REVIEW ARTICLES

Newfoundland in Photographs

STUART PIERSON

OF THE ELEVEN PUBLICATIONS under notice here, seven—the two Holloways, the Tourist Board portfolio, Mowat-de Visser, Horwood-Taylor, Hansen and Stewart—are out of print. The other four may be seen on the shelves of the Newfoundland section at local bookstores where they stare out at you with their vividly coloured dust jackets, their dramatic images, their distinctive shapes peculiar to books of photographs, which are often broader than they are tall. They have in common the art or craft or science or trade or hobby of photography as it has been practiced in Newfoundland, Labrador, and "the East." Beyond that, they are a *potpourri* as regards purpose, scope and quality. I will briefly describe each of those which came out since the advent of the slickly produced photography book, discuss some features of the earlier publications, and conclude with some reflections on the whole batch.

This Rock Within the Sea: A Heritage Lost contains one hundred and fifty-eight of John de Visser's photographs, all in black and white, and, interspersed, thirty-five pages of Farley Mowat's ripe prose, the excesses of which begin with that pompous "within." All the photographs are of the South Coast, where Mowat lived and suffered, as I suppose everyone knows by now, in the 1960s. De Visser has apparently spent a good deal of time in the province, as he also contributed a number of photographs to Stewart's book on Labrador. The two authors dedicate their book to the "outport people," especially those of "Messieurs Cove" (a *nom de guerre* for François), and more particularly to Dorothy and Doris Spencer "who sang songs in the days of their childhood" (as who did not?). Mowat's view of Newfoundland is a trifle romantic. He loved the place then and, like many lovers, projected onto his loved one virtues he wished or hoped she had, chief amongst which I think was self-possession.[1] The people of what

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Mowat insists on calling the "Sou'west Coast" are descended from "the strongest and bravest of the oppressed" who escaped from feudal Europe, and they are now an "Antaean people, adamantine, indomitable, and profoundly certain of themselves." Antaeus, for those whose knowledge of Greek mythology has slipped, was the son of mother earth and Poseidon, the god of the sea; he was invincible in wrestling because his strength was renewed every time he touched the earth, his mother, or, as Mowat would say, his Mother. Not a bad image, especially since the legend goes on to relate that Hercules strangled him by holding him off the ground, a fate which, Mowat fears, threatens also Newfoundlanders, tempted and bullied as they have been, by his account, into accepting Confederation, resettlement, industrialization and assimilation into the "Admass society." But for a people with the qualities which Mowat names to have succumbed to all of this spells something more sinister than the "lost heritage" of the subtitle—it spells betrayal, seduction, a corruption of the innocents. Mowat's melodramatic and overheated imagination requires his "resolute and prideful race" to have been "induced—and if not induced, then forced—to abandon the ways and the world they knew." The fact that outport Protestants—like those of the South Coast—were the island's strongest supporters of Confederation does not enter his calculation.

Mowat in this unpaged volume has divided his text into eight sections; de Visser's photographs accompany these and underscore the march of the argument, if that is what it is. The frontispiece—always so revealing a clue to the meaning of photographic books—shows white seas breaking on black rock in bright sunlit air full of spray—or, as Mowat would say, spume. You get the effect by shooting into the sun. The backispiece is similar. In between, 1) sea, rock, ice, Newfoundland dog (standing resolutely on the shore), caribou, fishermen in dories looking small and anonymous in an expanse of grey tossing water; 2) faces mostly of the old and the young; 3) villages and the shore; 4) around the outports in ice and snow; 5) interiors where people are talking, dancing, whittling, and, in an extended sequence, mourning a death; 6) fish and the men who catch them, one would believe always in filthy weather; 7) upland from the shore, where men hunt and gather fuel in a frozen landscape; 8) the young at play, in school, at work, or hangin' out, along with pictures of melancholy derelict household items, presumably in an abandoned village. The last shot but one—before the repeat of the sea-battered rock theme mentioned above—shows a young woman sitting on a rock, facing the camera, in a snowy landscape. She is wearing a kerchief, a heavy duffle coat, thick trousers, stout boots and warm gloves. Still, she looks cold, and she is grieving. Her brow is creased and her mouth is set as though she is about to cry. She stares unseeing at the ground some yards ahead of her. Is she the woman—or "girl"—Mowat quotes fifteen pages earlier in the last paragraph of the text? Here is the passage, starting with Mowat's introduction:

> For as long as I live I shall remember an evening when I sat on a high rock overlooking the sea, and listened to the words of a young girl speaking about herself and her life.
>
> "The worstest thing I know is that we got to go away. I watches the gulls following the boats out there and I wishes I was a gull sometimes, because nobody makes them go away from where they belongs. Those gulls are some lucky! They can stay and live in Burgeo until they dies. It won't be very long before they's nobody here except the gulls at all."

We are not told whether the woman who spoke these words is the same as the woman in the photograph, because it does not matter to Mowat or de Visser. They are too busy rewriting Oliver Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village* to care.

> Sweet Burgeo! parent of the blissful hour,
> Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> O luxury! thou cursed by Heaven's decree,
> How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!
> How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
> Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!

Harold Horwood and Stephen Taylor's book *Beyond the Road* sings the same tune, though a little less stridently. Horwood's prose is quieter and Taylor's photographs avoid melodrama and the striving toward epic dimension. Horwood's contribution, twenty-odd pages sketching the history and present state of the Great Northern Peninsula, is supplemented by an equal number of pages of transcribed tapes—comments and reminiscences from residents there, mostly men, mostly elderly. Taylor has printed one hundred and fifty-three black-and-white photographs, roughly a third of which are portraits. The greater part of the material, verbal and pictorial, comes from the west coast of the Peninsula from Trout River to Port au Choix, though a few of the authors' informants live at the northern tip and on the east coast, and there are pictures of places and people down in Cochrane country, Conche and Englee and Canada Harbour. A map locates most of the communities mentioned or depicted (9).

Despite sparer prose, Horwood, like Mowat, sets down Newfoundland's post-war experience in the form of a simple stark contrast. Before:

> it was a land of pioneers, of men and women willing and able to live by what they could catch and kill and cultivate. . . . Life was always on the edge, but [they] managed . . . just the same, without any kind of help from outside. [They] . . . lived by preying on seals and caribou and fish and sea birds, almost completely without the organization that we call "society." (13)

In between: radio, aircraft, roads, Confederation, resettlement. After:

> a human backwater, where men stagnate, or emigrate, or struggle against impossible odds to preserve a spirit and a way of life that belong to the past. These are people whom the world has left behind. (27)

Well, not quite left behind, because the youth belong to the Pepsi generation (65), and the Peninsula gets mission-preachers, Mormons, canned country music, American "jive," mass market paperbacks (soft-core porn, nurse books, comic books) "whose sole ideals seemed to be sex and violence and sentimentality, the cheap status of costly cars, and total disregard for any kind of human integrity" (65). In short, from self-sufficiency to ignominious dependence on handouts and somebody else's (dehumanizing) culture. Pioneers versus freeloaders.

Untangling the various strands—primitivism, anti-Americanism, hatred of the twentieth century, etc.—in this complaint would not be easy. I only want to remark that it seems to me to oversimplify in both directions. First, it exaggerates—so does Mowat—the independence of pre-war Newfoundland, which was from its earliest history intricately involved in the international market. This was a bread culture, and no wheat grows here; before Pepsi came, Newfoundlanders drank sweet tea with tinned milk; the prosperity of the island depended on fish markets abroad rather more than it ever did on the caribou herd. Secondly, radios and roads and the rest are not autonomous agencies; their arrival signals a desire to be even more closely integrated into the international market. It is by no means clear even that an anti-Confederate vote would have reflected a wish to live by what one could "catch and kill and cultivate." The same argument applies to government services. Thirdly, on the evidence presented, the conversations and photographs that Horwood and Taylor have put forward, I do not see the stagnation, alienation, and pain that they claim characterize life on the Peninsula now. John Slade of St. Anthony, who used to run mail by dogsled from Cook's Harbour to St. Anthony, has been unaffected by mass-paperback sentimentality. "After the highway come through we didn't worry no longer. We made away with all the dogs" (47). But mostly, as one would expect from a country whose population split nearly down the middle on Confederation and some of whose people were led to resettle by an enormously popular Premier, what comes through is *ambivalence*. Here is Bernard McDonald of Englee:

> Most all these places have been resettled, now. There was no way to get the road into 'em, see? I didn't like leaving Canada Harbour. I'd built a home, and settled down there, and nobody likes to leave home, to be resettled. But now I wouldn't change back. . . . We're a lot better off. Most people now have a car, a

> telephone . . . and they've got water running out of the tap—and that's things we could never have in Canada Harbour, eh? (125)

In sum, the people whose words have been transcribed in this book grumble and regret some, but do not talk the same language as Horwood, who talks of a "disaster," a society "ripped to shreds" and a people "furiously unhappy." Perhaps it is Mr. Horwood who is furiously unhappy.

Finally, is there not something incongruous about celebrating the virtues of pre-Confederation outport life with cameras, tape-recorders and slick-paper books published by companies that span the world? The result is a product whose existence and distribution require the very civilization these outport people would have been better off, according to Horwood (and Mowat), to have spurned. This is the self-contradictory position of the tourist whose prize catch is a place where no tourists go, who goes home to tell everybody about it, and then laments the fact that on his return the place has set up a tourist bureau.

Taylor, like de Visser, begins his sequence of photographs with landscapes. Headlands under a glowering sky, ice, dunes, driftwood, meadows with horses and sheep (frontispiece; 14-21). Some pages of text follow, after which the road, then still gravel and accordion-pleated (24). (I have not been able to figure out the title of this book—*Beyond the Road*—since we never seem far out of its reach in these pages.) There is no set pattern to the pictures which come after: portraits are interspersed with village scenes, more landscapes, domestic and architectural details, quite a few sagging fences, and two shots of the graveyard at Cape Onion. The tones are lighter than de Visser's, greyer than Hansen's and blacker and whiter than Cochrane's, whose book has a bluish tinge for some technical reason I am ignorant of. The result, in the Taylor-Horwood book, is a certain flatness as compared with the rest. Taylor's pictures are less arresting. They are good-looking, well-composed, and judiciously lighted, yet some dimension of force is lacking; perhaps it is not a matter of finish and tone but of emotion: the village shots and landscapes especially seem to me bland and unfelt, as though the photographer were simply practicing. Having said that, I must now confess, leafing through again to make sure I am not making this all up, that certain of the portraits are powerful indeed—cf. the intensity of Morgan White's ten-year-old eyes (126), Clyde Goosney's squinty alertness (102), the tight, muscular self-assurance of the unnamed hunter (92), the difference, where liking to be liked is concerned, between Morris Decker (78), who doesn't give a damn either way, and Charlie Martin (77), who positively twinkles in his attempt to be agreeable. These intimate moments have great value, but they do not pervade the book.

I have a friend who when shown snapshots always asks "who took it?" She is wise to ask, for photographs reveal as much about the person behind the camera as they do about whatever is in front of it. Perhaps they reveal more, if it be granted that there is an infinite number of possible

photographs of any object or scene or person. The point is forcefully illustrated by Ben Hansen's *Newfoundland Portfolio.* This collection starts and finishes in a manner similar to *This Rock Within the Sea:* the first photograph is of black rock buffeted by white breakers, the last of a cast-off beat-up washstand mirror amongst beach rocks. But the similarity ends there. In Hansen's photographs even the breakers and rocks are tame; his Newfoundland is an orderly, composed place. No invocation of Antaeus or Prometheus or the "elemental" here, for things are under control. In Mowat and de Visser, men in foul-weather gear haul nets in a storm; in Hansen, a man in St. John's tars his roof on a sunny day.

There are ninety-six photographs in *Newfoundland Portfolio,* sixteen of them in colour, along with a scant three pages of text, one of introduction by Peter Bell, one giving Hansen's artistic credo, and one "about the author," from which we learn that Hansen was born in Denmark and lived the first twenty years or so of his life there. The book is dedicated to his family, as befits its personal, messageless character.

The photographs were taken mainly on the east coast of the island, from the east side of Notre Dame Bay around the capes to Ferryland. Roughly a third are from St. John's, another quarter from Greenspond, Bonavista Bay, and the rest divided about evenly among places in Bonavista, Trinity and Conception Bays. In addition there are half a dozen each from the West and South Coasts. Most are summer scenes; those that are not are shot in full sunlight. John de Visser's melodramatic contrasts of light and dark do not appear. Nor do his panoramic spreads or aerial shots. Hansen has laid out his book in no discernible order, although the opening and closing pictures serve as a framing device, for besides frontispiece and last shot, already mentioned, the first few photographs are principally of water, ice and rock, the last few of abandoned household objects, storm-twisted scraggly trees, driftwood and tombstones. Also, all the colour plates are grouped together in the centre of the book. The absence of an overall ordering principle reinforces the impression one gets from many individual photographs that their author is not the kind of man who would jab at you with his forefinger while talking to you. He has given us a very Scandinavian Newfoundland in these photographs.

Robert Stewart's *Labrador* is one of a series published by Time-Life Books and devoted to the "World's Wild Places." It is quite a production. One hundred and seven photographs, three maps, and fourteen reproduced paintings add up to a sumptuous package in the style made famous by *National Geographic.* Stewart, apparently not himself a photographer, wrote the text and embellished it—or the editors did, of whom numerous are listed on the reverse of the title page—with the work of twenty-one photographers, a few of them local (to Labrador, that is), most of them international, including our own John de Visser and Candace Cochrane. The

photographs are generally of two sorts: the large-canvas landscape shot and the isolating close-up of various species of colourful bird, animal or flower. Most the the text is natural-history travelogue: "Labrador is a land of surprises, and one of its most astonishing aspects is the variety and riotous colour of its flora" (64). One is told what it is like to visit there, rather than what it is like to live there, though natives are quoted on such subjects as mosquitoes, black flies and wolverines. Famous treks to or through Labrador—Audubon's, some of whose paintings are here reproduced, and the Hubbards', first Mr.'s and then Mrs.'—each get a chapter. The single concession to any potential lurking curiosity about present living conditions is a tiny, gloomy photograph (6.24 x 9.25 cm, in black and white) of Nain, accompanied by this caption:

> Indicative of Labrador's undeveloped state is the coastal village of Nain, its main street still a rutted road and its cabins huddled against the mountainside. With a population of somewhat fewer than 850, Nain is Labrador's northern metropolis. (22)

Can one ask for a finer condescension? "Cabins." "Metropolis."

Condescension reflects arrogance. It betrays a sense of justified superiority and a habit of authority and possession. In this there is a split between Stewart's text, which, for the most part (the caption quoted above is an exception), is modest, respectful and closely observant, and the overall effect of the book, which is imperialistic and exploitative. Time-Life Books play King of the Mountain with the world. They look at sparsely populated regions and say, like my son Alexander when he was three, "I'll *have* it." This certainly is the impression one gets from the panoramic double-page aerial views. They take in vast stretches of landscape with a single exposure. All that real estate, and nobody's there but me. From this attitude it is a short step to NATO's aerial exercises over the "barrens."

SO FAR THE WORKS we have looked at take themselves and their subject matter seriously, and sometimes solemnly. Mowat and de Visser inflate the importance of everything—goin' fishin' is Pitting Oneself against Indifferent Nature; Horwood-Taylor claim to be chronicling a smashed-up culture; Hansen casts a sober eye on symbols of stable order—a broom, a dory keel-up for the winter, a lighthouse, a church; Stewart's photographers (or Henry Luce's) go for the monumental—the bigger the mountain, the steeper the cliff, the bleaker the scene, the better the picture. Perhaps in reaction to all this, Hines and Guy have put together a tribute to an object widely considered to be in itself risible—the once-common outdoor toilet, or outhouse, or privy. Guy's text, most of it simply captions of a sentence or two, occupies thirty-five pages of this questionable effort, while Hines has contributed forty-six photographs (forty-seven if you count the one on the dust-jacket, not included inside), eight of them not of

outhouses but rather of buttercups, goldenrod, spider webs, apple blossoms and so on found in the vicinity. The temptation to prettify is apparently overpowering. All in all, it's a dismal business, photos and text together, arch, cute and whimsically naughty from the start, its endpapers photocopied from an old Sears, Roebuck catalogue, its dedication to an "area that has for too long remained but little more than a frozen asset in the treasury of our Atlantic heritage," its sophomoric puns—traditionalists fighting a "rear-guard action," "today's rising effluence," the acronymic "Preserve Our Old Privies" Society—and its degeneration to this sort of thing:

> Ducks dawdle daintily down delightful dandelion-dotted declivity discretely distaining dilapidated domicile doubtless debauching divers dreadful decency-defiling downdrafts downgrading district. (50)

That "discretely distaining" and the "debauching" are, by the way, *sic*, along with, at various places, "prevading," "frivilous," "this strange phenomena," "lavitoria," and "Demarrera." They could have used an editor.

Further, the message of Hines' idyllic photographs and Guy's drolleries is much the same as in Mowat and de Visser. "Outhouses," Guy reflects, "compared to the brutal excesses of modernity . . . served their purpose simply, honestly and well." The virtuous past becomes a stick with which to beat the wicked present and its pretentions. Thus Guy, warming to his theme deplores:

> Whisper-flush, Tidy-bol, baby-powder soft, frangipani air freshener, color-coordinated china in "Desert Sand", stained glass illuminations, hanging ferns and twining tendrils, beaming sunlamps and morocco-bound volumes. (6)

One need not have a brief for any of the above items to notice that somehow missing from this book is any mention or depiction of that gleaming stalagmite of human shit that dispiritingly awaits the user of the older convenience.

THE PAST IN THESE books is a shade, an unseen presence. In *This Rock Within the Sea, Beyond the Road* and *Outhouses of the East* it is a kind of chiding ancestor, telling us how far we have fallen. *Newfoundland Portfolio* is more a *memento mori*, a reminder of our common mortality and of the perishability of all things. But apart from Stewart's *Labrador*, which includes a few photographs from the Hubbard expeditions, none of these works is in a position to show us what the past looked like. This is the great virtue and value of Antonia McGrath's *Newfoundland Photography 1849-1949*, which is based on an exhibition at the Newfoundland Museum,

drawn from the Museum's enormous collection of glass-plate negatives and from the Moravian Mission Collection (also held at the Museum? we are not told). There are ninety-two photographs, all of them in black-and-white, one lithograph and a seven-page introduction, which speaks partly of the history of photography itself, partly of the history of photography in Newfoundland. Although the span of years is 1849 to 1949, the dated photographs (which number fewer than half of the total) range only from 1873 to 1939, and the bulk of these fall in the years 1885 to 1910. Most of the undated ones look to be of about the same vintage. Perhaps a tenth of the lot date from the 1920s and 1930s. Overall, the majority of these pictures are portraits, individual or group.[2] The book proceeds in rough chronological order, and within this McGrath has arranged the material according to a loose (but pleasing) order—St. John's and environs, plates 1-24; group portraits, 25-28; rural scenes, 29-34; a long central section on Labrador, 35-58; a couple of portraits followed by industrial scenes, mining, whaling, fishing, ship construction; and, concluding, a quietly ironic sequence that deserves extended commentary.

The sequence begins after plate 71. Leaving the docks and mines and ships of outdoor labouring men, we enter, at plates 72 and 73, the office, the quiet world of linoleum floors, pressed-tin ceilings, the wristwatch, the calendar, men at desks writing in ledgers. Half a dozen men in suits sit entering in figures in the stillness of a sunny afternoon. It is the other side of all that fishing and hauling and digging—the accounting, marketing, brokering, insuring bourgeois side, the milieu of the fish merchant, so reverberant in the historical consciousness of Newfoundland and for some reason so conspicuously absent, except here, from the books of photographs under consideration. Turn the page. On the left, a funeral service at the Anglican cathedral for Earl Haig, who, as General Douglas Haig, commanded the British Forces in France in WWI. Elsie Holloway's photograph of the memorial service, taken from atop Victoria Hall on Gower Street, looks across Church Hill to the front door of the cathedral. A double column of men—veterans, surely—in cloth caps and black coats stretches from the steps of the church out to the street and up Church Hill past Gower Street. A small crowd of other men, women, children and dogs has gathered. It is a solemn moment caught in a still image. Although no date is given for the photograph, we can reasonably guess that it must have been taken early in February, 1928, for Haig died on 30 January.

On the right hand page, Earl Haig himself as he was when he visited St. John's in 1924 (not 1923 as the caption says) to dedicate the War Memorial. The photographer (anonymous) has him standing alone on the grounds of Government House in service dress complete with black gloves, leather puttees and sword. He was a short thickset man, then in his early sixties, with a roundish face, a white, wide but trim mustache over a set mouth, and a bearing, not put on for picture-taking, of command. Here was a man not

given to humour, self-deprecation, self-promotion or self-doubt. Very pukka. His portrait here bears comparison with those of August Sander, the German photographer whose portraits from the 1920s show people of all sorts and classes quietly expressing with every nerve and muscle in their bodies what their social role requires them to be.

Plates 76 and 77 immediately following are no less revealing. F. C. Alderdice, last premier of the Dominion, sits quietly at his desk, his hands folded; he looks directly into the camera, a melancholic, a man of sighs. His eyes, grey soup. Facing, David Baird, fish merchant, at the wheel of an enormous black touring car (its manual horn, with a bulb as big as a grapefruit, has been polished to a high gloss and looks to be about the size of a tuba), his suspicious eyes gazing coldly at you, his gloved hands not relinquishing hold of the steering wheel, though the vehicle is not moving. He does not look like a man who would be reticent about using that horn.

Then an interlude, plates 78 to 81 ("Woman Serving Tea," "Quidi Vidi Village," "Unloading Boxes on George Street," and "Miss Stick's, Water Street"), after which the dénouement in two contrasting pairs of plates. Number 82: the town's newsboys and girls, seventy or eighty of them, gathered for a group portrait in Solomon's Lane on a cold day in winter; they stand there higgledy-piggledy with that stary solemn rigidity children sometimes get when being photographed, looking urchinish in hand-me-down caps and coats too large for them, the very picture of pre-WWII working-class kids. On the opposite page, Mr. and Mrs. Humphries and their daughter Marie in Elsie Holloway's studio. McGrath in her preface praises Holloway for her "innovative approach to children's photography," which was "distinctive not just in style but in spirit as it captured the moment of spontaneity that defies so much studio work." That may be the reason for including the Humphries portraits in this collection, but their placement here opposite the newskids carries a different suggestion. The Humphries girl, aged about eight, wore her hair in a pageboy style, like a young Louise Brooks, and was dressed in a short sleeveless long-waisted dress belted with a chain. Ankle-socks and black patent-leather shoes with silver buckles complete the image: a precocious flapper. She is pert and pretty and spoiled. She will never have to peddle the *Evening Telegram*. A vivider example of the cleavages of social class than these facing photographs would be hard to find.

Finally, the two plates that McGrath concludes with: on the left (no. 85) "M. J. O'Brien & Family. 1939," on the right (no. 86) "The Prime Minister at Government House. 1934." Mr. O'Brien, on the right of plate 85, stands stocky, stolid and coarse-featured holding a three-year-old daughter on one arm. Mrs. O'Brien, on the left, a short plump woman of sunny countenance, has the baby of the family on one of her arms, and, as she practicedly feeds this baby its bottle, smiles into the lens with a jolly little

toss of the head back and to one side, her whole manner at once girlish and maternal. Between Mr. and Mrs. are the other eight children, from the cocky four-year-old to the daughter already past puberty. The family stands amidst Queen Anne's lace on an unkempt grassy bank, in contrast to the group in the right-hand photograph, who are sitting, all but two of them, on lawn chairs in the manicured gardens of Government House. There are two officers of the British Navy (standing); three ladies (the Governor's wife and daughter, and the Prime Minister's daughter) wearing hats, pearls, stockings and polka-dot afternoon dresses; H. E. the Governor and his guest the Prime Minister the Right Hon. James Ramsay MacDonald, cool and self-assured in light-grey three-piece suits. MacDonald visited Newfoundland at the end of a tour of Canada in the summer of 1934. Later he would write in *At Home and Abroad*, "The political history of Newfoundland is not worthy, but the Commissioners now in control have begun to write the future on a cleaner page" (190). Another fine condescension.

This completes the sequence: industry, office, the Great War and its ambiguous leadership, a sad-eyed politician and a steely-eyed magnate, intermezzo, the social divisions of the town, and, finally, the Irish (navvies, labourers, prolific breeders) and the English with quiet hands either out of sight or folded unobtrusively in laps. An inspired placing of images, a revealing montage that glows in the mind out of all proportion to the effectiveness of the photographs taken singly. It would have gladdened the heart of Sergei Eisenstein.

WE HAVE BEEN around St. John's, visited Labrador and the South, West and Northeast Coasts. Candace Cochrane, in *Outport,* takes us up the Great Northern Peninsula, mainly to the east side between Hare Bay and Canada Bay, though there are a few photographs of the Gros Morne area. Cochrane's base was Conche, to whose people the book is dedicated. She provides a short introduction telling us that she came to the province in 1967 to work, just for the summer, with Robert Bryan's Quebec Labrador Foundation and stayed finally for thirteen years. Her book, aiming at the continental audience, has two maps, one showing the island, the other locating it and southern Labrador in relation to Atlantic Canada, Quebec and the New England states. A glossary at the end defines such terms as *bottom* (of the bay), *jigging, mind* ("I minds the time . . . ") and *quintal*. The body of the book comprises one hundred and twenty-two black-and-white photographs interspersed with tales, poems, and short reminiscences transcribed from tapes of conversations with people in Conche and vicinity. The texts are usually related to adjoining photographs, but these do not always depict the speakers, whom Cochrane unfortunately names only *en bloc* (iv). Why not tell us who said what?

One example: the photo on page 41 shows two men standing on the beach

between two dories. They are short men, made to look even shorter by a downward camera angle. The caption reads

> The Newfoundlander's not a big man, mostly.
> You could say we're just stumps—
> Sawed off and hammered down.

In order to identify the two we have to turn to pages 154 and 155, where the photographs are listed, and where we learn that our two men are Walter Dower and Tom Flynn, neither of whom is named on page iv under "words spoken by. . . ." Well then who did say it? Do Dower and Flynn think of themselves that way? (Dower looks as though he would just laugh at the remark; Flynn on the other hand, to look at him here, might not find it amusing.)

Though she does not identify the speakers, Cochrane has wisely refrained from trying to capture their sound by means of phonetic spelling. There are a few instances of "twas" and "s'pose" and "b'y" to be sure, but for the most part she lets the rhythm of the line and the order of the words do their sufficient work of suggesting dialect. I find this practice infinitely preferable to that of such novelists as R. T. S. Lowell and Norman Duncan (see Patrick O'Flaherty's *The Rock Observed*), who for example when an ordinary Newfoundlander says "Isaac" spell it "Izik." (How did Lowell say it?) Here is a passage from *Outport*:

> I'm born and reared here, and whatever I got around me is me own. Now, if I had to go to St. John's and start paying rent, that would be a binder. Now you takes here, I get up in the morning, goes out and around with the rest of the men, talking about stuff, about the fish or lumber or something like that. But up there, I wouldn't be able to do that, they'd all be strangers. I'd be right astray. (50)

There are a few concessions here to dialect ("me own"), but mainly it looks as good on the page as I am sure it sounds on Cochrane's tape. Henry Nash Smith in *Virgin Land* has remarked about nineteenth-century American fiction that in it dialect was a sure sign of a character's ineligibility to marry the heroine or hero, who invariably spoke "standard" English. Dialect spelling on the page diminishes the speaker.

The photographs, however, are the thing. They reflect the length of Cochrane's residence in Conche, for there is an intimacy and affection about them, a settled-in feeling, and also a comprehensiveness—one could not have got this range of indoor and outdoor scenes without having had a good long look around. She begins by setting the scene with shots of sea, ice, headlands in fog (a specialty of hers—she has several in Stewart's *Labrador*), coming in, somewhat as Mowat and de Visser do, from the sea

and the wilderness to the cove and its community. One wonders at first whether this is going to be another monumentalization (an inflated word for an inflated phenomenon) of outport life in the fashion of Mowat, with his bastions of courage and endurance wherein there dwells a resolute and prideful race. But no. Soon, in the third of the book's eight sections, we find a homelier Newfoundland, domestic, humorous and quotidian. There are some simply stunning photographs here. Cochrane has a keen affectionate eye, and through the bulk of the book—in sections entitled At the Fish, Out in Boat, Up Home, At the Time—portrays the life of Conche and nearby outports faithfully, at times slyly, and without tendentiousness. In the end, however, in a final section called Not a Hen Here Now, she is just as worried as our previous authors about the future of the life she has lovingly captured. As an epigraph to that section, there is this:

> Awful change in the last 15 years. There's not a hen here now. You got to buy everything. (138)

On the facing page one of those photographs that I suppose every photographer has taken, of a straight road which converges to a point on the horizon (cf. Dorothea Lange, *An American Exodus*, or the old Canadian one-dollar bill), in this case, the road to Corner Brook. There follows a sequence contrasting in various ways the old, represented by oars, a sail, a dory, a statue of the Virgin, and the new, represented by a television set, a large freighter, a helicopter. The sequence culminates in a passage headed "It Depends on the Fish" facing a heart-stopping photograph of Alphonsus and Darren Flynn, father and, say, five-year-old son. The father is sitting at a table with young Darren in his lap. Both look directly out at the camera. The background is black, and as the father has black hair, all you can see of him is the top half of his face, one twinkling eye brightly lit, the other in shade, the laugh wrinkles however showing through, and also the worry ones between the eyebrows. He looks amused, but tired; he's no youngster. The bottom half of his face is obscured by the head of young Darren, whose face and light blond hair catch most of the light and dominate the photograph. He's a beautiful kid. How to read his expression? It is blank and challenging, defiant almost, or even insolent. (It recalls to this old filmgoer the last freeze frame shot in the late François Truffaut's first feature, *Quatre cents coups*). It says: my father and you out there know where you stand in the world—will I have that privilege? The last part of the facing caption reads:

> People wonder what's going to happen to this place. People even think this place will just die out. I used to think it would, but in the past few years, I've come to think it won't. A lot of it depends on the fish. How well that keeps going. (150)

So: there's the road to Corner Brook, to industry, to capital-intensive technology, to the prospect of yet more ghost-towns on the coast, and there's the challenge in Darren Flynn's eyes.

SINCE CANDACE COCHRANE'S book is not sublime (just very good indeed), it would be an exaggeration to make a conventional remark about going from the one quality to the other as we now turn to Sherman Hines' *St. John's,* introduction by John C. Crosbie, P.C., Q.C., M. P. Let us dispose of this last item first. Let us also be fair. Mr. Crosbie is a political man, and political men often pronounce fulsomely on such topics as Home. It is therefore perhaps ungenerous to object to the Joeyesque exaggerations in passages like this one:

> St. John's! The oldest city in North America. The site where 400 years ago Sir Humphrey Gilbert first took possession of Newfoundland for the Queen and commenced the establishment of the British Empire. Newfoundland, the cornerstone of that empire and now the vital, resurgent soul of Eastern Canada! (V)

The man is better in Opposition.

Following a descriptive list of plates are eighty-seven photographs in gorgeous Ektachrome or Kodachrome. Most are picture postcards: those that are not belong to the *Gourmet* magazine style of photography, which goes heavily in for broad expanses of vivid colour, for scenes caught in the waning light of a summer evening, and for portrayal of things nobody can dislike, as for example blue skies, children and sea gulls. Some of these pictures are very pretty indeed. It is however a world where it never rains, or, if it does, it does so picturesquely; where snow never turns to filthy slush in the gutters; a world whence poverty, unemployment, ugliness (except of the official kind), drunkenness, crime, disease and death have all been banished.

Hines has organized his book in observance of two of the classical dramatic unities, those of place and time. The first is trivial—it is after all a book about St. John's. As to the second, H. W. Fowler writes that unity of time has been observed "if all that happens in a play can be conceived as sufficiently continuous to fill only something like the same time (stretched by generous reckoning to a day) as the performance" (*Modern English Usage*, art. "unity"). Do you remember the old James K. Fitzpatrick travelogues? They started in the streets of a place at dawn, and always concluded with "As the sun sinks slowly in the west, we bid farewell. . . ." Not "say goodbye," mind you, but "bid farewell." Nice touch, that, in the Farley Mowat manner. In Hines' book we start with the first light or, as the caption[1] says, "Sunlight breaks through the cloud and strikes the ocean, near the Narrows." (Why are travelogues always overwritten?) After that,

two photos of the Narrows, one of the city, in fog, from the Battery, one of houses ("brightly painted") in the Battery, again in fog, all suggesting morning light. Moving around the north side of the harbour and into full day, Hines goes on to show scenes from all over this town. They are, almost all of them, public spaces, that is, what a tourist might see. The only interiors, unless you count the open decks of ships and boats, are of a church (the Basilica), an antique shop (Livyers, I think) and a bar (Barrister's, I am certain). Further, only about a fifth of the pictures have people in them, and in only about a fifth of these do the people look at the camera. (Compare Cochrane: two-thirds and two-fifths, respectively.)

Considering the kind of slick production it is, *St. John's* has a surprisingly large number of photographs that are bad in a purely technical sense, badly composed or taken from ill-considered angles. Most of the shots of public buildings have irrelevant foregrounds and too many have been captured from nearby with the camera pointing up. Memorial's Education Building—a fairly good example, with its snaky mural, of the official ugliness alluded to above—appears in a picture that is half bumpy grass and patchy snow, so that the building itself looks stuck off in the middle of the bush. Similarly the Confederation Building, that Stalinist monument. Hines caught the Masonic Building on Cathedral Street from the street directly in front of the building, with the result that the bottom half of his picture is half black retaining wall and fence, and the top half is a stretched-up converging triple-towered edifice that gives no idea of what the building looks like. Reading the captions dispels any suspicion of intended irony. The caption to plate 64 reads "In the heart of the city this lattice-work fence protects a well-kept garden." Having seen the other photographs with distracting foregrounds the viewer might have thought that the house, which occupies the top half of the picture, was the point of it. As for the garden, we have to take Hines' word for it, as it is invisible.

Perhaps the most annoying two pages in this book depict, on the left, two cooks in front of Upstairs Downstairs on Bates Hill, and on the facing page a related four-photograph display. The cooks each hold out temptingly a dish—a baked trout and a cheesecake, which we see again, its top generously embellished with mandarin oranges, in close-up on the right-hand page, along with a photo of ripe strawberries and one of the interior of what the caption would lead you to believe is the interior of the restaurant, with shining brass, imitation Tiffany lamps and one of those ceiling fans that are designed and deployed to suggest a tropical climate. In the first place, the interior is not Upstairs Downstairs, it's Barrister's on Duckworth. In the second place, mandarin-orange-covered cheesecake flanked by mandarin-orange-coloured serviettes with gold napkin rings does not exactly convey the sense of the St. John's, Newfoundland most people walk through daily. Strawberries do grow here, it is true, but again, if you were to do word

associations with "St. John's," "strawberries" would not exactly spring to your lips. Mr. Crosbie tells us in his introduction that the visitor to Newfoundland will see "salt cod, fresh cod, cod tongues, sounds, flounders, flat fish, caplin rolling on the beaches, caplin frying in the frying pans, and caplin lying on the fields." Also, the visitor "will taste fish and brewis, partridge, rabbit, moose, caribou, figgy duff, plum duff, blueberry duff and Dogberry wine." Not with Hines as a guide he won't. Well, there is the trout. The trout, however, finds itself bedded down in iceberg lettuce and garnished with grapes, tomatoes, maraschino cherries and lemons. If you are ever on Prescott Street, and the kids there see you garnishing fish with lemon (never mind the rest), I know from experience, they will say "what's that?" and "that's not how my mom does it" and "I hates that."

OF COURSE SOFTENING and North Americanizing Newfoundland via photographs for the sake of the tourist trade is no invention of Hines'. Under Commission of Government, sometime in the 1930s, the Newfoundland Tourist Development Board issued a portfolio of photographs by various practitioners of the craft, two of them from away (A. C. Shelton from Boston and W. R. Macaskill from Halifax), the other two local (E. J. Holloway and J. C. Parsons). This collection—there is a copy in the Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Memorial University Library—would lead one to believe that Newfoundland consists chiefly of rivers full of trout and salmon (always, in the captions, "noble fish"). St. John's harbour gets three photos, one of them primarily of sailing schooners, the town itself none. Nearby outports—Brigus, Ferryland, Petty Harbour—lend their air of pre-industrial charm to the collection, along with the cannon gates of the church at Bay Bulls and a Newfoundland dog named Westerland Sirius. A. C. Shelton's picture—almost identical, oddly enough, to one of Ben Hansen's in *Newfoundland Portfolio,*[4] though taken some thirty years earlier—of flakes and stages in Pouch Cove, with a wooden ladder descending twenty-five feet or so down a sheer cliff to the water, comes with a bit of unintended humour: "All around this settlement are to be seen the tiered flakes and fish rooms of the inhabitants, clinging to the rough craggy rocks." But mostly it's rivers and noble fish. Very few clinging inhabitants.

Yet not even this collection from the 1930s was the first example of doctoring this rock for foreign consumption. The earliest candidate for that distinction is the second edition of Robert E. Holloway's *Through Newfoundland with the Camera*, published at London in 1910. As Antonia McGrath tells us in her preface to *Newfoundland Photography*, Holloway was a gifted amateur photographer who taught chemistry at the Methodist College and who, being tubercular, escaped the bad city air summers to travel about the island with his family. He took pictures everywhere. Early in this century he gathered a sample of these for publication, but died in

1904 before he could complete the project, which, then, his family carried through. The result was the first edition of *Through Newfoundland with the Camera* (1905), the pictures for which Holloway, according to the preface, had selected. He has also "sketched out the literary portion," that is, the introduction. Even in this first edition the author emphasized the "growing popularity" of the island and the "importance [of its] mineral resources." These photographs, however, do not strike one as being promotional. Rather, they are like picture postcards, or like the slides your assiduous travelling friends bring back to show you what an exotic place they've just visited. The 1910 edition, though at first blush simply a reprint, is a different story. Starting with the frontispiece of the book, Newfoundland has been summerized and shown to be a thriving modern country, safe for foreign investment but with plenty of trout left for sportsmen. In 1905, the frontispiece showed an iceberg outside the Narrows; in 1910, the new paper mill at Grand Falls. Throughout the later edition, all the ice, snow and other disagreeable features of this land have been whisked away. About one in ten pictures in the original show icebergs or winter scenes; these have all been replaced, in 1910, by sunlit landscapes or, in one case, by a picture of "Two Beauties," that is, two salmon ("twelve to fifteen pounds" of noble fish) caught in the Codroy. Even an inoffensive portrait of a group of Eskimos at Nain has been expunged; in its place, "The First 'Steadies' on the Humber River." The 1905 edition's view of the whaling station at Bauline, Southern Shore, has a caption identifying the place and concluding "Note the fog over the hill." Five years later the same photo[5] appears with its caption, but the sentence calling attention to the fog has been demurely omitted. Both editions carry advertisements at the end of the book, and these tell the story. In 1905, the usual merchants advertised; in 1910 the government advertised as well. Not that puffery was completely absent from the earlier edition. H. A. Morine, General Passenger Agent of Reid Newfoundland Railway, took out a double-page spread to entice visitors to "the Norway of the New World," and, in a passage that anticipates a few of Farley Mowat's sentiments and some of his hifalutin turns of phrase, promised:

> In this sea-girt isle, Americans will find a welcome escape from the burning heat of their summers, and the exhilarating air imparts new vigor to the frame, and sends the traveller back with the tide of health coursing through his veins. (142-43)

Despite this kind of backing, the 1905 edition conveys the sense of being Holloway's vision of the place. The 1910 expurgated edition tells its little lies apparently with the blessing and no doubt under the prompting of A. W. Piccott, S. D. Blandford and R. Watson, respectively Minister of Marine and Fisheries, Minister of Agriculture and Mines, and Colonial Secretary in charge of Patents, Trade Marks and Copyrights in the Morris Government. These boosters bought the key first five pages of advertising

at the back of the book, where, borrowing the phrase "Norway of the New World" from the Reid ad of 1905, they held out the lures of "Forest and Farmland Wealth" and "Mineral Wealth" to capitalists and rich tourists everywhere. The place is a "Sportsman's Paradise," they say, and its "interior is destined to become the playground of America." Paradise, for Farley Mowat and Harold Horwood, was back then. Paradise, for these worthies, was soon to be realized. O hark ye infidels to the words of Henry David Thoreau:

> Men esteem truth, remote, in the outskirts of the system, behind the farthest star, before Adam and after the last man. In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times and places and occasions are now and here. God himself culminates in the present moment, and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages. And we are enabled to apprehend at all what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us.

PHOTOGRAPHY—all art perhaps—is a showing but also a way of showing. Some photographers emphasize the showing, as much as to say, here is a scene I saw and kept for you. They speak of "taking" pictures. Others insist that nothing that can be called a scene is given. It has to be worked up. Photographs are not surrogate bits of reality: they are artifacts produced by the work of the imagination upon inchoate raw material. Such practitioners speak of "making" pictures. I think they are correct in this claim, if only because older photographs such as those in Holloway's book and those reproduced by McGrath so clearly display the conventions of their times. The more recent photographs seem natural and artless simply because our conventional ways of seeing are invisible to ourselves.[6] It is like fashion—our own clothing appears to us to be normal while what people wore only a generation or two ago seems exotic. This applies even if we try to copy old styles. The copies are recognizably copies. The characteristics of conventional ways of seeing as embodied in photography books are elusive because they are conventional; they are too close, too much a part of us, for us to identify them without a considerable effort of distancing. However, I want to comment on three such characteristics that strike me as fairly obvious. First, there is the temptation or necessity to stretch the frozen moment that the photograph captures into a story; second, there is an almost irresistible gravitation towards kitsch; and last, there is the almost inevitable taint of the picturesque. Here is what I mean.

Still photography runs up against a paradox of time and memory. When we remember someone or something what we have, often, before our consciousness is an image—still, fixed, and single. It would seem that photographs should resemble these images. Ben Hansen exalts the "miracle of seeing, as through a fog, the image I remember reappear on a blank piece

of paper in the darkroom." The fact is, though, that moments do not in themselves signify very much. They are memorable only as part of a flux and as typical of other moments in a continuum. They cannot be of very much importance except insofar as they connect with other elements in our experience. Thus pictures of babies become every baby and pictures of old people become your gramps and mine. Most of the time we can establish these connections for ourselves while looking at photographs. Often, however, the photographer helps us along with gimmicks, visual puns, or "striking" juxtapositions. I find these annoying. I am not sure why. Perhaps because they betray a lapse of confidence in the true genius of the medium—its ability to isolate and cause to shine forth a bit of the world one has never seen before so clearly. It is a question of letting things be. Tricky photographs don't leave things alone, don't mind their own business. A few examples. Taylor shows prim, competent Elizabeth Payne of Parsons Pond sitting straight-backed, feet flat on the floor, in a rocking chair. She is crocheting. Everything in the photo is in sharp focus except her hands, which are a blur. That fast! Cochrane's page 17 (the same photograph adorns the dust-jacket) shows us a dory and an iceberg. The dory, rigged with a small sail, is being steered with an oar by its single passenger. The iceberg, on the left, dwarfs boat and man, and has a jagged scoured end facing him across a stretch of open water. It looks like Ahab's white whale about to swallow the insignificant (but defiant) trifling craft and skipper just ahead. Is this reading things in? Turn to the caption, p. 154: "The last sailor." Ben Hansen, who, incidentally, goes in for tricks less often than the other photographers here under review, has however given us one visual pun at pages 92 and 93. Page 92, piles of sawdust and pulpwood at Grand Falls with a mobile conveyor belt thrust into the air on the left of the photograph; page 93, facing, a modern church, also at Grand Falls, its peaked roof the same shape as the heaps in the preceding photograph, its bell tower corresponding to the conveyor belt—the two pictures have the same layout. It is a comment I suppose on the quality of religious belief in an industrial society. But it is facile. John de Visser in *This Rock Within the Sea* has on the forty-first page a portrait of a man whose face seems to grow out of the rocky cliffs visible above his head; another toward the end, showing girls working in a fish plant, includes the part of a scale that says "Honest Weight"; a pair of pictures, again toward the end, has a boy, foolish but fiercely determined, turn his back on the wisdom of his ancestors: top photo, old man in the background but in focus on the left speaks to boy, out of focus in the foreground, turned and ready to leave the frame; bottom photo, boy in, old man out of focus, the man having returned to some piece of handiwork, the boy sullen and on his way out of there.

Sherman Hines' whole book on St. John's is a gimmick, as I explained earlier, with its sunrise to sundown format and its facing the dilemma of un-

picturesque sunsets simply by presenting as the last plate another sunrise, the inevitable path of light on the sea catching the silhouette of a longliner. But one juxtaposition in the book gave me the only laugh in this whole collection of books. I am not even certain it was meant to be a joke. On page 42 a close-up of a mess of fish; facing, on page 43, a stack of flattened carcasses of automobiles, the shapes and colours of which resemble precisely a stack of dead fish, with gas-tank openings standing in for the baleful expressionless stares of the dead cod. There is even amongst the wreckage an old coiled bedspring, which looks here like netting. The captions (see vii) "Detail from a tour of the harbour" and "A sample of the rusting debris of twentieth century living" seem to indicate that the pun was not intended. It's still funny.

Besides being gimmicky, books of photographs are fatally prone to kitsch. Milan Kundera in his novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* provides the following reflective if somewhat oblique definition:

> Kitch causes two tears to flow in quick succession. The first tear says: How nice to see children running on the grass!
>
> The second tear says: How nice to be moved, together with all mankind, by children running on the grass!
>
> It is the second tear that makes kitsch kitsch.

Or, alternatively, how sad it is to see the relics of resettled outports scattered in the snow! Second tear: how nice it is to feel sad. . . . It is the element of self-congratulation that grates.

Finally, the picturesque. Going as always to the heart of the matter, R. G. Collingwood wrote two generations ago:

> the beauty of the picturesque is a beauty created by a contrast between the spectator and his object. It is only because we feel ourselves the creatures of a sophisticated civilization that we enjoy the spectacle of a relatively unsophisticated life; if we lost that feeling, we should lose the pleasure which we now take in the picturesque. Hence we must, in order to sustain that pleasure, sustain in ourselves the feeling of separation from our object; we must live in the country without becoming countrymen. . . .
>
> (*Outlines of a Philosophy of Art* 63)

These remarks apply to our photographers. Perhaps they apply to photography in general, for it seems to be at its most effective when practiced by outsiders: Paul Strand in Mexico and North Africa, Dorothea Lange in the Dustbowl, Walker Evans in Cuba and the American South, Cartier-Bresson anywhere, Robert Frank in America, Lewis Carroll amongst his nymphets, Diane Arbus amongst freaks. . . . Perhaps the legendary African who is afraid that photographs take away a piece of one's

soul is not so far wrong. Of course the logic of this argument would make the snapshot the only authentic non-alienated form of the art and August Sander, whose camera caught Weimar Germany from an innermost point of view, the truest genius in the whole history of the medium. David Hockney has recently gone in this direction with his polaroids. I am groping about here, trying to locate the source of photography's disturbing quality.

The question is, what do we want to get from photographs? The answer for snapshots is not so difficult: they are *aides-mémoire*. They get better with age, for who is not curious about how familiar people looked ten or twenty years ago, in different hairstyles and much thinner? In the case of photojournalism, again it is easy to see that where public events are concerned people simply want to know, and photographers to show, what the scene looks like, and, the events being open to everyone's gaze, they and the photographers have the right.[7] It is always a question of the relation between the artist and his object.

If that is true, then unlike the snapshot, which takes place as a transaction between intimates, and unlike the journalist's photographs, which record things open to public scrutiny, the kind of pictures published as books bear an ambiguous relation to their subject matter, especially when this is human or social portraiture. What the camera seems to confer on its owner and then on the viewer of the finished picture is a licence to stare. Now staring comes naturally to us: we have, as children, to learn not to do it. We are told we mustn't for two reasons, first it is rude and second it makes us look stupid. And we stop, though we still indulge ourselves in staring when we can get away with it—we go to the movies to stare at the figures up there who can't see us; we sit in a crowded dance hall and stare at people too busy to notice; we stare at infants; some old people who have decided to give up on a few of the social rules stare fixedly at others, much to the discomfort of the starees. In strange surroundings we stare as much as we can without calling attention to ourselves, for to be identified as a stranger is in turn to invite a few stares ourselves. But a camera shifts the equation. Granted one does not usually take close-ups of complete strangers (though there are such things as hidden cameras and "grab-shots"), still, in places one is not wholly a part of, one can by means of a camera be permitted to look long and hard at people without being thought intrusive or not quite all there. What I am trying to get at is this: the reasons the books we have been examining, and other books of photographs, so many of them by outsiders, are unsettling and unsatisfying as works of art—beautiful, thoroughgoing and conscientious though they may be—is that they are the product of that stranger's stare.

This is why I find the McGrath collection the most revealing of this present lot. Some of de Visser's, a number of Taylor's, quite a few of Hansen's, and many of Cochrane's photographs are lovely in the international style,

and a few, taken individually, are profound utterances about the culture of Newfoundland—Hansen's plate 45 "Caplin Cove," or Cochrane's Alphonsus and Darren Flynn, discussed earlier. Contrariwise, some of the photographs in McGrath's collection are clumsy, amateurish or downright depressing.[8] Yet for overall effect, the book succeeds where the others fail. One can find there not just the rocks and the dories and the weather-beaten elderly—not just the picturesque—but a vision of the community with all its tensions and its different ideals of itself. Again, R. G. Collingwood:

> The artist must prophesy not in the sense that he foretells things to come, but in the sense that he tells his audience, at risk of their displeasure, the secrets of their own hearts. . . . As spokesman of his community, the secrets he must utter are theirs. The reason why they need him is that no community altogether knows its own heart; and by failing in this knowledge a community deceives itself on the one subject concerning which ignorance means death. . . . Art is the community's medicine for the worst disease of the mind, the corruption of consciousness. (*The Principles of Art* 336)

Taken all together, these books of photographs tell us outsiders a lot about Newfoundland, such as the profound unity of the culture in some of its aspects—from Conche to St. John's to Burgeo, for example, people carry themselves in similar distinctive ways. Some of the photographs in Cochrane's book remind us that Newfoundlanders, around the bay anyway, drink beer during the working day, just as their English and Irish peasant forebears did. But amongst these books none in my view utters "the secrets of the heart" except McGrath's, though God knows Cochrane comes close.

Notes

[1]Naturally such projective fantasies undergo violent reversals when the loved one fails some test. Cf. *A Whale for the Killing*.

[2]In most cases throughout the book, McGrath was unable to, or didn't, identify the photographer. The dozen or so she was able to assign came from two families, Parsons (S. H., his son Charles and his nephew Reuben) and Holloway (R. O. E. and his daughter Elsie).

[3]The captions are grouped together at the front of the book, vi-viii.

[4]Actually two, one (10) in black-and-white and one in colour (51). Donald Lane has a version of the same shot on view at the "Boutique" in the Hotel Newfoundland in St. John's.

[5]It is also McGrath's plate 62.

[6]This is why recent books of photographs resemble one another so much. Compare *Nova Scotia: Window on the Sea*, text by Ernest Buckler, photographs by Hans Weber, about nine-tenths of which, with its lobster pots, old fellows, close-ups of door hardware, father-with-child-on-lap, etc., could be the Newfoundland of our collection. I cannot forego noting the resemblance these books bear to the Bible: they begin with Creation (water and rock) and proceed to the End of the World (boarded-up houses, washstands abandoned to the elements), preaching meanwhile with St. John the Divine

For without [i.e. outside the chosen rural circle, in Corner Brook, Ottawa and the Ad-

mass society] are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. Revelation 22.15

[7]When we consider that photographers have the right to shoot things happening and people acting in public we call these practitioners "photojournalists" and honour them; when we do not, we call them *paparazzi* and despise them.

[8]Plate 3, "Lady G. White. (c. 1894)," for example, comprises two versions of the same photograph. One has been printed so as to remove the wrinkles from forehead, face and neck. This dual photograph is also on view (I write in May) at the museum at the Murray Premises in St. John's.

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1. The books (and portfolio) discussed in this essay, in order of publication, are:

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