

nineteenth-century circular saw, and in addition we believed that the nature of the operation in terms of process and machinery would be of considerable interest to the viewer. The colonist car reconstruction was seen as a kind of "period room." Here the visitor can walk into the car and, it is hoped, leave with some sense of how things must have been. It is of course far from a total walk-in "historic site" experience, but lacking greater space and with no costumed guides available it is as close as we could come.

Now that the gallery is complete my principal concern is that there are still too few artifacts to induce the visitor to come back for another look. I have a suspicion as well that we should have tried harder for flexibility in the design of some of the cases. This would have permitted and even encouraged us to install new artifacts in an exhibition which will probably last for five or six years, a factor which would make economic sense for our institution.

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La Fabrication artisanale des tissus; appareils et techniques.

Québec: Musée du Québec, Ministère des Affaires culturelles,
 1974. 103 p., illus. ISBN 0-7754-1892-7 \$4.00

The researcher of historic Canadian textiles often experiences great difficulty in finding literature to provide assistance in his field. There exist, of course, certain standard texts: Harold B. and Dorothy K. Burnham, Keep Me Warm Warm One Night: Early Handweaving in Eastern Canada (Toronto:

University of Toronto Press, 1972); Florence M. Mackley, Handweaving in Cape Breton (Sydney, N.S.: privately printed, 1967); Audrey Spencer, Spinning and Weaving at Upper Canada Village (Toronto: Ryerson Press, [c.1964]). However, these are few and one is constantly looking for supplementary publications.

In 1974 the Musée du Québec published La fabrication artisanale des tissus - appareils et techniques, a well-researched, soft cover book describing the techniques and tools employed in the hand-making of fabrics in nineteenth and early twentieth century French Canada. Documented with excellent drawings and photographs, this book is well worth inclusion in any textile library.

Following an introduction containing a brief overview of textile history and a description of tools and equipment used in New France, there is a chronological presentation of the processes used by the habitants to transform their raw fibres into finished products. In order to accomplish this description the book is divided into three parts, "Les matières premières," "La préparation du fil," and "Fabrication du tissu," with the appropriate sub-divisions contained within each.

Part one deals with the primary fibres of flax and wool used by the French-Canadians. The procedures of converting the flax plant into fibres to be spun are discussed one by one. My only criticism of this chapter is that the description of removing the seeds from the plant, or rippling, follows that of retting or rotting it; rippling is actually the first step to be taken after harvesting and drying. This is a small oversight, however, and the detailed explanation of drying the flax before breaking it certainly compensates for the error. Many articles on the subject of linen processing fail even to mention such a practice, yet it is well portrayed here, with a clarifying drawing following the text. The preparation of the wool to be spun is discussed thoroughly and competently; no new information is presented, but nothing is omitted.

Part two of the publication describes the preparations of yarn for use on the loom. This is a comprehensive section making several especially good contributions. The photographs of the women spinning and warping are excellent, with a truly representative depiction of wool spinning with machine carded roving; all too often one has the impression that wool for spinning on the wheel was always carded by hand.

While spinning, skeining, dyeing, linen bleaching, bobbin winding and warping are all adequately described in this section, it is the presentation of the skeining of the yarn and bleaching of the linen that will add to the knowledge of anyone familiar with the craft. Skeining is illustrated with various types of reels and swifts including the use of songs as counting devices for the yarn. The old unit of measurement, the "aune," is given as varying between 0.8 and 1.4 meters, a length especially helpful to one using a ^{reel} swift of that period. The detailed account of linen bleaching is taken from E.-Z. Massicotte's "L'industrie du lin au Canada" in L'almanac du peuple Beuchemin (Montréal: Librairie Beuchemin, [1922?], p. 357). The directions and accompanying illustration are such that the researcher is clearly aware of the techniques employed in bleaching and, in fact, could almost complete the procedures himself.

Part three describes the weaving of the cloth, but this is by no means the final step. Instead, the domestic production of the fabric is concluded by the incorporation of chapters on the techniques of fulling, the variety of finished products of the loom, the recycling of old textiles and, finally, the chore of wash day. Each of these chapters is well worth reading, but by far the most interesting to me is the chapter on fulling. Once again the highly informative description and attendant drawings are taken from L'almanac du peuple Beuchemin (Montréal: Librairie Beuchemin, [1921?], pp. 340-44). Fulling of the cloth was a custom which occurred in many cultures and Massicotte's description of the habitant's techniques and tools provides a fine basis of comparison with these.

A comprehensive bibliography comprised of publications, dictionaries and oral material concludes the publication.

In a more general sense this work of the Musée du Québec has provided us with an excellent insight into the specifically French-Canadian aspects of hand-made fabric production. The spinning of yarns and weaving of fabrics is universal in context, but the authors are constantly referring to the evolution of these crafts as they occurred in Quebec, an important factor in distinguishing this publication from the many others on the subject. La fabrication artisanale des tissus is worthwhile, both in terms of text and illustrations, and if one's knowledge of French is limited the pictures are sufficient recommendation for owning the book.

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Heritage Furniture/Le mobilier traditionnel. Edited with an introduction by A. Gregg Finley. Saint John, N.B.: The New Brunswick Museum, 1976. 63 p., illus. (NBM Collection Catalogue Two/Deux) \$4.95

Heritage Furniture is the second in a series of catalogues to be published on the collections of the New Brunswick Museum. The title, Heritage Furniture, reflects the same precision that marks the excellent introduction by A. Gregg Finley, Curator and Head of the museum's Canadian History Department. As Finley explains, the catalogue embodies the many kinds of furniture that are part of New Brunswick's heritage: plain, fancy, locally made and imported furniture.