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Michael Power: the Struggle to Build the Catholic Church on the Canadian Frontier. By Mark G. McGowan

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how Tecumseh's legacy was remembered, manipulated, and constructed to suit specific purposes at specific times. These findings offer valuable insight into history of memory, and parallels could have been made to such current literature as Daniel Francis' *National Dreams: Myth, Memory and Canadian History* or *How Societies Remember*, edited by Paul Connerton. In addition, further commentary regarding government and private involvement in the unrestricted excavation of Indian burial grounds would have rounded the study, shedding further light on the attitudes of nineteenth- and twentieth-century "civilized" society, as the Kennewick Man case did in the United States. In his deconstruction of the 'myths and tales,' St-Denis' own ahistorical nihilism overlooks many of these attractive themes, and *Tecumseh's Bones* begs to be further contextualized.

These criticisms aside, the work is an excellent example of the fruits that can be had as a result of relentless archival digging and researching. The primary purpose of the monograph was not an exercise in historiography, but rather to evaluate and comment on the mysterious whereabouts of Tecumseh's bones – a task not easily handled – and St-Denis appears to have provided the most probable answer.

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Connerton, Paul, ed. *How Societies Remember* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

Francis, Daniel. *National Dreams: Myth, memory and Canadian history* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1997).

Michael Power:

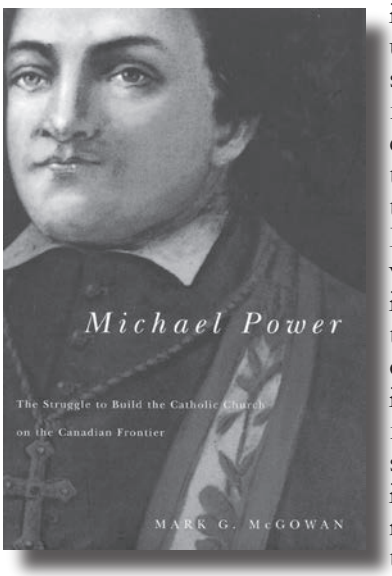
the Struggle to Build the Catholic Church on the Canadian Frontier.

By Mark G. McGowan. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005. xvii + 382 pp. $49.95 hardcover. ISBN 0-7735-2914-4.

On 1 October 1847 Michael Power, the first Catholic bishop of Toronto, died of typhus in his adopted city. He was laid to rest in the crypt of the partially-built cathedral named in honour of his patron saint, Michael. In that same year more than one thousand famine Irish also died of typhus and other diseases in the city, and Bishop Power is thought to have been infected while personally ministering to the dying in the municipal fever sheds. He had been the leader of the newly-established Catholic diocese of Toronto for little more than five years and, like the unfinished edifice of the cathedral, his plans for the diocese were in an early stage of fruition. Viewed as a Famine martyr, Michael Power's episcopacy has attracted the attention of many writers in the past, but this biography is by far the most complete. In this extensive work, officially commissioned by the archdiocese of Toronto, McGowan has successfully identified and drawn upon neglected archival records in Canada, Ireland, Britain, France, and Rome, and in the process he has filled many gaps in the life of a prelate who was hitherto more

renown for the manner of his death than the achievements of his life.

This biography can be read from a number of perspectives. On the human side it details the story of a young Halifax boy who was sent in 1816, at the age of twelve, to Montreal where he would be educated for eight years by the Sulpicians, before proceeding to the Quebec seminary where he was ordained, in 1827. The correspondence between the young Power and his family are suggestive of "a mother's vocation," and there were occasions when perseverance with his studies owed more to the demands of Mary Power than to her son's personal calling. Upon his ordination, Power was transferred formally from his Halifax diocese to that of Quebec and for the next fifteen years his fluency in French and English was put to good use as he ministered to parishes on the unfolding settlement frontiers of early nineteenth-century Quebec. He disliked, with some intensity, the frontier conditions in which he found himself – first in Drummondville in the Eastern Townships, then in Petite-Nation (where Louis-Joseph Papineau was a parishioner), and finally in Ste-Martine, again in the Eastern Townships. The lack of parish infrastructure, poor financial support for the clergy, and lax religious practices among both the French and Irish settlers did little to comfort Power who was increasingly obsessed with the strict application of canon law. It was not until 1839 that he secured appointment to an established parish at Laprairie, across the river from Montreal, and thereafter he moved closer to the heart of ecclesiastical power.



From the perspective of ecclesiastical politics the life of Michael Power affords considerable insight into the attempts by the Diocese of Quebec to be erected into the sole Archdiocesan entity with control over all bishoprics from Newfoundland westward to Lake Superior. It is again a story in which history and geography collide. But within that nexus of church politics there remain some unanswered questions. How did Power, having audaciously refused a vicar-general position in a cross-appointment with Kingston and Quebec dioceses, manage to repair the damage to his career? By what means did he emerge as the leader of the Anglophone priests in Quebec? Certainly, his transition from frontier parish priest in 1839 to bishop-designate of Toronto two years later is remarkable, all the more so as he had been selected, in the interim, to visit Rome and advise the Authorities on the case for a new diocese in Upper Canada. It would seem that Power was not without considerable political intuition, and as a canon lawyer he was, in the eyes of the Hierarchy, an ideal figure to put order not only on the vast expanse of his new diocese but also upon the priests and people who lived and worked within it.

In its significance, this biography transcends church history to offer much of interest to national historians and historical geographers alike. It fills many gaps in the life of the founding bishop of Catholic Toronto and it has much to offer on the

wider connotations of contemporary Canadian life. Purists might note that the mercury wash referred to in Grosse Isle did not come into operation until twenty years after the Famine arrivals, and in reference to Irish dioceses, Carlow is mistaken for Kildare and Leighlin. But these are minor quibbles about a biography that is substantive and independent in content.

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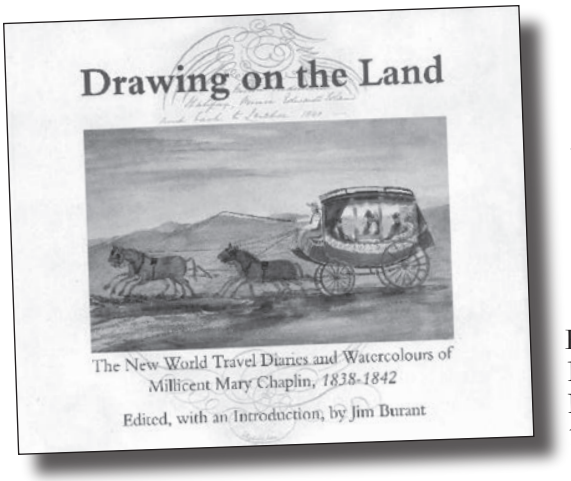

Drawing on the Land:

The New World Travel Diaries and Watercolours of Millicent Mary Chaplin, 1838-1842.

Edited, with an Introduction, by Jim Burant. Manotick, Ontario: Penumbra Press, 2004. 166 pp. $39.95 softcover. ISBN 1-894131-61-4.

Scrapbooks became a rage among the Victorian leisured classes but are undervalued by descendants, archivists, and researchers, and may face the ignominy of dismemberment by those interested in just one picture or entry. Editor Jim Burant rescues from such a fate the travel writings of Millicent Mary Chaplin, the middle-aged, childless wife who accompanied her officer husband to Canada in the wake of the 1837 Rebellion. Burant supplements the text with some ninety of Mrs. Chaplin's watercolours and his own well-researched endnotes, explanations of historical context, and information on travel and botanical writing in the Canadas. The illustrations are mainly of scenes in and around Quebec. Their value is limited, since the best of Chaplin's work has been previously published, and in general it boasts neither artistic merit nor precision. However, the illustrations and explanations complement an engaging but slim set of travel diaries, resulting in a book of considerable interest.

Married to a highranking officer in the Coldstream Guards, Millicent Mary Chaplin moved in the best circles, chaperoned by the Family Compact in Toronto, invited to Governors' and Bishops' mansions across the land, befriended by Samuel Cunard in Halifax and by American academics on her travels. In calling her an anglophile xenophobe who 'put the classes in their place,' the editor seems too hasty. Certainly Chaplin was a product of her time and place, a Lincolnshire Anglican who arranged shipboard services and balked at questions such as "The Queen, what sort of bird is she?" She shared the usual English distaste for the American habits of public spitting, asking strangers personal questions, and frantic dining (fast food is not new). She wondered though, if the gobbling arose from poor implements such as two-tined forks. More importantly, she was not standoffish about conversation with coach driv-