marked him as a British leader in colonial Upper Canada. This important element of his memory could only be communicated through accurate clothing.

In addition to clothing and facial features, attributes were another element to convey the “character” of an individual. Supplemented with certain poses, attributes conveyed the personality of an individual and their greatest accomplishments. Notably, no artist included Simcoe with any military attributes other than his costume. There is no mention in the designs of Simcoe brandishing a weapon, and it is likely none was included (except a sheathed sword at his

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111 Letter from Grant Stevenson to David Boyle, January 19 1901.
113 Letter from Birnie Rhind to David Boyle, January 22 1901.
Unlike the Exeter memorial, which deliberately marked him as a military hero of the British Empire, the Simcoe of Toronto was primarily tied to his political role as first Lieutenant Governor. The attributes of Simcoe’s memorial were carefully chosen to reflect the values represented by Ontario’s white “founding father.”

In the end, defining the features of Simcoe’s “character” was an important consideration for artists and commemorators alike. Submitting artists definitely recognized the importance of portraying character. Before the competition was officially held, Hébert asked for additional

Figure 4.9: Brittney Anne Bos. “Detail of Simcoe Statue,” Photograph. April 2014.

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114 John Graves Simcoe was primarily commemorated as a political founder of the province, not a military leader. As a twentieth-century embodiment of a “gentleman”, he is de-militarized and shown separate from his military context. Any weapon other than a gentleman’s sword (not drawn) would contradict the values of the gentleman, particularly in the political realm.
information on the character of Simcoe “showing clearly his tendency.” Known for his political monuments, Hébert understood the importance of depicting character in his designs, especially portrait statues. Other artists also mentioned what abstract ideas they wished to portray. However, they did not always describe how their design corresponded with these character traits. For example, Albert Loft noted that Simcoe was meant to appear in “the full vigour of life… stern yet benevolent aspect, his character mild and obeying!!” The difficulty for many artists was translating the elements of an individual’s character into a physical form. Personality traits were easily linked to white British values and institutions in speeches or texts, but portraying these ideas visually was far more challenging.

As a resident of Toronto, Allward understood the need to create the right “character” for Simcoe. There is no evidence that Allward was part of any local history groups or societies, but he was likely familiar with the importance of Simcoe to the people of Toronto and Ontario more generally. In his letter Allward remarked that he carefully considered capturing the true character of Simcoe. He wrote: “I have tried to make my model suggest refinement, dignity and determination, keeping in mind the fact, that, while Simcoe was a Governor and a gentleman, he was also a worker and a thinker.” The artist focused on creating a depiction that reflected the ideal character of Simcoe for his commemorators of the early twentieth century. The members of the OHS committee did not hide their admiration. One year after the competition was held, the committee entered the studios of Walter Allward to inspect the clay model. The committee was very impressed, and moved to commend the work of Allward, allowing him to proceed with the casting of the bronze. The committee moved that they “have no hesitation expressing themselves as being thoroughly satisfied with the artists [sic] work. The pose being dignified and

115 Letter from Philippe Hébert to Ross Robertson, February 23 1900.
116 Letter from Albert Loft to David Boyle, March 11 1901 (emphasis in source).
117 Letter from Walter Allward to the Governor Simcoe Monument Committee, April 10 1901.
commanding, and the head well set and conveying the idea of power and thoughtfulness.”

The British values of Simcoe’s leadership were visible in the form of the statue, and the committee recognized the significance of the pose and attributes selected by Allward. When the bronze was cast, the committee visually pinpointed the precise character attributes of Simcoe that matched their white imperial values. Commmemorators and artist worked together to mold a unified embodiment of Simcoe’s memory.

The pose of the figure deliberately conveys conventions of gentlemanliness of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. On the day of the unveiling, most of the speeches made particular note of Simcoe’s “character.” Lord Minto even remarked that the monument was a “spirited statue” and reflected the personality of Simcoe very well. The “refinement” of the figure is communicated through his pose, slightly resting on the cane in his outstretched hand. His other hand holds his hat, removed in a gesture that further communicates his gentlemanliness. The character conveyed by Allward adhered to the intent of the committee. Simcoe was a white British gentleman, expressing all of the characteristics of “civilized” refinement and dignity. Allward successfully created a design that conveyed the sought after “character” required for a portrait statue to a political or cultural figure. With the lack of heroic (military) deeds, political and cultural figures were effective physical commemorations only if the figure communicated a particular character to its public. In the eyes of the committee, Allward successfully accomplished this feat, and the physical commemoration of Simcoe served the purpose of broader public education.

The “character” of Simcoe was not only a reflection of his personal traits but was also a marker of the superiority of white Britishness and “civilization”. The Lieutenant Governor at the

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118 Meeting of Simcoe Monument Committee, April 24 1902, Microfilm reel MS 249-1, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Meeting Minutes, Archives of Ontario.
time, Mortimer Clark, spoke at length regarding the character of Simcoe, remarking that he upheld important British values of both the past and present: “To him also the country owed the introduction of English law, trial by jury, and the militia system. The distinguishing feature of the Governor’s character was his devoted adherence to British law and the British constitution.”

Some of the other submitting artists sought to explicitly connect Simcoe as the bringer of British institutions through their chosen iconography. While the final monument focused on the refined pose, other artists suggested more direct symbols to show Simcoe’s connections to the British Empire. For example, D.W. Stevenson remarks that his representation of Simcoe is pointing to the spot where the foundation stone was laid. Other artists used the standard attribute of paper in order to denote the political role of Simcoe. For example, Thomas Mowbray chose to represent Simcoe presenting the British Constitution. Similarly, Albert Loft specifically mentions that Simcoe’s figure is holding papers for an important event. Loft deliberately leaves the date of the monument and the accompanying papers vague, suggesting it could be used to symbolize the “opening of Parliament or a moment in his official position.”

Iconographies suggested by artists reflect the desire of the committee to depict the first Lieutenant Governor as a bringer of white British civilization. Simcoe was remembered as the originator of British values to the wilds of Upper Canada. His role in taming the “savage” colonial landscape was an important component of the monument for many submitting artists. While the final Allward design does not feature these direct attributions, the “civilized refinement” of his pose still communicates the arrival and superiority of conquering white elites.

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120 Ibid.
121 He contends that the committee wanted a statue of this subject, but there is no evidence that the committee directed any exact event (Letter from D.W. Stevenson to David Boyle, F1139-3, container B244045, file “Simcoe Monument Correspondences”, Ontario Historical Society Fonds, Archives of Ontario).
If Simcoe was positioned as the bringer of British institutions, then it was up to the present generation to uphold them. Along with mentions of Simcoe’s character, most of the speakers at the unveiling encouraged contemporary citizens to emulate the characteristics of the historical statesman. As with the example of Brock the century previous, Simcoe was an example not only from the past, but a statement for the future. Clark emphasized that the monument played an important role in continuing to inspire future Canadians, stating: “…when they look upon the monument [they] will be inspired by the same great principles which inspired this man.”  

In speaking about his role as first Lieutenant Governor, Ross also promotes Simcoe’s noble example for regular Canadians: “Simcoe also applied himself to the development of the country, a work which all good Canadians ought to do.”  

As with previous monuments, future generations were a prominent feature in the unveiling addresses. The Honourable R. Harcourt noted that all great nations of the past recognized their heroes and “great men… those whom we call makers of history.” For Harcourt, there was a special part played by monuments in the edification of the nation: “A great writer has said that the erection of monuments… [and] the impression they make upon the youth of the country is honorable, moral, useful and elevating.”  

For “statuemania” commemorators and Canadian imperialists alike, the shaping of the youth of the nation was a critical goal in the memorialization of the past. It was monuments in particular, a lasting physical manifestation that survived long after the performance of pageants or the delivering of addresses, which were the most permanent.  

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125 Ibid.
126 Ibid.
127 Ibid.
128 Simcoe’s monument was covered with very little fanfare in the local press. The *Toronto Star* published only a short article on the ceremony, while the *Globe* featured a half page spread. Neither paper included a picture of the monument or the ceremony. Major newspapers in surrounding communities did not even mention the unveiling.
In the spring of 1903, Ontarians were in the middle of “statuemania,” a period saturated with commemorations and monuments. Despite the lack of press coverage, the monument to Simcoe was an important unveiling for Canadian imperialists. For them, John Graves Simcoe represented the beginning of white British civilization in Upper Canada. As the bringer of British institutions, Simcoe was the civilizing force that tamed the wilds of the colonial landscape with his refinement and gentlemanliness. He was remembered primarily for his character and broader accomplishments; not one speaker brought up any actual legislation or act, and the monument made no mention of his specific impacts. The often-repeated form of the portrait statue and its standardized conventions was the ideal iconography to commemorate the white leader. Simcoe was the perfect representative of historic Britishness, but also provided a template for generations of the future to follow. For traditional imperialists intent on holding their positions of power, Simcoe was a triumphant example of leadership. His monument, intended to survive the tests of time, was a defiant conservative statement against the threats of modernity and future challenges to white imperial power.\textsuperscript{129}

**The United Empire Loyalist Monument in Hamilton, 1929**

On Empire Day 1929, the city of Hamilton formally accepted a monumental gift from the Mills family. A tribute to the UELs, the monument was positioned outside the old courthouse. British law and values of fair representation were embodied in the public building that loomed over a downtown Hamilton street. The family of four Loyalists was symbolically guarding one of the white British institutions that helped bring to the “savage” lands of Upper Canada. They were

\textsuperscript{129} Turn of the twentieth century commemorators appears to make no mention of Simcoe’s gradual emancipation of Upper Canadian slavery. This key part of legislation is not mentioned in any speeches, correspondences, or other commemorative documents from the period. However, by the mid-twentieth century, Simcoe’s position as ‘liberator’ becomes more firmly rooted. In a survey of late twentieth century newspaper reports from *The Globe and Mail* and *The Toronto Star* on Simcoe Day, every article mentions his role in ending Upper Canadian slavery. A comparison between early and late twentieth century commemoration of Simcoe would be an interesting avenue for further research.
protecting the institutions that they worked hard to establish, but were also ensuring its continuation into the future. The erection and eventual unveiling of the United Empire Loyalist monument was a decidedly imperial affair and recalled much of the same rhetoric used during the Simcoe ceremony and the Queenston centennial from the early decades of the twentieth century. However, the imperial message of the United Empire Loyalist monument and unveiling ceremony was comparatively out of date. Numerous writers have marked the death of staunch imperial stances and opinion following the devastation of the First World War. While the First World War seemed like a conclusive end to the glory of the Empire and the promotion of armed conflict, not everyone abandoned the imperial cause.

The monument to the United Empire Loyalists was an unconventional group portrait statue created after the official end of “statuemania”. Influenced by the commemorative landscape of the First World War, this monument was decidedly different than sculptures from the first few decades of the century. The subject was four anonymous figures. They were not famous Loyalists intended to preserve the memory of specific individuals; rather, they were symbolic representatives of the entire movement of these settlers. Not only was the monument a nod to great white men, but it also included the work of women. The inclusion of children was another unconventional element that served as a direct symbol for descendants and ensured the monument’s message connected with future generations. This statue was also different because

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130 Knowles, 170. Carl Berger’s important study ends at the dawn of the War with no pages dedicated to any imperial fervor following the conflict. Norman Knowles’ study of the Loyalists is also relatively silent on the years after 1919 and argues that the United Empire Loyalists significantly decreased their activity as the twentieth century wore on.

it was privately sponsored. Fully paid for by the Mills family, the design was not chosen by a board of prominent citizens nor were multiple artists included in the selection process. The idea for the monument was born within a specific context, a period that was still reeling from the First World War but filled with optimism for the future. As a prominent member of UEL groups, the sponsor Stanley Mills was familiar with the Loyalist narrative. Similarly, the artist Sydney March was active in both Britain’s and Canada’s post War commemorative landscapes. Within their own contexts, the sponsor and artist of the monument created one of Canada’s first commemorations of white immigration and settlement.

**The United Empire Loyalist Narrative**

Local groups concerned with Loyalist history were established throughout the province in the late nineteenth century. As they expanded, there was a wide call for a provincial association to unite their cause. The United Empire Loyalist Association (UELA) was founded in 1896 in order to promote the memory and perpetuate the traditions of the white “founding” people of Ontario. Amid growing fear and tension within Canada’s middle class over a faster paced society that appeared less economically stable, this group was decidedly conservative and defensive. Like other Canadian imperialists, the UELA promoted traditions of their ancestors as a lesson for the current and future generations. The purpose of the provincial association was to commemorate the Loyalist story, both through the production of materials and the celebration of events. Members of the new UELA were familiar faces in the commemoration of Ontario’s history. The Secretary Treasurer listed in the 1897 Constitution was William Hamilton Merritt, grandson of the man of the same name who served an important role on the Brock monument committee. The past President, who died when the Association was finally coming to fruition, was John

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132 Knowles, 139.
133 Ibid., 140.
Beverly Robinson, the Lieutenant Governor who provided a speech at the unveiling of Brant’s memorial in 1886. A member of the Executive Council in 1897, C.E. Thomson, would soon be named Chair of the Simcoe Monument Committee. These cross-appointments demonstrate that an exclusive local elite was largely responsible for the numerous commemorative projects in Ontario.

The United Empire Loyalist Association Constitution of 1897 opens with a short but gripping tale of the Loyalists in Upper Canada. Shunned from their native land in the United States and bound by a dedication to the British Crown, the group came north following the Revolution.¹³⁴ As with other writings of the period, the diversity of the Loyalists is obscured in favour of a homogenous narrative. The Constitution follows with an outline of the Bylaws, other guiding principles, and qualifications for membership. Anyone with direct descendants was permitted to join, regardless of race or politics.¹³⁵ Despite this wide definition, the UELA was far more exclusionary.¹³⁶ In the Constitution, membership in the Association was open to anyone that could demonstrate bloodlines; however, in practice, Loyalists were strictly defined as white British subjects who exhibited particular values. In this same document, the UELA outlined its Objects, focusing on the collection, preservation, and promotion of Loyalist history in the province.¹³⁷ The aims and objects of the Association were further entrenched in An Act to Incorporate the United Empire Loyalists’ Association of Canada in 1914.¹³⁸

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¹³⁴ The United Empire Loyalists Association of Ontario, Constitution and By-Laws Revised 1897, F600, Microfilm Reel MS689, United Empire Loyalists’ Association of Canada Governor Simcoe Branch Fonds, Archives of Ontario.
¹³⁵ Ibid.
¹³⁶ According to Knowles, there was considerable tension the next year when two Six Nations Chiefs were invited as Honourary Vice Presidents and the Six Nations of Grand River and Tyendinaga were offered associate memberships (Knowles, 147) Knowles notes that some members were dissatisfied with their inclusion due to their racial status, but others welcomed their inclusion in the Association (Ibid., 149).
¹³⁷ The United Empire Loyalists Association of Ontario, Constitution and By-Laws Revised 1897.
¹³⁸ The only object added to the original list was a note: “to erect, construct and repair buildings, monuments, memorials and also to purchase real estate and other things that may be considered desirable to perpetuate the
During the same period, there was a desire to commemorate the Empire in the form of a yearly national holiday. Clementina Fessenden, a prominent member of numerous historical associations and resident of Hamilton, Ontario, originally proposed the idea for “Empire Day.” Like other Canadian imperialists of the period, Fessenden was concerned with the youth of the Canadian nation. She was particularly focused on fostering pride in the Empire, and wanted to use the public school system as a method for spreading imperial rhetoric. Her idea was to create a school day, recognized across the country and eventually throughout the British Empire, which was dedicated to imperial exercises and demonstrations. With the support of George W. Ross, Ontario’s Minister of Education and future Premier, Fessenden was able to stage the province’s first Empire Day in Dundas in 1899. In June of 1900 the Ontario Historical Society noted the work of Fessenden in the creation of Empire Day.

By 1904, the year after the Simcoe monument was erected in Toronto, the British politician Lord Meath recognized Empire Day as a holiday throughout the United Kingdom and the far reaches of the Empire. This proclamation secured the future of Empire Day, but also supported Fessenden’s original dream of a worldwide celebration of British pride. In particular, Fessenden’s home city of Hamilton was perfectly suited to her message regarding Empire Day. With a rapidly expanding population that was gradually accepting large numbers of immigrants,
the British elite (many of whom were UEL descendants) faced a changing culture. Eager to hold on to historic traditions and their cultural rights to power, these elites quickly responded to the idea of an educational program that promoted loyalty to the British Crown. Empire Day in Hamilton was an immediate success and messages about shared British heritage and the glory of the Empire dominated the early years of its celebration.  

Following the establishment of Empire Day and the foundation of provincial history organizations, the First World War shattered the world. Widespread material devastation, human loss, the crumbling of Empires, and the instability of the future led many people away from the past. Popular accounts of the past and historical organizations declined after the First World War. The Loyalist myth appeared less relevant, and provincial associations (the UELA included) lost much of their momentum. The imperial vision for the future was much less promising after the devastating conflict, and the entire imperial message appeared to be shattering. Commemorations took on a new tone, memorializing deceased soldiers and somberly recognizing the victories of the War. As the reasons for commemoration changed, the iconographies and symbolism also shifted.

Although many communities focused on mourning in the 1920s, Hamilton’s commemorative landscape was complex. Largely due to a significant increase in immigration following the First World War and the presence of long-time imperial elites with strong British connections, Hamilton remained seeped in imperial traditions. Pride in these connections was expressed on the yearly holiday, Empire Day. Not only were school children targeted by the

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142 Knowles, 166-167.

143 Berger.
celebration, but also individual citizens of the city encountered extensive yearly newspaper coverage. It was within this imperial environment that Stanley Mills, descendant of the UELs and member of local historical societies, decided to donate a physical symbol of these ideas to his community. A prominent grocery owner with ties to the area’s “pioneer past”, Mills was a fixture of the local business scene. Already a member of the UELA and the local Simcoe Branch in Toronto, Mills pushed for the establishment of a Hamilton Branch, a fight he eventually won in 1931.\textsuperscript{144} Stanley Mills dedicated years of his life tracing the genealogical past of both the Mills and Gage families, publishing a volume in 1926.\textsuperscript{145}

No correspondences or personal papers of Stanley Mills survive, so it is impossible to ascertain when he originally pushed for a monument to the UELs.\textsuperscript{146} It is unknown if Mills approached the municipality, province, or federal governments for any funding. Most commemorations were still supported by a combination of public and private funds, but the federal government was especially turning away from local memorial projects.\textsuperscript{147} While commonly recognized as the donor, Stanley Mills was not alone in offering the UEL monument to Hamilton.\textsuperscript{148} Local newspaper reports officially recognized both Mr. and Mrs. Helen Mills

\textsuperscript{144} The greater Hamilton area had a branch in 1902, however they disbanded shortly after their establishment.
\textsuperscript{145} Produced during a time when amateur historians promoted the study of genealogical history, the volume is typical of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In this book, Mills traces the United Empire Loyalist heritage on both his father’s and mother’s side, writing about the prominent roles and various activities undertaken by his ancestors in building and shaping Upper Canada. Reading like a promotional text for the merits and character of his ancestors, Mills subtly presents his genealogical findings as proof of his own position within Hamilton’s elite (Stanley Mills, \textit{Genealogical and historical records of the Mills and Gage families, 1776-1926} (Hamilton: The Reid Press Limited, 1926)).
\textsuperscript{146} On the day of the unveiling, Mills reported that the monument was a “result of 18 months worth of worry” (\textit{The Hamilton Spectator}, “Great Spirit Lives again in Hamilton” May 25 1929). It is unclear if the monument was originally contracted 18 months before (in late 1926) or if his original idea was started in late 1926. Given the size of the monument it is likely that March was commissioned a year and a half before the project’s completion.
\textsuperscript{147} Consumed by marking the service of First World War veterans, living and deceased, the government in Ottawa did not routinely sponsor local monuments as it sometimes did in the nineteenth century. If Mills did approach any governments for funding, his request was likely denied; the commemorative landscape significantly shifted in Canada following the saturation of war memorials throughout the nation.
\textsuperscript{148} Helen Davis’ obituary from 1934 mentions her interest in the United Empire Loyalist associations, but does not include her membership in any of these groups (United Empire Loyalists’ Association Hamilton Branch Scrapbook,
(nee Davis). Together, the couple who could both trace their ancestry to prominent Loyalist families of the area, memorialized the struggles and values of their white ancestors.

**A Monumental Shift**

Sydney March and other sculptors needed to adapt their styles in order to reflect the changing world, and particularly the shifting commemorative landscape that came after the First World War. Before the conflict, individual heroes dominated war memorials. Great Generals or Colonels were placed on high pedestals or lofty columns. Leaders responsible for victories were glorified in grand, large-scale commemorations that were replicated on smaller scales in growing towns and cities. Nineteenth-century war memorials relied on Classical iconography and linked the glory of their contemporary heroes with figures from an abstract and glorified ancient past.149

Beginning in the period following the South African War,150 individual soldiers were increasingly the central feature of local monuments to conflicts. The move to recognize ordinary soldiers in commemorative projects continued through the first decades of the twentieth century. The changing iconographies of war memorials had a dramatic effect on the broader imperial commemorative landscape.

Commemorators of the South African War were intent on recognizing the victory of the Empire and the triumph over “lesser” imperial subjects.151 Many monuments to the Canadian volunteers that fought in South Africa were different than their heroic counterparts from the

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1931-1937, Hamilton Collection R971, Hamilton Public Library. The coverage of the unveiling of the monument included her family’s history alongside Stanley Mills (The Hamilton Spectator, May 25 1929).

149 For more on these Classically inspired heroic monuments of the nineteenth century, see Chapter 2.

150 This conflict is often referred to as the “Boer War”. In the early twentieth century, this language was often used interchangeably, especially in the case of commemorations. Due to this tangled use of both terms, I employ the “South African War” to refer to all commemorations of that particular conflict, regardless of the monument’s designation.

previous century. In Montreal, an equestrian statue featuring a soldier with a rearing horse was
dedicated to all Montrealers that served in South Africa. The individual with the horse is meant
to represent every soldier that fought in the conflict and is not differentiated by position or a
specific identity. Nonetheless, the anonymous soldier was still represented using the heroic
iconography of the previous century. The soldier is holding back a rearing horse that is twisted
wildly in one direction. He appears calm, forcibly holding the horse and assuredly turning him
back to a normal position. The horse is intended to represent the chaos throughout the Empire
and “untamed” colonial subjects. Within the context of the South African War, the soldier on the
monument is the steady hand of the white Empire that controls “Other” uncivilized populations.
In Ottawa, the task of recognizing all soldiers from South Africa in the commemorative
landscape is even more marked. A soldier from the period stands atop a pedestal that is inscribed
with the names of those who died from the Ottawa area. This type of monument, with an
anonymous representation of a contemporary soldier and a list of names, was increasingly
common in British commemorations of the same war.\textsuperscript{152} This iconography was already used
extensively in the United States as the primary method of recognizing the Civil War in both the
North and South. Although the glorified leader did not disappear from war commemorations, the
single hero was outnumbered by the anonymous masses who came to dominate the new
iconographies emerging at the end of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{153}

Within the context of a rapidly changing commemorative landscape, the project to
memorialize the UELs began. Because the monument in Hamilton was not paid by public funds,

\textsuperscript{152} One of the most prominent examples is in Edinburgh (old town), where each soldier that served in the war is
included on a memorial tablet capped with representations of various soldiers.
\textsuperscript{153} There is one notable exception (in scale) to South African War commemorations in Canada and that is the
monument in Toronto designed by Walter Allward. The monument is a very large obelisk with angel at the top and
recalls previous commemorations of the hero. However, the monument is not meant for a specific General or leader,
but rather for individual soldiers, who are represented at the bottom of the monument.
no design competition was held in order to determine the artist. It is likely that Stanley Mills personally chose the creator of the monument, the British sculptor Sydney March. He and his seven siblings were, as a group, providing one of the largest outputs of monuments in the interwar years. Mills likely chose Sydney March due to his family’s prominent presence in Canada’s commemorative landscape. In 1926, Vernon March was chosen as the winner of the design competition to create the National War Memorial in Ottawa (Fig. 4.10).\footnote{For more on Canada’s National War Memorial, see: Susan Phillips-DesRoches, \textit{Canada’s National War Memorial: Reflection of the Past or Liberal Dream?}, Thesis (Ottawa: Carleton University, 2002); David L.A. Gordon and Brian S. Osborne, “Constructing National Identity in Canada’s Capital, 1900-2000: Confederation Square and the National War Memorial,” \textit{Journal of Historical Geography} 30, issue 4 (2004): 618-642.} That same year, Mills was making initial plans for the UEL monument. The choice of a March brother for such a prominent national commission in Ottawa likely influenced Mills’ choice for his own
In addition, Sydney March was a recognized artist, having produced numerous monuments in Britain and throughout the Empire. Although the UEL monument was eventually well-received, his artistry and handling of the subject matter was barely mentioned in newspaper coverage at the time. Unlike the praise offered to Allward only a couple decades earlier, March was featured much less prominently in the UEL celebration. March’s status as a British subject was not raised in the press, or in any remembrances of the monument. Nonetheless, the prominence of the selected artist was likely a source of pride for Stanley Mills himself.

As a reputable sculptor of many other commissions, Sydney March was familiar with the different iconographies of the early twentieth century. His first projects were primarily individual portrait statues, but March also contributed to the post First World War commemorative landscape of England. He focused on producing local memorials that were intended to represent all individuals who served in the War. His Bromley War Memorial matched the standard iconography adopted for recognizing the First World War: a simple base decorated with an endless list of names, topped by allegorical figures and/or representations of soldiers. This type of cenotaph, an empty tomb to mark all of the lives lost, was quickly the standard iconography for memorializing the war dead throughout the Empire.

Vernon March died in 1930 leaving the monument unfinished. With the help of many of his siblings, Sydney worked at finishing the memorial which was eventually installed in Ottawa in 1939. This is a striking contrast compared to the praise offered to Allward, the rising “Canadian” star. In addition to March’s national status, after the First World War with the significant outpouring of war memorials, artists and their skills were mentioned less frequently. Even at the unveiling of Canada’s National War Memorial in 1939, created by multiple March siblings, the status of the artists and their accomplishments was a minimal narrative. It was shortly after completing this monument that his brother Vernon entered the competition for the Canadian National War Memorial. Although Sydney did not design the grand monument in Ottawa, he extensively worked to execute the project and completed various figures representing types of servicemen and servicewomen. Like other war memorials from the period, anonymous figures were intended to represent the masses of individuals that fought and died in the conflict.
The precise directions provided to Sydney March in his design of the United Empire Loyalist monument are unknown. It is likely that Mills presented him with a basic idea, but there is no evidence to suggest that Mills designed the monument himself or even had a rough sketch for March. Therefore, March probably relied on his own vision and creativity for the monument. The explosion of war memorials sweeping the Empire and his own contributions to this new iconography certainly influenced his ideas. Although this Loyalist monument was not representative of a conflict, it still depicted a group of individuals that faced collective hardships in settling and conquering their new land. Despite the different subject matter, the iconography of new war commemorations was adaptable to memorialize these white pioneers. There were common ideas of struggle, self-sacrifice, fighting for a noble cause, and the eventual triumph of the Empire. With a focus on ordinary individuals standing as representatives for an entire group and their collective values and hardships, March drew upon the lessons of First World War iconography to create something that was familiar to the citizens of Hamilton and the rest of Canada.

“Symbolic of hope, faith, and determination”

The United Empire Loyalist monument in Hamilton is a bronze cast featuring a grouping of four individuals placed on a pedestal. The stone pedestal where these figures stand is a more recent addition, erected after the monument was moved to its present location in 1958; however, it features the same plaques as the original. The four figures on top of the monument are presumably part of a family unit including a man, woman, and two children (one boy and one

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159 The plaque on the front of the monument reads: “This monument is dedicated to the lasting memory of the United Empire Loyalists who, after the Declaration of Independence, came into British North America from the seceded American colonies and who, with faith and fortitude, and under great pioneering difficulties, largely laid the foundations of this Canadian nation as an integral part of the British Empire. Neither confiscation of their property, the pitiless persecution of their kinsmen in revolt, nor the calling chains of imprisonment could break their spirits or divorce them from a loyalty almost without parallel.”

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Figure 4.11: Brittney Anne Bos. “Frontal View of United Empire Loyalist Monument in Hamilton.” Photograph. April 2011.

girl). They are erected using the common sculptural scale for monuments of the period, approximately nine feet in height. The four are grouped together, the arms of the figures intertwined and blocking any light from the other side. The woman in the group is wearing a period dress with the hemline past her ankles. The neckline exposes a portion of her chest and neck, and the sleeves of her costume fall off her shoulders. There are some minor decorations and elaborations on the dress, but it is “everyday” wear for a middle class woman and not a dress for a particular occasion. The man is also fashioned in period clothing with breeches and a long tailed coat. Similar to the woman, the costume includes some decoration but is intended to represent casual wear for a member of the middle class. Both the boy and girl child are adorned
in similar costumes, differentiated by their sex. All four figures are paused briefly in taking a long step forward. The gestures of the figures are dramatic and exaggerated in order to convey the narrative. The man holds his wife around the shoulder, while the girl clutches his coat. The woman grabs at her own stomach, and holds the boy with her other hand. The man and woman have their eyes cast to the distance, but the girl and boy look off in different directions. The facial expressions of the figures denote very clear emotions, but are rendered to avoid individualization.

Stanley Mills and the city of Hamilton chose Empire Day as the national holiday to unveil the new statue. As with coverage in previous and subsequent years, the Hamilton Spectator and the Hamilton Herald reported on the event extensively. Both newspapers offered full page spreads of the day’s events and duplicated the main address from Colonel Charles McCullough. This was the height of Empire Day in Hamilton and a monument espousing the same ideals as the holiday was unveiled in front of the parades of school children. The day’s events included an introductory parade by school children and local bands, a number of addresses related to the Loyalists and the monument in particular, the unveiling performed by Helen Mills, the laying of wreaths by various associations, prayers and hymns offered by the Rev. Dr. J.E. Hughson, an acceptance speech from the Mayor, and a group singing of “O Canada”. The monument’s unveiling plan matched the standard procedures of most commemorations throughout Canada for the last decade.

Empire Day in 1929 held special importance for the citizens of Hamilton, but the national holiday never went unnoticed. In fact, the day was celebrated during the interwar years with significant fanfare in Hamilton. Newspaper coverage of Empire Day reflected the popularity of
the holiday in the minds of public officials. The school children of Hamilton participated in large numbers in demonstrations throughout the interwar years that were eagerly covered by the local press, especially in the large periodicals of the *Hamilton Herald* and the *Hamilton Spectator*. Both newspapers carried a similar message of imperial unity, and also highlighted editorial content on the importance of Empire Day intermingled with their coverage of local events. The extensive yearly coverage of Empire Day and its accompanying imperial editorials meant that the holiday was not only significant for school children, but was recognized as an educational opportunity for all citizens. Numerous individuals from Hamilton, including recently arrived immigrants that could read English, opened their newspapers to lengthy coverage of the holiday and engaged with the imperial rhetoric.

The monument’s social geography, in relationship to interwar Hamilton, partially explains why a memorial to imperialism was erected after the First World War. Individual citizens were annually reminded that Hamilton had a special place within the Empire. In 1929, the *Spectator* wrote:

> Hamilton more than any other city has reason for showing its enthusiasm on this occasion; for the movement had its inception in this city, being the conception of the late Mrs. Clementina Fessenden. From the small beginnings which she initiated in local schools, Empire Day has taken on a world-wide significance. Today in the Mother Country and in other dominions the thoughts of the young scholars turn, as they do in Canada, to the splendid services of our forefathers in establishing British prestige and the benefits of British rule in remote corners of the globe; the epic story of their bold and courageous efforts, their self-sacrifice, their deprivations, their unwavering fidelity to the great cause is being retold by thousands of school teachers.  

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160 A survey of both the *Hamilton Herald* and *Hamilton Spectator* (during their operating years) from 1914-1950 reveals at least one article of coverage and one editorial per year on the holiday. Some years (most notably in the 1920s) feature full page spreads and multiple editorials. It is very difficult to determine how engaged students were in the process of celebrating Empire Day and if they absorbed the intended content. Newspaper reports from the period reflected on this question, wondering if students were simply happy to take an afternoon off in the fleeting days of the academic calendar (*Hamilton Herald*, “Board Dashes Holiday Hopes” Thursday May 23 1935).

As the decade wore on, Canada’s place as a leading nation within the Empire was a growing theme in the editorials. It was clear that the Empire was not only facing perceived threats outside its border, but inside as well. In recognizing problems throughout the world, the Spectator affirmed: “Canada is in the best position to help. We have ample room: but the immigration problem must be handled with intelligent forethought.”\(^\text{162}\) In his address regarding Empire Day in 1930, Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King echoed the concern over immigration, noting that Canada needed to consider “immigration measures which favor British settlement; and more than all, the cultivation of British sentiment, based on the sturdy independence which has made the empire what it is…”\(^\text{163}\) For imperialists and other elites, in a period of steady immigration, new arrivals threatened the delicate social fabric of white Britishness and its associated values. Empire Day, and the monument unveiled on this special occasion, was an opportunity to physically affirm these values and preserve them for future generations.

Following the War, as imperial rhetoric generally cooled in Canada, Empire Day continued its surge of popularity. Encouraged by the release of pamphlets and educational guides by the Ontario government every year, Hamilton in particular took pride in the imperial holiday.\(^\text{164}\) Nearly every year during its interwar coverage, the Hamilton Spectator and Hamilton Herald reminded citizens of their own connection to Empire Day: the founder, Clementina Fessenden, was once a resident of the city. In addition to their connection with the founder, many Hamiltonians had a special connection with Empire Day due to the rapidly changing demographics of the city. The population of Hamilton exploded in the early twentieth century, attracting workers to its growing industrial base. In addition to a growth in numbers, the British-

\(^{162}\) Ibid.
\(^{163}\) The Hamilton Herald, “Empire Ties” May 26 1930.
\(^{164}\) Although there is no comprehensive comparison between different Canadian cities, the recognition of Empire Day in Hamilton was comparatively large. Examining the celebration of this day in Canadian cities across the country would be an interesting area for further research.
based population was also shifting. Particularly in the 1920s, greater immigrants of non-British origins were arriving in Hamilton, a notable departure from the predominantly English heritage of early residents.\textsuperscript{165} With a growing and diversifying city around them, Hamilton elites turned to their Loyalist past as justification of their continued power. Commemorated with nostalgia for this “pioneer” past, the UELs were presented as the sole white founders of the city and the bringer of “civilized” values to the undeveloped colonial countryside.

The iconography of the UEL family seeing their homeland for the first time corresponded with these values. The monument was characterized by the \textit{Hamilton Spectator} as a “perpetual reminder of devotion to principle, valor, and the quality of overcoming the most difficult obstacles” and “symbolic of hope, faith and determination.”\textsuperscript{166} The Loyalist family, isolated from other members of their old society and surrounded by “uncivilized” peoples, is embarking on their own discovery of the “new” land. Upper Canada is supposedly empty, open, and vast, waiting for their civilized presence to transform it. This settlement narrative demonstrated the superiority of white British civilization and celebrated the triumph of Britishness over the untamed colonial lands. A focus on “original” settlers and their values coincided with contemporary fears of new immigrants that did not conform to British institutions. As the “original” immigrants of Upper Canada, the Loyalist narrative offered the perfect contrast to the newly arriving migrants. These were people that did not resemble noble Loyalist ancestors and they especially did not represent the same system of values.\textsuperscript{167} The presence of the UEL monument, particularly in relation to the changing demographics of Hamilton, was a statement advocating for the continuation of British institutions in the face of

\textsuperscript{165} For more on the history and demographics of Hamilton during this period, see: Allison Marie Ward, \textit{Guarding the City Beautiful: Liberalism, Empire, Labour and Civic Identity in Hamilton, Ontario, 1929-53} Dissertation (Kingston: Queen’s University, 2014).

\textsuperscript{166} \textit{The Hamilton Spectator}, “Great Spirit Lives Again in Hamilton” May 25 1929.

\textsuperscript{167} The largest “non-British” ethnic groups of this period were Germans, Italians and Ukrainians (Ward, 6).
perceived foreign threats. The location of the monument outside one of these British institutions was highly symbolic. Stanley Mills assured the crowd on the day of the unveiling that “the location of its erection was one hundred per cent perfect.”168 This placement of the monument, outside the steps to the county courthouse, symbolically positioned the history of Hamilton’s (and Canada’s) white British institutions on the backs of the UELs.

The narrative of the Loyalists at the time of the monument’s erection was largely homogenous and the diversity of their experience was mostly unrecognized. The primary story told of escaping hardship, standing against oppression, sticking to one’s ideologies, and eventually settling in a new but difficult landscape that bred a hardy society. The gestures and expressions of the figures on the monument coincided with the basic narrative. The mix of

Figure 4.12: Unknown Photographer. “United Empire Loyalist Monument Created by Sydney March” Photograph. c. 1929. From Vancouver Archives: Major Matthews Collection.

weariness and determination on the faces of the figures fit the ideal Loyalist settler narrative that only told of people loyal to the British Crown. The man in the monument holds his new land grant, a symbol of his new “home” but also his own position of power. The attribute of a piece of paper, discussed previously in relation to the Simcoe monument, was a symbol of European civilization and legitimacy. It marked the man’s claim on the land as “valid”. Like other papers (such as a map, law, or treaty), it represented the imposition of British values on the landscape.

By erasing the earlier presence of First Nations peoples, the settlement narrative was persuasive. The identity of the UELs as settlers of a harsh and empty land was raised throughout the addresses of the day. J.A.C. Cameron, President of the UELs, noted that the Loyalists arrived in Canada following the American Revolution, which was then “the thinly populated land held only by French-Canadians.” Col. McCullough also noted the sparsely settled landscape and difficulties of early settlers: “…Then thousands came into Upper Canada and built in the then wilderness a habitation and a home…” These conditions faced by migrants were represented in the dramatic iconography of the figures in the monument. The faces, particularly of the mother, are worn and tired. Their clothing, although respectable, is wrinkled and un-pressed. Although all standing, the figures are hunched and slow moving. The gesture of the father pointing forward is determined; the family has almost arrived, but the journey was long and difficult. Their story of struggle was supplemented by the promise of a new beginning, symbolized in the paper held by the father. The Loyalist story of struggle against hardship and the claiming of a fresh and empty landscape furthered the colonial narrative of settlement. The

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169 Ibid. In praising the design of the monument, Cameron notes the importance of settler stories in Canada’s history, and notes that another pattern of settlement (this time the French Canadians arrival) was also designed by a March brother. He was referring to the monument to Champlain by Vernon Mills in Orillia from 1927.
170 Ibid.
paper held by the male figure is not simply a “land grant”; it is representative of colonial British claims to Upper Canada that disregarded and dispossessed Indigenous peoples.

The First Nations presence in Upper Canada and their eventual assistance to settlers disappeared from the Loyalist story; it was replaced by hardy British individuals that were shaped by a tough landscape. They were people so devoted to their principles that they endured personal hardships. This type of self-sacrifice was a theme in the Empire Day celebrations of the interwar period, and also featured prominently in editorials about the monument. According to the Spectator, it was more important to live under the virtues of the British Empire than to desire material wealth: “…when they passed into Canada they abandoned their property, losing

Figure 4.13: Brittney Anne Bos. “Detail of Male Figure.” Photograph. April 2011.
practically everything they possessed, being content to live in the very humblest of circumstances so long as they found a home on British soil." There is nothing visual that marks the figures of the monument as specifically British; there are no symbols or emblems on the actual figures that differentiate them from other Europeans of the period. However, the monument was supplemented by a rhetoric that was often repeated in speech and texts (including the plaques on the sides of the monument) that confirmed these settlers as representatives of white British institutions.

Some of the people most familiar with the Loyalist narrative were their decedents. Using specifically chosen iconography, March included their presence and marked them as important contributors to contemporary Canada. The inclusion of children in the monument acknowledged the future generations of Loyalists and many of Hamilton’s elite families. Their own position as inheritors of the great legacy of the Loyalists was directly visible in its finished form. Due to the anonymity of the figures, almost any descendant could identify with one of the members of the family. The monument was not to one specific family, but was meant to represent the broader movement of people into Upper Canada. This form of mass “participation” in public commemorations was relatively new, but an essential feature of the memorials erected following the First World War. The iconography of the cenotaph was for any family; the space of mourning represented no one person and thus was open for all. Using lessons from these anonymous memorials as spaces for the masses, March created a public commemoration that represented Loyalists and their descendants as a group. However, because the Loyalist narrative was very selective in its scope, those identifying with the family in the monument were also limited.

171 Ibid.
Representing a group’s settlement of the land was nearly unprecedented and March needed to develop a specific iconography for such a different commemoration. The artist decided to turn to the “family” for inspiration. The representation of the family, and particularly a husband and wife with their children, was nearly nonexistent in the commemorative landscape of Canada and elsewhere in the Empire.¹⁷² Family values and the ideals of that life were located in the private sphere, outside the chaos of the rapidly changing public sphere. Families were primarily situated within the protection of this idealized “home.” Their representation in the public world of commemoration was not only unnecessary, but contrary to the ideology of separate spheres. Nonetheless, Loyalist writing of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was focused on families, particularly the search for genealogical traces of their past.¹⁷³ In comparison to many other dominant historical narratives of the period, the white family played a very significant role in the Loyalist myth. Although the Loyalist family was frequently featured in these narratives, the iconography of the “family” was usually reserved for paintings hung in drawing rooms, not public monuments out in the street. By presenting a family during a very intimate moment (receiving their new land allotment and seeing their new “home” for the first time), March was publicly exhibiting the very intimate private sphere. In addition, the symbol of the “family” was an important marker of civilization and colonial progress. The family represented ideal white British values on the micro scale. Monogamous marriage, particularly in the colonial environment, was a symbol of “civilization” and a marker of

¹⁷² The idea of “separate spheres” (the public sphere gendered male, the private sphere gendered female) largely restricted the representation of women (and especially the family) in public. Monuments to the family, considered a very “private” realm, were rare in the commemorative landscape of the West until the mid twentieth century.

¹⁷³ There were numerous books written by amateur historians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries on family histories. These genealogical studies (like the one written by Stanley Mills) traced lineage, but also commented on the settlement and development of particular communities and especially early elites.
whiteness. The arrival of white family units (particularly women and children) was indicative of putting down permanent roots in new lands. They were representatives of a strong white future and civilized institutions, a symbol not carried by white men alone. The iconography of the family within the commemorative landscape was a bold statement against artistic tradition, but accurately positioned the UEL narrative as a story of white imperialist settlement.

In representing a family, March also gave a prominent position to Loyalist women (Fig. 4.14). Many genealogical studies placed equal importance on female as well as male members of

![Figure 4.14: Brittney Anne Bos. “Detail of Female Figure.” Photograph. April 2011.](image)

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However, the role of women was significantly under-represented in public commemorations. Laura Secord had been recently recognized for her role in the War of 1812, possessing an ideal mixture of feminine qualities and a loyalty to the British Crown. Although often promoted as an “ordinary” woman, Secord was an exception and identified as an individual worthy of note. The woman in the UEL monument is different than the heroine Laura Secord. The anonymous figure is a symbol of other largely unknown women that played significant roles in establishing communities. Often only featured as allegorical representations or religious personifications, the inclusion of women on monuments was very rare. One notable exception is the Nurses’ Memorial created for the nurses who died in the First World War. Unveiled in 1926, this monument was a rare imprint of women’s national work on the Canadian commemorative landscape. Although the representation in monuments was quite rare for women, their presence at commemorative ceremonies was far more common. For example, Mrs. Mills was heavily involved in the project and also took a prominent role in the ceremony. It was her hand that pulled the unveiling cord and her act revealed the statue to the public for the first time. In addition, the Wentworth Women’s Historical Society, a very active group in the Hamilton area, was one of the few organizations invited to place a wreath at the base of the monument.

Loyalist descendants could trace their heritage through either their paternal or maternal lines, both being considered of equal value when determining eligibility for UELA membership.

The virtues of heroines, such as Laura Secord, and the connection to Britishness is extensively explored by Cecilia Morgan. See: Colin Coats and Cecilia Morgan, Heroines and History: Representations of Madeleine de Vercheres and Laura Secord (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2002); Cecilia Morgan, “‘Of Slender Frame and Delicate Appearance’: The Placing of Laura Secord in the Narratives of Canadian Loyalist History” Journal of Canadian Historical Society (1994); also, Ruth McKenzie Laura Secord: the Legend and the Lady (Toronto: McClelland and Steward, 1971).

Due to the patriarchal constructions of Western society, women were largely barred from public institutions (social, political and cultural) and the military. Since most monuments commemorated these leaders, women were not a frequent subject of commemorations. Queen Victoria was a notable exception to this trend, but her status as a monarch set her apart from “ordinary” women of the period.

Responding to its historical context, the woman on the UEL monument coincides with expected roles of middle class white women in the early twentieth century. Her role and influence is seen through the gendered expectations of commemorators and the iconography adopted by the artist. The image of the housewife, who stayed at home and raised children while the husband worked dominated representations of white women during the Victorian period and seeped into the twentieth century. Virtues of purity, morality, and family devotion were promoted as ideal visions of white femininity. The woman on the UEL monument corresponds with these ideals, which were still part of dominant gendered discourse in the 1920s at the time of its erection. She represents the idealized roles of women, but this was a gendered ideology tangled with race and class. The woman is hunched over, leaning on her husband for support. Without his guiding hand, she would collapse. She already appears close to fainting, likely from exhaustion, clutching at her stomach in a gesture of pain. In contrast, his posture is upright, his firm grip holding her delicate shoulder. Her frame is smaller than his and her narrow shoulders bare; she is vulnerable and in need of protection. Her waist is cinched by a corset, and the only dominant part of her figure is the long flowing gown of her skirt. The male figure towers over her wilting frame and pulls her closer to him. Her facial expression communicates weariness and complete exhaustion. Her delicacy and frailty correspond with expected traits of middle-class white women specifically. The female figure on the UEL monument is not differentiated by race using skin colour or accessories. Instead, gendered expectations of dependence and fragility link her with expectations of white femininity.

The children on the monument also coincide their respective gender roles (Fig. 4.15). The young girl clutches to her father’s coat, a gesture of clinging to the male authority figure. Her expression is the most ambiguous, a look of contented confusion as she follows her family.
Figure 4.15: Brittney Anne Bos. “Composite Image Comprising of two Details of the Two Children.” Photograph. April 2011.

She is dressed in a feminine gown with a large, perfectly tied bow at the back. She is the youngest and clearly most subordinate and voiceless figure of the group. The young boy, appearing to the one side of the mother, is more determined in his pose. He holds an ax in one hand, and a hoe in the other. He is being clutched by his mother’s outstretched arm, but is separating himself from her grasp. He looks to the side, a completely different direction than the other three figures. Other than his subtle step forward, the boy is positioned as a separate figure compared to the rest of his family. His face, although round with youth, is similar to that of his father. He has a determined expression and is posed with a puffed chest. His separation from his mother and determined stance away from his family depicts him as the future head of the household.
The theme of white middle class family life and corresponding gender roles was also present in the addresses at the unveiling. Col. McCullough recognized the importance of both “fathers and mothers” noting that their “character and devotion have entered into the very fabric of this nation.”\textsuperscript{179} His speech matched the iconography of the monument and the inclusion of both parents in the representation. Nonetheless, McCullough also alludes to the gendered expectations represented in the bronze: “The courage of the father and the faith of the mother, irradiating their distinguished faces, will not fail to inspire this and future generations…”\textsuperscript{180} The monument was a representation not only of this great family of pioneers, but also of the institutions of white Britishness that needed preservation in the future. On the same day as the unveiling, the \textit{Spectator} published an editorial that asserted: “The family shown in the group gives a good idea of the splendid type of citizens who came to Canada so that they might continue to live under the British flag. They preferred hardship and persecution to the easy course of surrendering their convictions and having a comfortable time…”\textsuperscript{181} This family was a good example of the past, but also a critical symbol for present (and future) citizens to emulate. Simcoe represented the arrival of white British institutions on Canadian soil. The Loyalists, on the other hand, represented the maintenance of these British institutions. The patriotic sentiments of editorials from Empire Day, directed at Hamiltonians in particular, reminded them of their duties and why recognizing the Empire was so important.

The Loyalist monument offered an opportunity to inspire future citizens by using the historic narrative as an exemplary display. At the unveiling, Col. McCullough recalled the importance of the day, stating: “We assemble on a day set apart…. To vindicate their character, to extol their principles, to praise their patriotism and to unveil and dedicate this imperishable

\textsuperscript{179} \textit{The Hamilton Spectator}, “Great Spirit Lives Again in Hamilton” May 25 1929.
\textsuperscript{180} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{181} \textit{The Hamilton Spectator}, “UE Loyalists, an editorial for Young People” May 25 1929.
memorial in testimony of their devotion to King and constitution.”\textsuperscript{182} The role of individual action became an increasingly prominent theme as the 1920s moved forward. Two years earlier, the Spectator challenged Hamilton citizens, asking:

Are we going to take a worthy share of the responsibilities or are we to accept all the advantages and let others bear the heaviest part of the burden? It is good to take a pride in the Empire, to board of our membership and to glory in the strength of the imperial commonwealth, but the Empire can not endure on mere praise; its growth and very existence depends upon the active co-operation of its component states in the work of development and in the task of defense.\textsuperscript{183}

The following year, individual action was once again the dominant theme of the yearly editorial, challenging Hamilton citizens in particular to do their part for the greater glory of the Empire:

“Lip service is not enough. If the great vision is to be realized, there must be action also. No amount of patriotic sentiment will suffice to accomplish the destiny in store of the British people; they must not only believe in their destiny but work for its fulfillment.”\textsuperscript{184}

The inclusion of children on the UEL monument meant that the representation was not simply about the settlers that came from the United States, but equally about the future generations that developed Upper Canada. The children symbolize the new nation, but also the promise of the future. It is evident that the children represented in the monument were intended to grow up and follow the gendered expectations set by their parents in the building of the new communities. The young girl, like her mother, was destined to raise the next generation. One hand holds her father, but her opposite hand clutches a barely visible doll. The use of a doll in European representations is an allusion to the future fertility and role of girls as they age. In this tiny bundle, clutched by the small child, is the next generation. Since the family is signified using particular racial definitions, the girl will inherently carry on the future of the British race.

\textsuperscript{182} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{183} Hamilton Spectator, “Canada and Empire” May 23 1927.
\textsuperscript{184} Ibid.
She is a Loyalist that will produce future generations, but she is also a white woman who is responsible for populating the colony. She was expected to birth future white citizens and pass along the British institutions that her parents brought to the “new” land.

The future of Empire greatness rested on the shoulders of younger generations, and particularly their commitment to defending the Empire against foreign threats. The local newspapers commented on their roles as future citizens, not only as Canadians but as bearers of British traditions. In 1928, an article in the *Hamilton Herald* remarked on the cadets calling them: “…young Canadians proud of their heritage of British blood and tradition.”

In 1932 they were described as making “a brave showing at the review, well trained and smart appearing.” In the monument itself, the boy represents the future building of Upper Canada. The father is not holding any implements of development (except his symbolic land grant), but rather it is the son that carries the ax and the hoe. The son is the bringer of “home” (represented in the ax used to clear the land and build the house) and agricultural sustenance (represented in the hoe used to till the soil). The young girl was responsible for giving birth to white citizens of the future and raising them to be good British subjects, while the boy was required to build and defend his family and nation. The children represented the future Loyalists, and more broadly the continuation of the white race in the colonial landscape.

After the monument was unveiled in Hamilton in 1929, the family of four became an icon of the UELs in Canada. In the years after their recognition in the monument, the image of the arriving family was transformed into both a stamp and a commemorative plate (Fig. 4.16). The stamp, issued for Dominion Day in 1934, features an engraved image of the family atop March’s monument. Flanking the family are two panels: Britannia appears on the left, and an

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Indigenous figure on the right. By the time of the stamp’s release, the representation of Britannia was iconic and reproduced in various colonies and former colonies around the world. Wearing a Classical helmet and holding a trident, the militaristic symbols attached to Britannia link her to a world of colonial dominance. Her figure represents the spread and power of the British Empire and its associated values. As with the cathedral wall tablets in both St. Paul’s for Isaac Brock and Exeter for John Simcoe, the Indigenous figure once again is used to represent the colonial landscape. However, this representation of the Indigenous body is more closely aligned with the archetypical Indian of the early twentieth century and is iconographically removed from the noble savage. Wearing animal skin clothes and topped with a large feathered headdress, the Indigenous figure is represented as the archetypical Indian that was now dominating popular
culture. Both Britannia and the Indigenous figure are topped with images of the Union Jack and British Crown. The placement of the UEL family on a Canadian stamp furthered their position as the bringers of white British institutions and “civilization” to the untamed Canadian wilderness.

**Conclusion**

According to middle class white elites in Ontario, modern Canada was facing a looming crisis. Mass immigration was threatening the ethnic balance, growing cities were moving people away from the protective grasp of small communities, political and social systems were transforming, and the power of white middle class British elites was questioned. In this changing environment, elites turned to the past for refuge. They looked for narratives that offered hopeful stories of self-sacrifice, endurance, the maintenance of traditions, and the triumph of British institutions. By reshaping the Loyalist narrative, amateur historical societies used the pioneer story to suit their own ends. As commemorations exploded across the province, they turned to Loyalist leaders for inspiration. John Graves Simcoe was the ideal representative, the perfect white British gentleman that was refined and dignified. He was responsible for bringing British institutions to the colonial environment, and the Loyalists were positioned as its chief defender. They were hardy settlers, willing to endure harsh conditions in the “empty” wilderness of Upper Canada in order to defend their British values. White families in particular, like the constructed narrative of the Loyalists, promised a white future for Canada. These early pioneers, with Simcoe at the lead, were proclaimed as the first of many white settlers. They were the hopeful past that was linked with an even brighter future. Such narratives were spread through speeches, literature, newspaper editorials, and articles. However, the monument was a permanent marker, everlasting

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187 For more on the archetypical Indian, see Chapter 3.
in its tribute to the past. Unlike spoken or even written texts, monuments could speak to the masses not only in the present, but the future as well.

When commemorators turned to monuments to represent their political and social figures, they relied on artists to create memorials that stood for particular characteristics. These figures needed to promote specific values without moving or talking; their physical presence alone needed to communicate abstract ideas. Artists turned to recognizable iconography, but in the case of both Allward and March, often made their own individual marks to suit their subject matter. Iconographies were negotiated and narratives were bent. Future generations were drawn into speeches, alluding to the permanence of the bronzes that now loomed over their respective cities. The apparent crisis confronting the middle class whites in Ontario was quelled with monuments to their great leaders; no longer victorious military heroes but representatives of social ideals. The explosion of monument building in Ontario coincided with the spread of Canadian imperialism. The search for Canadian values that contributed to the strength of the Empire continued as more statues were proposed, funded, and built. The statue to John Graves Simcoe was constructed in the middle of the “statuemania” craze, positioned as the white founding father of the province. By the time the Loyalist monument was completed, the idea of Canadian imperialism had faded; however, in the specific landscape of Hamilton a monument to its pioneers was suiting. These monuments were intended to stand for the values of the growing Canadian nation. The figures in bronze were physical representations of a bright past that would lead to a promising future. The commemorations were a response to growing elite concern, and their attempt to mark the Canadian landscape as an exclusively white British space.
Chapter 5: “Our Own Responsibility to Uphold these Values Must Never be Forgotten”¹: The International Memorial to the Underground Railroad (2001), Windsor and Detroit

Figure 5.1: Brittney Anne Bos. “View of International Memorial to the Underground Railroad, Windsor Component.” Photograph. May 2014.

Ed Dwight, sculptor, has given Windsor and Detroit two beautiful companion monuments which will serve as a catalyst for thought, discussion and continuous reflection on our great heritage and the meaning of freedom. ²

Introduction

An innovative monument causes people to pause; it encourages the passersby to stop, look, and learn. It usually communicates a narrative, a story that the viewer can easily imagine. As a work of art, a successful monument helps the viewer realize an abstract concept. These types of memorials cause people to reflect, and even place themselves within the story. Once the viewer becomes part of the story, they can imagine themselves within the collective memory. In order to create such a monument, artists need to consider the audience, the specific site, the most appropriate iconography, and what parts of the narrative to emphasize (or leave out). The successful balance of these factors, in the best location, will often have the desired effect: continuous reflection and group participation. In her comment on Windsor and Detroit’s Underground Railroad Monument, Andrea Moore observed these qualities. She asserted that the monument was a triumph, a successful physical manifestation of the abstract concept of “freedom” embodied in the narrative of the Underground Railroad. Her interpretation matched many commentators from the period who also saw a visual depiction of “freedom” in the granite and the bronze. The monument inspired discussion about the historical narrative, but also prompted reflection on contemporary citizens and future generations. In its representation of “freedom”, the monument reached out to all viewers and encouraged them to take a role in the memory of the Underground Railroad. However, the reflection and participation was still limited as parts of the story were deliberately excluded.

² Ibid.
The International Memorial to the Underground Railroad was a result of the Detroit 300 celebrations, a year-long “birthday party” to recognize the European “founding” of the city 300 years earlier. The monument was one of the most everlasting gifts and enduring legacies of the celebration. The two statues spanning both sides of the border were intended to commemorate the story of escaping enslaved peoples to Canada. This story was re-invigorated with new meanings in the waning years of the twentieth century, as Parks Canada and the National Parks Service of the United States met to consider a bi-national commemorative program. At the same time, Parks Canada was rewriting a historical plaque in Windsor recognizing the “fugitive slaves” who found refuge in the local area. Concerned citizens combined with governmental groups, both vying for their own interpretations and meanings of the Underground Railroad narrative. Amidst often competing interests and an increasingly tangled narrative of meanings, the monument was erected on both sides of an international boundary, one of the world’s first to span national territories. The monument also represented a collective narrative of Black North Americans, one of the first notable instances of Black history commemoration on a national/international scale.

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3 “The Fugitive Slave Movement” was the original title of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board designation and the first plaque in the 1920s.
One reason for the very limited commemorative scope of Black history in North America is due to the continued silence of “Other” experiences and enduring racism. National histories and collective memories are constructed in order to celebrate the nation and its values. Within Canada, “multiculturalism” is increasingly the subject of national pride and commemoration. Across the border in the United States, nationalist history is often focused on the quest for “freedom.” Acknowledging the existence of slavery and other forms of historical racism contradicts the collective narratives intended to instill pride in citizens. Additionally, people generally prefer to be “entertained” by their history and not confronted with the “tough stuff.”

Flanked on either side by universities and theme parks, “history-makers” face a difficult balance between representing history and creating memories for contemporary families. Within the commemorative landscape these difficult subjects are often disregarded or given minimal attention in order to preserve ongoing national values. While the commemorative landscape of

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9 Ibid, 50. This struggle is echoed in Gable and Handler’s ethnographical study of Williamsburg, Virginia, a historical recreation of a pre-Civil War space. When museum officials attempted to make their history more “accurate” (such as including more overt depictions of slavery), they faced considerable resistance from a public that was primarily seeking entertainment (Richard Handler and Eric Gable, *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997) 51-52).
the late twentieth century initially appears to embrace “Other” stories, their inclusion is still dictated by the boundaries of white nationalism.\(^\text{10}\)

One method of stretching the borders and restrictions of nationalism is through visual iconography. With very few marks on the commemorative landscape, and a similar silence in public history spaces, Black people in both Canada and the United States\(^\text{11}\) are gradually forming their own iconographies. Created at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad is an early example of a new type of iconography that is gradually emerging on the commemorative landscape. Working with a nearly blank slate, sculptors are developing unconventional iconographies that often visually challenge nationalist narratives. By combining recognizable imagery presented in new ways, artists are able to make their monuments endearing to the public and easy to read. New forms of representation are gradually taking shape that allow Black Canadians and Black Americans to tell their versions of historical narratives using their iconography. The International Memorial to the Underground Railroad represents the tangled negotiations between national values and new inclusionary iconographies. Nonetheless, nationalist meanings endure and artists are often required to work within specific parameters in order to represent complex ideas, such as “multiculturalism” and “freedom”.

For nearly a century, numerous communities and governmental departments were involved in the commemoration of the Underground Railroad in the Detroit-Windsor area. The

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\(^{11}\) This dissertation is focused on the monuments of Ontario. Nonetheless, because the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad is in both Canada and the United States (and the artist is American), there is consideration of both national contexts. The focus remains on Canada’s commemorative landscape, but due to the site of the monument American nationalism and commemoration is also included.
monument, supplemented by plaques and other discourse, reflects a multi-layered iconography adapted to an unconventional subject matter. This first section of this chapter outlines the process of planning and building the monument. Although officially constructed by Detroit 300, the erection of the monument involved various stakeholders and required constant negotiations. The final monument in Windsor contains two different components: the physical statue coordinated by Detroit 300 and the plaque affixed to the front written by the HSMBC. The rest of this chapter considers these two somewhat competing components and their relationship. The first part of this large section covers a brief history of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada’s commemoration of the Underground Railroad in the Windsor area. First cited as a nationally historic event in the 1920s, the official meaning of the Underground Railroad has significantly shifted over time. This section also considers the bi-national discussions that were held between Parks Canada and the National Parks Service only a few years before the construction of the monument. The final part of this chapter considers the meaning of the monument and its iconography. The International Memorial to the Underground Railroad encourages participation from diverse viewers and recognizes multiple historical experiences. Through its innovative iconography and position on an international boundary, the monument engages in the production of “transnational memory.” A rare but growing presence on the commemorative landscape, transnational memory challenges the restrictive boundaries imposed by nationalism and encourages diverse responses.

A Chance to Reconnect – The Beginnings of a Monument

In the final decade of the twentieth century, the narrative of those escaping slavery was re-shaped by governments, local historical societies, academics, and related organizations. The narrative was a provocative story of struggle and eventual triumph. For governmental
groups, it could cloud the horrors of slavery and emphasize the successful triumph of “freedom”. In the United States, the Underground Railroad story acknowledged the history of African Americans without directly confronting the “tough stuff” of slavery. In Canada, it was the ideal narrative to demonstrate the values of openness and tolerance, a key part of the twentieth-century “multicultural nation.” The stories north of the border focused on those receiving the formerly enslaved peoples and connected this reception to contemporary refugees and the Canadian ethnic mosaic. As the narrative exploded in popularity during the waning years of the twentieth century, there were increased discussions regarding a possible large-scale commemoration of the historical event.

The first mention of a possible monument to the Underground Railroad in Windsor was during the discussions of a new Historical Sites and Monuments Board (HSMBC) plaque. A group of citizens convened to consider the new government-sponsored text and draft their own proposal. During their initial meetings, they also interrogated the possibility of a better site and more reflective commemoration of the Underground Railroad. The committee considered Dieppe Park and the Windsor Sculpture Gallery as early options, both clearly in view of the Detroit River. Local artist, Artis Lane, was contacted to enlist support for this special project. However, the question of funding quickly stalled discussions. Concurrently, organizations on the other side of the border were also moving for a larger commemoration of escaping enslaved

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13 Discussion Notes: Meeting of Citizens Concerned about the UGRR Plaque, Ouellette Avenue and Riverside Drive in Windsor, 29 July 1999 and 12 August 1999, Private Collection.
people. Announced at the meeting held on August 12 1999, the Detroit Underground Railroad Monument Committee formally proposed an international monument to the historic event that would include the new HSMBC plaque in Windsor. The American committee suggested a large monument on the Detroit riverfront and a small component in Windsor. A pole topped with a star, that could easily accommodate the new HSMBC plaque, was part of this initial design.\(^\text{14}\) Although still in its early planning stages, the Detroit Underground Railroad Monument Committee acknowledged the importance of including a constituent in Windsor. In the coming months, as the Detroit 300 celebration plans were formalized, this original small-scale design turned into one of the first International Memorials spanning the border of two nations.

The International Memorial to the Underground Railroad quickly became one of the flagship projects and long lasting legacies of the Detroit 300 Celebrations. The commemoration recognized the 300\(^{\text{th}}\) anniversary of the European “founding” of Detroit by French Officer Antoine de La Mothe Cadillac. The City of Detroit established a non-governmental committee to oversee the festivities and control the sponsorship money primarily fuelled by the local automotive industry. Detroit 300 was mandated by the City to celebrate the past of Detroit and leave a permanent legacy to its future citizens.\(^\text{15}\) The ambitious year-long celebration included musical performances, festivals, a grand riverfront renovation, and monuments.\(^\text{16}\) These projects were intended to create pride in community but also to encourage individual participation. For example, anyone could purchase a brick on the new riverfront promenade, a campaign entitled “The Legacy of Freedom,” and help contribute towards the renovation costs. Through this

\(^{14}\) Ibid.  
\(^{15}\) Guide to Detroit 300, June to December 2001, Private Collection. By the time Detroit 300 received their mandate, the city was in a deep economic and social downturn. Although never explicitly mentioned in promotional materials, Detroit 300 was one of the ways the city attempted to create pride in a community that was in rapid decline. The eventual monument was a permanent legacy of this pride and certainly intended as a way for citizens (both past and present) to come together.  
\(^{16}\) Many of the plans continued through the summer months, but the events of September 11 2001 cooled interest in many later projects, including the monument unveiling in October.
campaign and others, Detroit 300 was combining community pride (and opening of public spaces) with the celebration of historical events. The festivals were important for the citizens of the City in 2001, but the long lasting gifts were intended to bring the community together in the future. The Legacy Project in particular was meant to “… provide much-needed plan for public space,” including a publically accessible renovated riverfront promenade that included the Underground Railroad Monument.17 This riverfront plan, including the plans to erect a monument, was submitted to Council and approved in October 2000 as extensive renovations were underway in preparation for the reenactment of Cadillac’s landing.18 As with numerous commemorative events of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the recognition of Detroit’s “founding” was an opportunity to re-tell stories of the past to inspire future generations.19

As Detroit 300 released some of their plans for the tercentennial project, the local press exploded with interest. From its early stages, nearly a year before its official launch, Detroit 300 was connected with a broader sense of community pride. In January 2000, the Detroit Free Press commented: “The commemoration will give current and former Detroiter a fresh chance to reconnect with a proud city.”20 This festival was primarily about public participation and celebrations that promoted unity through diversity. Another article in the same paper affirmed: “Best of all, it’s our celebration. Detroit 300 is focused on getting all of us involved, to rediscover our heritage, and to reaffirm our Detroit citizenship. You are encouraged to

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18 City Planning Commission, “Review of Detroit Riverfront Civic Center Promenade Project,” 16 October 2000, Detroit City Clerk’s Office.
19 Commemorative books and booklets from Detroit 300 include: Crain Communications Inc., Detroit at 300: Then and Now (Detroit: Crain Communications, 2001); Destination Detroit: Detroit 300 Years (Detroit: Central Business District Foundation, 2001); Nortown Community Development Corporation, Northeast Detroit Neighborhoods Celebrate Detroit 300 Birthday (Detroit: Nortown Community Development Corporation, 2001).
participate in many ways.”21 The *Detroit News* similarly remarked that this festival was an opportunity for Detroit to celebrate their long history with the rest of the United States.22 For Detroit 300, local pride was connected to broader American nationalism. Authors were careful to note, however, that this was a moment to come together through diversity, not create further separations. The *Detroit News* remarked: “The commemoration will note the unique contributions of all of the members of an ethnically varied and culturally rich region.”23 At the same time the *Detroit Free Press* recognized the importance of acknowledging the city’s racial diversity: “…[Detroit 300] offers a grand opportunity to unite the metropolitan area and bury the divisions of the past while commemorating the events and people that shaped it.”24 Mitigating ethnic tensions and celebrating the varied history of the city was part of the Detroit 300 mandate. While the Underground Railroad monument was not yet included in these initial press releases, this commemoration in particular offered the perfect story of ethnic cooperation. The narrative was about overcoming the adversity of a terrible past towards the path of universal “freedom”. Conveniently, the Underground Railroad story was an ideal opportunity to bury racial tensions in favour of unity under a common cause.

Although the Detroit 300 plans were received very favourably in the local press, at least some municipal officials questioned the celebration. On January 17 2001, after the monument design was finalized, Detroit 300 presented their plans to City Council. In the ensuing discussion, Council-woman Kay Everett challenged the committee on their representation of African American history and noted a significance omission. She remarked that the celebrations only recognized the African American contributions to Detroit though music and sports;

otherwise, Black citizens were absent. Everett never addressed the Underground Railroad Monument specifically, but she identified the overall absence of African American voices from the celebration and particularly a discussion of the “tough stuff” from Detroit’s racially divided history. Her critiques do not reappear in later City Council minutes when they officially accepted the gift of public art from Detroit 300.

Once the monument was accepted as an official component of the Detroit 300 events, the major decisions of the International Memorial needed finalization. Although Detroit 300 was the primary body responsible for planning, the Windsor committee directed all of the events in Canada and contributed to board discussions in Detroit. For example, Windsor Chair Andrea Moore was a regular member on the Detroit 300 monument committee board and was present when the design was finalized. While the Windsor committee wielded slightly less power, they were responsible for securing funding and determining the program for the unveiling within their own jurisdiction. The Windsor committee also continued discussions with the HSMBC regarding the new plaque text and their role in the unveiling. The timeline for the monument was relatively short; there was less than two years to pick a design, oversee the execution, and plan a massive international unveiling that involved multiple layers of government and private committees. This international collaboration of various stakeholders came together to execute this ambitious task and make their own marks on the Underground Railroad narrative.

One of the first major decisions was the choice of artist and design of the monument. A sub-committee of Detroit 300, the Public Art Committee, was responsible for the broader

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25 City Clerk’s Notes from Council Presentation by Detroit 300, January 17 2001, Detroit City Clerk’s Office.
26 Letter from Marilyn Wheaton (Detroit 300) to Detroit City Council, September 21 2001, Detroit City Clerk’s Office.
oversight of the monument’s erection. It is likely that some leading artists were contacted privately for the design competition, but a public announcement was also posted. By the deadline, Detroit 300 received submissions from a total of fourteen artists. By the time the committee met to make a decision, the selections were narrowed to six finalists: one Canadian, one British, and four American artists. On October 23 2000, almost exactly a year before the monument was unveiled, the Detroit 300 Underground Railroad Sculpture Committee met to consider the submissions of these six finalists. Two representatives from the Windsor Committee were present: Andrea Moore and Nancy Allen. Three designs were immediately and unanimously eliminated as “unsuitable”; all three proposed abstract contemporary designs that departed from the portrait statue model. Based on the brief meeting notes, the committee members preferred a realistic design that represented the Underground Railroad narrative in an illustrative manner.

The committee was left with a short list of three artists, all of whom were American men. These submissions were realistic figurative sculptures; the figures were not abstracted and all had some degree of likeness. None of the artists were proposing commemorations of specific individuals. In fact, all three submissions used multiple figures to represent the diverse experiences of people escaping enslavement. The intent of most group monuments is to

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27 Detroit 300 Public Art Committee Meeting Notes, September 26 2000, Private Collection. The Public Art Committee provided some oversight, but the Underground Railroad monument was proposed prior to Detroit 300’s formation. As such, the committee responsible for the monument acted largely independent from their government overseers. Both Windsor and Detroit representatives were part of the Public Art Committee and presented the Underground Railroad Monument’s chosen design on October 26 2000 (Detroit 300 Public Art Committee Agenda, October 26 2000, Private Collection).

28 From committee minutes (Discussion Notes, August 12 1999) it is clear that Artis Lane was approached privately by members of the Windsor monument committee regarding the monument. The committee minutes (Meeting of the Underground Railroad Monument Committee of Windsor, July 11 2000, Private Collection) also state that Canadian artists were contacted privately, their names being forwarded to Detroit 300. However, it is unclear how or why all fourteen artists submitted proposals.

29 Meeting of the Underground Railroad Monument Committee of Windsor, July 11 2000.

30 Underground Railroad Monument Committee of Windsor, October 17 2000, Private Collection.

31 Ibid.
symbolize the larger masses in the figures of a few anonymous individuals. Collectively, all three finalists included multiple figures in their designs and a diversity of expressions with the purpose of representing the multi-layered history of the Underground Railroad. Additionally, the submissions all clearly presented elements from the Underground Railroad narrative. For example, two of the proposals used the river and escarpment as an element in their design. The iconography of the river and boats symbolized the prominence of the Detroit River in the Underground Railroad narrative.\textsuperscript{32} By drawing on familiar iconographies and standard methods for representing collective histories, the artists submitted sketches that aligned with the committee: an easily understood and readable design that told the diverse history of the Underground Railroad to an equally diverse public in two cities.

Presented with three finalists, the committee then focused on the feasibility of design, narrowing down the submissions based on minimal modifications required. From this process, Ed Dwight emerged as the winner, with a submission that only required slight changes. One of these suggestions was to increase a diversity of expressions, features, and clothing to better capture the multiplicity of people in the Underground Railroad story.\textsuperscript{33} The committee wanted to ensure that multiple people and their representative experiences were included in the monument. Increasing the number of stories acknowledged the diversity of perspectives within the Underground Railroad narrative and promoted contemporary viewers’ connections with those stories. Similarly, the monument committee suggested that Dwight include known Detroit abolitionists in the final design.\textsuperscript{34} Not only does the inclusion of specific faces increase the

\textsuperscript{32} Curiously, Ed Dwight’s design was the only one of the finalists that did not include a prominent boat or water motif. After his eventual selection, the committee suggested adding a boat element to emphasize the history of the Detroit River waterway, but no such element was included (aside from a small map on one of the panels and its physical location on the Riverfront).

\textsuperscript{33} Detroit 300 Underground Railroad Sculpture Committee Meeting Notes, October 23 2000, Private Collection.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid.
historical connections of the monument, it triggers a viewer’s response in recognizing a prominent figure. Although most of the monument was to remain anonymous and diverse, the inclusion of a “local hero” situated the International Memorial and connected it to local citizens.

Some suggestions were also mandated for the Windsor monument. For example, the committee questioned the omission of a Union Jack on the Windsor tower, a historically relevant symbol. Although this suggestion was proposed in the early stages, it was never included in the final design.35 The historically irrelevant Canadian maple leaf remains at the top of the final monument, while the more historically accurate representation of the Union Jack is missing.36 One modification that was not listed but did appear in the Windsor monument was the opening of the archway at the bottom of the tower. The original design called for a closed tower, with the single bronze figure of a girl behind a solid granite wall. The opening of the archway in the final design creates additional movement and the suggestion of passing through the gateway to freedom. The heavy granite tower becomes a symbolic “archway,” utilizing Classical iconography frequently used to represent triumph and success. The Committee meeting minutes from the month following the selection process include other suggestions for the artist, including the names of operatives in Canada that were to appear on the Windsor monument. The committee meeting minutes conclude that the artist was accommodating in making all necessary changes.37

The design submitted by Ed Dwight and eventually built on the sites was accepted without major conflict. There is no mention of any dissenting voices regarding Dwight’s design.

35 Ibid.
36 The inclusion of the Canadian flag did not fit the historical narrative; the modern Maple Leaf dated from the twentieth century, far removed from the Underground Railroad story. The contemporary flag was likely a nationalist symbol, but it did not fit the historical narrative. The meeting minutes and other correspondences are silent as to why the Canadian flag remained.
37 Meeting of the Underground Railroad Monument Committee of Windsor, November 16 2000, Private Collection.
or concerns over his American nationality. The question of an American versus Canadian design was raised only once in the available minutes in July 2000. At that time, as prospective proposals were narrowed, Committee member Howard McCurdy (former Windsor MP) expressed his concern over the lack of outreach to Canadian artists, particularly African Canadians from Nova Scotia and Quebec.\textsuperscript{38} The meeting minutes contain no other mention of nationality and it appears no objection was raised regarding the choice of an American artist. Unlike many other Canadian monuments from the previous century, American citizenship was not a significant concern for commemorators. Instead, committee members were most concerned with the choice of design and did voice individual objections regarding possible iconographies. Reverend Owen Burey, pastor of the Sandwich Baptist Church, advocated for a design that included a pole with a star on top, preferring an iconography historically connected with the Underground Railroad narrative. He also affirmed that he could not endorse an “abstract work of art.”\textsuperscript{39} The choice of three figurative finalists, and the exclusion of the three abstract submissions, confirms that other committee members shared his sentiments. Although the important North Star was absent, the committee chose a design that included numerous iconographical references to the Underground Railroad narrative. Although created in the style of a traditional portrait statue, Dwight’s design nonetheless challenged the Euro-centric commemorative landscape in both Canada and the United States.

\textbf{Towers and Testaments to Freedom}

Once the choice of design was finalized, the committee in Windsor focused on choosing the names of operatives and other prominent people that would appear on the base of the

\textsuperscript{38} Committee Meeting, July 11 2000.
\textsuperscript{39} Meeting of the Underground Railroad Monument Committee of Windsor, August 24 2000, Private Collection.
The Underground Railroad Monument Committee of Windsor reached out to a number of provincial stakeholders asking for their nominations. One stakeholder recommended Rev. Anthony Binga for his faithful commitment to abolitionist work, while another advocated for George and Katherine Henderson, and Henry Walton Bibb. John Freeman Walls and Jane King Walls were also suggested. Many other nominated names were not featured on the final monument. For example, one local stakeholder suggested James C. Jones and James Munroe Jones, each early settlers in the Chatham area, but neither are featured on the final monument.

The Committee meeting minutes provide no indication of why specific names were chosen and others excluded, but does mention that all names required a direct connection to the Underground Railroad and could not be contemporary. Only a specific number of names could fit on the small base of the monument, so the committee was required to select only particular people. By June 26 2001, the Committee made its final decision and the results were forwarded to Ed Dwight.

One of the largest questions for the International Memorial was still the issue of funding. Detroit 300 was sponsored by numerous private and corporate donations, many from the city’s

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40 One side of the base would eventually feature the names of prominent sites, while the other would list participants and operatives.
41 Collection of letters re: base name (Fax from Andrea Moore to Ed Dwight, June 26 2001; Letter from Barbara K. Hughes Smith to Andrea Moore, June 13 2001; Letter from Gwen Robinson to Andrea Moore, May 22 2001; Letter from Porverbs Heritage Organization to Andrea Moore, 2001; Letter from Nneka Allan to Andrea Moore, June 20 2001; Letter from North American Black Historical Museum to Andrea Moore, June 2001; Internal report Graphic and Textual Requirements for the Detroit Underground Railroad Monument, n.d.) All letters from Private Collection. An early version of the base names proposal confirms that there were a number of drafts created. This undated document contained a total of thirty-three names divided into two columns and a separate block at the bottom of the page. A column titled “Base Names” contained eleven suggestions, eight of which were chosen for the final monument. The other column, labeled “Possibilities Only!”, featured fifteen names, nine of which were chosen.
42 Meeting of the Underground Railroad Committee of Windsor, April 26 2001, Private collection.
43 Collection of letters re: base name.
auto industry. Edsel Ford was the ceremonial Patron of Detroit 300, and the corporations of both Ford and Chevrolet were major sponsors of the primary events.\textsuperscript{45} Detroit, as a municipality, contributed some funds from public coffers, but the year-long celebration was primarily driven by American corporate cash. The funding for the Detroit side of the Underground Railroad Memorial came from the general Detroit 300 monetary reserve. However, Windsor did not have similar access to a pool of private donations and there were no corresponding birthday celebrations on that side of the border. Under the agreement, Detroit 300 sponsored the cost of the monument itself; however, Windsor was responsible for clearing and preparing the site, as well as most of the unveiling activities. It is not clear whether the Windsor committee approached the City for funding, but publically funded monuments were rare by the late twentieth century. Even though Detroit 300 was technically responsible for providing funds, there was interest from all stakeholders in finding a suitable Canadian sponsor for the Windsor side.

The Windsor component was estimated to cost around $200,000 (USD).\textsuperscript{46} In February 2001, only seven months before the monument was installed, Casino Windsor announced a $200,000 (USD) donation to erect the Windsor component. Large-scale corporate contributions to monuments in the modern era are relatively common, but a single donor is still quite rare, particularly in Canada. According to the meeting minutes, Detroit 300 was the primary negotiator in securing funding. However, shortly after the sponsorship announcement, the price for the monument was increased. The cost for the Windsor component was raised to compensate

\textsuperscript{45} Detroit 300 Communique vol. 1 iss. 1; Detroit 300 Commission list of members, RG65-78, Records of the St. Clair Parks Commission, file: “Detroit 300”, Archives of Ontario; Detroit 300 Guide to Detroit 300.

\textsuperscript{46} Meeting of the UGRR Monument Committee of Windsor, April 26 2001 - Windsor
for the overall higher price of both monuments.\textsuperscript{47} Casino Windsor remained committed to their original $200,000 grant and concerns increased over the shortfall on the Canadian side. Casino Windsor eventually agreed to contribute an additional $30,000, a final fund that now totalled over $300,000 (CAD).\textsuperscript{48} In early 2001, the Windsor Monument Committee documented a lengthy discussion of funding the monument and accounting for the additional money.\textsuperscript{49} In mid-spring, now less than six months before the unveiling, the Committee was still concerned that their primary funder was not being treated appropriately by Detroit 300, a partnership that was under more and more strain. Despite their worries, Casino Windsor provided all funding required by Detroit 300 and was a major presence on unveiling day.\textsuperscript{50}

Once funding was finally secured, the last obstacle in planning the monument involved the passing of bylaws and preparing the site. Based on meeting minutes and the bylaw meeting documents, the City of Windsor was accommodating and open to the International Memorial project. They agreed to fund the formal reception, approved the use of the Civic Esplanade land, and provided police services for the day of the unveiling. On December 6 1999, the City of Windsor initially approved the location for what was then described as the new plaque site and the potential place for a future monument. The possibility for a monument was mentioned at the plaque committee earlier that summer, but no formal connections with Detroit 300 were finalized yet. The letter accompanying the Council motion mentions that the committee approached Artis

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{47 The Windsor Monument Committee (Meeting of the Underground Railroad Monument Committee of Windsor, April 26 2001, Private Collection) remarked that it was the Detroit side that was actually going to cost more, due to some modifications required by the committee and proposed by the artist.}

\footnote{48 Canadian to United States Dollar conversion in 2000 was at decade lows. Averaging at 0.67 CAD to 1.00 USD, the financial conflicts between the Windsor and Detroit committees were likely exasperated by such a significantly low exchange rate.}

\footnote{49 Meeting of the Underground Railroad Committee of Windsor, March 22 2001, Private Collection; A. Moore remarked that no other Canadian corporations or individuals had been approached by Detroit 300 to cover the additional funding. There were related concerns that Detroit 300 would not receive tax credits or receipts due to how the funds were provided.}

\footnote{50 The Windsor portion of the Monument is now in the looming shadow of the new Casino Windsor hotel.}
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Lane and discussions were ongoing. The letter also outlined the reasons why that particular site on the Civic Green was an important location for the new plaque and monument given its historical importance to the Black community in the Windsor area.51 At the same time as Detroit’s Riverfront renovation, Windsor was also embarking on a similar project of beautifying and opening their waterfront to the public. The Civic Esplanade, and the Civic Green more specifically, were part of this project and one of the reasons why the land for the monument was relatively easy to secure. The expansion of Casino Windsor eventually cemented this new central park as a major public space in downtown Windsor.52 Following the finalization of the monument’s design only a year later, another Council motion was forwarded to approve the Ed Dwight Memorial.53

In the year before the unveiling, the Monument Committee of Windsor held a number of other related events that built anticipation for the culminating ceremony in October. A special performance of an Underground Railroad themed play was held in August 2001 at the Southwestern Ontario Heritage Village. The play “Across the River” was created by Canadian Rex Deverell and based on the historical experience of those involved in the Underground Railroad in the mid-nineteenth century.54 In addition to the play, an Emancipation Gala, held annually and hosted by the North American Black History Museum, took place in July 2001. The guest speaker for that year was the sculptor Ed Dwight who discussed his artistic work, including

51 City of Windsor, Notice of Council Meeting to Andrea Moore Re: Relocation of Underground Railroad Plaque and Monument (with attachments) (Windsor: December 1 1999).
54 Program: Across the River, Stories from the Underground Railroad (a Play by Rex Deverell), Private Collection.
the anticipated Underground Railroad Memorial. The printed program included a biography of the artist, an outline of his work, and a letter from the Underground Railroad Committee of Windsor describing the upcoming monument. In addition to the celebratory events, a symposium was also held in Windsor to discuss some of the broader themes of Underground Railroad history in the area. The Sankofa Symposium was scheduled for September 2001, and featured a variety of speakers recognizing the anniversary of the first enslaved African’s arrival in the Western hemisphere. Some of these events, particularly the Emancipation Gala, continued in subsequent years; but the explosion of interest in the Underground Railroad narrative was primarily fed by the anticipation of the new monument.

The committee was involved in many events in 2001, but their primary focus remained on the unveiling ceremony. The original date, proposed by Detroit 300, was October 27th 2001; however, there was concern that it coincided with the locally popular “Devil’s night” and might cause unnecessary disruptions. The Windsor Committee scrambled to deal with the change of date imposed by Detroit 300 only nine months before the dedication. In the winter of 2001, the committee discussed the reception (its cost and location), as well as the schedule of events and their correspondence with the plans of Detroit 300. By the summer of 2001, the City of Windsor also became involved in the Dedication Day events. During the August 22 2001 meeting, the

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56 Letter from the Underground Railroad Monument Committee of Windsor re: the Sankofa Symposium being held on September 15 2001, Private Collection: It is unclear if this symposium went ahead or was cancelled. Given the international speakers and guests, it isn’t apparent if the events of September 11 2001 affected the attendance or scheduling of the Symposium.
58 Meeting of the Underground Railroad Monument Committee of Windsor, January 18 2001, Private Collection.
59 The Committee decided it would be best to hold the unveilings on the same date but expressed concern that notifications had already been sent out. It was eventually decided to change the date to coincide with Detroit 300
plans for the dedication were finalized and the program was coming together. The day would feature a joint collaboration of speeches, art, songs, and the grand reveal.

By October 20 2001, the cities were ready to showcase their international collaboration. Before the Windsor monument was unveiled, the Detroit component was introduced to an eager public. As one of the biggest and lasting memories of Detroit 300, the unveiling bookended a busy season of birthday celebrations. One of the most important features of the unveiling was the singing of “Amazing Grace” by Aretha Franklin. Advertised as the highlight of the event, the presence of a famous singer brought increased attention to the monument. The artist Ed Dwight and Detroit 300 presented the City with the gift of the Memorial, forever marking the Hart Plaza and Detroit’s connection to the Underground Railroad story. The comprehensive Detroit 300 unveiling pamphlet featured a history of the local Underground Railroad narrative, as well as a timeline of the monument. The pamphlet also listed the Dedication Day events in both Detroit and Windsor, presenting the monument as a joint International venture that spanned both sides of the border. Finally, the pamphlet for the dedication described the local quilt project, where a variety of community groups came together in order to construct a massive quilt in recognition of the Underground Railroad. The quilt was used to conceal the monument from public view until it was revealed to the masses. Quilts were an important iconographical reference to the Underground Railroad story; historically they were used to help guide escaping enslaved peoples and unite abolitionists. Representations of quilt squares were also placed on the final monument.

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60 Pamphlet: Dedication of the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad, October 20 2001, Private Collection.
61 Quilts were an important guide for escaping enslaved peoples, and were subsequently used to represent the “escape narrative.” For more on quilts and their connections with the Underground Railroad and American slavery more generally, see: Jacqueline L. Tobin and Raymond Dobard, *Hidden in Plain View: A Secret Story of Quilts and the Underground Railroad* (New York: Anchor Books, 2000); “Quilt Exhibit Tells Story of Slavery and Freedom,”
Once the Detroit monument was unveiled, the focus shifted towards Windsor, where the symbolical escapees would reach their “freedom” across the border. Many people took the emblematic journey from Detroit to Windsor that day, embarking on the same path of the Underground Railroad from centuries before. The Windsor ceremony was set for two o’clock with many of the same attendees and a similarly structured unveiling. With representatives from Parks Canada, the new HSMBC plaque was presented to the people of Canada and following other speeches, the Windsor monument was finally unveiled. The Windsor component did not feature the big draw of Aretha Franklin. However, Ed Dwight and the major sponsors (Casino Windsor and Edsel Ford) presented their own remarks.

The primary address of the day was offered by the Chair of the Windsor Committee, Andrea Moore, who spoke about the history of the Underground Railroad and its meaning for the city of Windsor and the Canadian Black community more generally. Basing her story on the Book of Joshua quote, “What mean these stones?”, Moore provided the historical context for the new monument. The focus of her presentation was on the Black community, but she did mention the generosity of those receiving the former enslaved peoples. She closed by stating that the stones of the monument represented freedom, and stood as a permanent testament to the hard work of early Black immigrants. Moore reiterated that the Underground Railroad story was about the Canadian spirit and the welcoming of many hard working refugees over the centuries.62 Her speech, overall, was about overcoming hardships in the American South, the difficult journey northwards, and the eventual establishment of communities. In previous meetings and letters, Moore expressed the importance of recognizing continued racism in Upper Canada at the time of

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their arrival. She had critiqued overly celebratory versions of the narrative and fought to include struggles as well as triumphs in the official story. However, the tone of the unveiling was celebratory and Moore remained focused on acknowledging resilience and the eventual success of Black communities in Canada. Her speech complemented the flexible readings of the monument that now towered behind her.

The unveiling ceremony was reported in both the Detroit and Windsor press. The major newspapers in both cities covered not only the events of the dedication day, but also published information on the history of the Underground Railroad to provide valuable context for their readers. The press coverage of this period contributed to the overall explosion of interest and commemoration of the Underground Railroad in the early years of the twenty-first century. As planning for the Detroit 300 celebrations got underway, the Detroit News ran a feature series on Black history in the United States. The author documented a number of individual stories, mainly from the Detroit region. Each story was a testament to overcoming struggle and represented the “lost” parts of American history.63 The year before in Canada, the Windsor Star also ran a feature on the Black history of that region. Similar to its American counterpart, the article was a documentation of individual stories and their contribution to Canadian history. The author showcased local sites and people, but also connected the stories with the Canadian nation.64 As various governmental and private stakeholders held meetings about the memory of the Underground Railroad story, the local press was also encouraging people to recognize Black history in their own regions.

64 Darrin Denne, “Remembering the Past; Canada commemorates the forgotten flight of 30,000 escaped slaves who used the Underground Railroad from the U.S. South into Canada,” Windsor Star, October 30 1999.
A couple of years later, when the monument was being finalized, local press continued to fuel interest in the subject of Black history with numerous features in the months leading up to the unveiling. Covering the monument specifically, local press in both Detroit and Windsor gathered personal testimonies from members of the local historical societies, heritage networks, and museums. Different commentators remarked on the meanings of the monument, but most connected the commemoration with the desire for “freedom.” Elise Harding-Davis, curator of the North American Black Historical Museum, commented that the monument recognized “the most important freedom movement in the history of mankind.” In the same article, the CEO of Casino Windsor, Bobby Yee, commented that the monument “will stand forever as a testament and a celebration of the undeniable struggle for the freedom that we all enjoy today.” He stated the monuments would stand for future generations and remind them that “the need to be free is the strongest need of all.”

Historian Brian Walls also recognized the Underground Railroad as “the start of the first freedom movement in the Americas.” Concurrently in the Detroit press, the focus of the monument and the Underground Railroad narrative was also on “freedom.”

However, it was not simply about historical figures seeking freedom; rather, this liberty had explicit connections to contemporary issues. An Ontario woman who brought her daughter and grandchildren to the unveiling is quoted in the Detroit News: “I wanted them to see how...”

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67 Ibid.
68 Ibid.
71 The destruction of the World Trade Centers and other attacks on the United States on September 11 2001 was certainly still paramount in the minds of many. Although unintended by the commemorators initially, the “freedom” rhetoric of the Underground Railroad narrative was a perfect fit to early twenty-first-century “freedom” in the face of terrorism. Although this connection was likely clear to many attendees in both Detroit and Windsor, the speeches and other coverage from the unveiling did not explicitly make this link.
racism has to stop, and this tower is the perfect example to illustrate that… All the hatred and inequality must stop.”

In Windsor, the desire to commemorate past struggles for future generations was also a key feature in the monument committee’s activities. Chair of the Underground Railroad Monument Committee of Windsor Andrea Moore remarked that the monument represented a message about the future fight for freedom and rights: “Our own responsibility to uphold these values must never be forgotten.”

According to numerous commentators covered in the local press during and after the unveiling, the monument was a nod to their ancestors, but also an important symbol for future generations. The monument represented the freedom that asylum seekers fought for in the past, but was also a recognition of the continued fight for freedom in the present.

**Memorializing the “Fugitive Slaves” by the HSMBC**

When the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad was unveiled in 2001, the focus was on the sculptural components. People were immediately drawn to the characters in the monument, with their rich array of emotions and personal struggle. However, on the day of the monument’s unveiling another component was also revealed to the public: a new plaque, written by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board (HSMBC), detailing the “national historic event” of the Underground Railroad (historically titled “The Fugitive Slave Movement”). Detroit 300 and their counterparts in Windsor directed the sculptural component. The governmental body of Parks Canada, however, wrote the plaque. The committee in Windsor initially convened to discuss proposed changes to the plaque, and they did submit recommendations. Nonetheless, the final version of the text was directed by the HSMBC. As a result, the monument and the plaque are two largely independent components. While the iconography of the sculpture promotes

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73 Letter to the Editor from Andrea Moore.
diverse meanings and complex experiences, the textual component affixed to the front directs (and ultimately excludes) much of this diversity. Created by an organization mandated with recognizing collective stories of national significance, the HSMBC plaque reflects the changing Canadian values of the early twenty-first century and the role of the Underground Railroad narrative in the new “multicultural” nation.

The narrative of the Underground Railroad has a sporadic history of commemoration in the Windsor area. The HSMBC first placed a plaque in the 1920s, eventually re-writing and re-formulating the narrative in the latter half of the twentieth century. Despite relatively early national interest in the story, the city of Windsor and province of Ontario did not significantly recognize the Underground Railroad until the 1970s. Twenty years later, the Underground Railroad story became a significant component in the diversification of Canada’s past. The commemoration of the re-written narrative recognized multiple groups and their contribution to Canadian history, but most importantly the story fit broader commemorative goals: to recognize stories of openness and tolerance that were supposedly inherent in both Canada’s past and present, and reflective of contemporary multiculturalism. This section traces the history of commemorating the Underground Railroad in the Windsor area. It is primarily focused on outlining the activities of the HSMBC, but also considers the eventual provincial and private interests of the latter part of the century. This section closes with an analysis of the new 2001 version of the plaque affixed to the front of the International Memorial.

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada first commemorated the Underground Railroad in the Windsor region in 1925. During a general meeting, the Board moved to commemorate the “Fugitive Slave Movement” as a national historic event and to
install a plaque in coming years.74 The meeting minutes are brief and list no reasons why this particular event was chosen. The Board was established in 1919 with the mandate of memorializing sites, events and people that were significant to the Canadian nation. The first Chair, General Ernest Alexander Cruikshank, promoted sites that traced Imperial heritage and justified the continuation of imperial values in the present, while systematically silencing any dissent.75 The Board moved quickly in the years following their establishment, designating a number of battlefields, fur trading posts, forts and historically significant male leaders. Of the 49 Ontario designations during the 1920s, more than half were military sites or battles. The remaining 20 were evenly split between famous men, political events, settlement, the fur trade, and industrial development.76 For these commemorators, imperial Canadian values were best displayed in the recognition of military achievements and the spread of Western “civilization” in the past. In the list of designations from the 1920s, two initially seem out of place: The Fugitive Slave Movement and The Coming of the Mohawks. Since the “settlers” in these narratives are not white, they did not correspond with other settlement stories (most notably the Loyalists) where immigrants brought Western values to the colonial landscape. The recognition of Black and Indigenous history was not about their settlement, and was especially not intended as a narrative of “Other” values. Rather, both stories were a demonstration of white imperial values and the superiority of the British system over American Republicanism.

74 Historic Sites and Monuments Board, Meeting Minutes 1925, Parks Canada Archives.
75 Alexander Cruikshank wrote a number of early histories of Ontario and Canada. Along with writing popular histories, Cruikshank compiled historical documents into anthologies, such as his collection on the War of 1812 (Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812 multi-volume). For more, see: C.J. Taylor, Negotiating the Past: the Making of Canada’s National Historic Parks and Sites (Montreal, Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1990) 48-49. The Board’s mandate changed throughout the twentieth century, as new Chairs were appointed and Acts were passed to guide their governmental role. However, sites related to Canadian imperialism continued to dominate new commemorations until the revision of the HSMBC in the 1980s.
76 List of sites marked by the National Parks Bureau, March 31 1940, R1185-24-4-E, National Archives of Canada Fonds, Library and Archives Canada.
The Fugitive Slave Movement plaque was installed in Windsor sometime in 1928. The original plaque text read (emphasis in original):

HERE THE SLAVE FOUND FREEDOM
Before the United States Civil War of 1861-65,
Windsor was an important terminal of the
"UNDERGROUND RAILROAD"
Escaping from bondage, thousands of FUGITIVE SLAVES
from the South, men, women, children, landing near this spot,
found in Canada Friends Freedom, Protection
UNDER THE BRITISH FLAG

The concluding emphasis, “under the British flag”, is capitalized and larger than the rest of the text. The accentuated final phrase connects the fugitive slave movement with the broader imperial views of the Board in the 1920s. Under Cruikshank’s leadership and the presence of many other Board members, the early HSMBC highlighted white imperial values of the present in historic narratives. To commemorators, the importance of this event was not the arrival of Black populations and the establishment of subsequent communities in Canada. Rather, the narrative was meaningful because of those who “received” migrants with apparent open arms. Both the fugitive slaves and their British recipients remain undefined identities without clear articulation of ethnicity or race. Nonetheless, the enslaved peoples remain “Othered” in the text.

The use of the word “fugitive” in particular designates the enslaved peoples as outsiders. In 1928, the “Fugitive Slave Movement” was primarily about the superiority and virtues of the British system.

The “Fugitive Slave Movement” was an ideal opportunity to recognize the welcoming, tolerant, and superior society of British Upper Canada in opposition to the Republic of the United States. Anti-American rhetoric was not uncommon in early HSMBC designations, particularly those associated with the War of 1812. Early scholarly studies on the Underground

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77 Neither the local papers nor the HSMBC cover the event, so it is unknown if an unveiling ceremony was held.
Railroad in Canada also shared this nationalist sentiment. Fred Landon, Board member and eventual President of the HSMBC, wrote some of the few Canadian historical articles on the Underground Railroad in the early twentieth century.\textsuperscript{78} In many of his studies, Landon contrasted the moral superiority of the welcoming British North Americans to the brutality of the slave owners from the United States. According to Landon, Upper Canadians took pride in “protecting” Black populations from the unequal southern Republic.\textsuperscript{79} He also contended that an imperial system of governance and its associated values could elevate other races. Writing in 1919: “Canada was also showing that, though brutalized by slavery, the best instincts of the Negro race were reasserted in freedom, and the degraded bondsmen developed morality and intelligence.”\textsuperscript{80} As with the HSMBC plaque text, Landon’s early studies highlight the Underground Railroad as a demonstration of British moral superiority. In his 1925 article, Landon reflectively concluded that the fugitive slaves coming to Canada “forms so romantic a page in our history.”\textsuperscript{81} In the early twentieth century, the narrative of the Underground Railroad was a notable demonstration of white Canada’s superiority and the moralizing influences of the British system on a “primitive” race.

\textsuperscript{78} Despite being a member of the HSMBC, there is no direct indication that Landon promoted the designation of the Fugitive Slave Movement. While it is likely that as an expert on the subject he would have discussed its importance and even helped to write the plaque text, there is no evidence confirming his role. Shannon Ricketts that the Underground Railroad was commemorated “thanks to Landon” (Ricketts, Shannon. \textit{The Underground Railroad in Canada: Associated Sites. A Study Prepared for the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada}. Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, December 1998). However, there is no reference provided and existing documentation does not prove this link. Notably, under his presidency, no additional sites related to Ontario’s Black history are designated.


\textsuperscript{80} Landon, \textit{Canada’s Past}, 50.

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., 192.
The Fugitive Slave Movement was an unconventional inclusion on the early designation list of the HSMBC. The only other designation related to non-English/non-French settlement before mid century was the “Coming of the Mohawks.” The Coming of the Mohawks, first installed on a small cairn in 1929 and still standing in Hastings County, Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, reads:

THE COMING OF THE MOHAWKS
Commemorating the arrival here on 22nd May 1784, under the leadership of Chiefs John Deserontyou, Aaron Hill, and Isaac Hill, of a band of loyal Mohawks, one of the nations of the Iroquois Confederacy, expelled from their homes in the Mohawk Valley, for their fidelity to the unity of the Empire.

In this text, the Mohawk people are highlighted for their loyalty to the Empire and its associated values. Similar to the plaque for the Fugitive Slave Movement, British North America is characterized as welcoming and tolerant in contrast to the United States. Like the fugitive slaves, the Mohawks are presented as a group of “Others” that were oppressed under the Republican system and forced to leave their homes. Upon arrival in Upper Canada, according to the imperial narrative, the British Crown received both of these “primitive” races because they proved their loyalty. In both stories the “Other” becomes elevated due to the civilizing influence of the British Crown and its institutions. Not only were “primitives” received with tolerance, but under the guidance of British values both of these races were elevated by white civilization.

The Underground Railroad does not re-appear in the history of Windsor, or the national history of Canada, until the second half of the twentieth century. In the 1970s, the HSBMC

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82 Meeting minutes regarding the designation of the Coming of the Mohawks is equally sparse and contain no discussion of its merits. However, the early plaque confirms that the designation was also intended to demonstrate the superiority of Imperial values and the civilizing influence of British institutions.

83 For this dissertation, I surveyed documents from the Historic Sites and Monuments Board (LAC) and documents from the Windsor Centennial (Archives of Ontario). I also examined newspapers from the Windsor area during key historic celebrations. There were no mentions of the Underground Railroad in this local or national history. One relevant newspaper article was found (Lionel Silver, “Escape from Slavery Recalled in Essex and Kent: Fugitives’ Descendants Describe Hazards on Underground Railroad” Windsor Star, 1938), but this is not connected to a particularly commemorative event or celebration.
began to modernize their collection of plaques and make them bilingual. The new text conformed with broader organizational changes in the HSMBC and reflects mid twentieth-century ideas about the purpose and use of plaque texts. Parks Canada removed the original plaque and replaced it with a new bilingual version that was also edited. Placed in the same location as the previous, the new plaque read:

Fugitive Slaves
From early in the 19th century, and particularly after the passage of the American Fugitive Slave Law in 1850, the towns along the Detroit River served as major terminals of the network of routes by which thousands of slaves reached Canada. Once in Canada the fugitive was often aided by philanthropic societies and individuals in securing land, employment and the necessities of life. In some cases separate colonies were established for former slaves. By 1861 an estimated 30,000 fugitive blacks resided in Canada West, but more than half of them returned to the United States following Emancipation.

There are notable differences between the original text and this version officially installed in 1973. The text is more informative, with additional historical facts and demographical information. The plaque reads like a history textbook, with a brief snapshot of information, meant to educate the casual reader. This type of plaque text, offering a quick history lesson to the viewer, was the predominant strategy used by commemorators starting in the 1960s. In addition, presented in a seemingly objective manner, the overt nationalism from the earlier version is gone. There is a hint of the Canadian values of openness and tolerance, particularly in the mention of philanthropic societies and individuals, but there are no direct indications of moral superiority. Notably, the “fugitive slaves” remain an anonymous “Othered” entity without definition or agency.

The new plaque text removed most of the early imperial rhetoric and told the narrative using a more “scientific” strategy. When the new version of the plaque text was installed in

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84 There is no evidence that the City of Windsor and local historical societies were involved.
Windsor, the HSMBC was in the midst of sweeping changes. In 1955, Bill 182 defined the purpose of the HSMBC and its representation of all Canadians and their national values. Following the bilingualization and standardization of the 1960s and 1970s, the mandate of the HSMBC continued to shift. By the early 1980s, the HSMBC had completed more thematic studies of existing sites. In an undated policy briefing, the HSMBC first considered the special recognition of “ethnic” leaders and communities. This briefing determined that individual “communities” should not be commemorated; instead, people/events/sites associated with “ethnic groups” that contributed to the building and development of Canada should receive special attention. This policy was eventually entrenched in the System Plan of the early twenty-first century. That document identified “ethnocultural history” as a category of underrepresented sites that should be designated in coming years. The Underground Railroad eventually became an unofficial pilot project for “ethnocultural history”.

Before ethnocultural history was officially included in the System Plan, however, the HSMBC participated in a number of meetings with the National Parks Service (NPS) of the United States in order to develop a joint strategy for commemorating the Underground Railroad. An initiative to study and recognize Underground Railroad history was first passed by the United States Congress in 1990. Eventually, the HSMBC joined with the NPS to discuss joint

85 “Historic Sites and Monuments Board Act”, September 9 1952, RG13-A-8, Volume 2764, file part 1, Operational Records of the Legislation Sections, Library and Archives Canada. Following the restructuring, the HSMBC completed a number of thematic studies, trying to pinpoint “under represented” areas of Canada’s history to single out for additional commemoration (Historic Sites and Monuments Board Thematic Studies Reports 1962, R1185-24-4-E, National Archives of Canada Fonds, Library and Archives Canada). Economic history and architectural history were the most significant themes from these studies with no mention of particular groups that were under represented.

86 Historic Sites and Monuments Board Policy Briefing, 1982, R1185-24-4-E, National Archives of Canada Fonds, Library and Archives Canada.

87 This is a term adopted by the HSMBC (and other government organizations) to refer to non-French and non-English communities and individuals.

88 Historic Sites and Monuments Board, System Plan (Gatineau: Parks Canada, 2002).

strategies and international opportunities. The two policy documents that emerged from the bi-national meetings uncovered similarities between the two nations, but also some significant differences. The “Bi-National Underground Railroad Field Study and Charrettes” contrasts different national strategies and definitions. The comparison summarizes contrasting nationalisms and documents their underlying reasons for commemorating the Underground Railroad. For example, the NPS claims: “… [The] story of the Underground Railroad carries with it a message of the yearning of an enslaved people for freedom, and of resistance on the part of common people… to a legally sanctioned system of oppression.”90 In contrast, the Canadian side of the chart reads: “Their presence cemented Canada’s image in the world as a country of freedom, tolerance and colour-blind opportunity… Emotional border crossings by refugees from slavery are among the proudest movements in Canadian history.”91 While the American commemorative body mentions the “yearning for freedom” and resistance to oppression, the Canadian Board focuses on the national values of tolerance and openness. Although both countries shaped the Underground Railroad narrative based on their own national values, there was one major similarity. Throughout this document and the other bi-national talks, “freedom” is the central ideology used to frame the Underground Railroad narrative. “Freedom” would soon become the primary focal point for the International Memorial.92

Gathering inspiration from these meetings, the HSBMC also produced a number of policy papers, studies, and briefs on the Underground Railroad in Canada and the importance of future designations. New sites and people were extensively identified and studied, and a number

91 Ibid.
92 In the 1996 press release following the completion of the Underground Railroad report by the National Parks Service, the Direct Roger Kennedy asserted: “[The Underground Railroad] created one of the strongest, united forces for freedom that the world has ever known” (Hilary Russell, The Underground Railroad, Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada Agenda Paper, 1996-11, Parks Canada Archives: 304).
were eventually commemorated.\textsuperscript{93} The 1996 \textit{Agenda Paper} by Hilary Russell thoroughly outlined existing designations, the history of the HSMBC’s recognition of the Underground Railroad, and points for further consideration.\textsuperscript{94} As a result, the HSMBC requested the preparation of a paper that examined various Underground Railroad sites for future designations.\textsuperscript{95} Shannon Ricketts prepared and released this document two years later, outlining a number of different sites for consideration by the Board. Based on Ricketts’ report, the HSMBC’s interest in the Underground Railroad narrative was tied to its connection with contemporary Canadian values: “The experience of the Underground Railroad helped to forge Canadians’ sense of themselves as a democratic nation.”\textsuperscript{96} By the close of the twentieth century, governmental interest in the Underground Railroad narrative was no longer imperial in tone. However, the tolerance and openness of contemporary Canada was still linked to the historic arrival of formerly enslaved peoples. Their own experiences, both positive and negative, were still a subject of secondary importance and continued silencing.

In the final years of the twentieth century, the HSMBC was involved in commemorating a number of individuals and sites in south-western Ontario related to the Underground Railroad. Many private groups and historical societies were involved with these initiatives and provided significant community support. One of the most notable recognitions of this period, at the same time that the plaque was being reconsidered in Windsor, was the commemoration of Josiah Henson in the spring of 1999.\textsuperscript{97} The

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid.; Ricketts. To date, over 25 designations relating to Canada’s black history are now recognized by the HSMBC, many dating concurrent with or after the release of these reports.
\textsuperscript{94} Russell, 305.
\textsuperscript{95} Ricketts, 1.
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid, 5. This exact rhetoric is replicated in Shannon Ricketts’ draft plaque text submitted to community members of Windsor the following year.
\textsuperscript{97} The HSMBC was not the only body seeking recognition for Henson. The Mayor of Detroit, through the Detroit 300 celebrations and in cooperation with the St. Clair Parkway Commission, encouraged the United States Stamp Development Committee of the Postal Service to create a commemorative stamp for Henson (Letter from Detroit
commemorative pamphlet from the unveiling stated: “He worked with energy and vision to improve life for the Black community in Upper Canada.” 98 As a prominent member of the early south-western Canadian Black community, and a famous figure from popular literature, Reverend Henson fit within the mandate of the HSMBC. 99 Unlike the designations of the Underground Railroad “event,” Henson was commemorated for his role in the Black community in particular; none of the documents point to “Canadian values.” Other community leaders and sites of importance were similarly designated. 100 However, only one of these designations to individuals reference Canadian national values or collective memories. In the case of individuals, the HSMBC focused on their accomplishments and contributions to communities rather than connections to abstract values.

Along with these individuals, three different churches were recognized for their connections to Ontario’s Black community and the Underground Railroad in 2000: Oro African Methodist Episcopal Church, Sandwich First Baptist Church, and Salem Chapel British Methodist Episcopal Church. 101 The surviving churches were prominent sites that

99 He was one of the first Black Canadians associated with the Underground Railroad who was designated as a “person of national significance.”
100 For example, Mary and Henry Bibb were recognized for their role in the creation of Ontario’s Black community, particularly through their newspaper Voice of the Fugitive, and their work in establishing separate black schools (Text of Mary and Henry Bibb Plaque, placed by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board, Windsor, Ontario). Thornton and Lucie Blackburn were also recognized for establishing their prominent cab company in Toronto after escaping slavery in the United States (Text of Thornton and Lucie Blackburn plaque, placed by Parks Canada, Toronto, Ontario).
101 All three churches were identified by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board in 1999 as significant future sites of designation related to the Underground Railroad (Ricketts; Russell: Underground Railroad Terminals: Border Churches in Canada, Submission Report by Parks Canada, n.d., Parks Canada Archives)
illustrated the historic narrative and demonstrated the role of philanthropists, the uniting force of religion, and the creation of Black communities in Upper Canada. In many cases, they are some of the only surviving tangible sites related to the Underground Railroad and the associated Black communities in Ontario. Most of these designations emphasize the church as the centre of communities. For example, the Salem Chapel plaque states: “Many of those aided to freedom became church members and put down roots in the local community.” Instead of direct references to religious beliefs and practices, many of the designations reference Black contributions to the Canadian nation more generally. For example, the Oro African church plaque states: “This church is a testament to the contribution of African Canadians to the settlement and defence of Canada in the 19th century.”

In this common historical narrative, the racialized “Other” was a welcome

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102 Text of The African Methodist Episcopal Church of Oro plaque, placed by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board, Township of Oro-Medonte.
addition to the white nation as long as they fought to defend Canada and its supposed superior moral values.\textsuperscript{103}

Immediately following the unveiling of the monument and new HSMBC plaque in 2001, the Ontario government joined the growing number of groups interested in the Underground Railroad narrative. The \textit{Ontario Underground Railroad Project}, driven by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, was one of the final reports produced about this narrative during this period. The comprehensive report covers a number of sites and stakeholders in Ontario that present the history of the Underground Railroad. The purpose of the report was to create a joint marketing strategy in order to promote the associated sites and museums, creating a more formal network with a comprehensive promotional program.\textsuperscript{104} At the same time, local museums were also expanding their operations. Along with Uncle Tom’s Cabin in Dresden, North Buxton was also increasing its operations through the Raleigh Township Centennial Museum, adjacent to two important historical sites.\textsuperscript{105} Chatham also individually released a number of pamphlets promoting its own connection to the Underground Railroad.\textsuperscript{106}

\textsuperscript{103} Despite this explosion of interest in designating the Underground Railroad, since 2002 only one site or person has been recognized: the Amherstburg First Baptist Church in 2012.
\textsuperscript{104} LORD Cultural Resources, “Ontario’s Underground Railroad Project”, 2 August 2002, RG65-78, Records of the St. Clair Parks Commission, file: “Ontario’s Underground Railroad Project”, Archives of Ontario: i. The report strategizes how to capitalize on “cultural tourism”, a growing trend where tourists seek out cultural experiences and sites. The report specifically outlined how to market the Underground Railroad for cultural tourists, particularly African Americans and African Canadians, and educated tourists of any race. It also looked towards the United States as a useful framework, noting the success of the Underground Railroad narrative in drawing tourists to northern states. This report was never implemented and the Ontario government did not significantly invest in the development of cultural tourism surrounding the Underground Railroad.
\textsuperscript{105} Diane Kepo, “Story of Courage is Told for Real at the True Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” \textit{The Globe and Mail}, 16 May 1997. A joint pamphlet produced by Chatham, Dresden and Buxton includes short “did you know” facts, along with a listing of three sites, a book list, and a map of the area. The “did you know facts” featured local stories imbued with national significance and were stated using plain textbook style language with little use of dramatic embellishment.
\textsuperscript{106} Pamphlet on the First Baptist Church in Chatham, n.d., RG65-78, Records of the St. Clair Parks Commission, file: “Follow the North Star”, Archives of Ontario. A small fold-out produced by the First Baptist Church in Chatham emphasized the connection between the Underground Railroad and religion: “Moral principles of right versus wrong solidified the supporters. Faith and prayer were the cornerstone of liberty.”
sponsored commemorators, local communities were also adding their diverse voices to the expanding narrative.

Over the course of nearly eighty years, the Underground Railroad was re-shaped by the HSMBC to reflect changing ideas about history and its role within the nation. As a federal government body, the HSMBC was mandated with representing contemporary Canadian values through their designations of the past. With this purpose in mind, Parks Canada informed Windsor that a new plaque for the “Fugitive Slaves” was being planned. The initiative was principally a response to the changing Windsor streetscape. The building façade that featured the Parks Canada plaque, the former Toronto Dominion Bank building on the corner of Ouellette and Riverside, was set for demolition. The existing plaque, now 25 years old, could be placed in a different location or replaced altogether. With renewed interest in designating the Underground Railroad in Canada, the HSMBC chose to re-write the plaque and find a suitable new location. Community members were not informed when the 1973 plaque was removed and placed in storage in 1998. \(^{107}\) However, a community group and other stakeholders in southwestern Ontario were consulted during the re-writing process in early July 1999. \(^{108}\) In Windsor, a group of various community members, many of whom would form the Underground Railroad Monument Committee, convened in the summer of 1999 to discuss the plaque and its ongoing importance.

The new draft plaque text originally submitted by Parks Canada historian Shannon Ricketts was considerably different from the 1973 version. This new plaque text reflected the late twentieth-century mandate of the HSMBC and their focus on sites, events, and people that reflected contemporary Canadian values. By this time, the Underground Railroad narrative had a

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\(^{107}\) Discussion Notes, July 29 1999.  
\(^{108}\) Letter from Shannon Ricketts to undisclosed recipients (including attachment), July 9 1999, Private Collection.
somewhat different place in Canada’s national story. The original draft version of the new text, distributed in 1999, read:

The Underground Railroad
During the nineteenth century, thousands of African Americans sought haven in Canada from enslavement in the United States. Their secret routes north came to be known as the Underground Railroad. Most refugees arrived in what is now southwestern Ontario with only the determination to build a free life. They found jobs in towns and cities, established farms, and built communities where descendants [sic] continue to live today. Their defiance of slavery was an important act of resistance which contributed to the end of the infamous institution as well as to the democratic ideals of our country.¹⁰⁹

Unlike the “text book” style of 1973, the new proposed plaque text contained no numbers, dates, names, or specific events. In this version, the Underground Railroad exists without any period reference and no mention of the Civil War. The text does not contain precise numbers or details; instead the focus is on a dramatic re-telling of the narrative. Significantly, the “fugitive slaves” are now termed as “refugees”. The language of fugitive “Other” was replaced with a contemporary label that was relevant to viewers in the early twenty-first century. Nonetheless, the “refugees” are still treated as a block identity without individual agency. The “refugees” are acknowledged for their contributions and are noted for building the “democratic ideals of our country.” The departure from the 1973 version of the text reflects the revised mandate of the HSMBC and its push to designate “multiculturalism.” The importance of the Underground Railroad, according to the plaque text draft, is its contribution to Canadian identity.

This draft was forwarded to various stakeholders in the region, including Andrea Moore, the eventual Chair of the Underground Railroad Monument committee in Windsor. Shortly after Shannon Ricketts distributed the revised text, Moore wrote a response and that included her own version of a new plaque and a careful deconstruction of the numerous changes proposed by Ricketts. The letter points to the over exaggeration, increased vagueness, and overt celebratory

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.
tine of the proposed plaque. Moore particularly refuted the idea in Ricketts’ version that African Americans reached an open and welcoming Canada upon arrival. She pointed out the racism and segregation faced by Ontario’s early Black population well into the twentieth century. Before offering her own version, Moore critiqued the overly positive final sentence of Ricketts’ proposal, stating:

…[A]ny suggestion that their act of resistance contributed to the democratic ideals of our country erroneously gives far too much credit to this country’s democratic ideals… these realities indicate that Canada did not view the racial minority population with any particular respect and was certainly not inclined to incorporate their point of view into its ‘democratic ideals’.

In her proposed version, Moore maintains most of the 1973 text. The statistics, dates, and numbers remain. The only major revision is a subtle reference to descendants. In Moore’s version, the philanthropic societies are also still included. According to Ricketts, the proposed removal was intended to increase the agency of former enslaved people. However, Moore defended the philanthropic societies as an important element in the story. The response from Moore reflects disparity between the local community and the HSMBC. Under their new mandate, the Board was rewriting plaque texts to better represent contemporary values. Community members (like Moore and the eventual committee she Chaired) pushed for the inclusion of their own version of the narrative, often in opposition to the celebratory and nationalist intentions of the Board.

By the time of the unveiling, the HSMBC did incorporate community input and addressed much of the feedback received from other stakeholders. The final version of the

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111 Andrea Moore’s proposal for the new plaque text read: “From early in the nineteenth century through the time of the American Civil War, the towns along the Detroit River serve as major terminals of the Underground Railroad, a network of routes by which thousands of slaves reached Canada. Once in Canada, the refugees were often aided by philanthropic societies and individuals in securing land, employment and the necessities of life. In some cases separate colonies were established for former slaves. By 1861 an estimated 30,000 American of African descent resided in what is now Ontario, where many of their descendants continue to live today.” (Letter from Andrea Moore to Shannon Ricketts, July 22 1999)
plaque text was still a departure from the 1973 version, but many objectionable references from the draft were removed. The final text, officially installed at the unveiling and still affixed to the front of the monument, reads:

The Underground Railroad in Canada
From the early 19th century until the American Civil War, settlements along the Detroit and Niagara rivers were important terminals of the Underground Railroad. White and black abolitionists formed a heroic network dedicated to helping free and enslaved African Americans find freedom from oppression. By 1861, some 30,000 freedom-seekers resided in what is now Ontario, after secretly travelling north from slave states like Kentucky and Virginia. Some returned south after the outbreak of the Civil War, but many remained, helping to forge the modern Canadian identity.

Significantly, most of the dates, places, and statistics reappear in the final version, giving the historical story added context. Any reference to fugitive slaves is removed, but “refugees” also never appear in the final text. Instead, markers such as “African Americans” and “freedom seekers” are used. The philanthropic societies were still removed, replaced with heroic white and black “abolitionists.” Most of the dramatic adjectives from the draft do not appear, and the celebratory tone was diminished. However, the segregation and racism brought up in Moore’s letter is not present. Notably, the concluding statement still links the Underground Railroad narrative to the contemporary Canadian identity. This concluding statement reflects the new mandate of the HSMBC and pushes values from the present onto narratives from the past.

The three plaques to the Underground Railroad, unveiled within a span of 80 years, reflects the changing narrative of the escaping slavery story and its importance to the federal commemorative Board. The most recent text demonstrates the contemporary mandate of the HSMBC to designate sites that celebrate national Canadian values, pointing to the past for demonstrative examples. The meaning of the new plaque is particularly significant as an

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112 The 1973 version of the plaque had a subtle reference to segregation in stating that “separate colonies” were sometimes established.
illustrative monument now accompanies it. Not only can viewers read the text and imagine the historical event, but now they have a physical reference to the narrative. The positioning of the plaque text on the monument itself not only illustrates the words, but also focuses the meaning of the monument for the viewer. Without specific textual reference, the viewer can read the monument in different ways and make strikingly different conclusions. The plaque text concentrates viewer responses and directs interpretations. The HSMBC did not sponsor the monument and members of the Board did not influence the choice of design. However, they did affix a narrative to the bronze monument, a limited interpretation of the figures in the statue. Therefore, although not formally involved in the design of the monument, the federally mandated Board directed potential meanings of the memorial and still prompts the viewer to interpret the narrative in specific ways.

“What Mean These Stones?” – Iconography of the Underground Railroad Monument

“It’s a story of freedom and freedom seekers. It’s a story that is told and retold for each generation.”113 The Underground Railroad narrative was imbued with “freedom” from the early days of its recognition. However, in 2001 this idea was re-shaped to fit current needs and to reflect changing commemoration practices. The plaque on the front of the Windsor monument, installed by Parks Canada at the unveiling ceremony, bridged the historical narrative with contemporary Canadian values. The monument itself was an embodiment of ancestors and their struggles, but also a reminder for present and future generations. Together, the discourse of these commemorations, visual and rhetorical, used Windsor’s Black history to respond to contemporary realities in multicultural Canada. However, the commemorative landscape of Detroit-Windsor was complex: this was a bi-national monument that carried the label of “international”. Created by an American artist, funneled by a tangled mix of American and

113 Ellyce, “Underground Railroad Festival.”
Canadian money, organized by a bi-national committee, and affixed with government-designed plaques, the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad is not tied to a single national or local context. The monument reflects a new awareness and development of “transnational memory” that considers the migration and fluidity of communities spanning national boundaries. Created in a very specific geographical, social, and commemorative situation, the monument represents a dynamic new direction in memory-making. Although some of the nationalist markings remain, the iconography of the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad challenges traditional practices and alters the commemorative landscape.

*Iconographies for Black Narratives*

Figure 5.3: Brittney Anne Bos. “View of International Memorial to the Underground Railroad, Detroit Component.” Photograph. May 2014.
Even though the placement of the HSMBC plaque directs the meaning of the monument, the two components were created separately by different organizations. The discourse of the plaque is not connected to the local organization that created the monument, nor the artist that designed it. The visual component of the commemoration, on both sides of the river, is the first to draw the viewer’s attention and likely leaves a much longer lasting impression. The Detroit portion of the monument features seven life-sized figures cast in bronze (Fig. 5.3). Five figures face south towards Canada: a man pointing his finger forward, another man following the gaze, two women (one of whom is holding a baby in her arms), and a final man in behind the main figures. The sixth and seventh figures, located at the rear of the monument, look back towards Detroit; they appear to be in conversation. Dressed in a variety of clothes, individuals in the group possess different personal items, and the facial features of each figure are distinct. The monument is accessible on a short pedestal on the north side with a plaque affixed to bottom, while the east and west sides include stairs leading down to the riverfront walkway below where the south side of the memorial looms above. Additional information and plaques are attached to the south-side wall below the figures.114 Two granite towers topped with flames frame the east and west sides.

The Windsor portion of the monument is smaller in scale than its Detroit counterpart, including only three life-sized figures at the front and one at the rear (Fig. 5.4). A plaque is affixed on the front south-facing pedestal. The main feature of this monument is the large granite tower, engraved with the motto “Keeping the Flame of Freedom Alive.” The tower is decorated with a bronze Canadian flag and topped with a stylized flame. One male figure at the front of the monument raises his arms and lifts his gaze upwards. In front of him, one

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114 In contrast to the Windsor side, there are numerous plaques and textual components in Detroit. There is not sufficient space to consider all of the text in this dissertation, but the interaction between text and iconography in this case would be a very interesting area for further research.
woman comforts another woman holding a baby. The north side features the lone figure of a young girl clutching a doll and looking back towards Detroit. As with the American side of the monument, the figures are dressed in diverse types of clothing, and their facial features are distinct and expressive.

There were very few monuments to Black history upon which to base the design for the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad. There were few historical examples and the contemporary commemorative landscape was only beginning to include stories from marginalized groups. As demonstrated in the previous chapters, artists often look to previous examples and iconographies to inspire their works. In the case of this monument, however, there
were few historical precedents. Some individual Black Canadians and Americans had previously been commemorated, but the representation of a collective narrative was rare. The artist eventually chosen for the design, Ed Dwight, had a limited collection of iconographical inspiration. Working in relatively unchartered territory, Dwight was attempting to shape a new visual language for representing Black history.

Monuments to Black history in the United States, and especially Canada, were very minimal when Dwight submitted his idea for the Detroit-Windsor memorial. However, the representation of the “Other” by white individuals in different forms of Western art had a very long history. Charmaine Nelson has extensively explored the representation of the Black body in Western art and commemoration. Nelson reveals that the artistic representation of Blacks was intricately tied to the political and social contexts of their creation. Throughout her texts, Nelson demonstrates how the representation of Black women depended on definitions of the colonial nation. She argues that the portrayal of women was embedded in gendered and racialized expectations of exoticism, over-sexualization, and the aggressively protective “Mammy” figure. Displaying stereotypes of Black women in art supplemented the scientific literature of the late nineteenth century. Although Black women did not appear on public sculptures, they were a frequent subject for artists. For example, Nelson and Naghibi uncover the trends of representing Black women in American Neo-Classical art. The use of white marble to depict a “dark” subject matter blurred the common artistic iconographies of representing “Other” racialized subjects primarily through skin pigmentation. Artists needed to turn to other

115 One exception is the commemoration of the Civil Rights movement in the United States. By the time of the Underground Railroad monument, there were only a few commemorations of this collective history but it was rapidly expanding. For more on Civil Rights commemorations, see: Owen J. Dwyer and Derek H. Alderman, Civil Rights Memorials and the Geography of Memory (Chicago: Columbia College, 2008); Renee C. Romano and Leigh Raiford (eds.), The Civil Rights Movement in American Memory (Athens: University of Georgia, 2006); Dell Upton, What Can and Can’t Be Said: Race, Uplift and Monument Building in the Contemporary South (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015)
116 Charmaine A. Nelson, Representing the Black Female Subject in Western Art (New York: Routledge, 2010).
iconographical techniques to differentiate race. As Empires continued to expand, colonial subjects remained a popular genre in European art. The edited volume by Jan Marsh considers a century worth of depictions of Black colonial subjects created for the British market. These art works were created for various reasons and used different iconographies, but “Other” colonial subjects in particular held the imagination of many British viewers. The exotic body was initially intriguing, but also served to normalize the presence of colonial subjects within the confines of the Empire.

Figure 5.5: Currier and Ives. “The Lincoln Statue” Illustration. 1876. From Civil War Trust.

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Black subjects still remained on the margins of Canadian art well into the late twentieth century. Within public art, this gap was even more pronounced. The Underground Railroad Monument in Windsor was the first large-scale figurative monument in Ontario exclusively recognizing the Black community. As such, it is impossible to formulate comparisons with other monuments to the same subject matter in Canada. Visual depictions of Black history in the United States are also relatively rare. One of the earliest and most prominent depictions of African Americans on a public monument in the United States in the Emancipation Memorial in Washington, D.C. (Fig. 5.5). Erected in 1876 by Thomas Bell, the monument pays tribute to the emancipation policy of Abraham Lincoln. A standing Lincoln grips the Emancipation Proclamation in one hand and reaches an outstretched left arm to the figure below him. In a gesture of “freeing” or “blessing”, Lincoln liberates the crouched figure, intended to represent enslaved peoples and the institution of slavery. The broken chains around the wrist of the crouched figure confirm the liberation. Lincoln’s looming form recalls religious blessings in depictions of Christian figures, such as Christ and other martyred Saints. This religious iconography and connection with Christianity was very familiar to nineteenth-century viewers in Washington. In contrast to Lincoln, the crouched figure appears semi-nude, his muscular body draped in cloth. The emphasized musculature and semi-nudity recalls the colonial images created by whites to “primitive” races. Although different from the noble savage symbolism reserved for Indigenous peoples, the elements are meant to create a visible difference between the European body and the “Other”. The tightly curled hair and emphasis on African facial features

119 “Primitive” or “non-civilized” races were often represented in particular ways through the eyes of Europeans. Often, these peoples were connected with the natural world and represented either as animals or close to nature. For more on this type of iconography, see: Troy Bickham, Savages with the Empire: Representations of American Indians in Eighteenth-Century Britain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); David Bindman, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and Karen C. Dalton, The Image of the Black in Western Art: From the Pharaohs to the Fall (Harvard University Press, 2010); Lucy Jarosz, “Constructing the Dark Continent: Metaphor as Geographic Representation of Africa” Human Geography 74, no. 2 (1992): 105-115.
confirm that the crouched figure is meant to be a former enslaved person. Iconographically, he is very distinct from the standing European “gentleman” and is intended to stand for contrasting values.¹²⁰

The power difference in this depiction is very apparent: the European has clear dominance over the crouched figure and is responsible for the “freeing”. The representation is of the “white saviour”, a common iconographical trope used by colonists around the world in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the “white saviour” model, there is a distinct separation between the civilized race and the “primitive”. The white figure is depicted in a powerful position, communicated by stance, light, perspective, sizing, props, etc. The representative of the “primitive” culture is often depicted crouching, seated, bowing, or in another submissive posture. Although there is a very clear hierarchy in these types of depictions, the intention of the “white saviour” is to elevate the “primitive” closer to civilization. Nonetheless, the visual separation of the figures confirms the continued segregation of the races, even if “civilization” is achieved. The widespread use of these colonial images certainly would have influenced Thomas Bell’s creation of the Emancipation Memorial, a clear nod to the “white saviour” iconography and discourse surrounding Abraham Lincoln.

After the Civil War, Bell’s monument was not the only public memorial erected to the memory of those that fought for Lincoln, including his policy of emancipation. The 1870s saw an explosion in the number of monuments in the United States, largely driven by the desire to

commemorate the deadliest war in that young nation’s history.\textsuperscript{121} In both North and South alike, citizens sought to recognize the sacrifices of their dead, erecting markers of all sizes. As Kirk Savage argues in his exploration of Civil War monuments, those with power and influence create commemorations. In the South, Black memory was deliberately suppressed in order to recognize notable Southern heroes, particularly Robert Lee.\textsuperscript{122} In the North, however, the memory of Abraham Lincoln and his principle of supposed racial equality was more prominent.\textsuperscript{123} Under the guise of reconciliation and North/South harmony, the memories of Emancipation, African American presence in the Civil War, and the institution of slavery, were systematically erased from the commemorative landscape. Recognitions to Black history in the United States remained relatively rare and most commemorations avoided the “tough stuff” of the past.\textsuperscript{124}

Another rare instance of Black history commemoration is the Robert Gould Shaw Memorial in Boston from 1897 (Fig. 5.6). Created to commemorate Colonel Shaw and the 54\textsuperscript{th} Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, the monument recognizes the contribution of Black soldiers to the Union cause. The memorial consists of a stone slab with bronze bas-relief. The slab is decorated with two eagles with wings outstretched perched on a globe. The rear of the monument contains a lengthy engraving, the top of which includes another eagle with wings spread and gripping a wreath of laurel. The entire monument is created in the form of a Classical

\textsuperscript{121} Largely due to the significant number of erections following the conflict, there are numerous popular and academic studies on the monuments of the Civil War. For some studies of these commemorations, see: John R. Neff, \textit{Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation} (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 2005); David W. Blight, \textit{Beyond the Battlefield: Race, Memory and The American Civil War} (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002); Alice Fahs and Joan Waugh, \textit{The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture} (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

\textsuperscript{122} Ibid., 134.

\textsuperscript{123} Ibid., 138.

\textsuperscript{124} However, Bruce Levine reveals that the role of African Americans was not completely buried and has become an uncomfortable part of Black history, being used by Neo-Confederates as propaganda for their cause. In fact, a Black Confederate soldier is featured among other white representatives on an Arlington Cemetery memorial, unveiled in 1914 (Bruce Levine, “Neo-Confederates and Black Confederates,” in \textit{Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory}, eds. James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (New York: the New Press, 2006): 187)
heroic tombstone. The prominent laurel, Doric columns, and dentalled edgings are all elements of Classical iconography intended to link the contemporary hero, Colonel Shaw, with his ancient counterparts. The addition of the eagle is similar to the inclusion of the imperial lion on Brock’s monument; the symbol is primarily included in order to inspire nationalist feelings amongst the American viewing public.

As with many Classical monuments, the bas-relief is one of the major educational tools in order to communicate the heroic deeds to the general public. The memorial is intended as a recognition to Robert Gould Shaw, the white commander of a Black division. He is prominently displayed on horseback in the centre of the bronze cast; tallest and most dominant, the iconography of the monument communicates that Shaw is the primary subject of the memorial. However, he is not alone in the depiction. A group of anonymous soldiers surrounds his horse,
some in front and some following behind. They are all depicted in profile, faces forward and marching towards an unseen goal in the distance. None of the faces are modelled on individuals, but are instead intended to represent the 54th Regiment as a whole. An angelic depiction, holding strings of laurel, appears to bless the scene from the upper portion of the bas-relief. The brief front engravings confirm that the monument is intended for Shaw and acts as a tombstone to his heroic deeds. Mention of the 54th regiment is confined to the rear of the memorial. This more lengthy description documents the history and conditions of the Black regiment led by Shaw.

The Robert Gould Shaw Memorial is primarily intended as a commemoration of the deeds of a great white man; however, it is largely an exception in the American commemorative landscape following the Civil War. Heroic connections with Shaw are solidified through the use of Classical iconography and the addition of nationalist symbols. The role of the 54th Regiment is confined to the anonymous figures surrounding the dominant image of Shaw and the descriptive carving at the rear of the memorial. From this commemoration, it is clear to the viewer that the focus is still on the commander in charge. The white man on the horse, leading the anonymous soldiers, remains the dominant feature of the heroic narrative. However, the Civil War witnessed a profound shift in the creation of war memorials. Following this conflict, memorials were created for entire regiments, families, towns, and battles. It was no longer simply the commanders receiving recognition, but the ordinary soldier as well. As the American commemorative landscape exploded with Civil War memorials, regular soldiers were marked for the first time. The Robert Gould Shaw Memorial conforms to this shifting trend, but also

introduces the Black soldier to the American commemorative landscape. The descriptive role of Black soldiers remains at the rear of the monument, but still forms an integral part of the whole. Instead of the anonymous Classically-inspired soldiers of heroic commemorations in the past, the Shaw memorial features his contemporaries. Although Shaw remains the focus, he is not divorced from the regular soldiers he supervised. This narrative still reinforces the role and superiority of the white commander, but does not disregard the deeds of his Black followers.

White commemorators and artists routinely used Black history as a supplemental story to the subjects of great white leaders in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nearly a century later, the artist for the Underground Railroad Memorial was attempting to create a new visual language that was not dependent on these white narratives. Ed Dwight was certainly familiar with the commemorative landscape of the United States, and was already influential in raising some of the first monuments to notable Black figures and events in the nation.126 Following his commission for the monument in Detroit-Windsor, the artistic production of Dwight exploded. His career, spanning nearly three decades, was focused on primarily historical African American subjects. All of Dwight’s sculptors are figurative and realistic with no abstract interpretations. He described himself as a “natural abstract artist,” intent on creating representational figures.127 Late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century monuments were increasingly abstracted, relying on plaques and other interpretive materials to convey the narrative. Dwight’s realistic monuments contrast with the abstract contemporary style and instead feature recognizable figures often engaged in related activities. His personal style of depicting individuals changed over time and across subject matter, but he remained within the

126 Before the Detroit/Windsor commission, Dwight had already designed: Underground Railroad Memorial (Battle Creek MI), Dr. Benjamin Mays (Atlanta, GA); Frederick Douglass (Anacostia, MD); Hank Aaron (Atlanta, GA); Miles Davies (various); Mother of Africa Chapel (Washington D.C.); design for Black Revolutionary War Patriots Memorial (proposed for Washington D.C.).
127 Singer, “Freedom Rings out”. 
general confines of portrait statues throughout his career. By the time of his commission for the Detroit-Windsor monument, Dwight had produced a recognizable personal style that used realistic figures to convey clear narratives.

When the artist was selected in 2000, he was already familiar with the subject matter of the Underground Railroad. Dwight produced a monument to the Underground Railroad in Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1994 (Fig. 5.7). Like his eventual Detroit-Windsor design, the Battle Creek monument is a group statue with multiple figures. A roughly depicted stone runs through the centre of the monument, providing a display façade on either side. These façades are used to depict various stories in the Underground Railroad history specific to the Battle Creek area. One side of this façade shows figures entering an open doorway, a stop on the Underground Railroad operated by Battle Creek residents Erastus and Sarah Hussey. The other side of the façade contains a line of disheveled people making their way forward. Two larger figures are at the

Figure 5.7: Unknown Photographer. “Underground Railroad Sculpture, Battle Creek.” Photograph. N.d. From Calhoun Visitors Bureau.
front of the monument, not separated by the stone façade that runs down the centre. The female figure is intended to represent Harriet Tubman, her face rendered to match historic photographs, and the male figure is Erastus Hussey. The monument captures a local component in the international story of the Underground Railroad. The large monument realistically represented the experience of multiple individuals but also paid tribute to specific local residents. As with Dwight’s later submission to Detroit 300, there are a number of different figures rendered with varying emotions on their faces. The result is a narrative of multiplicity and varying reactions.

Based on the available meeting minutes, it appears that no one was surprised by the choice of Ed Dwight for the Detroit-Windsor Memorial; he was already a prominent sculptor and had produced an appealing design proposal. His submission was figurative, allowing for an easy “read” by the viewing public. The final design was simple for any member of the public to understand, with life-like figures engaged in a clear activity, supplemented by gestures and facial expressions. It is a type of “narrative” group monument recognizable to many citizens of both Canada and the United States, presented as a “still” from a play or film. The readability of the monument was likely a factor in the committee’s decision, as they were attempting to tell a story that may not be familiar to many viewers. Nonetheless, Dwight was working with a largely European mode of representation, a type of visual iconography prominent in Western commemorations over the last few decades. Despite these confines, Dwight was also breaking new ground as he negotiated the tangled, but rare, iconography of Black history.

The idea for the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad was very unconventional. It was a monument intended to span two different nations and connect with two different cities. The statue, created by an American artist, relied on international iconographical references to the Underground Railroad in order to convey its story. However, the monument
was still situated within a particular locality: Detroit, Michigan, and Windsor, Ontario. The position chosen for the Detroit component was significant: Hart Plaza contained one of the largest and most prominent memorials to an African American figure in the entire country (Fig. 5.8). Created in 1986, the monument to Joe Louis is a large suspended fist, prominently placed in the middle of a Detroit thoroughfare. In their study of this monument, Gallagher and LaWare untangle the complex racial history of the city of Detroit in order to position the monument within the public memory of that area. They argue that the monument is read differently in various times and places, and also by the white and black populations of the city. The meaning of
the giant fist is not universal and invites judgment by the viewing public.\textsuperscript{128} The fist is at once symbolic of the struggle of African Americans, particularly in Detroit, and also the association of Black men in the city with violence and crime. Paradoxically, the symbol of the fist captures the fight for freedom by Black citizens, and the resulting fear of white residents.\textsuperscript{129} The arrival of the fist in the middle of downtown Detroit forever changed the landscape of the city, but also made the racial tensions of the community visible. A very complicated monument within the commemorative landscape of Detroit, the Joe Louis fist changed the way citizens would approach the new monument to the Underground Railroad over a decade later.\textsuperscript{130}

In Windsor, the visibility of the Black community in commemoration was much less prominent. There were no elaborate monuments to their history or erections to the memory of their cultural figures. There was a history of racially charged issues in Windsor, particularly involving its Black community. However, the visibility of these racialized struggles was less apparent than in Detroit. By the time the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad was planned, the economic and social crisis in Detroit was deepening. Economic hardships were driving out main industries, white citizens continued their exodus to affluent suburbs, and the local Black population was confined to inadequate housing in the inner city. Across the Detroit River, Windsor was also suffering some economic backlash as a result. Within this climate of local uncertainty and concern for the future of their communities, the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad attempted to unite the cities through their common history.


\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., 95.

It is a significant artistic challenge to create a monument that relates not only to different cultures, but also different national discourses. This monument was labeled “International”, but the artist still needed to address the various communities and cultures represented within the narrative. When Dwight first conceptualized the monument, he originally intended to create an arch that could unify the two sides of the river. After seeing the expanse of the Detroit River, he abandoned the idea and selected more subtle iconographical connections.\(^{131}\) One of the methods of creating a unified whole is ensuring the visual language on both sides is similar. Physically, the similar materials of granite and bronze connect the two monuments. Moving from one side to the other, it is quite clear that the separate pieces belong to the same whole: the repetition of basic materials and scale confirms this for the viewer.\(^{132}\)

\(^{131}\) Thompson, “Sculpting Black history”.

\(^{132}\) Nonetheless, the Detroit monument is much larger in scale and situated with a closer relationship to the River. It has a more elaborate base, numerous plaques and other information, and is placed in a more open public space. The
The artist also chose to use very similar iconographical elements when designing the two components of the monument. For example, the liberty flame is a repeated and prominent feature situated at the top of the towers. The presence of the flame is emphasized in Windsor with the carved title: “Keeping the Flame of Freedom Alive.” The stylized liberty flame, although iconographically disconnected from the Canadian national context, visually unites the monuments. Additionally, some of figures are also repeated on both sides of the border (Fig. 5.10). Their presence in Detroit (where they are “fugitives” and face possible capture) is complemented by their presence in Windsor (where they are now “free”). Both former enslaved people at the front of the Windsor monument are recognizable at the front of the Detroit version:

different siting of the monuments, particularly the much more closed site for the Windsor component away from the riverfront, does create additional separation between the two.
their facial features and clothing are the same. By repeating the iconography and figures on both sides of the Detroit River, Dwight was able to create a monument that is symbolically connected. The expanse of the Detroit River still separates the two components, and the national differences of the United States and Canada still create a formal boundary between the two. Nonetheless, Dwight employs a number of iconographical strategies to unite these differences in his “international” memorial.

**Capturing “Freedom” and “Freedom Seekers” in Bronze**

There is an inherent link between the collective memories of commemorations and nationalism; this connection has been explored in various contexts by a number of scholars. Some marginalized groups do fight for inclusion in the narrative and disrupt “official” meanings. Nonetheless, commemorations have an intimate relationship with nationalism, particularly when directed by governmental organizations or other elites. The Underground Railroad monument exists within the context of two (often competing) nationalisms and attempts to portray a narrative that is historically shaped by national values. In order to separate from the traditional nationalist rhetoric surrounding the Underground Railroad and related collective values, the artist turned to iconography. Dwight created his monument to the Underground Railroad without significant connections to the nationalist discourse that surround the narrative in Canada. The HSMBC was writing a plaque text for his monument completely divorced from the erection of the international memorial. The two components were not necessarily in complete opposition, and both sides wanted to use the historical narrative to speak to present and future generations. The HSMBC was using the new plaque text in order to tell the story of the Underground Railroad but also inspire viewers to see the connection with present-day Canadian values (most

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133 Interestingly, the only figure at the back in Windsor, the young girl with the doll, is not featured on the Detroit side. Another young girl appears at the rear of that monument in Detroit, but the dress and facial features do not match.
notably multiculturalism and tolerance). Dwight, on the other hand, was using iconography in order to communicate a diversity of experiences. He developed a manner of depicting a collective story but with the acknowledgement of multiple voices and experiences. In order to successfully communicate this message to his viewing public, he turned to many recognizable symbols. While the artist could not fully step outside the nationalist boundaries of commemoration, he challenged and stretched the traditional confines of that relationship.

Created by an American artist for the birthday of an American city, the International Memorial does feature some distinctive American nationalist iconography. The most notable symbol, repeated on both monuments to unite their geographical divisions, is the liberty flame. The stylized flame on the highest point on both monuments very closely resembles the Statue of Liberty flame, a commonly reproduced American national symbol of freedom. The flame is a largely foreign icon, not normally connected with either imperial or Canadian values. The flame prominently recognizes the message of “freedom” in the monument, but also connects the Underground Railroad narrative with a popular theme in American history. Nonetheless, the idea of “freedom” was contentious, especially when linked with the institution of slavery. The concept of “freedom” in American history is embarrassing and contradictory when the institution of slavery is added. This confusion is largely avoided with the emphasis on “seeking freedom,” rather than the experience of slavery. The complete narrative of the Underground

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135 The flame is not completely absent in Canada; the National War Memorial, for example, features the figure of Liberty who holds a “liberty flame”. Nonetheless, compared to its American neighbours, the flame was a rare commemorative symbol and not commonly associated with Canadian nationalism.

136 Horton, Slavery in American History.
Railroad necessarily includes the horrors of slavery; however, the focus is usually on the attainment of “freedom.” Without a direct and overt visual reference to slavery, the Underground Railroad monument represents the sanitized version of this history. For some viewers, the focus on freedom and the prominent placement of the liberty flames can connect with the national value of freedom without the added complications of slavery.

The liberty flame replaced other more well-known symbols of light or illumination that come from the Underground Railroad narrative. Significantly, there is no prominent North Star in either monument. In other commemorations, particularly in Canada, the North Star is one of the only dominant visual elements that are frequently repeated.137 From early discussions, it appears that some committee members were aware of this iconography and even promoted its addition to the monument.138 The night lantern, another frequent symbol in the Underground Railroad story, is reduced to a small engraving on the front of the Detroit Memorial. Instead, the liberty flame is the main source of illumination and direction. Because the monument was focused on “freedom”, the stylized flame was the most logical iconography available.

Throughout the popular press and bi-national meetings between Parks Canada and the National Parks Service, the idea of “freedom” was a frequent theme. Turning to the largely American “freedom flame”, one of the most recognizable symbols of the idea, was a clear choice in representing such a critical concept in the contemporary period. Nonetheless, the choice of the “freedom flame” pushed out the more common and historical North Star or lanterns that were frequently connected to the Underground Railroad story.

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137 The North Star was frequently referenced in abolitionist literature and was a key part of the escaping slavery narrative.
138 There is no clear indication why this motif was not seriously considered, but its absence is curious given the commemoration of the Underground Railroad in Canada.
In addition to the idea of “freedom”, Dwight sought to create figures that represented specific feelings and emotions. He noted: “I want people to say, ‘My God, I can feel what this was like.’”\textsuperscript{139} The bronze figures in both memorials represent the diverse types of people associated with the Underground Railroad in both countries. The Detroit monument features a number of ages and both genders. The faces of each figure clearly communicate varying emotions, ranging from tense fear to excited optimism. The varying costumes and accessories of the different individuals further emphasize the diversity of people represented in the monument and subtly recognize multiple experiences. On the Canadian side, the four figures are also rendered differently to reflect multiplicity. The male at the front is rejoicing, hands reached to the sky, while the woman in front of him is more hesitant, holding her baby out for the

\textsuperscript{139} Singer, “Freedom Rings out”.

Figure 5.11: Brittney Anne Bos. “View of Rear of Detroit Component.” Photograph. May 2014.
conductor. The intense emotional expressions encourages the viewer to “take a role,” and imagine themselves within the narrative.

Viewers of the monument are encouraged to interact with the Memorial and envision their own roles. Although any viewer can place themselves in the position of any of the figures, racial status is still a prominent component in all of the bronzes. The facial features of the figures are individual and distinct, but have prominent traits that distinguish them as a particular race. The artist uses common physiological facial features to denote most of the figures as African Americans. Rounder faces, tightly curled hair, larger lips, and an overly emphasized African nose are clearly marked on the majority of the bronzes. In this case, the dominant facial traits are used to differentiate the race of the figures. Despite their physiologically African American features, the casts are not intended to represent any specific individuals. Instead, the figures were intended to portray a diverse group of people involved in a common historical narrative. Other than their race, the figures were designed to be a “ragtag band” that embodied the difficult journey from the South towards freedom.\textsuperscript{140} This identity was primarily communicated through their torn and ragged clothing, an observation noted in the \textit{Detroit News}. For the artist, it was important to employ the anonymous bronzes to represent the many individuals who used the Underground Railroad rather than pinpoint a precise story. The goal was to capture different experiences and perspectives, but also frame this as a distinctly African American/Black narrative through iconography.

In contrast to the very distinguishable physiological features of the formerly enslaved peoples, the two conductors are more ambiguous in racial origin. The conductor figure in Canada has more Caucasian features in comparison to the emphasized African features of the others. Her oval face, pointed nose, smaller lips, uncurled hair, and more narrow eyes are a contrast to the

\textsuperscript{140} Ibid.
Figure 5.12: Brittney Anne Bos. “Detail of Front Figures in Windsor Component.” Photograph. May 2014

formerly enslaved woman beside her. The conductor figure in Canada is not clearly connected to an actual historical person. Like the formerly enslaved peoples, she is intended to represent the multiple conductors on both sides of the border that aided escapees. However, the male conductor on the Detroit side of the monument is meant to represent an individual person: George DeBaptiste.\textsuperscript{141} For the viewer, the male conductor is iconographically distinct from the escaping enslaved peoples behind him. His face is more clearly rendered than the others, likely drawn from a portrait rather than an imagined likeness. His clothing is also a significant contrast

\textsuperscript{141} DeRamus, “A Testament to Freedom”.
to the male escapee beside him: the conductor is wearing a long coat, straight pants, a vest and a bow tie, while the escapee has torn pants and a more dishevelled appearance. The artist carefully used costuming and facial features to clearly distinguish the different actors in the narrative. While the figures still form a cohesive whole, this subtle differentiation speaks to the varied experiences of the two groups in relation to the Underground Railroad narrative.

Commemorative representations are not only embedded with iconography related to race, but are also intricately intertwined with gender. As prominent Black men eventually broke through commemorative boundaries, albeit very slowly, Black women were still left silenced. Only in the twentyfirst century were monuments unveiled to individual Black women and their own histories, and at an incredibly slow rate. One exception to this trajectory is the commemoration of Harriet Tubman. As mentioned previously, Dwight’s Battle Creek Underground Railroad monument is meant to feature Tubman as an abolitionist and conductor.

In the early decades of the twenty-first century since the unveiling of the memorials in Detroit and Windsor, Tubman is the main subject of numerous commemorations across the United States. However, one of the earliest monuments pre-dates the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad (Fig. 5.13). “Step on Board” is a memorial recognizing the role of Harriet Tubman in the city of Boston, placed there in 1999. The large bronze slab features a prominent figure of Tubman stepping forward away from the massive piece of carved metal behind her. Her outstretched left arm persuades a small group behind her to follow. The other five figures, three women (one holding a baby) and two men, are more physically connected to the mass bronze slab. The iconography communicates that Tubman has stepped away from the confines of the massive metal and is gesturing for the others to break “free” as well. This type of design also confirms Tubman as the leader and focal point for the commemoration. Her dominant stance, with shoulders square and face pointed forward, further communicates her leadership and control.

The type of iconography used to depict Tubman in Boston (and in many subsequent commemorations) is rare and exceptional. In his representation of Black women, Ed Dwight exclusively turned to the maternal image. None of the women in the Underground Railroad monument are depicted as the stereotypical “Mammy,”¹⁴² but each one is closely tied to the role of motherhood. Men and women feature relatively equally in the monument. However, the women perform different roles than the men. The Detroit side features two adult women, both of whom attend to children. The Windsor side also includes an adult woman with a baby and a

¹⁴² Wallace-Sanders explores the prevalent use of the “Mammy” figure in visual culture, particularly in the South following the Civil War. She traces the various interpretations of the Mammy, a content domestic motherly figure serving the white population. Wallace-Sanders reveals that the Mammy images acts as a “cultural barometer” reflecting fluctuating racial attitudes, and particularly the desire for racial harmony (under the leadership of whites) following the end of slavery. The image of the Mammy, according to Wallace-Sanders, is prominent in white artistic culture, but is downplayed in African American depictions of their own community (Kimberley Wallace-Sanders, Mammy: A Century of Race, Gender and Southern Memory (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006)).
young girl with a doll (alluding to her future of motherhood). On the Detroit side of the monument, a male conductor is pointing and leading a former male slave, while a woman with a baby looks forward. None of the male figures in either Detroit or Windsor are closely connected to children. Although the women in the Underground Railroad monument are intertwined with their children, they are not afforded other roles or tasks. Men and women are also clearly differentiated by their appearance. The women on both sides of the monument are distinguished by their clothing; they each wear long dresses with headscarves. The iconography selected for the Underground Railroad monument distinguishes the gendered expectations of men and women.

There are also a significant number of children or adolescents present in the monument. As with other monuments including children, the presence of younger people in the Underground Railroad monument is a nod towards future generations. Symbolically, it is also a representation of the future freedom of African Americans and subsequent generations that did not endure the tyranny of slavery. Their presence also subtly embodies the descendants of former enslaved peoples. Many individuals in Detroit and especially Windsor traced their ancestry to the Underground Railroad. The inclusion of children on the monument was a method of including their presence in the commemoration. The prominence of mothers and their children might also allude to the common abolitionist narrative of women being forcibly separated from their husbands and children. The image of the Black mother divided from her children under the institution of slavery was a persistent image. Repeating the symbol of Black motherhood, but this time on the path to freedom, was a powerful visual response to the historical reality.

143 The smaller scale of these figures and their slightly different rendering, means there are nearly as many African American children on the monument as adults.
presence of children in the monument represent future generations but also symbolically acknowledges the resistance and overcoming of slavery.

Some individual figures on the monuments speak to specific experiences and encourage the viewer to connect with certain stories. The front male figure on the Windsor monument has a notable and distinct performance. His arms up in the air, eyes skyward, is read as a moment of rejoicing, presumably with his new freedom. The happiness in his expression is read as a moment of personal liberty, shedding his own harsh experiences of the past. However, the gesture of rejoicing cannot be separated from the religious context of the Underground Railroad commemoration. The Underground Railroad itself was run by a number of community groups, particularly religious institutions. They were also available to aid former enslaved peoples when they arrived in Upper Canada. The large majority of Underground Railroad recognitions by the HSMBC are churches, and many of the Detroit 300 and Windsor celebrations featured religious services and prayers. Although the mention of philanthropic societies was removed from the HSMBC plaque, the male figure at the front iconographically represents this element of the narrative and the history of its commemoration. While the religious connection may not be immediately apparent to all viewers, his gesture of “rejoice” with eyes pointed upwards, is familiar symbolism of celebration. The performance of the figure was likely inspired by the artist’s own faith. Reporting on his new monument, Ed Dwight pinpointed his Catholic faith as an important influence in his life. The Detroit News remarked that the “you will see faith” in the figures in the monument.\textsuperscript{144} Through readable, dramatic gestures, the artist created a monument that actively encouraged emotional involvement from the public. According to Dwight, “there was no way to abstract” the reality of human resolve.\textsuperscript{145}

\textsuperscript{144} Singer, “Memorials a Tribute to Freedom.”  
\textsuperscript{145} Singer, “Freedom rings out.”
Each individual figure contributes a different experience to the narrative. A figure on the Windsor monument stands apart from the rest and represents another element of the story: diaspora. Looking back towards the Detroit River, this figure is alone and isolated. The large granite tower physically separates her from the other figures and she gazes in an opposing direction. Although the revised design by Dwight featured an open archway to link the front and rear, she is captured at the moment before she walks through the arch. Unlike the former enslaved persons at the front of the Windsor monument, she does not appear on the Detroit side. The absence of this figure in Detroit further alienates her from the rest of the group. She is the only figure in both monuments that is transitioning from one to the next, on the actual journey of
the Underground Railroad. Her presence at the rear of the monument, contemplatively looking back towards her former home, is one of the most complex references in the entire Memorial. Her facial features reveal determination and strength, but her “look back”, away from the rest of the group, physically holds her back. On one hand, she can be read as representative of the thousands of escapees that eventually returned to the United States following the Civil War. Her look back could reference her desire to return one day when slavery was abolished.

In addition to serving as a possible representative of returnees, the female figure at the rear of the Windsor monument is simultaneously a complex reference to the feeling of “diaspora;” a sense of being in between places and not having a true sense of home. Her presence away from the Detroit monument, but physically separated from those on the other side of the arch in Windsor, puts her in an “in-between” space that is not firmly connected to either place. The doll that she clutches is a subtle reference to her future motherhood and the new generation of Black Americans/Canadians that will have similar sentiments. Her complicated position is an important addition to the story itself, but also a significant marker in the production of “transnational memory.” She adds to the complexity of the Underground Railroad narrative, but especially blurs the national boundaries ingrained in the story. She is not clearly escaped or escaping; she is not firmly on the Canadian side of freedom or the American side of enslavement, and the distinct emotions on her face are ambiguous and complex. This complicated figure is representative of the complex narrative of the Underground Railroad, particularly when it is divorced from nationalist interests.

Conclusion

The commemoration of the Underground Railroad in the Detroit-Windsor area brought together numerous stakeholders with their own agendas. The National Parks Service was mandated by Congress to recognize the Underground Railroad as a part of the national story. Parks Canada, encouraged by new directions in Canada’s identity (particularly surrounding multiculturalism and the welcoming of refugees), faced a changing commemorative landscape that was soon reflected in a new *System Plan*. Detroit 300 was mandated with the creation of a new monument along the Detroit Riverfront. Numerous citizens on both sides of the border also came together to express their viewpoints on the commemoration of this notable story. Considering the involvement of so many groups, with various backgrounds and agendas, the eventual creation of the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad was a tangled and complex version of this historical narrative. Despite the various stakeholders and multiple meanings, the resulting monument left a new imprint on the commemorative landscape of North America: a transnational memorial.

Although the monument was labeled “international”, it actually contributes to the creation of transnational memory. This type of memorialization refers to the breaking of national boundaries and discourses in order to produce something that recognizes experiences outside of or across nations. Transnational memory acknowledges the blurring of national boundaries, particularly in an increasingly globalized and migratory world. The study of transnational memory is relatively recent and scholars in commemoration are only beginning to find examples in the existing commemorative landscape.\(^{147}\) Although this study has just begun, existing

\(^{147}\) In a study of World War II battles, Geoffrey White examines commemorative practices and determines that many sites are actually devoid of nationalist messages. Instead, most of these battlefields focus on the human experiences that transcend nationalities (Geoffery White, “Remembering Guadalcanal: National Identity and Transnational Memory Making,” *Public Culture* 7.3 (1995): 529-555). In his consideration of the memorialization of the
scholarship agrees that transnational memory is not simply about the recognition of multiple nations, but specifically about the blurring of nationalistic distinctions and working outside the confines of national groups. Continued study of these rare marks on the commemorative landscape offer significant opportunities for recognizing the diversity of narratives and further tangling commemorative events.

In the later decades of the twentieth century, the commemorative landscape of Canada shifted as the values of “multiculturalism” became more entrenched in the nation. Responding to these changing discourses, the HSMBC became responsible for recognizing the diversity of Canada’s past through new designations. The Underground Railroad was an ideal pilot project to showcase the country’s historical (constructed) values of tolerance and openness. Eventually the HSMBC produced a plaque text that re-iterated the nationalist importance of the Underground Railroad story. However, on the day of the unveiling, something much grander and more impactful was revealed: the International Memorial to the Underground Railroad in Windsor and Detroit. Designed as a monument to recognize the diverse experiences, the iconography employed by the artist encouraged continuous reflection. It contested many of the celebratory nationalist meanings and challenged the viewer to take their own role in the story. While the plaque by the HSMBC still directed the final meanings of the monument (given its prominent positioning on the front), the Memorial itself represents a new and growing imprint on the commemorative landscape. As a recognition of “transnational memory”, the monument to the Underground Railroad challenges the traditional nationalist role of commemoration and opens new possibilities for the representation of diverse groups.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Perhaps in another hundred years, when other generations come together to commemorate the efforts of these men that with Brock and Macdonell strove to seek and find and do and not to yield, the skirmish at Queenston may be viewed in a different light. Perhaps then the British Constitution will have bridged the oceans and the ‘Seven Seas’; perhaps then Canada will be more British than Britain itself – the very core, the centre, the heart of the Empire in territory and population, in wealth and in influence, in spirit and in vital activities. Then Queenston Heights may be regarded not merely as a victory that encouraged Canadians to fight for their homes but as a far-reaching world-event.¹

In 1859, years after the heroic death of Major General Sir Isaac Brock, a crowd assembled on Queenston Heights to dedicate the mighty shaft marking his resting place. In the spirit of that gathering, another group joined together in 1912 to observe the centennial of his great sacrifice. In the shadow of Brock’s column along the Niagara River, John Stewart Carstairs addressed a crowd of onlookers. He joined numerous other speakers on the platform that day who promoted the ideology of Canadian imperialism. The growing Canadian nation was a critical part of the British Empire and the citizens of the present and future needed to continue its greatness. Commemorative events and monuments demonstrated what races (and their accompanying “traits”) were welcomed within the boundaries of the Empire. White British institutions and values had conquered the untamed colonial landscape and “civilized” primitive races. These deeds were cause for celebration and promotion across the globe, but especially in Canada. Carstairs reflectively hoped that one day, perhaps in 2012, Canada would be more “British than Britain itself.” As a Canadian imperialist, Cartstairs’ future vision of the nation included the continued superiority and dominance of British institutions, which was aptly preserved through commemorations such as Brock’s column. Carstairs did not foresee the flexibility of historical

¹ Speech of Mr. John Stewart Carstairs, in: Alexander Fraser (ed.), Brock Centenary 1812-1912: Account of the Celebration at Queenston Heights, Ontario, on the 12th October 1912 (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1913), 10.
memories and their accompanying iconographies.

Nationalism and commemoration have an intimate relationship; the rememberings of the past are often tied to collective memories tangled with national values. Nationalism remains exclusionary and only certain people are welcomed in the folds of the nation; however, how these borders are marked and what rhetoric is employed changes over time. Commemorations adapt, the narratives are re-written, history is re-shaped, and citizens absorb different meanings. Nevertheless, some commemorations, such as monuments, are physical and seemingly static, intended as permanent markers of memory. The elites directing monumental projects often expressed hope that their intended meanings would continue for future generations, permeating the collective even decades later. The permanent monument seemed the easiest method of transferring values and definitions from one generation to the next. However, the same historical narratives are re-shaped, even in the presence of these static markers. Carstairs assumed that people in 2012, gathered for the bicentennial of the War of 1812, would gaze upon the elaborate white tombstone of the “civilized” Brock and see the same meanings. But national values had shifted, the meaning of “Canada” had changed, and the narrative of the iconic white hero had been re-written. In part, Carstairs was correct: the War of 1812 was “viewed in a different light” for the bicentennial.

Like the generations before them, crowds gathered on Queenston Heights on October 13 2012. Another “funeral” for the lamented General was planned in the Niagara region and more speakers were invited to give addresses in the shadow of the monument. Along with the multiple ceremonies at the old column, a brand new commemoration was planned for the grounds of Parliament Hill in Ottawa. This monument dedicated to the War of 1812 was intended as the everlasting embodiment of the present generation’s memory of the conflict and its meanings to
the Canadian nation. The narrative of 2012 was decidedly different than previous generations; this was a story about diversity and a variety of groups coming together in defence of a supposedly common cause. However, some threads from the past remained. Canada was still a colonial and white nation, led and dominated by European elites. Iconographically, the Indigenous body was much the same, recalling centuries of noble savage imagery. The design and interpretative devices of the monument continued to obscure the dominance of whiteness and perpetuate its invisibility. “Multiculturalism” was a now guise to hide the colonial underpinnings of the War of 1812 and continue to silence the “tough stuff” of Canadian memory.

The War of 1812 monument on Parliament Hill is titled “Triumph Through Diversity” and was designed by Toronto artist Adrienne Alison. The statue is a multi-figured group monument situated on the south side of the East Block overlooking the National War Memorial across the street. Through costuming, pose, and other attributes, the artist represented the “diversity” of people joining this common fight. In the front centre of the monument is a man raising his arm in the air. His costuming denotes him as a member of the middle class and he is intended to represent the militia. To the right of this central figure is a British regular, also defined by his costuming, shooting a musket. On the opposing side of centre is a crouching Indigenous “scout” pointing to something in the distance. This middle group is flanked on either side by two dynamic figures: a member of the Royal Navy pulling a rope, and a “Metis” militiaman pushing a cannon. At the very rear of the monument, facing back towards the East Block, is the figure of a woman attending to a French Voltigeur (also denoted by costuming). The bronze figures stand atop a granite pedestal with the dates of the War of 1812 on the front.

The short pedestal is accessible to viewers and the public is encouraged to interact with the monument. The ground-level statues ensure that members of the public feel connected with the memorial and part of the War of 1812 narrative. Although still slightly raised and larger than the viewing public, citizens are encouraged to participate in the story. Unlike the dramatic rise of the immortal Brock over the colonial spoils below, these figures are accessible and attainable. They serve as symbols for every citizen to emulate and encourage active engagement. The diversity of the figures also promotes all viewers to “take a role.” This message coincides with the official version of multiculturalism; that everyone is included and welcome in the arms of the nation and diversity of experience is celebrated. The title of the monument, “Triumph Through Diversity,” reinforces the national value of the “ethnic mosaic” that rhetorically accepts diverse
contributions to the Canadian nation and identity. While the realities of multiculturalism are still exclusionary and racism within the boundaries of the nation endures, the monument silences these lived experiences in favour of an idealized vision of racial harmony.

The iconography of this monument coincides with many other group statues that encourage a diversity of interpretations and are well suited to the ideology of multiculturalism. However, the War of 1812 monument still limits the roles of citizens in historical narratives based on race. The familiar “scout” at the front of the monument is nearly identical to the noble savage imagery of the docile and helpful “primitive.” Some elements of this iconography have changed; for instance, the Indigenous figure is still denoted through clothing, but is no longer depicted semi-nude or with archetypical attributes. Nonetheless, based on pose and accessories, it is clear to the viewer that the figure is intended to represent Indigenous “scouts” aiding their white counterparts. Additionally, there are no specific cultural artifacts that symbolize the precise background of this figure; rather, he is intended to represent all Indigenous peoples regardless of culture. Like the image of Joseph Brant, this is the “good Indian” that helped the white British colonial project. The Metis figure is much more ambiguous. Aside from the description of the monument, there is little to indicate his racial identity as Metis; his clothing and positioning are not differentiated. With a limited iconographical library for representing Metis peoples, the artist relied solely on written interpretative devices to convey the racial identity of this individual.

Contrastingly, the other figures on the monument are not ascribed specific racial identities. Unlike the Metis and Indigenous representations, the textual description of the monument on the Government of Canada website does not mention the racial backgrounds of the other figures. Instead, it is assumed that the viewer understands them as the “norm” (that is, white) and therefore they are perceived as “race-less”. Even though the racial status of the
figures is not mentioned in interpretative devices, the artist used familiar iconography to communicate their whiteness. “Standard” military costuming for the soldiers and middle class gentleman’s attire for the militiaman all communicates racial identity. However, for most viewers these attributes are invisible and the figures are simply interpreted as the invisible “norm”. By turning to “standard” costuming from the period and other attributes for the white figures, the artist was still able to differentiate the “Other” in this diverse vision of Canada’s past.

Although there is a diversity of figures on the monument, it is still clear to the viewer who is in the lead. The militiaman at the front, with arms raised, is the dominant focal point of the group monument. His extended hand, along with his central and frontal position, makes him the most dominant individual in the collection. A secondary focal point is directed at the British regular firing the musket; he is the only figure directly engaged in an act of war and commands attention from the viewer. The “scout”, while also at the front of the monument, attracts less attention due to his crouched pose and position as aid. Notably, the role of women and French Canadians are pushed to the rear of the monument. While both groups make an unprecedented appearance in the remembrance of the War of 1812, their contributions are behind the main players. Viewed from the front of the monument, the woman and French Voltigeur are not visible. The “behind the scenes” domestic tasks of white women are represented in one of the rear figures. She is bandaging the wounded soldier, but represented far from the horrors of the conflict. Her pose is relaxed and static, a direct contrast to the dynamic motion of the figures at the front of the memorial. From the grounds of Parliament Hill, her subtle act of bandaging draws viewers closer, but is ultimately of secondary importance compared to the action at the front.

Placed on the grounds of the federal government buildings during the anniversary of the
War of 1812, there were certainly numerous intended meanings of the monument. According to the Government of Canada: “This monument is a dynamic national tribute to the spirit, courage and bravery of those who served and successfully defended their land in the fight for Canada.”

This group of bronze representations was intended to symbolize the diversity of Canadians and those who came together in a supposedly common cause. The white colonial control of the landscape, the true purpose of the War, is obscured in this narrative. Instead, the “good Indians” are included within the folds of the white nation as they protect British interests from invading American foes. By acknowledging the role of these diverse individuals and groups, the 2012 version of the narrative of the War of 1812 obscures and continues to erase lived experiences and perspectives. In particular, the new narrative smoothed colonial relations in favour of a “diverse” past conveniently reflected in contemporary multiculturalism.

The representation of ideologies, particularly tied to race and colonialism, were a part of Upper Canada’s/Ontario’s early commemorations. When Brock’s mighty shaft rose to the heavens in the mid nineteenth century, commemorators were intent on representing the superiority of white Britishness. They intended to build the monument of white stone, dedicate it with meanings from their own context, and have those same ideas last well beyond their deaths. Indeed, Brock’s column was raised, visually linked to the great heroes of Classical antiquity that was conveniently linked to whiteness and “civilization.” The seemingly timeless virtues of heroism and self-sacrifice were embedded in each stone as it raised Brock higher and higher over the conquered colonial landscape. He represented the triumph of Britishness, the white “gentleman hero” that ruled over untamed colonial citizens. He was representative of refinement

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2 “War of 1812 Monument, Triumph Through Diversity,” Government of Canada, last modified June 7 2016, http://canada.peh.gc.ca/eng/1443025436159. Visitors to the monument can also access this page through a barcode for mobile devices. Other than the barcode access to this webpage, there are no further interpretative devices on the monument itself.
and “civilization,” and the mighty column was intended to symbolize those values. The iconography was specifically chosen in order to connect him with other white British heroes of the period and partially to legitimize his enduring fame. Through Classicism and its link with “civilization,” Brock’s commemorators immortalized their white hero on the same grand scale as the gods.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Ontario citizens were still looking to memorialize their heroes. The people of Brantford turned to their local namesake, Joseph Brant, for a special commemoration. However, heroism in this period was intricately tied to whiteness. Classical self-sacrificing immortals like Brock were decidedly European; contrastingly, Brant was an “Other”. Nonetheless, Joseph Brant was perceived as “nature’s nobleman”, an ideal representative of the value of assimilation and exposure to civilized institutions. Thus, Brant was the perfect example of the “good Indian;” an “Other” who was remembered for embracing civilization and working in aid of European colonizers. The iconography of Brant’s monument drew inspiration from centuries of European depictions of Indigenous cultures. The iconography itself was a hybrid, intended to mark Brant as a representative of his culture through the eyes of Europeans in the late nineteenth century. The iconography intended to reinforce the values of “civilization” and its potential, just as colonial policy in Canada was embarking on new directions.

In the eyes of white Ontario elites, the man responsible for bringing this “civilization” to Upper Canada was John Graves Simcoe. Elites of the province turned to recognizing his memory in the early twentieth century as the modern world threatened their social and political power. By remembering exemplary stories from the past, elites harnessed these opportunities to showcase white British virtues and push for their continuance into the future. Simcoe was the white
“founding father” of the province, the iconography deliberately chosen to reflect him as refined and gentlemanly. If Simcoe was responsible for establishing institutions, the UELs were the chief defenders. One of the first monuments to white settlement in Canada, the UELs were representative of British values and their position in the colonial landscape. Using the symbol of the white “civilized” family, the iconography of the monument represented the establishment of white Ontario and their superior values. The family was a symbol of permanent roots and the enduring legacy of the Loyalists in the present. For elites in the province, those narratives and their accompanying monuments were important markers on the landscape that symbolized their continued power in the rapidly changing modern province.

Although Canadian values shifted over the course of the next century, commemorations were still erected as symbols of these abstract values. “Multiculturalism” was embedded in the practice of the HSMBC by the late twentieth century, and new commemorations were constantly framed within this re-written narrative of Canada. Concurrently, previously marginalized groups were demanding their own place on the commemorative stage. The narrative of the Underground Railroad drew multiple (often competing) groups under a single idea: an international monument to the historic event. As these groups vied for their own positions, a new iconography gradually emerged that recognized the diversity of experiences and stretched the traditional confines of restrictive nationalism. Through the production of “transnational memory”, such monuments challenge the meaning of commemorations and offer yet another new direction in rememberings of the past.

Commemorations were a vehicle for defining the boundaries of the provincial “imagined community” for nearly two centuries. These historic narratives helped delineate exactly which races (and their accompanying traits and values) were included within the folds of the emerging
white nation. These definitions were created by a rather select group of white elites that sought to imprint the colonial landscape as an exclusively white British space. The vehicle of commemoration was ideally suited to the task of creating racial definitions; it used the past to justify white dominance in the present and future. Certain “Others” were included within the bound of the nation, but only when they assisted white colonial dominance or demonstrated the elevating merits of white “civilization”. As the decades wore on, exactly who was included within the nation began to shift. As the rhetoric of “multiculturalism” took over Canadian national values, the boundaries of the nation were re-drawn. Nonetheless, even in their new form, the boundaries were still exclusionary and only certain “Others” were permitted within the folds of the still dominantly white nation. Commemorations of the past remained an integral part in drawing these boundaries and ensuring the continued and uncontested dominance of whiteness. While the narratives continued to shift as Ontario itself transformed, monuments and other commemorations were still erected across the province to recognize exactly who was part of the imagined community.

On one level, monuments represent the period when they were created, the people that erected them, and their values. Other than destruction or significant alteration, monuments remain as everlasting testaments of a prior time and a previous culture. They represent abstract ideas about colonialism and race, and exactly who was/is welcomed within community boundaries. However, the meanings surrounding narratives do change. Monuments, if they are to survive into the future, also need to change. Nonetheless, their positions on race, and how they worked in drawing historical racial boundaries, always remain. While the physical forms may stay the same, the meanings attached to that iconography can transform. Foremost, as pieces of art, interpretation is directly dependent on the viewer; as the context surrounding monuments and
their historical narratives shift, the interpretation and understanding of these historical “documents” also change. Because of their contradictory static yet fluid identity, monuments and their iconography are critical documents for the historian. They offer glimpses into the historic drawing of racial boundaries, but continue to provide insights into the contemporary period.

For viewers in the West, public monuments to historic events or individuals are common. They line city streets, centre green spaces, dot the grounds of government buildings, and are featured in open plazas. For many viewers, these memorials are part of their everyday environments and most are passed without a second glance. The bronze figures placed on pedestals loom over collective landscapes, but are often left unacknowledged. Even scholarly attention, until recently, is very limited; few studies have adequately employed a deep visual analysis of how commemorations “look.” Although monuments have permeated our everyday living experience, their complex meanings are only minimally understood and rarely examined. Through the study of iconology, the diverse readings of these erections are gradually untangled; by understanding what a monument looks like and why offers important clues into racial boundaries and expressions of colonialism. Monuments stand as tributes to their period of creation, everlasting visual testaments of historical memory; however, these seemingly static markers also demonstrate how narratives shift over time. Situated in the both the past and present, monuments continue to perform for their publics, adapting to the values and boundaries of the next generation. For scholars, monuments and their iconographies offer an endless source of analysis and interpretation; not simply a window into history, but a moving picture of historical memory.
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Figure 2.5: Cockburn, James Pattison. “Nelson’s Monument and Market Place of Montreal, July 20th 1829.” Watercolour. 1829. From Library and Archives Canada: Peter Winkworth Collection of Canadiana. (MIKAN 2838137)

Figure 2.6: Unknown Photographer. “Memorial to General Sir Isaac Brock in St. Paul’s Cathedral London England.” Photograph. 1989. From Niagara Falls Public Library (Record No. 256265)

Figure 2.7: Cockburn, James Pattison. “Brock’s Monument, Queenston Heights.” Watercolour. c. 1822. From Library Archives Canada (MIKAN 2836182).

Figure 2.8: Unknown Creator. “S.E. view of Brock’s Monument on Queenston Heights as it appeared on May 9th A.D. 1841.” Drawing. From Archives of Ontario: Thomas Glegg Fonds. (Ref. F596)
Figure 2.10: Coleridge, Francis George. “Brock’s Monument, Niagara River on Lake Ontario.” Watercolour. 1865. From Library and Archives Canada: Francis George Coleridge Collection (MIKAN 2836838).

Figure 3.3: Kane, Paul. “Cree or Assiniboine Lodges in Front of Rocky Mountain Fort (Alts).” Watercolour. April 1848. From Library and Archives Canada: David Ives Bushnell Collection of Canadiana (MIKAN 2836589).

Figure 3.4: Topley Studio, Detail of Original. “The Champlain Monument, Nepean Point.” Photograph. N.d. From Library and Archives Canada: Topley Series.

Figure 3.5: Romney, George. “Thayendanegea (Joseph Brant).” Oil on Canvas. 1776. National Gallery of Canada.

Figure 3.6: Berczy, William. “Thayendanegea (Joseph Brant)” Oil on Canvas. c. 1807. National Gallery of Canada.

Figure 3.7: Ames, Ezra. “Portrait of Joseph Brant, Thayendanegea.” Reproduction after original Oil Painting. 1806. From Burlington Historical Society: Mary Fraser Fonds.

Figure 3.11: Unknown Photographer. “Canadian Indian Portrait – Indian Life.” Photograph. N.d. From Library and Archives Canada: Canadian National Railways Collection (MIKAN 3349380).

Figure 3.15: Woodruff, John. “Blackfoot Chiefs at Earnescliffe during a visit to Ottawa.” Photograph. 1886. From Library and Archives Canada: Geological Survey of Canada. Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN 3567399).

Figure 4.4: International Stationary Co. “Laura Secord Monument, Niagara Falls, Ont.” Postcard. N.d. From Lundy’s Lane Historical Society (Record 389245).

Figure 4.5: Fraser, Alexander. “Six Nations Confederacy Chiefs and Members at the 1812 Centennial at Queenston Heights.” Photograph. 1912. From Six Nations Public Library (ID SNPL000021v00i)

Figure 4.6: Unknown Photographer. “John Graves Simcoe Memorial, Exeter Cathedral, England.” Photograph. N.d. From Archives of Ontario (Ref F47-17-0-11).

Figure 4.8: Galbraith, Alexander W. “Unveiling of General John Graves Simcoe Monument, Queen’s Park, Premier George Ross Speaking.” May 27 1903. Photograph. From City of Toronto Archives: Alexander W. Galbraith Fonds (Item 448).

Figure 4.10: Unknown Photographer, Detail of Original. “Unveiling Ceremony of the Canadian War Memorial by Vernon March on Parliament Hill.” Photograph. May 21 1939. From Vancouver Archives: Major Matthews Collection (Ref. AM54-S4-2-: CVA 371-1975).
Figure 4.12: Unknown Photographer. “United Empire Loyalist Monument Created by Sydney March” Photograph. c. 1929. From Vancouver Archives: Major Matthews Collection (Ref. AM54-S4-.Mon P125).

Figure 4.16: “United Empire Loyalists, 1776-1784.” Enlargement of Stamp. Issued July 1 1934. From Library Archives Canada (MIKAN 2242524).

Figure 5.2: Unknown Photographer. “Uncle Tom’s Cabin Historic Site, Josiah Henson House” Photograph. N.d. From Ontario Heritage Trust.

Figure 5.5 Currier and Ives. “The Lincoln Statue” Illustration. 1876. From Civil War Trust.

Figure 5.6: Unknown Photographer. “Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th Regiment.” Photograph. N.d. From Boston African American National Historic Site, National Parks Service.

Figure 5.7: Unknown Photographer. “Underground Railroad Sculpture, Battle Creek.” Photograph. N.d. From Calhoun Visitors Bureau.


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