

every aspect of daily life: social, economic, political, military, and spiritual. The same absence of fragmentation is characteristic not only of Judaism and Christianity but also of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and what are now called "primal societies." Both the Jewish *halakhah* and the Islamic *shariah*, for example, insist that religion is intimately tied to both commerce and politics; failure to repay a loan is not merely a legal offense, therefore, but a religious one as well.

The same thing is true of traditional religious pilgrimages. These have always been multipurpose affairs. Pilgrims expect not only to worship at the shrine of a saint or the temple of a god, after all, but to see the world beyond their villages, find husbands or wives for their children, savour the latest gossip from distant parts, buy souvenirs or holy objects, trade textiles for tamarind seeds, exchange recipes for pilav or polenta, and so forth. Trade routes, please note, are seldom isolated from pilgrimage routes. Both ecclesiastics and saints complain about all this from time to time, of course, when things get out of hand. But human nature cannot be overruled. Pilgrimages, in short, have never been entirely "religious." Or, to put it another way, secularity has never been neatly separated from religion (not until modern times in the West, at any rate).

4. In the 1920s, conservative Protestants were attacked by liberals for being too *otherworldly*, for withdrawing from the society and its problems, for seeking "pie in the sky" instead of social justice. By the 1980s, conservatives were being attacked by

liberals for precisely the opposite reason: now liberals considered them too *worldly*, too successful in attracting members, and — worst of all — too influential both economically and politically. Some people might argue that liberal Protestants originally understood more easily than conservatives — that is, evangelicals in general and fundamentalists in particular — the inherent links between religion and other aspects of life. Be that as it may, liberal Protestants have tried to resolve the apparent dichotomy by making religion more secular (although they seldom admit that). Conservative Protestants, on the other hand, have tried to do so by making the secular more religious (although they, *unlike* the folks who produce movies such as *The Wizard of Oz* and television shows such as *Star Trek*, seldom succeed in that).

5. Diana Crane, *The Transformation of the Avant-Garde: The New York Art World, 1940–1985* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).
6. The distinction between worship and veneration has always been problematic in Christianity. It led to iconoclastic violence not only in the Protestant West but centuries earlier in the Byzantine East. In theory, at least, icons are merely channels that direct the devotion of worshippers to God. In practice, icons are sometimes more like "idols."
7. Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen, *Meaning for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).
8. Ann Douglas, *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s* (New York: Noonday Press, 1995).

## Hallie E. Bond, *Boats and Boating in the Adirondacks*

JOHN SUMMERS

Bond, Hallie E. *Boats and Boating in the Adirondacks*. Syracuse, N.Y.: The Adirondack Museum and Syracuse University Press, 1995. 334 pages, 361 illus., cloth US\$49.95, ISBN 0-8156-0373-8.

This large and handsomely-designed book is really several volumes between one set of covers, each of some significance. Adirondack historian Phillip G. Terrie contributes an introductory chapter that establishes a geographical and historical context for the region and its history as a park and recreational area. Hallie Bond, Curator of Collections and Boats at the Adirondack Museum and the driving force behind the 1991 exhibit that spawned this book, lays out the story of the evolution and use of small craft in the Adirondacks from the early nineteenth century to the present in eleven

information-filled and well-illustrated chapters. The noted draftsman and boat delineator Sam F. Manning contributes five illustrated sidebars showing an elm or oak-bark canoe, Adirondack guideboats, a lapstreak rowboat, traditionally-fastened strip-built boats, and wood-canvas canoes, and boatbuilder Mason Smith wrote most of the construction notes that accompany them. An illustrated *catalogue raisonnée* of the Adirondack Museum's outstanding small boat collection is followed by a list of builders whose work is represented. There is also a sample of the documentary drawings that have been made for selected boats in the collection, a glossary and a selected bibliography.

Through these different sections, the book manages to be both of interest to the general reader and of use to the specialist. The

introduction and subsequent chapters are clearly and broadly written for general consumption, but also well-referenced with end notes. Although the focus throughout is on the watercraft, such as the region's famous Adirondack guideboat, boats are also related to larger social trends such as the rise of leisure time and railroad access into the region. The story is carried from the first explorers to see the region in the sixteenth century, through early settlements and the beginnings of recreational activity to the great camp and hotel era of the late nineteenth century and up to the present. The book is heavily illustrated with photographs, engravings, drawings and paintings, most of which are from the museum's own extensive collections.

This is a large book, at 334 pages, and expensive by virtue of its somewhat specialized subject matter. While acknowledging that the economics of book production may have precluded making it larger, some additions would have made a good book better. There is but one map, a general, modern calligraphic-style one at the beginning. Given the amount of travel referred to, and the region's intricate network of connecting waterways, smaller and more detailed maps to document particular journeys, travel routes, or hotel and camp locations would have helped. While this book goes some way towards integrating watercraft into their social and material context, no mention is made in the catalogue or elsewhere of the various items of equipment used to propel or travel in these boats. A discussion of oars, paddles, sail rigs, yokes, seats, fishing and hunting equipment would have enriched the presentation of the boats themselves in the catalogue section, particularly since the museum has good collections in this area. The book makes relatively little mention of construction practices aside from the illustrated sidebars, but readers are well-directed to the seminal work on the subject, Durant's *The Adirondack Guideboat*, and other material in the bibliography.

The Adirondack Museum was founded in 1957 as a regional museum of art, history and culture, but as Terrie makes clear in his introductory chapter, "This Venice of America," it was almost inevitable that in so being it would also become a museum of watercraft, for boats are inseparable from the Adirondack story. Over the years the museum accumulated an embarrassment of riches in historic watercraft, so much so perhaps that it was felt necessary to add to a recent brochure the outline "more than just boats" (though that

phrase did appear below the photo of an Adirondack Guideboat).

For years many of these small craft were on display, and were justly known as a highlight of the museum's exhibitry. This was due in large part to the strength of the collection itself, however, and not to the museological techniques employed, for the exhibit was of the usual taxonomically-based kind traditionally used for large comprehensive collections, where like is shown with like in some decorative pattern, a style seen particularly frequently with collections of insects and antique hand tools. While there were a great many boats on display of significant interest, there was no overriding theme or interpretive context. For the student of watercraft history, this was close to paradise, and indeed this kind of visible storage display certainly has its uses. For the average visitor, however, the experience was less fruitful. A further consequence of grouping the boats as a relatively uninterpreted group of discrete artifacts was that they were not integrated with the rest of the museum's collections, and Adirondack life as a whole. The result was more like a department store of artifacts, with boats here, paintings there, and furniture somewhere else.

Shortly after her arrival in 1987, Curator Hallie Bond was given an opportunity to re-interpret the watercraft collection. This kind of permanent exhibit renewal is potentially one of the most fruitful kinds of curatorial project that can be undertaken, but also the most challenging. Any exhibit, no matter how old or tattered or unfashionable, has a constituency. For a certain portion of a museum's audience, lack of change will always be a virtue, so there can be a collision between staff and public attitudes when exhibits are changed. As the Smithsonian Institution found out when it revamped its long-standing "Watercraft Hall" (an old taxonomic-style display) into the "Hall of American Maritime Enterprise" (a thematic, multi-media "modern" exhibit), what staff and professional museologists see as an improvement may not be so regarded by other groups of users.

A given exhibit also represents an important document in an institution's history, embodying significant beliefs about the meaning and interpretation of a collection and proper historical practice; one that is worth studying for its own sake, or at least being documented before it is disassembled. A new exhibit should represent a fundamental reconsideration of material and cultural meanings, and ideally introduce the results of new scholarship and

research. Finally, the development of new permanent exhibits is an expensive proposition.

In this case, the resulting project produced the book under discussion and a new permanent exhibit. It is an outstanding example of curatorial practice and should be of significant interest to the material culture scholar. The work was important in several ways. First, it ensured that a watercraft collection of international significance was given due attention. In preparation for the book each of the boats in the museum was re-catalogued, cleaned, measured and photographed before being returned to storage. Though unglamorous and exacting (and, in the case of boats, often just plain hard work), this kind of basic museology is fundamental to material culture scholarship. Without accurate and consistent item-level information and visual records, it is next to impossible to research either an artifact or a collection. Without good cataloguing, so much of the crucial information about provenance, use, acquisition and interpretation can be lost forever. Notwithstanding material culture's focus on obtaining information directly from the artifact, this secondary data is crucial to any further analysis. Material culture research begins with basic curatorship.

Second, this curatorial work resulted not just in better records, but in an important new exhibit that represents a great advance in the interpretation of historic small craft. If the history museum is material culture's rightful home, then the interpretive public exhibit should be its most important statement. While individual research projects and scholarly papers serve to organize information and solicit professional feedback, it is ultimately the dissemination of both artifacts and information through the medium of the exhibit that has the broadest impact, returning items of material culture to the world of which they were once an active part. In her conclusion to Chapter 11, Bond quotes Adirondack guidebook writer Paul Jamieson, speaking of the effect of the wilderness experience, as saying "The past can be recovered...I have seen the past and it works." She then goes on to speak movingly of the way in which artifacts, and specifically in this case the watercraft of the Adirondacks, can connect the past with the present through their use, enumerating any number of ways in which the past works through boats. Surely the premise of a successful exhibit such as this is also that "the past works," on any number of levels.

A third important result of this project is the catalogue of the museum's watercraft

collection, which follows the narrative chapters. In terms of sheer quantity, much less has been written about watercraft history than about maritime history. This is unfortunate to say the least, as smaller boats are by no means a smaller topic. The field of watercraft history is usually understood to pertain to small craft, this is, those less than forty feet (twelve metres) in length. It is a specialized area within maritime history as a whole. Perhaps because fewer significant naval actions have been fought in rowboats than in ships of the line, watercraft historians typically approach their subject differently than those who delineate broad canvases of empires, fleets and patterns of trade.

The history of small boats is seldom linked to larger political and social issues, but typically is focussed more closely on the boats themselves. In this, studies of watercraft are often works of material culture in spirit, if not name. Published studies of watercraft can be arranged in several broad groups based on their scope: global (James Hornell's *Water Transport*); national (Howard Chapelle's *American Small Sailing Craft*); regional (Kenneth and Helen Durant's *The Adirondack Guideboat*); local (A. H. Duke and W. M. Gray's *The Boatbuilders of Muskoka*); anthropological (David Gidmark's *The Algonquin Birchbark Canoe*); and studies of a particular type (Peter Guthor's *The Seabright Skiff and Other Shore Boats*).

Another significant kind of work on watercraft is a descriptive catalogue of a collection, such as Howard Chapelle's *The National Watercraft Collection*; Maynard Bray's *Mystic Seaport Museum Watercraft*; and Richard Dodds's and Pete Leshner's *A Heritage In Wood: The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum's Small Craft Collection*. Such single-institution works are rounded out by the Museum Small Craft Association's recently-released *North American Watercraft: A Union List of Boats in Museum Collections*. Bond's *Boats and Boating in the Adirondacks* lies in this latter group.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of this kind of descriptive catalogue. It is commonplace in the museum world that only a small portion of the total mass of historic artifact collections are ever exhibited, and an even smaller amount is researched and published. This is particularly true for collections of historic watercraft. Publication of these kinds of annotated catalogues improves the situation by publicizing the quantity and range of a museum's holdings; organizing them into some sort of typological structure; and allowing local

and regional forms wider exposure. Such work is squarely in the interests of the material culture field at large, where research is based on the analysis of large bodies of data and large numbers of artifacts. Without accurate baseline information on collections, this is impossible to carry out.

Each of the catalogue entries in *Boats and Boating in the Adirondacks* includes the boat's typological name; length; beam; weight; builder; date of construction; a narrative about significant features; references and further reading if applicable; donor information and the accession number. Each boat was photographed against a neutral background and roughly the same scale and, in most cases, from a point off the starboard bow or port quarter, unless another view served better. The photographs are unfortunately often either underexposed and/or badly printed, with the result that many of the interiors of the boats are too dark to make out details. Nonetheless, the photographs alone represent a significant research resource.

The catalogue entries are quite similar to those used in the earlier Mystic Seaport Museum and Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum volumes, though the Mystic catalogue adds another section called "status," which records the degree of originality, restoration and repair. However, this information is often mentioned in the

narrative section in the Adirondack volume. Taken in their aggregate, these catalogue entries are a running curatorial commentary on the collection, and form a narrative equally as compelling, if not more so, as the historical chapters that precede them. It is obvious from the information given about the boats both that a tremendous amount of research has been carried out, and that there is still a great deal to be known about these complex artifacts and the makers and users associated with them.

The strength of North America's watercraft tradition is in its local and regional forms. It becomes abundantly clear from a consideration of the range of small craft types that have been developed over the last two hundred years to what a large extent the design and use of artifacts of material culture is situational and contingent. Out of the fundamental requirements for a structure to carry a person (or persons) on the water and to accomplish a task afloat, come a multitude of forms, each one a singular response to a user, an environment and a use.

*Boats and Boating in the Adirondacks* brings into full view the watercraft, builders and users of a significant American region. In doing so it makes a contribution not only to the study and understanding of historic watercraft, but to the ongoing exploration of the culture of material and the materiality of culture that is at the heart of this discipline.

## Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory*

BRIAN S. OSBORNE

Schama, Simon. *Landscape and Memory*, Toronto: Random House of Canada, 1995. xi + 652 pp., 250 black and white, 45 colour illus., cloth \$44.96, ISBN 0-394-22214-8.

*Landscape and Memory* is one of a cluster of recent volumes that have related the social memory to the construction of symbolic place and time.<sup>1</sup> Schama's primary objective is to discover the myths, memories, and obsessions that underlie the Western world's interaction with Nature. It is an "excavation below our conventional sight-level to recover the veins of myth and memory that lie beneath the surface" (p. 14). But it does more than expose the deep roots of our thinking about the physical world.

Aesthetically, it is the influence of deep-seated cultural experience and preferences that "invests a retinal impression with the quality we experience as beauty" (p. 12). And more ominously, inherited traditions and remembered myths have often transformed geology, hydrology, botany, and zoology from scientific abstractions into symbolically charged places as part of "the cult of patriotic landscape" (p. 63).

Perhaps this is why this volume is being reviewed in a journal that some would think is concerned primarily with science, technology, and the material paraphernalia of history. It is because, as Schama puts it, "...landscape is the work of the mind. Its scenery is built up as much from strata of memory as from layers of