

THOMAS RADDALL AND THE MAKING OF A PUBLIC HISTORIAN IN NOVA
SCOTIA, 1945 - 1958

by

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ABSTRACT

Nova Scotia's history and heritage sector transformed in the mid-twentieth century. This thesis argues that Thomas Head Raddall played a vital role in these transformative processes and was a valued member of the historical profession. Drawing on an in-depth analysis of Raddall's personal correspondences from 1945 to 1958, this thesis explores key developments in this era, including the landmark *Halifax: Warden of the North*, Raddall's work as a local and public historian, and his increasing collaboration with academic historians. Whereas his correspondence following the release of *Warden of the North* reveals changing perceptions by those who viewed him as a popular historian, the period after 1950 illustrates his increasing involvement with provincial and national heritage organizations. Through both his written and organizational work, Raddall was a multifaceted historical contributor, often acting as an intermediary. This thesis challenges existing representations of Raddall that often present a narrow view of his role and impacts on the field of history.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

QCHS	Queens County Historical Society
CAA	Canadian Authors Association
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
NSHSAC	Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Introduction

The middle of the twentieth century witnessed the transformation of Nova Scotia's cultural memory and the formation of its public historical understanding. Taking place during the final stages of the professionalization of the historical craft in the 1940s and 1950s, often the most formative and popular sources directing the course of this development were in the public sphere. Thomas Raddall was a central figure in this process. An author by trade, Raddall's stories were strikingly popular throughout the twentieth century, garnering a level of renown that helped him build a large professional and social network. Through his popular works such as *His Majesty's Yankees* (1942), *Pride's Fancy* (1946), *Halifax*, *Warden of the North* (1948), *The Nymph and the Lamp* (1950), and *The Path of Destiny* (1958), he made a substantial impact on not only the literary landscape of Nova Scotia, but also the historical profession as well. Through both his historical fiction and his award-winning non-fiction, he played a key role in influencing the public's understanding of the past through textbooks, heritage sites, and monuments that still permeate today in Atlantic Canada.

Although Raddall occupies a central place in many cultural histories of Nova Scotia, the scholarly literature on the development of public history seldom mentions him. When he is mentioned, he is described as an "amateur" participant whose work only temporarily drew him into the historical sphere, often to ill effect due to his narratives. This lack of presence and recognition in the existing literature and the narrow interpretations of the historical nature of his work and its impact on the field leave much

to be desired. Through a thorough textual analysis of Thomas Raddall's correspondence and other archival documents in the period of 1945 to 1958, it presents a reengagement with the crucial figure of Thomas Raddall and provides a more multidimensional image of him and his work.

Through this reengagement, a more comprehensive understanding of Raddall's place within Nova Scotia's formation of the past and its historical craft can be presented. It reveals that Thomas Raddall, through his career growth and popular works of literature, was an active and productive member of the field of history. He grew his career and was able to influence the course of Nova Scotia's memory formation through not only his written work but also his extensive organizational involvement. From his two Governor General award-winning non-fiction books, which he produced during this time, to his involvement in provincial and national heritage organizations, he was able to achieve such an impact. In each of these pursuits, he embodied different roles within the historical field, most prominently as a local and popular historian. Coinciding with these roles within the field, this period also witnessed Raddall become a founding member of a new class of public historians that came into existence during the late 1940s and 1950s. Intertwined is Thomas Raddall's extensive and meticulously curated web of correspondences, which served as an invaluable tool throughout this period of his career and beyond. Through exploring this period and his social and professional growth within it, we can examine the impact he had on the landscape of Nova Scotia's historical memory formation and his importance as a crucial part of the conversations we have about it today. Ultimately, this exploration of Thomas Raddall's career during this period

challenges the dominant narratives of mid-twentieth-century Nova Scotia, placing Thomas Raddall in the proper place within its formation.

Historiography

The historiographical landscape that surrounds Thomas Raddall has had several crucial contributions made over the last twenty years from a variety of scholarly sources. One of the most direct comes from historian Ian McKay, who has written extensively on topics such as Atlantic Canadian social history, historical memory, and liberalism. In his 2010 book *In the Province of History: The Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia*, co-written by Robin Bates, he explores the nature of historical memory and its creation during the twentieth century. Their work provides a unique perspective on the historical efforts and outcomes of important cultural figures such as Premier Angus L. Macdonald, Will Bird, and Thomas Raddall on the popular historical landscape of Nova Scotia. They argue that these individuals were the architects of a new tourist history, whose key features were its sanitization of the past, emphasis on its Scottish and English roots, and the exclusionary nature of its narrative. They single out Thomas Raddall, whose popularity made him uniquely impactful in shaping the perceptions of Nova Scotian history. Ian McKay vehemently argues that Raddall's work frequently misused and presented a particular image of the past, something that he uses to challenge the 'historical' label that is prescribed to his work. They further emphasize the impact of Raddall's work by arguing that it surpassed his peer Will R. Birds, stating it had a greater impact on the historical landscape. Complementing his work in the Province of History Ian McKay's 2020 article titled "Race, White Settler Liberalism, and the Nova

Scotia Archives, 1931–1976” further engages with Thomas Raddall through his impact on the archival world due to his influence in the broader historical field.

Another scholar who has engaged directly with Thomas Raddall is David Creelman, who has published frequently on the nature and impact of Raddall’s work on the broader Canadian literary landscape. In “Conservative Solutions: The Early Historical Fiction of Thomas Raddall,” Creelman explores two of Raddall’s books, *His Majesty’s Yankees* and *Roger Sudden*. He makes the argument that the historiographical aspects and the underlying cultural tensions that inspired these books are often overlooked by scholars and critics. Making the case that without a thorough understanding and acknowledgment of these two factors, an understanding of Raddall’s work cannot be achieved. In tandem with this article, his book, *Setting in the East: Maritime Realist Fiction*, offers further insight into Raddall’s work through a literary analysis of the broader field and where his work falls within it. A key takeaway from David Creelman’s work comes from the final sentence of “Conservative Solutions,” where he states that Raddall’s “historical romances contribute to our understanding of how “simple” fictions are engaged with and contribute to the ideological shifts of their day.” His analysis of Thomas Raddall and his work from a more literary angle offers an invaluable perspective on Raddall, displaying that he was not only a prominent contributor to his field but a reflection of the world he lived in and the change he was experiencing.

Beyond the literature that engages with Thomas Raddall directly are those that deal with the larger contexts surrounding him, such as public history, heritage, and commemoration during the mid-twentieth century. Steven Henderson's extensive biographical work on Nova Scotian premier Angus L. Macdonald serves as a fantastic

entry point into the role of government within these larger contexts. In *Angus L. Macdonald: A Provincial Liberal*, Henderson explores his career from its early political beginnings to his final impactful years in the office of the Premier. From this mosaic presented by Henderson, we see that one of the central goals of Macdonald's premiership, was to achieve the economic and cultural self-development of Nova Scotia. A crucial by-product of this goal was his support and engagement with the creation of Nova Scotian history, which promoted and cultivated cultural development and added value to tourism. Manifestations of this support came through state-sponsored projects and organizations, one prominent example being the creation of Cape Breton Highlands Park in the 1930s and 1940s, a project of personal significance due to his Scottish highland heritage. Another key part of this process of achieving cultural development was facilitated through connections with "independent cultural producers," whom he charged to create and promote Nova Scotia's history and heritage. The most significant cultural producers were his personal friends, Will R. Bird and Thomas Raddall, who found roles within his newly created Nova Scotian Historic Site Advisory Council. Steven Henderson's book makes it clear that Angus L. Macdonald was inextricably connected to Thomas Raddall. This reveals the level of engagement Raddall had with the state from 1945 to 1954, providing valuable insight into the upper echelons of Raddall's professional and social network and avenues that the state pursued to create and promote public history.

In Meaghan Beaton's book, *The Centennial Cure: Commemoration, Identity, and Cultural Capital In Nova Scotia, during Canada's 1967 Centennial Celebration*, the province's engagement with public history and heritage continued in the era following Angus L. Macdonald. Through an analysis of four case studies of commemoration

projects across the province, she conveys how the province, by the mid-1960s, was still active in its goal of promoting cultural development through acts of heritage and commemoration. She makes it clear that Canada's centennial celebration served many purposes; in the case of the government, it served as an attempt to cement a Canadian identity during the socially and intellectually disruptive period of the 1960s. This highlighting of the growing complexities of the time is crucial, as it sheds light on how Nova Scotians' perceptions of themselves and their imagined collective cultural memory were being renegotiated. Produced in part by the increasing modernization of Canada and the challenges being made against the existing historical narratives by growing social and intellectual movements. The important takeaway from Beaton's work and how it connects to Thomas Raddall is its emphasis on the province's continued investment in developing its heritage and the relevance of public history in the conversations around its collective social memory.

This period of change that Beaton's scholarship touches upon is explored further in other works of scholarship that tackle the many intellectual and social developments during the mid-twentieth century. The two most prominent of these developments in the case of Thomas Raddall are the increasing professionalization of the historical craft, and the advent of the CBC and its television broadcasting. An insightful source that explores the process of historical professionalization is Donald Wright's *The Professionalization of History in English Canada*. Through a national lens, his book tracks the evolution of the historian's craft beginning in the late nineteenth century through its final formalization in the mid and late twentieth century. He states that "the emergence of modern academic professions represented a reorganization of intellectual culture from a civic foundation to

a professional and academic one,” a process from which the field of history was not exempt. Crucial to this development was the creation of organizations that worked with and operated in the realm of academia, such as the Canadian Historical Association (CHA), *Canadian Historical Review*, and the Humanities Research Council of Canada. Paired with the growth of recognized organizations and accreditation systems came an increased focus on aligning historians’ research ideals to those of the new social sciences. As Canada modernized so did the historical profession, fashioning itself into a hybrid community that walked along the lines of this new scientifically inspired empiricism yet never fully abandoning its humanistic creativity. Through his exploration of this process, Wright’s work helps identify the ways that Raddall was an active participant in this process. Through his membership with the Canadian Historical Association, correspondence and cooperation with relevant academics, and the research methods for his books, Thomas Raddall positions himself as an active member of this increasingly professionalized community.

Historian Monica Macdonald, in her book *Recasting History: How the CBC Television Has Shaped Canada’s Past* engages with the other crucial developments taking place during this period. In *Recasting History* she explores the rise of television in post-war Canada and the impact this new medium has on the dissemination of public history. One of the arguments she makes is that despite the changing historical landscape during the 1950s, onward the presentations of history on television remained largely the same in its content and narrative. Macdonald’s work also illuminates how journalists, through their creation of ‘historical dramas’, re-enactments, and novel adaptations give rise to a new kind of historian. These new ‘historians’ and their historically inspired programs

were able to reach and impact the historical perceptions of millions thanks to the advent of television and its increasing availability throughout the 1950s. While the book and its timeline only briefly overlap with the period of 1945 to 1955, her work provides important coverage of the rise of television, which Thomas Raddall made increasing use of as his career progressed, as well as the importance of radio. Her work also expresses the challenges posed by the creation of public history through the emerging medium of television and engages with the conflicts that its depictions of history posed during the 1960s, and onward. Not only does Monica Macdonald's book shine a light on the importance of the CBC and its television programming on the landscape of public history but it also explores the mediums which Raddall used. Through both radio and television, Thomas Raddall and his histories found greater popularity and were able to place themselves in front of a national audience.

Primary Sources

Thomas Raddall remains a centrally important figure in the cultural formation of Nova Scotia and its history, yet there is no sustained analysis of his impact as a historian and creator of Nova Scotia public history. A common held notion is that Thomas Riddell was simply an author, whose work occasionally and briefly drew him into the realm of historical creation. Initial research of the correspondence of Thomas Riddell, at Dalhousie's Special Collection's revealed that his vast network of contacts and the content of their letters, form an urgency for further research to challenge this notion. His extended service in historical societies, professional, associations, museums, and archives in addition to his constant cooperation, with academics indicates that he is a recognized member of the field. Through a textual analysis of the correspondence from the years

1945 to 1958, indicates that his role was not ‘amateur’ nor passive as was commonly believed, but rather as a recognized member of the historical field. This is not a question of his character, but simply that his work demands Thomas Raddall be seen as an active participant who contributed to the historical literature which has instrumental to the history of Nova Scotia.

To achieve this goal, my thesis draws primarily upon a variety of unpublished manuscript sources from the Thomas Raddall fonds held by Dalhousie University’s Special Collections. From this extensive and rich body of primary sources, attention is placed on analyzing his correspondence collection which consists of over eight hundred individual series of letters that have been graciously organized and catalogued by the collection’s archivists. To further narrow down this rich yet daunting collection of primary source material, focus is placed on letters sent or received between 1945 and 1958, with room to accommodate letter series which extend beyond if relevant. The reason for choosing this period despite the letters spanning over eighty years is because the letters from 1945-1958 related to the writing of historical works or Raddall’s interaction with the historical community represent roughly 42% of the total throughout the entire collection. This is a staggering saturation of relevant material found within or overlapping just a single decade; however, it is not unsurprising given the work he is producing during this time. Some examples of the conversations of interest during this period are the beginning of a 33-letter series with Dalhousie University spanning from 1949 to 1970, a 2-letter series between Raddall and King’s College Dean of Men Harry Dysart from 1948 to 1949, and a 15-letter series with Nova Scotian archivist C.B.

Fergusson from 1953 to 1972. These examples represent only a small sample of the one hundred and forty-two conversations I have identified in this period in my research so far.

To further enhance the textual analysis of these letters and to best draw out their significance, several other complementary primary sources were explored within the Thomas Raddall collection as well as, personal items and letters that contained unpublished manuscripts relating to his various writing projects. These early renditions of his stories alongside the research notes he used to create these ‘historical fictions’ provides crucial insight into his process as a writer and historical contributor. In addition to the Thomas Raddall collection the Historic Sites Advisory Council funds from 1947-1964, provide valuable information about Raddall. The Historic Sites Advisory Council Funds give insight into his membership on this council and reveal he was a valuable contributor to the council. This collection includes records of the council’s correspondence, meeting notes, and other related material which offer a greater look into his work in the field of heritage and commemoration.

Thomas Raddall also had strong links with many forms of physical and electronic media that helped grow his professional network and increase his social reach. There are various newspapers, magazines, recorded television, and radio broadcasts which Thomas Raddall engaged with. An important example of a physical print source is, *Maclean’s* magazine, which is reflected through his seventy-five letter correspondence series with them from 1945 to 1963. These letters between himself and *Maclean’s* help to identify the specific articles, interviews, story publications, and other issues of the magazine in which Raddall was featured. In the realm of electronic media, the Thomas Raddall collection contains both correspondences with and as well as the radio and television scripts for the

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Through the CBC archives, many of these interviews have been made available and will allow for an exploration of his presence in the earliest forms of Canadian television, as well as his long-time presence in radio. Intermingled with these key examples are a plethora of other publications such as regional and national newspapers, magazines, and journals. These include publications like the *Financial Post*, *Halifax Herald*, *Maritime Quarterly*, *Nova Scotia Historical Quarterly*, *Readers Digest*, and *Weekend Magazine*.

In addition to the primary source material, a diverse body of secondary sources from a variety of academic disciplines will be drawn upon to help contextualize Thomas Raddall's contributions as a public historian. Some examples of explicitly interdisciplinary literature are the works of Donald Wright and Monica Macdonald which have been previously discussed. Donald Wright's *The Professionalization of History in English Canada* is presented through the lens of history and political science, with Monica Macdonald's *Recasting History* engaging not only with history but with media studies as well. To better understand the literary nature of Raddall's work use of David Creelman's article "Conservative Solutions: The Early Historical Fiction of Thomas Raddall" and his book *Setting in the East: Maritime Realist Fiction*, will be utilized. Further diversifying the secondary source base are articles and books written from a variety of historical lenses such as social history, public history, and intellectual history. This diverse selection of supporting secondary sources will paint an inclusive historiographical landscape that is able to tackle the complexities that come with examining history and its creation during this period.

The chapters of this thesis will follow a chronological mapping of Thomas Raddall's career and social network from 1945 to 1958. Chapter One introduces and provides background information on Thomas Raddall leading up to 1945. It covers his early life and the publications and works he has produced leading up to this period to provide needed context on his life. Chapter two examines the years 1945 to 1948, which marked the beginning of Angus L. Macdonald's final run as the premier of Nova Scotia. This chapter focuses on Raddall's landmark work, *Halifax, Warden of the North*, released in 1948 in alignment with the bicentennial of the founding of Halifax. Chapter three addresses the crucial period from 1948 to the year 1950. This chapter considers the public and professional reception of *Halifax, Warden of the North*, the increasing popularity, and social reach of Raddall, and the writing and publishing of a subsequent work titled *The Nymph and the Lamp* in the year 1950. Chapter four traces the most productive years of Raddall in the 1950s, which was the peak of his professional career up to this point. This period witnessed the swift rise of Raddall's social and professional network alongside an increasing pace in the professionalization of history in the province. Another impactful feature of this period is the death of Angus L. Macdonald while in office as premier, a great loss for Thomas Raddall and a splintering point to the distinct vision that Macdonald held for the province's history. The fifth and final chapter will summarize final remarks, findings and arguments. Each of these five chapters represents an important unpacking of this crucial decade in Thomas Raddall's life, reflected through his correspondences and the other supporting primary and secondary material.

Conclusion

Thomas Raddall played an essential role in the creation of Nova Scotian cultural memory and the development of the historical profession during the mid-twentieth century. From his contributions to the literary and historical landscape to his involvement in heritage and commemoration, Raddall and his work remain relevant today. While the existing literature acknowledges his participation within these fields, he is often portrayed as a sporadic and amateur participant whose work did little to benefit the field of history. Through the exploration of this period in Thomas Raddall's career from 1945 to 1958, it expands the narrative around him and his work through a thorough textual analysis of his correspondence. Through research of his letters, unpublished manuscripts, government records, and a diverse set of secondary sources a new interpretation of Thomas Raddall as a public historian will be provided. It will convey the role and impact that Raddall had on shaping the cultural memory of the province and how it still affects the conversations we have about it today. Therefore, shedding light on the fact that he was a consistent and contributing member of the historical profession during a period of increasing professionalization. His literary and organizational work acted as a bulwark against an increasing trend within the field of history to isolate itself from the public. Ultimately it will challenge the prevailing narratives that have formed around the mid-twentieth-century Nova Scotian historical landscape and Thomas Raddall.

CHAPTER TWO

Principles and Practice - The Warden of the North, 1945 to 1948

Introduction

In 1948 Thomas H. Raddall published *Halifax, Warden of the North*. Released in alignment with the 200th anniversary of the founding of the city of Halifax, the book was a longtime financial and immediate critical success. In the year following its release, it would go on to receive the Governor General Award for English Language Non-Fiction and was well received in the *Canadian Historical Review*, quickly becoming an essential read for anyone wishing to understand the history of not only Halifax but Nova Scotia as well. For the first decade of Thomas Raddall's career, since he started writing full-time in 1935, history often inspired the locations, characters, and direction of his novels, but never formed the core of it. With *Halifax, Warden of the North* he would diverge from his previous work as it fully embraced presenting history as the goal of the book, rather than a mere tool for storytelling. The book's divergence from a decade of writing precedent, the impact that it had upon the landscape of history, and its legacy today make it a crucial starting point in understanding how Thomas Raddall and the field of history intersected during the mid-twentieth century.

To understand the significance of these early intersections, made through *Halifax, Warden of the North* and beyond, it is essential to explore the period which led up to its release. This can first be achieved by exploring the career of Thomas Raddall from 1945 to 1948, through the lens of his correspondence, making use of letters directed towards his publishers as well as his personal and professional contacts. Through these various threads of conversation, it becomes evident that the book was not merely a project of

spontaneity made solely to exploit the celebrations of a single city, but rather a project of longtime significance to its author. In addition, by exploring his social network through letters it will become clear that Thomas Raddall was also engaged with the field of history through his involvement with societies, associations, archives, and museums. The second way these intersections are revealed is through assessing and understanding the state of the field of history which existed at the time. The professional state of the discipline of history, the landscape of literature being written at the time, and what was being consumed as history display the intersections between Thomas Raddall and the field of history. By examining the years that preceded Thomas Raddall's landmark non-fiction *Halifax, Warden of the North*, it becomes clear that he was a prominent author of historical fiction, a local historian through his societal collaborations, and an emerging popular historian through his literary and radio broadcasts. These were facilitated by his growing network of social connections through his correspondence. Through this period, these interweaving facets of Thomas Raddall's career become clear and show that between 1945 and 1948 the groundwork for his unprecedented success in the decades to come was prepared.

The Origins of the *Warden*

On the 3rd of March 1948, Thomas Raddall wrote to John McClelland, the owner of his Canadian publisher McClelland & Stewart Ltd based in Toronto. In this correspondence with his longtime business partner, Raddall conveyed that his work on his up-and-coming book on Halifax was nearing completion and that a contract should be prepared. This one-page letter would go on to provide McClelland with several other crucial updates as well as Raddall's own personal insight into his ongoing project's

potency. He would begin by requesting several detailed illustrations for the book, swiftly followed by a lengthy espousing of the advantages of the book's publication during the anniversary of the city's founding. In his final paragraph he sets the stage for this argument by declaring that for the 200th anniversary celebration "no one is attempting a full-scale history of the city like mine and in this respect, we have a virgin field." This confident assessment of the market was likely warranted as Thomas Raddall's decade of experience and knowledge as a writer would have given him a good sense of the field of literature. Subsequently, his words grew ever bolder with his final declaration of the letter stating that his book "will be the first real history of Halifax since Akins' work more than a hundred years ago and should remain a steady seller for a good many years."¹

Brimming with confidence and a tangible enthusiasm for his work, Thomas Raddall through this letter offers a window into the final days of work for one of the most important books of his career.

The book in question that Thomas Raddall was referring to with such enthusiasm was his soon-to-be-named *Halifax, Warden of the North*. A project of personal and professional significance, this book was a culmination of half a decade's worth of work. First formulated and discussed as a possible project in 1943 with his Toronto Publisher McClelland & Stewart, the book and its premise remained along the sidelines for most of the 1940s.² This delay was the result of several factors such as the changing of his US and British publishers, the conflict of writing about the city of Halifax during wartime, as well as his dedication to other writing projects. Eventually, in late 1947 he cleared his

¹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, June 7th, 1945. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 17, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

² Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Doubleday and Company, June 7th, 1945.

literary plate and found time to pursue the writing of this comprehensive history of the city. Using the research he completed over the previous half-decade, alongside his experience gained through his historically inspired works such as *His Majesty's Yankees* (1942), *Roger Sudden* (1944), and *Pride's Fancy* (1946) he felt prepared to tackle such a task. The timing of the publication was also crucial as 1949 would mark the 200th anniversary of the city's founding. By aiming for an autumn publication and access to the Christmas market he positioned his book to take full advantage of the public's peaking interest in history of Halifax's past. When looking at *Halifax, Warden of the North* with all the additive factors involved, this work was the most directed, planned, and monumental project Thomas Raddall had undertaken in his career to date.

The first time it became viable for Thomas Raddall to pursue his book on Halifax arose during the waning days of the Second World War. Due to wartime censure and shortage of materials such as paper, fuel, and other supplies, many projects were sidelined, postponed, or delayed. Having experienced these difficulties during the war getting work published, printed, and moved forward due to the logistical and administrative challenges, he was keen to complete these backlogged projects. His publishers, being the first to see the opportunities arising during this time, all made requests for the plans for Raddall's next book and specifically enquired as to the status of his book on Halifax. Although the first letter to mention the idea of the book remains absent from the historical record, the first mention of it by his publishers comes from a letter between himself and Doubleday on June 7th, 1945. In the letter from Ethel M. Hulse to Raddall she states that "Mr. Foster and Mr. Stewart of McClelland & Stewart were here to attend our sales conference [...] and they raised the question of that book on

Halifax – the city and port – we talked about with you back in 1943.” The letter further explains that whilst they were keen for Raddall to declare his intention for his next book they said they were in no hurry, but were “keen for the book and felt some of the wartime restrictions might soon be removed so that you could get to work on it.” They end the letter with a final note stating, “won’t you let us know your own thoughts about your writing plans for the present and immediate future?”³

Language indicating enthusiastic interest for Raddall’s work is quite common and consistent in letters from his publishers. Thomas Raddall had brought to his publishers a consistent and reliable source of income as his books both at home and overseas were successful enough to warrant more work from him. The June 7th, 1945, letter makes it clear that his publishers were hungry for more work and were aware of the potential viability of his book on the history of the city. Thomas Raddall’s response to this plea for the plans he had for his following book arrived at Doubleday in New York on July 6th, 1945. In his letter he conveys that his delay to their letter was the result of research he was engaged with for his next novel, stating that his findings would influence the plot of the final project. He then goes on to outline that his next work would be a book named *Pride’s Fancy*, a tale of Nova Scotian privateers in the Caribbean during the Napoleonic war. Subsequently, he provides them with a timeline stating he “shall begin writing the novel in August and expect to finish it about the beginning of summer, i.e., about June 1946.” Following this clarification he provides about his next project and its timeline he makes sure to provide clarity on the fate of this “Halifax book.” Acknowledging that George Foster of McClelland & Stewart raised the topic of the book on Halifax “a week

³ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Doubleday and Company, June 7th, 1945. MS-2-202, Box 39, Folder 59, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

or two ago” for their Seaport Series he goes on to clarify his intent for the book. “I think by [the time I finish my Caribbean novel] the last vestige of wartime censorship will be lifted from the Halifax scene, and it will be possible to do a complete and satisfactory job of the book. Publication in the autumn of 1947 would mean good sales for it through 1948, [as] Halifax will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of its founding, with much pomp and ceremony and publicity, which would do the book no harm.”⁴

Thomas Raddall’s rationale to postpone the Halifax project so that it would be released in tandem with the city’s anniversary was not only pragmatic but was informationally advantageous. This was made clear in the foreword of his First edition of *Halifax, Warden of the North*, as well as echoed in conversations with his publishers, he states that “I should not attempt the work until two or three years after the war’s close so that the full story might be told.”⁵ With the intent to take the reader comprehensively through Halifax’s distant past to the present day he needed to be able to properly engage with its role within the Second World War. The importance of the city within this war effort as well as the impact it had upon the city was apparent to both Raddall and his publishers. In yet another correspondence between McClelland and Raddall pleading for him to write the book from June 27th, 1945, McClelland begins it by stating “now that the war in Europe is over [...] Halifax can be called Halifax instead of an East Coast Canadian Port.”⁶ Rather than prompting him to begin the project post-haste these letters and correspondence only endeared him to his goal of getting all the information he could

⁴ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Doubleday and Company, June 7th, 1945. MS-2-202, Box 39, Folder 59, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁵ Thomas Head Raddall, *Halifax, Warden of the North*. 1st ed. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1948), ix.

⁶ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, June 27th, 1945. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 17, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

about the city's role in the conflict. For Thomas Raddall, achieving this goal of telling the complete story of Halifax's role within such a transformative historical event required not only an end to the war and its censorship but also information not yet available to the public.

With this sentiment firmly embedded within his long-term plan for the book, Raddall spent the next few years continuing his career writing historical fiction. Between 1944 up till his eventual beginning of his Halifax Book, Thomas Raddall completed two short story collections, a fully-fledged novel, as well as a regimental history. Listed in order of completion are *Tambour and Other Stories* (1945), *Pride's Fancy* (1946), *The Wedding Gift and Other Stories* (1947), and finally *West Novas: A History of the West Nova Scotia Regiment* (1947).⁷ Additionally during these years before the *Warden*, a major professional conflict occurred with the souring relations and dissolution of his ties with his American publisher Doubleday. In 1947, dissatisfied with his relationship with Doubleday due to their mishandling of 1944's *Roger Sudden* as well as 1946's *Pride's Fancy* release, promotion, and the fumbling of a movie deal with the former of the two, Raddall would part ways with his longtime publisher in the US.⁸ Raddall would find a new American publisher in the John C. Winston Company of Philadelphia and the exclusive rights to *Halifax*, *Warden or the North* went to McClelland & Stewart upon its

⁷ In historian Rebecca Conrad's article "The Pragmatic Roots of Public History Education in the United States", she states that one of the early applications of public historical practise appeared in the form of military histories. Military Departments in the US and UK began seriously engaging with writing comprehensive histories of their military, eventually leading to the creation of specific historical sections. These histories were likely created for the interest of the public in informing on their national armed forces. This connects directly to Thomas Raddall and his work of the West Novas Regiment as well as the work of military historians such as C.P. Stacey.

⁸ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, February 10th, 1947. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 17, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

release in 1948.⁹ With a plan set in stone within his mind, Raddall continued for nearly half a decade to stew over *Halifax, Warden of the North* in his mind.

Crafting the *Warden*

In the spring of 1947, with the completion of Thomas Raddall's extensive regimental history of the West Nova Regiment, his literary plate was finally cleared. With no backlogged projects to get in his way and a suitable social climate in place, he got to work on his long-awaited book on Halifax. Over twelve months from May 1947 and May 1948 the book was written in its totality, not including the many years of diligent research and planning.¹⁰ *Halifax, Warden of the North* would embody many characteristics of Thomas Raddall's previous works through its engagement with and use of history but was set apart due to its scope and ultimate literary goal. In most of his previous books and short stories, he had always made history a tool to support, frame, and direct his compelling narratives. The *Warden* diverged from this trend and history would not merely serve as the set dressing for his narratives but rather it would take center stage. Having mastered the art of crafting costume histories, where the past was his vessel for bringing character and conflict to life, Thomas Raddall now had the daunting challenge of creating a comprehensive history of a past he held so dear.¹¹ By examining the process Thomas Raddall took for planning, researching, and consultation for this book, the early

⁹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, November 18th, 1947. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 17, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹⁰ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, May 4th, 1948. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 17, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹¹ Costume histories is a term which best describes the historical fictions that Thomas Randall had become famous for writing throughout his career. They rely heavily on real historical places, events, and even people to support and enhance the novels' fictitious narratives. Stories which are representative of his costume histories include *Roger Sudden*, *His Majesty's Yankees*, and *Pride's Fancy*.

intersections between him and the practises of history are revealed. This process sets the stage for a better understanding of the principles and practices of the historian's craft and what qualifies as history during this period.

The best place to begin exploring the process of writing the *Warden* is through understanding Thomas Raddall's associations, anxieties, and intentions while creating the book. In the first edition of *Halifax, Warden of the North* published by McClelland & Stewart Ltd in 1948, he provides the reader with a brief preface to help them better understand both his book and his motivations. In the first two pages, he explores his deeply symbolic relationship with Halifax, sharing how through hearing stories and tales of the past he had come to know the three faces of the city. These three faces are described as the soldier, townsman, and sailor. Enamored by these faces and the tales which created them, Raddall states that his interest in the past and storytelling deepened through his desire to find the source of his city's stories. From these first two pages, he sets the stage by conveying to his reader that Halifax was a city rich in stories worth telling, many of which heavily influenced his career as a writer.¹²

In the preface, this exploration of his youth and the city's effect on him subsequently flows into his time as a novelist, where he at length ascribes credit to those who helped him uncover the sources of these stories and guide his writing on them. Many of the influential people listed maintained lengthy correspondences with Thomas Raddall which now reside in Dalhousie University's Special Collections. The earliest individuals whom Thomas Raddall thanked for their assistance in his career as an author are the Public Archives of Nova Scotia's Dr. Daniel Cobb Harvey, Dr James Martell, and Miss

¹² Raddall, *Halifax, Warden of the North*, vii.

Margaret Ells. Raddall stated that Dr. James Martell, alongside Theodore Roosevelt, whom Raddall corresponded with in the 1930s, were the earliest individuals who urged him to write a purely historical novel. He would go on to further thank Dr. C. Lindsay Bennet of Dalhousie University, Dr. C. Bruce Fergusson of the Provincial Archives, and several other authors, scholars, and officers for their efforts in aiding his research. The most notable of these individuals are Nova Scotia Archives Head archivist Dr. C.B. Fergusson, prominent historian and Dalhousie Lecturer Dr. D.C. Harvey, and Dalhousie's Dr. C. L. Bennet. Through his conversations and correspondence with each of these individuals from the Dalhousie Libraries and Nova Scotia's archives, alongside their historical writing, provided invaluable guidance for Thomas Raddall during the crafting of *Halifax, Warden of the North*. Paired with these individuals' names he acknowledges his use of the *Canadian Historical Review*, *Dalhousie Gazette*, and *Nova Scotia Historical Society Journal* in helping him form the basis of his knowledge about Halifax and broader Nova Scotian history.¹³

Alongside the extensive number of accreditations of assistance and guidance, Thomas Raddall shared the anxieties he had while tackling a book of such historical breadth. He reveals these anxieties had a definitive impact on the final product of the book and fundamentally shaped his understanding of the kind of book he was creating. On page ix of his preface, he begins unpacking this by first writing about his past issues with using history and how he decided to create the *Warden* stating:

Very soon I found that the great difficulty in writing a historical novel about Nova Scotia was the great richness of the material. It was a struggle to keep the history in the background where it belonged, for it had an insistent way of intruding upon the story, a habit I had to watch and repulse. The insistence of history was double hard to resist because the temptation came from without as well as within. [...]

¹³ Raddall, *Halifax, Warden of the North*, vii – xi.

Later James Martell urged me to write a history of Halifax, because in the process of familiarizing myself with the background of two of my novels I had gathered a great amount of the necessary facts. Again I refused, pleading that it was out of my field. [...] That is how and why this account of Halifax during its first two centuries came to be written.¹⁴

This anxiety around writing a fully-fledged work of historical non-fiction would continue to persist despite the support of his peers. In the following paragraph this continued anxiety over handling “proper history” would manifest through his declaration of what he wanted the *Halifax, Warden of the North* to be understood as stating:

It is not a history, for properly a history must record every incident, every date, and copious statistics, all documented with care. It would take several volumes, whereas my object was to write a single readable book based on selective research.¹⁵

The desire to create a book that was digestible and enjoyable to a broader base of readers was an ever-present focus of Thomas Raddall. Whilst he undoubtedly had a desire to present a well-researched history, as displayed by his communication and consultation with academics and archivists, his investment in creating what he believed was an enticing story presented stylistic and editorial conflicts. This conflict is evident in his statement that “in the first writing I made laborious footnotes, documenting every pertinent fact; but as the work went on, I realized that they would only bore the average reader and I therefore cut them out.”¹⁶ This decision would have been a large departure from the expected norms of a book which aimed to present itself as a well-fashioned and stylistically academic history book. Despite this rejection of some of the required tenets of professional history, he does make it clear that he specifically retained elements in his final draft to make the book useful as a historical source. Relaying to the reader that:

¹⁴ Raddall, *Halifax, Warden of the North*, ix.

¹⁵ Raddall, *Halifax, Warden of the North*, ix.

¹⁶ Raddall, *Halifax, Warden of the North*, ix.

For those whose interest is in the sources I have included an appendix showing books and documents I consulted. But even there I have not attempted to list the various newspapers or the great number of letters, pamphlets, diaries, and other documents from which I gleaned information.¹⁷

These editorial decisions and stylistic choices were made to find a compromise between presenting a comprehensive history of Nova Scotia's past whilst keeping it concise and entertaining. As Thomas Raddall's first foray into writing non-fiction, this balance seems reasonable, and representative of an author concerned about the presentation of his work. In addition by declaring that this work is not explicitly a history to the reader, he displays a desire to keep his work under the umbrella of an author rather than claim to be the work of a historian. Ironically, this desire to create a book for the wider public rather than an academic one presents early evidence of Thomas Raddall's increasing alignment with the role of a public historian, someone whose work influences the wider public's understanding of the past.

The preface of the first edition of *Halifax, Warden of the North* provides a window into the origins, anxieties, and intentions that all came together, as well as, large and diverse social network of professional and personal contacts, which all played a role in influencing and supporting the creation of such a monumental piece of work. From C.B. Fergusson, Margaret Ells, and D.C. Harvey of the Nova Scotia Provincial archives we see a strong interest in the use of primary source information. Additionally, through D.C. Harvey as well as Dr. C. L. Bennet, we see connections with Dalhousie University, with each of them along with Fergusson making sure to provide a basis of secondary and contemporary literature to help create a foundation for Raddall to work from. Finally, through the bibliography and the preface, the large bodies of historical literature can be

¹⁷ Raddall, *Halifax, Warden of the North*, ix.

found such as the Canadian Historical Journal and the Nova Scotia Historical Society Journal. Despite the editorial and stylistic choices made by Thomas Raddall to rein in the overtly academic nature of the book he still built it with and had consultation with respected academic sources. In this way, *Halifax, Warden of the North* represents a hybridity between the artistic practices of his past works and the research principles of the historians' practice of the time. This combination presented within its pages is neither antagonistic nor disruptive to the final form which it would take in its first edition.

Queen's County Historical Society & The Simeon Perkins House

The interactions between Thomas Raddall and the field of history during 1945-1948 were not exclusive to his work as a writer and occurred through his organizational involvement. Living in the town of Liverpool, Nova Scotia, Thomas H. Raddall was a prominent member of the Queen's County Historical Society (QCHS). From as early as 1946 there was correspondence made between Thomas Raddall and its members, as well as outside groups they engaged with. In many of these letters, it is evident that Raddall was at the center of most of the important activities and efforts of the Society. Nowhere is this more clearly displayed than in the correspondence relating to QCHS's most prominent project, the Simeon Perkins house, and its related collection of historical documents. Thomas Raddall's time and energy as a member of society during this period was dominated by his efforts to restore and preserve the Simeon Perkins house and its contained collection. This series of correspondence is invaluable in exploring Thomas H. Raddall's participation in the preservation and representation of history in this period. In addition, it offers insight into the many interweaving avenues and varied roles by which Thomas Raddall made an impact on the broader historical community.

While it is difficult to pinpoint the exact date Raddall began his involvement with the Simeon Perkins House and its repository of historical documents, his presence within their correspondence is most prominent beginning in 1946. The first letter directly addressing Thomas Raddall in the series relating to Simeon Perkins is found in a letter sent to Raddall on the 8th of May 1947 by Merrill D. Rawding, Minister of Highways & Public Works, on behalf of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly. The letter relates to the provincial government's interest in financially supporting the improvement of the Perkins House and the transfer of it into the public fold. In the letter Rawding additionally relays to Raddall that the government's support for the Perkins House amounts to \$5000.00 and expresses the government's interest and enthusiasm for the historical value of the house. Rawding ends this brief but important letter by stating that "if you have not already done so, I think it might be well to take the matter up with the Historical Society, so that you may be prepared to formally pass the property over to the province."¹⁸

This correspondence does not exist within isolation but rather represents the culmination of years of outreach by the QCHS to garner financial support for the house. Within the correspondence collection, two letters preceded it which were responses made to society when they requested funds. The first on May 23rd, 1946, was sent to Mayor Edgar Wright of Liverpool by the House of Commons in Ottawa and the second on May 20th, 1946, was sent to Colonel Winters by J. Allison Glen of the Department of Mines & Resources. In each of these letters, they state the results of the society's proposal made to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, making it clear that their request

¹⁸ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the Simeon Perkins House, May 8th, 1947. MS-2-202, Box 47, Folder 60, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

“was not able to attach national importance to the house”¹⁹ and was denied. Interestingly the letter from May 23rd, sent to Edgar Wright clarifies that the possibility of failure to qualify was conveyed to Thomas Raddall and Merrill Rawding during their interview with them in March of that year and that the possibility of funding could be acquired at the provincial level. These two letters from May of 1946, alongside the correspondence between Merrill Rawding and Raddall in May of 1947, positions Thomas Raddall as a member of the Queens County Historical Society who was at the forefront of securing funding for the Simeon Perkins house. He was not only a part of the plan to secure funding from the federal level but was the first to be notified when it came and was likely responsible for bringing forward the proposal from the Province of Nova Scotia.

While most of the correspondence relating to the Simeon Perkins house takes place later in the 1950s, these early years between 1946 and 1948 allow for insight into the work of Thomas Raddall in the local historical field. The exact nature of this historical work is revealed through the work of Donald Wright in his 2005 book *The Professionalization of History in English Canada*. Donald Wright's exploration of the Canadian historical profession helps explain the significance of Thomas Raddall's work with the QCHS and the Simeon Perkin's House. By this point in his career, Raddall had long been inspired by Canada's past and made it an invaluable tool for his work as a writer. In addition to using historical characters and settings within his literary works, he also participated in the preservation of primary source materials through the Simeon Perkins House project. This involvement within a local historical society, interactions with the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, and promoting the preservation

¹⁹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the Simeon Perkins House, May 23rd, 1946. MS-2-202, Box 47, Folder 60, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

of sites and collections of documents, place Raddall within a significant role within the historical landscape. In *The Professionalization of History in English Canada*, Donald Wright states that by the end of the Second World War and the 1940s clear lines of what a professional historian was were being formed. “Historians defined themselves in terms of what they were – university-trained, university-based experts in history and in terms of what they were not – history buffs puttering away at their pet projects in their spare time.”²⁰

Through this understanding of how historians of the time classified themselves, Thomas Raddall would find himself excluded from this professional sphere. Instead, he would have more closely aligned with their amateur or local counterparts which would have recently become classified as distinct from professional historians. Donald Wright establishes that during this time the relationship between the two was not characterized solely by differentiation but by one of necessary cooperation. For professional historians, these newly defined amateur and local historians performed the crucial task of “gathering of facts, the preservation of documents, and the promotion of history in general.”²¹

Coinciding with this significant role in the preservation of material and the promotion of history these amateur historians also were important participants in the Canadian Historical Association. They were valuable through their memberships which filled its ranks and paid their dues; however, they were still subjected to the hierarchy it created.²²

Through his frontline role in securing provincial funding and support for the Perkins house, Raddall was not only making improvements to the property itself but also

²⁰ Donald Wright. *The Professionalization of History in English Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019), 83.

²¹ Wright, *The Professionalization of History in English Canada*, 83.

²² Wright, *The Professionalization of History in English Canada*, 95.

ensuring the preservation of the Simeon Perkins collection which came along with it. This collection contains materials such as the mundane everyday items of the former residents of the property, documents such as deeds, wills, and diaries, as well as an eclectic mix of other material and historical documents. With the additions made by the society in the 1940s paired alongside the list “compiled hastily in 1938”²³ the Simeon Perkins House provided an impressive body of historical documents which in time would become invaluable to the work of many historians across Canada.

The Queens County Historical Society and its engagement with the Simeon Perkins House is one of the most important interactions between Thomas Raddall and the historical field. Working within these organizations his efforts would materialize into genuine acts of historical preservation, an essential part of the historical process. These acts, as defined by the recent scholarship of Donald Wright, establish that within the landscape of history, Thomas H. Raddall held a crucial role independent of his literary work. Through his involvement with the QCHS and the Simeon Perkins house, he would have been understood as a local historian, one invested in preserving valuable primary sources and promoting the interests of history to the public as well as the government. His efforts to acquire tangible support for these acts of preservation, alongside his later fights to secure the promised funding, make it clear that he held a place within the field. His sway within the QCHS, expressed through his network of communications, sets him up to be not only a rank-and-file member but one who was well respected and capable member.

²³ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the Simeon Perkins House, List of articles in the Simeon Perkins House, 1947. MS-2-202, Box 47, Folder 60, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

Canadian Authors Association

His time with the QCHS and his efforts to promote the interests of the Simeon Perkins project not only established his role within the field of history at this time but also revealed the larger network of relationships he had. In the decades leading up to the 1940s, Thomas Raddall had been diligently fostering a steadily growing social network using letters. As displayed in his correspondence surrounding the creation of *Halifax, Warden of the North*, this network was an vital tool for his craft. In addition to this social network's ability to aid his work as a writer, it also worked to help him grow as a respected figure within various social spheres. Nowhere is this displayed better during this period than in the case of his relationship with the Canadian Authors Association (CAA).

Beyond the town of Liverpool and even the Province of Nova Scotia, Thomas Raddall became well-established in several professional circles. Most important during the mid to late 1940s was the Canadian Authors Association. Thanks not only to his work as a writer but the social network he had fostered, he was able to garner the attention of the CAA's leadership and climb into their social circle. The first recorded contact between Thomas Raddall and the CAA through written correspondence occurred on March 31st, 1944, when Raddall received his official invitation to join the Canadian Authors Association through a letter sent by then-National President Watson Kirkconnell. In the letter, Kirkconnell presents a routine membership proposal to Thomas Raddall but interestingly takes time to emphasize that their interest in his membership comes from his remarkable strengths as an author. Kirkconnell states that "by your established position as

an author, you could help to give strength to our organization.”²⁴ This interest in Thomas Raddall to become a member due to the strong position he held as a writer is in great part due to his Governor General’s Award for English Language Fiction, for his book *The Pied Piper of Dipper Creek and Other Tales*, released the previous year in 1943. This sentiment is reinforced by a letter Thomas Raddall received on April 24th, 1944, from Lillie Mitchell, President of the Halifax Branch of the Canadian Author Association. In the letter, Mitchell shares that in the last meeting of the association, the proposal for his membership was “enthusiastically received” and that “in the event of your joining the branch, be assured that you will be warmly welcomed.”²⁵ The letter ends with Mitchell stating “may I take this opportunity to tell you that the Halifax Branch of the CAA is exceedingly proud that a Nova Scotian has carried off the Governor General’s Award. For your most very merited success, we offer you the most sincere congratulations.”²⁶

Due to his skills as an author and the warranted literary accomplishments he made within the first decade of his career since beginning writing full-time in 1934, Thomas Raddall was already popular and relatively well-known before joining the CAA. This early success in his career and his seemingly advanced standing upon becoming a member of the CAA would allow Raddall to move his way up in the CAA swiftly. On December 19th, 1945, Thomas Raddall received a letter From CAA’s National Secretary Charles Clay, announcing that by the result of the ballot vote he had been elected to the National Executive Committee for the 1945-1946 term, responsible for representing the

²⁴ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, March 31st, 1944. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 15, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

²⁵ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, April 24th, 1944. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 15, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

²⁶ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, April 24th, 1944. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 15, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

Maritimes. In this capacity, given a month's notice, he would be required to travel to Montreal for meetings of the executive committee.²⁷ Through later correspondences made between Secretary Clay and Raddall in late December, he would stress that he would be unable to be present for the first meeting of the year, due to the issues of distance and the importance of his ongoing writing projects.²⁸ Rather than receiving a swift response from Charles Clay over this matter of attendance Thomas Raddall would receive a letter directly from the President of the CAA, Roderick Kennedy, on April 8th, 1946.

The letter by Kennedy is deeply revealing and surprisingly personal regarding the words which he chooses to share with Thomas Raddall. He begins with an apology regarding the communications between Thomas Raddall and Secretary Charles Clay, mainly for failing to convey to Clay the letter received by Raddall about his inability to attend the year's first meeting. He goes on to apologize for the inconsiderate nature of requesting his presence with such short notice and without acknowledgement of his current responsibilities as a writer. Afterwards, he talks about the importance of Raddall's membership within the executive, goes over the major points of the first meeting held in January, and shares the direction he as the president wants to take the CAA. The latter of these points he makes by stating that "the writers of high reputation, are getting old or dying and a new generation of writers are making important reputations for themselves. Hugh McLennan, Dorothy Deacon, Gwethalyn Graham, Grace Campbell, Will Bird, yourself, and others are taking over literary leadership. They should be taking over the CAA [...], it is from these that we must find our future Vice-Presidents and Presidents."

²⁷ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, December 19th, 1945. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 15, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

²⁸ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, December 26th, 1945. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 15, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

Boldy after this espousing of the need for new and popular blood to reinvigorate the organization Kennedy states, “I ought not be president of the Association.” Rationalizing that his position should be held by a writer whose work goes beyond a modest collection of short stories and articles, and then goes into detail about his woes as president.²⁹

Following the extensive apology, this intimate exploration of Kennedy’s woes and desire for the CAA he proceeds to ingratiate himself with Thomas Raddall by praising his work. The language of this final page of the letter does much to reveal the position Raddall had in the mind of the leadership of the CAA, a sentiment which would come to be shared by many of its members. He states to Raddall that he is “a thoroughly professional writer, and if I may say so, your *Roger Sudden* and *His Majesty’s Yankees*, the only two books of yours I have read, are both brilliant professional jobs [and that] these books show more skill, competence, and professionalism in the best sense than any other Canadian Historical novels I have read.”³⁰ Going further he states that in comparison to Raddall “older novelists, as a class, have always tended to lack that tight-knit confidence and vigor in construction and narration that is particularly essential to a historical novel.”³¹ These words coming from the President of the CAA give credence to the impact that Raddall and his work as a writer have had on those around him. Even when unable to attend to his duties as a newly elected Executive, he is written to by the President to reassure him of his position both within the CAA and as a writer. The President’s language when referring to Raddall’s works as historical novels, expertly

²⁹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, April 8th, 1946, Pg. 2. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 15, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

³⁰ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, April 8th, 1946, Pg. 2. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 15, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

³¹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, April 8th, 1946, Pg. 2. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 15, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

crafted, and works of complete professionalism reinforces the standing of Raddall as a writer among his peers.

This overt praise by the president, the emphasis on his importance to the CAA, and Kennedy's willingness to accommodate Raddall were genuine. In time, Raddall would be able to attend several CAA events, meetings, and conventions during his first term as a member of the Executive. Interestingly, in these initial years with the CAA as a new member of the executive, Thomas Raddall would express a surprising level of shyness in his role when called upon to provide speeches, addresses, and other matters of public speaking. The first mention of this comes from his letter in response to Roderick Kennedy's letter which he wrote on May 13th, 1946. In the letter, he conveys to Kennedy that he appreciates the letter he sent to him and states that because his Toronto-based publishers called for him to make a trip to Toronto, he would be able to attend the CAA Convention taking place in late June of that year. He closes the letter by enquiring as to what he should be thinking about in his capacity as a member of the Executive Committee and states in full:

With regard to speaking to the members I am a bit shy. What on earth would I talk about? My Craft? I am still learning that, and it comes home to me from time to time that I know very little about it. I'd much rather sit back and listen to what others have to say.³²

Thomas Raddall's concerns over the delivery of a speech during the summer convention from June 27th to 29th of 1946, continued through the correspondence with William A. Deacon. The letter series between the two spanning from May 28th up until June 11th, 1946, reveals a level of familiarity between the two. The first letter from May

³² Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, May 13th, 1946. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 15, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

28th from the Deacon expressing his pleasure and excitement of Raddall's ability to attend and excitement of the delivery of his speech to the convection, providing Raddall with guidelines about what he would be required to present.³³ Raddall's response on the 9th of June, thanks him for his enthusiasm and instruction but once again reiterates his lack of desire to deliver such a speech.³⁴ This is once again, followed by a letter from Deacon on the 11th of June stating that ultimately the matter of the speech is between Raddall and Kennedy, but that he would love to hear a delivery from Raddall.³⁵ Despite this back and forth between the two Thomas Raddall would eventually relent and accept doing the speech after the continued reassurances of Deacon and Kennedy, with each assuring him that from his past speeches from Halifax, he was well prepared for the occasion.

From his initial invitation to the Association in 1944 to his election to the Executive Committee a year later, Thomas Raddall's early years in the CAA were expedited thanks to the success of his written work and the power of his reputation. Through these two factors, he was able to easily find a prominent place within the organization and make use of it to further grow his network of social and professional connections. The relationships he formed during this time with fellow authors like William Deacon and Will R. Bird were crucial as they had a positive impact on his image and career growth. His relationship with Will R. Bird, a fellow Maritimer, was of particular importance as such a popular and influential author would help further Raddall's career in a myriad of ways in the late 1940s and for decades to come. The

³³ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, May 28th, 1946. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 15, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

³⁴ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, June 9th, 1946. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 15, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

³⁵ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, June 11th, 1946. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 15, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

correspondence between Thomas Raddall and the CAA help to reveal the power of his reputation during this time. His invitation reveals that by the mid-1940s Thomas Raddall was a known and respected author, not only on the provincial but also on the national level. His letters to President Kennedy show that he was seen by his peers as an author whose work stood out thanks to its quality and clarity, often seen as having a strong historical element. Finally, through his conversations with Deacon and Bird, we see that his correspondences brought him within the social spheres of increasingly influential writers. As the 1940s neared its final years Thomas Raddall would continue to experience further social and positional growth within the CAA. In 1947, Thomas Raddall would once again be elected to the CAA Executive and by 1948 become the Vice-President of the Maritimes for the CAA, with Will R. Bird being elected the President of the CAA alongside him.³⁶ Thomas Raddall's time with the CAA in the mid to late 1940s offers an useful look into the status of Raddall as a writer and the reach of his social network.

The Making of a Popular Historian – *Maclean's* and the CBC

Equally as important as the organizational participation of Thomas Raddall during the mid to late 1940s was his cooperation with print and radio. Like many authors of the time, his work seldom circulated solely through just their publishers' prints; rather they were also distributed within magazines, journals, and other forms of print media. This was certainly the case for Thomas Raddall as his books and short stories were widely circulated in these alternative forms of print throughout his career. Some of the most prominent stories circulated this way during the 1940s were *Roger Sudden*, *His Majesty's*

³⁶ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, March 18, 1949. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 15, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

Yankees, *Pride's Fancy*, and many of his popular short stories like his award-winning *The Pied Piper of Dipper Creek*. Sections of these stories or their entirety found new audiences through these publications which ranged from local, regional, and even national organizations bringing a substantial amount of attention to his work. On the national level, *Maclean's* Magazine maintained a long-running relationship with Raddall, seen through their correspondence dating back to November 3rd of 1939, only three years after the start of his official career as a writer.³⁷ Through exploring these letters, it is clear their relationship during this time was one of mutual benefit with Raddall's stories selling magazines and *Maclean's* increasing the audience of Raddall's unique costume histories.

In the correspondence before 1945, Thomas Raddall and *Maclean's* magazine exchanged no less than one hundred letters. From an overview of these letters from this preliminary period, *Maclean's* was keen to acquire for their magazine a vast number of Thomas Raddall's stories. In the plethora of exchanges between the two, they talked about formatting larger tales to fit within their publication, conversed on the specifics of editing, and discussed the prospects of creating unique tales for their magazine. Often Raddall would include within his letter's entire stories, concepts, and ideas which he proposed to the magazine as potential candidates to occupy its space. It is important to address these earlier letters as they provide crucial context as to the state of the professional relationship between the two at the beginning of 1945. The first letter of the correspondence series which spans from 1945 to 1949 is from January 4th, 1945, written to Thomas Raddall by Mr. Norval Bonesteel, Assistant Editor at *Maclean's*. In the brief

³⁷ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Maclean's Magazine, November 3rd, 1939. MS-2-202. Box 43, Folder 50, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

letter, he proposes \$200 for the first Canadian serial rights to the story “The Love Moon”, and thanks Raddall for his advice to not take his other story “The Sword of Justice” due to its length.³⁸

This first letter offers a representative glimpse into the relationship which existed between Raddall and *Maclean's* throughout the mid to late 1940s. Raddall was a trusted and dependable supplier who had a substantial amount of sway within their business dealings. He was able to propose his work which suited his style and interests as well as adapt for them specific tales which they wanted for their magazine. An example of this latter point comes from a back-and-forth between the two spanning from October to November of 1945. Initiated by W. A. Irwin, Managing Editor of *Maclean's*, in a letter from October 31st, 1945, he asks if Raddall has any insight on the state of whaling in the Antarctic and its relation to Nova Scotia. Stating that “it has occurred to me that you might know what the situation is and also that you might be interested in the subject.” He then neatly ties up the letter by asking if Raddall at this point had any stories he would like to share with the magazine, a routine statement in most of his letters.³⁹

Unsurprisingly Thomas Raddall makes his response to Irwin in a letter dating from the 5th of November 1945. In this lengthy letter, he begins by saying that “the story of the whaling ships briefly is this” and then flows into a detailed tale about whaling during the Second World War. Providing in his letter the intricate details of Norwegian whaling ships, German interference, and their connection to Lunenburg and the greater

³⁸ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and *Maclean's* Magazine, January 4th, 1945. MS-2-202. Box 43, Folder 51, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

³⁹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and *Maclean's* Magazine, October 31st, 1945. MS-2-202. Box 43, Folder 51, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

province of Nova Scotia. He ties in with these informative paragraphs his personal experience in the matter stating that “we had a lot of fun with the Norwegians when they were here [when] for two years Liverpool was a Norwegian naval town.” He then proposes to Irwin that he could author a story on whaling and the local stories about it and apologizes that he has no short stories to present to him, because he was working on his next novel.⁴⁰

While examples only provide a drop of water in the vast ocean of letters between the two, they show the nature of his relationship with *Maclean's* during this period. He was not only a source of many stories and tales, which paid handsomely in many cases, but he was also an insightful contact to have for the magazine. Throughout the mid to late 1940s, Raddall would not only contribute to *Maclean's Magazine* as a fiction writer but would also offer personal pieces, current events, and interestingly some pieces on the history of a variety of topics. During the final stages of his work on the *Halifax, Warden of the North* he did not shy from offering them the use of select chapters for their publication. An example of this comes from a letter from March 18th, 1947, where he stated, he’s “keeping in mind the possibility that Maclean’s might want to use a chapter or two as in the case of Leacock’s Montreal.”⁴¹ In Irwin’s subsequent letter on the 27th, he reported having passed along Raddall’s offer to Ralph Allen who, he states, would get in touch with Raddall about the topic.⁴²

⁴⁰ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Maclean's Magazine, November 5th, 1945. MS-2-202. Box 43, Folder 51, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁴¹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Maclean's Magazine, March 18th, 1947. MS-2-202. Box 43, Folder 51, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁴² Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Maclean's Magazine, March 27th, 1947. MS-2-202. Box 43, Folder 51, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

The adaptation of Thomas Raddall's work in the pages of *Maclean's* magazine displays the national reach of his work and how it was able to expand his image in the 1940s. Raddall's collaboration with *Maclean's* also shows how he often prioritized creating popular works of literature which could be consumed and enjoyed by the wider public. This is a crucial point to highlight from his *Maclean's* correspondences as it is also echoed in his correspondences surrounding his work of *Halifax, Warden of the North*. As discussed in the previous section, which examined the process behind drafting the book, Thomas Raddall strove to create stories that could be understood and enjoyed by anyone. This desire and ability to create popular works which explored the past or were inspired by it increasingly aligned Thomas Raddall with the role of a popular historian. It is interesting to note that a popular work of history is largely defined by its ability to be seen or read by many people, this grants it some parallels to the goal of a public historian.⁴³ If Thomas Raddall's larger works of costume history and non-fiction like *Halifax, Warden of the North* were able to impress upon the public an understanding of the past, then his more digestible work through *Maclean's* would further propel that process. It is for this reason that his collaboration with *Maclean's* and its widespread dissemination of his work played a significant role in laying the groundwork for Thomas Raddall's image as a popular historian.

The unique tales and costume histories of Thomas Raddall were not solely bound to the medium of print during the 1940s as he maintained a longstanding relationship with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). Between 1940 and 1946, there was a

⁴³ Green, Anna, and Kathleen. Troup. *The Houses of History: a Critical Reader in History and Theory*. Second edition. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016. Pg. 342

nine-letter series of correspondence between Raddall, CBC Toronto, and the Maritime Talks team based in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The first letter in this series from H. W. Morrison, Supervisor of Talks based in Toronto, on November 20th, 1940, would ignite the forty-five-year collaboration between Raddall and the CBC. H. W. Morrison in this first letter reaches out to Raddall about his interest in working in the field of Radio and if he would be willing to conduct a talk for the CBC National network. Enticing him by stating “we should be very interested in any suggestions you may offer [...] and preferably with a Canadian flavor” and that “your experience in fiction writing should assist you in preparing a colorful script” for the occasion.⁴⁴ After a back and forth between the two which carried over into January of 1941, Raddall would eventually deliver his talk titled “A Nova Scotia Privateer” in Halifax.

After completing his first talk for the CBC on the 10th of January, there was silence for the next three months. Eventually, on the 23rd of April 1941, Morrison would reach out to Raddall and apologize for this lack of correspondence. The whole of the letter from that date reads as follows:

Please accept my apologies for not writing to you after your broadcast of January 10th last. I thought it was very good, although somewhat rushed. Would you be interested in doing another one for us sometime, along similar lines.⁴⁵

Despite what seems to have been a less-than-perfect delivery the CBC wished to continue their cooperation with Raddall. He would deliver one other major talk for the CBC maritime talks team the same year with a program titled “The Old Norse Voyages of

⁴⁴ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, November 20th, 1940. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 18, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁴⁵ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, April 23rd, 1941. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 18, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

America.”⁴⁶ This talk, motivated by the CBC’s current interest in the history of Iceland and Greenland, would be presented more in the manner of Thomas Raddall’s style of costume histories. This talk would be a success and would prompt the CBC to reach out to Raddall once again for his interest in another talk as seen through a letter on May 6th, 1942. Their interest in getting Raddall back in the studio whilst also being curious about his residence in Liverpool is conveyed by the author Elizabeth Long. She states in her letter “I am wondering if this is the time of year that you will be going to Halifax to do research work in the library there” and that “if such a trip is on your mind, had you any thought of preparing one or two broadcasts.”⁴⁷ Marking down in the bottom left corner of the letter Raddall would clarify he would not be making such a trip in the near future.

After this attempt to get Raddall back in the studio, the letter series contains only one remaining letter from March 13th, 1946. Despite this substantial gap within his recorded correspondence, there is still evidence of many other talks which he conducted with the CBC as the 1940s wore onward. Found within the Thomas Raddall Fonds at Dalhousie Special Collections are five additional scripts for radio talks conducted with the CBC; “Brooms for Sale,” “Jim Charles and His Gold Mine”, “Halifax Explosion,” and the “Indian Devil” all presented in July of 1945.⁴⁸ The fifth broadcast script titled “Tales of Two Cities” presented in April of 1947.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, May 2nd, 1941. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 18, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁴⁷ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, May 6th, 1942. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 18, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁴⁸ Radio and Television Broadcast Scripts, July, 1945. MS-2-202, Box 50, Folder 4, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁴⁹ Radio and Television Broadcast Scripts, April, 1947. MS-2-202, Box 50, Folder 4, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

The early radio presentations made by Thomas Raddall in collaboration with the CBC represent the beginning of a long and impactful relationship. Raddall for most of his career as a writer would lend his voice and unique storytelling style to radio and later television broadcasts as well. It is clear from these early correspondences that he was an asset, receiving accommodation and increasing amounts of control over the content of the talks he would deliver. These talks, which were delivered as part of local, regional, and national radio series increased the reach of Thomas Raddall and his work as an author. In addition to growing his image as a storyteller the content of his talks, which often focused on historical events, also aided in fostering his image as a popular historian. As time progressed into the late 1940s and Thomas Raddall approached the completion of *Halifax, Warden of the North* this relationship would continue to evolve. With the publication of his first work of non-fiction and the critical acclaim that followed it, Thomas Raddall would increasingly speak on topics of history and Nova Scotia's past. Whilst this would not begin to take place until later in 1949, it is important to acknowledge the impact his early years with the CBC had in allowing this transition.

Through the dissemination of his work in both print and radio media, Thomas Raddall extended his reach and influence as an author and historian during this period. His unique style of writing and the digestibility of his stories would allow him to occupy the pages of national prints like *Maclean's Magazine*. He would also reach national audiences through an ever-growing collaboration with CBC radio throughout the 1940s allowing him to take advantage of the emerging medium. Through both avenues, Thomas Raddall paved the way for an explosion in his popularity with the coming release of his landmark book *Halifax, Warden of the North*. Upon its release, it would allow Raddall to

speak with increasing credibility on topics of the past, Nova Scotia, and Halifax. These modes of publication of his works of fiction, costume histories, and recreations of the past in both print and radio Thomas Raddall was able to reach and inform an increasingly large audience. His ability to influence his audience's understanding of the past, laid the groundwork to become a popular historian, a conduit between the public and the past during the late 1940s.

CHAPTER THREE

Within the field of History – Reception of the *Warden*, 1948 to 1950

The 1948 release of *Halifax, Warden of the North* took Thomas Raddall's career to a new level. In the decades leading up to the *Warden*, Raddall had made himself an important member of the QCHS, fueled his lifelong interest in history. With the publication of his first fully-fledged non-fiction book, he had finally created new historical literature. Following the book's release, its critical, popular, and financial reception changed how the field of history saw Thomas Raddall. His previous work labelled him as a local or popular historian; however, studying the correspondence and growing network of connections in the aftermath reveals his reputation transformed. While he remained excluded from an ever-professionalizing field of university-trained historians, his work nonetheless brought him closer to professional historians. By 1950 Thomas Raddall had become a valuable part of the historical trade, gaining the new label of a public historian in addition to long-held labels of a local and popular historian.

This transition is clear through the network of connections and correspondence that Thomas Raddall made and received between 1948 and 1950. During this time, he would be the recipient of rapturous praise and emphatic critique. Through both sentiments towards himself and his first foray into historical literature, a better understanding of the field during this period can be developed. Most importantly the impact which Thomas Raddall himself had on the greater historical landscape is unravelled a little more.

This chapter explores the critical and popular reception as well as the sales of *Halifax, Warden of the North*. It uses Thomas Raddall's correspondence, records of his

organizational involvement, and other works. By peeling back the layers of connections, conversations, and critiques, the evolution from local and popular historian to public historian becomes clear. In addition to the networks that drew Raddall into the field of history, this chapter examines other works that he undertook during this period. This chapter considers the evolution of Thomas Raddall as a writer and a figure within the historical community and how his work is important to understanding the broader field of Atlantic Canadian history during this period. Thomas Raddall's evolution is conveyed using his correspondence, records, and vital documents relating to the perception of the *Warden*. It will reveal the complex nature of Thomas Raddall's understanding of his work as well as the role he plays in shaping the field of history. In the process, it will tackle the idea of a popular public historian and how Thomas Raddall finds himself within this new and soon-to-be inescapable label.

Off to the Presses

In late 1948, the correspondence between Thomas Raddall and his Publisher John McClelland was a bustle of updates, editorial notes, and exchanges relating to the soon-to-be-published *Halifax, Warden of the North*. Raddall and his publishers always had such conversations when it came to his previous works, but the *Warden* had a distinct intensity in these letters. The earliest reference to a desired release date is found in a letter from Hugh P. Kane of McClelland and Stewart and Thomas Raddall from April 12th, 1948. Apart from a few details around an issue with the contract for the book and some minor alterations to the full title, which never occurred, Kane states that the printer has

scheduled the book for August, aiming at a release date of late September or early October.⁵⁰

In the following letter between Raddall and John McClelland, this timeline established in early 1948 was well founded. In May, Raddall stated that the typescript of “Halifax” is complete and that he is nearly finished with the foreword and bibliography. In the same letter, he also relays to John that the only part yet to be completed is the index, described by Raddall to be “an important matter in a book of this kind.” He adds “for this reason I strongly urge that the book be set up as soon as possible so that I may have the page proofs to provide the correct page numbers for my index.”⁵¹ This fixation on providing a proper index within the book is reminiscent of the changing nature of Thomas Raddall’s perception of the value he sees in *Halifax, Warden of the North*. This being the first of his work to tackle an all-encompassing history of a very real past, he is invested in ensuring that he supports his retelling of it to the best of his ability. This use of an index is motivated by his increased use of contemporary secondary historical literature within his research for the book. In addition, his correspondences, and collaborations with archivists such as D.C Harvey and other academics contributed to its inclusion.

This vision of the book is conveyed through other letters written during this time. Letters written by Hugh Kane on April 21st, 1948, to the illustrator for the book further illuminate the trajectory that it took during its final months of work. Before the split

⁵⁰ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, April 12th, 1948. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 18, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁵¹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, May 3rd, 1948. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 18, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

between Doubleday and Raddall, the book had been envisioned to be a part of a series of books on Canadian Cities and their historical role in Canada's past. In this letter, Kane addresses this split, stating that “we are in no way wedded to the pattern set by Doubleday’s Quebec and Montreal, but I do think that endpapers would enhance the book.”⁵² He makes it clear that whilst the core concept of a historical focus on a single Canadian city still lies at the heart of his work, many of the restrictions made for his scope were now alleviated.

In alignment with the original timeline established in early April, in August the first solid update was given to Thomas Raddall from his publisher McClelland and Stewart. It provides a general update to Raddall on the status of the publication process, the status of edits, and several valuable congratulations worth unwrapping. The first item tackled in the letter is reassurances to Raddall that the first twenty pages of the galleys have come from the printers and that despite this late arrival of the pages “things should move quickly now [and that] I hope we will see the finished product before long.”⁵³ In terms of the edits and alterations made by the reader, McClelland ensures that the edits are expediently relayed to Raddall as they are made. From the concise and relaxed language of this section, this process is hardly new for the publisher and writer and there would be little issue or interferences in this process.

The publisher congratulates Thomas Raddall on the work he has done on the book. They state, “I want to offer you my personal congratulations on what I think is an

⁵² Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, April 21st, 1948. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 18, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁵³ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, August 17th, 1948. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 18, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

outstanding contribution to our historical literature.” McClelland further indulges Raddall's work stating it is “eminently readable and yet, at the same time, is obviously the result of thorough research.”⁵⁴ The reason for emphasizing and focusing on this section of the letter is that it is part of a far larger trend which has formed around Raddall and his work. From the very first mention of *Halifax, Warden of the North* to the early correspondence between his friends and confidants about it there has been much fanfare. In all this correspondence relating to the book leading up to its release, it is universally referred to as a work of historical literature, one that very few doubt its coming impact. From past and present CAA members, archivists, fellow writers, and other professional colleagues all confidently and emphatically subscribe to Raddall’s work as that of history.

Within Raddall’s world, there was little skepticism about the value and impact that this new work would bring. For his publishers, Thomas Raddall was a marketable and proficient writer whose work provided them with solid and reliable revenue. For his colleagues at the Canadian Authors Association, he was a rising star whose participation and promotion within their organization were seen as uniquely valuable. In his role as a vocal local historian, his status as a writer has been a vital tool for the preservation of the past through the Simeon Perkins House and its document collection. Leading up to the conceptualization and inevitable release of *Halifax, Warden of the North* those around him have been confident in his abilities, seeing him as uniquely valuable in their separate ways. Thomas Raddall has chosen to accept many of the roles and labels which have been ascribed to him but has also chosen to deny some others. In the aftermath of the

⁵⁴ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, August 17th, 1948. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 18, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

Warden, this trend would continue, working to further evolve the labels that Raddall is ascribed and those to which he decides to don for himself.

The Reception of the *Warden*

After a year of writing and many more in diligent research, *Halifax, Warden of the North* was finally published in late 1948. While many voices arose in both praise and criticism of the book the most apt to address its general reception lies in the *Canadian Historical Review* (CHR). For many years his colleagues and peers within the writing profession supported his work and reinforced to him their understanding of it as history, but with the release of the *Warden*, his work became the focus of professional historians who were eager to assess its merits. In the *Canadian Historical Review* Volume 30 Issue 2, a striking review appeared by Wilfred I. Smith of the University of Saskatchewan. In his review, he covers three books published on the topic of Nova Scotian and Halifax history. The three books listed in order were Thomas Raddall's *Halifax, Warden of the North*, William Coates's *Historic Halifax, in Tales Told under the Old Town Clock*, and lastly G. G. Campbell's *The History of Nova Scotia*. Despite covering three books on the same topic published within a brief period, the review is dominated by Raddall's *Warden of the North*.

The value of focusing on this review comes from its illumination of the popular and scholarly perception of the *Warden* and displays the complexity of how it was understood during its time. It displays the dichotomy which the book embodies, a simultaneously useful work of popular history but not something explicitly tailored for the seasoned scholars of history. In the opening paragraph of the review, Smith begins to establish this dichotomy to the reader stating these books are all linked through not only

their content but that they are “written primarily for the general reader than that [of] the well-informed student of Nova Scotian History.”⁵⁵ Smith’s reasoning for grouping up *Halifax, Warden of the North*, with works he describes as “[making] no pretense of being history” in the case of Coates and “falls short of meeting the needs for a brief but comprehensive history” for Campbell’s book, comes from several factors. These factors include a lack of footnotes, a disproportionate focus on “the spectacular and the spicy”, and a frequent lack of proper historical perspective seen in more scholarly works of the time.⁵⁶ Despite these issues, the review primarily focuses on the positive aspects of Raddall’s book, with three of the six total paragraphs of the review speaking favourably of Raddall’s work.

Smith states at the beginning of his review of the *Warden* that “In Halifax, Warden of the North, Thomas Raddall uses effectively the literary skill which has won for him such a prominent position in the field of the historical novels.”⁵⁷ This introductory statement works twofold to not only compliment the style and quality of the writing but to inform the reader that Raddall was a prominent and reputable historical novelist. This was certainly the case as Thomas Raddall’s most successful books were his costume histories, which had been a staple of his writing career for over a decade. In the same paragraph, he labels the book as having a gripping narrative filled with vivid depictions of the past, the result of what he describes as coming from “sound analysis, a discriminating use of most of the available sources, and accuracy based on painstaking

⁵⁵ Wilfred I. Smith, "Halifax, Warden of the North. Historic Halifax, in Tales Told under the Old Town Clock. The History of Nova Scotia," *Canadian Historical Review* 30, no. 2 (June 1949): 164–165.

⁵⁶ Wilfred I. Smith, "Halifax, Warden of the North. Historic Halifax, in Tales Told under the Old Town Clock. The History of Nova Scotia," *Canadian Historical Review* 30, no.2 (June 1949): 164.

⁵⁷ Smith, "Halifax, Warden of the North. Historic Halifax, in Tales Told under the Old Town Clock. The History of Nova Scotia," 164.

research.”⁵⁸ This praise coming from a man such as Wilfred Smith, a respected scholar, archivist, veteran, and Order of Canada recipient is something to value.⁵⁹ This introduction also stands out from the overwhelmingly critical reviews that the other two Halifax books received. Whilst the other two books were lambasted for their lack of historical accuracy and inability to convey a respectable reconstruction of the past, Thomas Raddall and his first venture into non-fiction comes out relatively unscathed and overwhelmingly praised. This positive outlook by a professional historian was undoubtedly gained thanks to the assistance Thomas Raddall had received from the archives and scholars he consulted when researching his book. Figures like C.B. Fergusson and D.C Harvey are undoubtedly valuable resources in ensuring such a positive review.

In the review of *Halifax, Warden of the North*, Smith maintains a balance between cautious rebuttals and lauded praises. Smith’s criticisms amount to him believing that this source should be used cautiously by scholars and students but not rejected. He states that it lacks the footnotes and perspectives, which he believes are required for true scholarly history, but he balances it out by stating that the bibliography is extremely useful and “places significant events and developments in proper perspective.”⁶⁰ From this review, the work of Thomas Raddall stood out amongst other authors venturing into the field of historical literature thanks to his writing ability and his rigorous research. The closing remarks made by Smith further emphasize his perceived value of the book despite it

⁵⁸ Smith, "Halifax, Warden of the North. Historic Halifax, in Tales Told under the Old Town Clock. The History of Nova Scotia," 164.

⁵⁹ Ian E. Wilson, "In Memoriam Dr. Wilfred I. Smith: An Archival Tribute," *Archivaria* 46 (February 1998), 175-79.

⁶⁰ Smith, "Halifax, Warden of the North. Historic Halifax, in Tales Told under the Old Town Clock. The History of Nova Scotia," 164.

falling short of being an academically rigorous book. His final sentence states “[*Halifax, Warden of the North*] is attractively bound, with excellent illustrations and a good index, this book is undoubtedly the most valuable single contribution to a popular knowledge and understanding of the history of the old city.”⁶¹ It is worth noting that Smith's emphasis on the book's contribution to the popular knowledge of history is part of a continuing trend towards the understanding of Thomas Raddall and his work to be that of popular history. Thomas Raddall and his work, beginning but not ending with the *Warden*, in the written realm of history were undoubtedly impactful. This book worked to further evolve the image of Raddall as a respected historical novelist, local historian, and newly recognized public historian through the broad audience his book aimed to inform. Deliberately and passionately, Thomas Raddall set out to fill a hole in the public understanding of his province's past, and with the release of the *Warden*, as seen through this review, his plan was on course to succeed.

The impression made by *Halifax, Warden of the North* was not solely reflected in the pages of the *Canadian Historical Review*. It can be found permeating many of the biographical sources which trace the course of Thomas Raddall's life and career. From his publishers, and his professional connections, all the way to his correspondence the impact of this book can be felt. In addition to the impact his work had on himself as an author, the ripple that it made within the broader field of History can be felt.

Governor General's Award for Non-Fiction

⁶¹ Smith, "Halifax, Warden of the North. Historic Halifax, in *Tales Told under the Old Town Clock. The History of Nova Scotia*," 164.

An important milestone in Thomas Raddall's career was receiving his first Governor General's award in English-language fiction in 1943 for his book, *The Pied Piper of Dipper Creek*. Having received the award within the first decade as a full-time author was a great boon, not only for his career but also for his status within the Canadian literary field. The Governor General's Award was and remains an important achievement in Canadian society which highlights the recipients' achievements in the field of academic, artistic, and social pursuits.⁶² Acknowledging the impact his first award had on his career and the weight which such an award carried it makes sense that his second award was a further reflection of his achievement. The second Governor General's Award he received was in 1948 for *Halifax, Warden of the North*. Diverging from his first award, this second one was for the Governor General's Award in English-Language Non-Fiction, the first of two Thomas Raddall would receive in his career.⁶³ Alongside Thomas Raddall, historian C. P. Stacey won the award as well for his work on the book *The Canadian Army, 1939-1945*.⁶⁴ These two finalists share a connection through their correspondence series beginning in the year 1949. The first letter of this series from the 29th of June 1949 states in full:

I enclose a spare copy of a paper about Halifax which I read at the meeting of the Canadian Historical Association earlier this month; it has occurred to me that it might have some interest for you. Congratulations on the Governor General's Award. I am looking forward to seeing you at Halifax the week after next. With

⁶² Canada Council for the Arts 2023, Governor General's Literary Awards, accessed 3 October 2023, <<https://canadacouncil.ca/funding/prizes/governor-generals-literary-awards#:~:text=The%20Governor%20General's%20Literary%20Awards,to%20English%20and%20vice%20versa>>

⁶³ Canada Council for the Arts 2023, Governor General's Literary Awards Past Winner and Finalists, 1948 Non-Fiction English

⁶⁴ Canada Council for the Arts 2023, Governor General's Literary Awards Past Winner and Finalists, 1948 Non-Fiction English

all good wishes, Yours Sincerely C. P. Stacy (Department of National, Defence Director Historical Section)⁶⁵

While it is unknown when the relationship between these two men first began, it is important to recognize the connection drawn by these two receiving such an award. Seeing this connection between these two is valued as it draws in another important figure within Thomas Raddall's social web during this period. C. P. Stacey was an important figure not only through his role as Director of the National Defences Historical section, but he was also an avid contributor to the *Canadian Historical Review*, an important platform for Canadian Historical literature. The first contribution he made to the journal was in Volume 28 Issue 2 from June 1947 where he reviewed the recent publication of historian Arthur R. M. Lower titled *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada*, which just so happened to have also won a Governor General's Award in 1946.⁶⁶

Past recipients of the Governor General's Award for English Language Non-Fiction represent a wide variety of content in their awarded works but many of the recipients share common traits. From the years of 1940 to 1947 all the recipients are University trained, hailing from either the disciplines of History, Journalism, or Political science. These figures include the previously mentioned historian Arthur R. M. Lower in 1946 whose alma maters included Harvard and Toronto University, Political Scientist Robert Dawson in 1947 of Dalhousie University, journalist Ross Munro in 1945, historian Edgar McInnis in 1944 and 1942 of Oxford University, and famous artist Emily

⁶⁵ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and C. P. Stacey, June 29th, 1949. MS-2-202, Box 47, Folder 85, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁶⁶ C.P. Stacey, "Review of *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada*," *Canadian Historical Review* 28, no. 2 (June 1947), 194.

Carr in 1941.⁶⁷ Whilst this list does not fully represent the totality of those who won the award during the 1940s, it provides a solid representation of the variety of work, personal achievement, and education the pool of recipients often held. By looking at these past recipients, Thomas Raddall would have been highly regarded to be included alongside such figures through this award. In addition, Thomas Raddall was one of few recipients receiving of this award who was not formally university educated, with many hailing from the Ivy League and Oxbridge Institutions.

Thomas Raddall receiving the Governor General's Award for Non-Fiction in 1948, serves as an important milestone in his career and represents a shift in the importance his work held in historical conversations. His work now stood alongside prominent and active historians such as Arthur Lower, Edgar McInnis, J. F. C. Wright, and many other important literary and journalism figures. The award served not only as a reflection of the value placed upon his work but also provided him with a level of prominence within the historical landscape. Whilst he differentiates himself from many of these recipients through his disparity in his education, which is important in the historical field at the time, he makes up for it in the connections he has and the reputation he carries.

C. L. Bennet: Literary Reception

By the late 1940s, Thomas Raddall had assembled an expansive network of personal and professional connections throughout the Maritimes and Canada as a whole.

⁶⁷ Past Winners and Finalists Governor Generals Award for English Language Non-Fiction, 1947-1940. Canada Council for the Arts Governor General's Literary Awards. <https://ggbooks.ca/past-winners-and-finalists>

With the publication of *Halifax, Warden of the North*, in 1948 many of these crucial connections rose to the surface exhibited through many correspondence immediately following the publication of his book. These letters contain anything from congratulations from fellow authors, friends within academia and the public service, all the way to influential figures within major institutions. Through both the content of the letters as well as the weight of the person writing them, it is clear the impact that the book had reached throughout his social network. In addition to showing the impact that the book had through these important connections, these letters help to expand how broad of an effect the book had. Whilst the importance the book had on the field of history has been extensively explored, it also had an undeniable impact on the field of literature as well. Thomas Raddall had made himself many friends within the archives, government institutions, and the historical ecosystem but he was also, as an author, deeply embedded within the field of literature.

The correspondence that best signals the impact that the *Warden* had on the broader literary field comes from the correspondence between Thomas Raddall and his longtime friend C. L. Bennet. From the records of his correspondence kept by Thomas Raddall, the two had been actively conversing, both in letter and person since at least 1945. From this earliest conversation up until the release of *Halifax, Warden of the North*, their correspondence has revolved broadly around the discussion of their work, their craft, and the field of Canadian literature. In these correspondence, both typed and handwritten, these two were trusted friends and colleagues, each harbouring a deep respect for the other. This kind of relationship is special considering the status of C. L. Bennett during the mid to late 1940s, during which time he was the George Munro

Professor of English at Dalhousie University. Over the next twenty years, his career would continue to grow becoming the chair of the English Department, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Arts and Science, and eventually the Vice-President of Dalhousie University. Beyond the university, Bennet was an active editor, manager, and founder of a variety of magazines and journals dedicated to English and the pursuit of writing.⁶⁸

In January 1949 Bennet thanked Raddall for sending copies of the book to his household and congratulated him on his work. He begins the letter by apologizing for the delay in the letter as the family fought over ownership of the two copies that they had. After this apology he states, “I want to tell you how much I have enjoyed it”, further stating that “you have given us good history and a good story as good in my opinion as the stories in your novels.”⁶⁹ By all accounts, this equation of quality from his previous work to his new historical work would come as high praise from such a colleague. It is also worth highlighting that the continued reference to his work as history reinforces the notion that it was consumed and understood as a work of history. The final point of interest in the letter is when Bennet states “I am no historian, either by training or by temperament, but it seems to me that in giving ahead a confession you have never lost proposition or misplaced emphasis [and that] all accounts that I have heard have agreed with my own.”⁷⁰ This statement is important as Bennet is referring to the foreword of the

⁶⁸ Dalhousie University Archives Catalogue 2023, Bennet, C.L., accessed 2 October 2023, <<https://findingaids.library.dal.ca/bennet-c-1>>

⁶⁹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Dr. C. L. ("Ben") Bennet, January 1st, 1949. MS-2-202, Box 37. Folder 49, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁷⁰ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Dr. C. L. ("Ben") Bennet, January 1st, 1949. MS-2-202, Box 37. Folder 49, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

book in which Raddall explains his vision of the purpose of the book, stating in it that he is not writing a history for history's sake but rather to retell the past in his way.

The correspondence between Raddall and Bennet provides a good example for how a respected literary colleague received it. The correspondence reveals how the book was being consumed by its readers and more specifically by those with an understanding of the nature of his work and the previous work of Raddall himself. It shows a case where even with an acknowledgment of the purpose of the book explained in Thomas Raddall's foreword, he and his colleagues still saw the book as a work of History. As fellow authors *Halifax, Warden of the North* is an extension of Thomas Raddall's previous work as a teller of enjoyable stories, using this long-refined skill to share an engaging and digestible past with his readers. The last point highlighted in the letter is useful as it extends the sentiments of Bennet to those whom he has discussed this book with beyond Thomas Raddall. While this statement made on the second page of his letter is brief it reveals the broader reach the book had by 1949, and the consensus that is held by his colleagues.

McClelland and Raddall: Financial State of the book's release

Despite the critical acclaim garnered by *Halifax, Warden of the North* the book was not the initial financial success that Thomas Raddall and his publisher were hoping for. Since the earliest conversations between the two around the book back in 1947 it was meticulously planned to be released on the 200th anniversary of the city's founding. It was expected by both Raddall and his publisher that coming out of the gates the book would quickly become a financial success for the two. However, in the correspondence between Thomas Raddall and McClelland & Stewart, the financials of the book were far from what was expected in the early days of its printing. Through their correspondence,

the bulk orders, cooperation with schools and public organizations, and individual sales of the book reveal the tenuous state of the book's initial release.

One factor revealed through these correspondences, which would have potentially impacted the initial sales of the book, was its price tag upon its release. In a letter sent to Raddall by Hugh Kane of McClelland & Stewart on December 10th, 1948, he informs him that the books from the printer turned out great and are of exceptional quality. However, he says that to maintain such quality the books regrettably needed to hold a price of \$6.00, rather than a preferable price below the \$5.00 mark. Despite informing Thomas Raddall of this unfortunate price point he reiterates that “present indications are that the price is not interfering with a very good sale, not only in Halifax, but throughout the country.”⁷¹ From the language of this letter around the price of the books, it seems that this cost was beyond what was customary for Thomas Raddall's other works. This is the case when comparing his initial earnings of *Halifax, Warden of the North* to his 1950 book *The Nymph and the Lamp*. In his earnings report from January 31st of 1949, the 2448 copies of *Warden* sold made him \$1468.80 in royalties equating to \$0.60 a copy.⁷² In the case of *The Nymph and the Lamp* which on December 31st 1950, had sold 5632 copies resulting in \$1689.60 was equated to \$0.30 per copy for Raddall.⁷³ Whilst these royalties could have been the result of differing agreements between himself and his publishers it is significant enough to indicate the price disparity between these two books.

⁷¹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, December 10th, 1948. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 18, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁷² Writing Earnings 1928-1990 pg.13. Thomas Head Raddall's Financial Records Subseries. MS-2-202, Box 51, Folder 1, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁷³ Writing Earnings 1928-1990 pg.15. Thomas Head Raddall's Financial Records Subseries. MS-2-202, Box 51, Folder 1, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

Despite the steep initial price point and lacklustre sales, the critical acclaim *Warden* garnered through its many stellar reviews and receiving of the Governor General's Award helped the book to find a more international audience. In conversations between Raddall and McClelland & Stewart beginning in June 1949, the British publisher J.M. Dent became interested in acquiring the rights to publish the book in England. In the earliest of this correspondence from June 14th J.G. McClelland conveys to Raddall that "they do not, as you will understand, anticipate a very large sale but they are anxious to try it out and see what can be done" but would regardless like to import roughly a thousand copies.⁷⁴ In the following letter from McClelland on June 20th, thanked Raddall for his swift acceptance of this deal and reiterates that "Dents are publishing *Halifax* not as a financial investment but simply because it is a piece of English literature which they think should be made available in England."⁷⁵ Interestingly McClelland ends the letter by stating Dent's desire to be considered as Thomas Raddall's new English Publisher, something which may be the underlying motivation of this deal. Letters in this series relating to the deal with Dents indicate that through the success of the *Warden* critically he was tempted and accepted the offer of a new British publisher, one who prodded Raddall for new works for them to put in their market.⁷⁶

In addition to the information gathered from his McClelland correspondence, Thomas Raddall also kept his record of the financials relating to his book sales and the royalties he collected. In a document labelled "Writing Earning", he lists his bi-yearly

⁷⁴ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, June 14th, 1949. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 19, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁷⁵ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, June 20th, 1949. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 19, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁷⁶ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, June 17th, 1949. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 19, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

sales and royalties from his various books and publications. In this handwritten collection of documents, he labels the top of each page with the book with which he is calculating the earnings. From left to right on each row of the pages he lists the year, publication, the six months, the copies of the books sold, and finally the royalties that he has collected from the book. On the first page which mentions his earnings from *Halifax, Warden of the North*, he lists the sales and earnings of his book between January 31st, 1949 to January 31st, 1950. Through this document, we can get a grasp on the number of copies sold and royalties he earned in the first two years of the book's circulation. In the first year, his records cite a total of 2448 copies sold within the first 6 months of publication and another 513 during 1949. From these 2961 copies sold in the first year, he earned a total of \$1914.90 which adjusted to inflation amounts to \$24,772.45 in 2023.⁷⁷ In the following year of 1950, he sold a total of 379 copies, resulting in a total of \$341.10; equal to \$4,198.97 in 2023 adjusted to inflation.⁷⁸

It is important to note that Thomas Raddall's income from his royalties was not solely represented by *Halifax, Warden of the North* between 1948 and 1950, instead most of his income came from his other publications. Between January 1948 and January 1951 Thomas Raddall continued to sell copies and collect royalties from no less than seven books that he wrote, with many of them being acquired in book deals to various groups. Examples of the lower-selling works of this period were *Pied Piper of Dipper Creek* (1939) with 264 copies sold, *His Majesty's Yankees* (1942) with 623 copies, and *Tambour*

⁷⁷ Data source: Statistics Canada, Consumer Price Indexes for Canada, Monthly (V41690973 series)

⁷⁸ Writing Earnings 1928-1990 pg.13. Thomas Head Raddall's Financial Records Subseries. MS-2-202, Box 51, Folder 1, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

and Other Stories (1945) with 186.⁷⁹ On the higher end were books such as *Roger Sudden* (1944) with 2353 copies sold, *Pride's Fancy* (1946) with 6593 copies, and *The Wedding Gift and Other Stories* (1947) with 2679 copies.⁸⁰ In each of these high and low-selling groups of works, many were sold in high numbers to groups. A prime example is in the case of *Pride's Fancy*, as noted on January 30th of 1950, sold 1350 copies at a rate of 5 cents each to the "Peoples Book Club".⁸¹ The final book of note during this period was *The Nymph and the Lamp*, released in 1950 and was a huge financial success for Raddall. Within the first year of its release, it totalled 40541 copies sold raking in \$4606.56 worth of royalties.⁸²

A professionalized field at last

The careful planning and release of *Halifax, Warden of the North* aligned with many important developments taking place in the broader field of Canadian History. Explored in Donald Wright's book, *The Professionalization of History in English Canada*, the process of professionalization taking place was in its final phase during the mid-twentieth century. It had long since evolved from its more fluid nature in the nineteenth century and had become its more rigidly defined professionalized state during this period. By this timeline of development, Thomas Raddall and his landmark book find themselves located squarely at the end of this long and strenuous process. The landscape that this book entered was strewn with boundaries and divides, where the academic

⁷⁹ Writing Earnings 1928-1990 pg. 2-6. Thomas Head Raddall's Financial Records Subseries. MS-2-202, Box 51, Folder 1, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁸⁰ Writing Earnings 1928-1990 pg. 7-12. Thomas Head Raddall's Financial Records Subseries. MS-2-202, Box 51, Folder 1, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁸¹ Writing Earnings 1928-1990 pg. 11. Thomas Head Raddall's Financial Records Subseries. MS-2-202, Box 51, Folder 1, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁸² Writing Earnings 1928-1990 pg.15. Thomas Head Raddall's Financial Records Subseries. MS-2-202, Box 51, Folder 1, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

historian had drawn a clear line between professional historians and everyone else. In many ways, these divides of titles were also ascribed to many works being written at the time, where the background of those writings heavily influenced the labelling of the work they produced. Previously covered in chapter two Thomas Raddall very clearly existed outside the institutions that facilitated this professionalized status, something which resulted in him being excluded from access to the academic in-group. Despite this disqualification from being considered a professional historian he still played a key role in the greater field of history.

Before the publication of *Warden*, Raddall's work with the Simeon Perkins house and the Queens County Historical Society, as well as his association and collaboration with archives and academics, made him an invaluable local historian. With the release of *Halifax, Warden of the North*, Thomas Raddall's role within the field and the importance of his work had unmistakably evolved. Through his book, viewed favorably in the eyes of both the public and his colleagues Thomas Raddall positioned himself to not only be recognized as a valuable Local historian, but as a popular public historian. The title of public historian is an apt way to describe this new status attained by Thomas Raddall during this period. No longer was Thomas Raddall merely preserving the past and an author of historical fiction, he was now beginning to influence the public's broader perception of the past. Despite the lack of a clearly defined class of public historians during this period, as displayed by the work of Donald Wright, Thomas Raddall still displayed many of the characteristics of what is understood today as a public historian. Modern understandings of what a public historian is labels them as individuals whose work appealed to a broader audience, working outside of the rigid conversations and

restrictions of academia. They were a vital conduit between the public at large and the past, having enormous sway over how it would be understood by their audience.

Further insight into the definition public history and historian comes from the work of historian Thomas Cauvin. In his article “The Rise of Public History: An International Perspective”, he explains that in public historians were not a recognized class of historian in the United States and internationally until at least the 1970s. He states that despite this late recognition of the group the practises which constituted their work have roots as far back as the 19th century. Even today there is no strict definition of public history despite the various international bodies which study and explore this avenue of history. Cauvin presents his own definition in the articles stating that “I define public history as being based on three particular emphases: the communication of history to non-academic audiences, a public participation, and the application of historical methodology to present-day issues.”⁸³ This expanded definition offered by Cauvin helps illuminate how Thomas Raddall aligned with the role of public historian. Through both the reach of Raddall’s works of historical non-fiction and fiction, as well as his direct involvement with local historical societies and their outreach, he began to fit the label more.

Thomas Raddall in this capacity had a larger sway over the public's understanding of the past compared to his strictly academic counterparts. In Donald Wright's final two chapters, he explores the critical failings and drawbacks of the professionalization of the historical profession and the failures of the field. He does so by drawing attention to

⁸³ Thomas Cauvin, “The Rise of Public History: An International Perspective,” *Historia crítica* 68, (2018): Pg. 4

Hilda Neatby's portion of the 1949 Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences as well as Jim Miller's 1997 presidential address to the Canadian Historical Association. In the former, he states that Hilda Neatby describes "the professional historian has not reached or touched the Canadian Public."⁸⁴ She accredits this to several factors such as the privatization of the profession leading to increasingly insular conversations which excluded outsiders. Paired with this she argues that "the true appeal of history is philosophic, moral and aesthetic; it is killed by purely scientific dissection", something which the field increasingly focused on in this process.⁸⁵ This discourse is especially relevant as it takes place during the same period when Thomas Raddall released *Halifax, Warden of the North*. To have such a work released during this time, with these issues in the field being made apparent, exhibits that the popularity of his work is invaluable in potentially mitigating the increasingly out-of-touch relationship professional historians and their work have with the public.

In Jim Miller's address, fifty years after Neatby's, he raises the same issue. Stating in his address that the profession "seems alarmingly to be receding from prominence in public discourse, and even in the public's consciousness."⁸⁶ This quote does not stand in isolation as Donald Wright extrapolates that Miller had long urged increased cooperation with non-professional historians, outreach to a larger audience, and reinforcing the importance of history and understanding the past. It seems that between these two figures, discussing the issue at hand in the field of history, there has been a continual trend of disconnect between the public and the past, which professional historians have

⁸⁴ Wright, *The Professionalization of History in English Canada*, 172.

⁸⁵ Wright, *The Professionalization of History in English Canada*, 172.

⁸⁶ Wright, *The Professionalization of History in English Canada*, 173.

been unable to amend. Interestingly the urgings of Jim Miller, whilst not raised by Neatby, are issues which existed during the late 1940s at the end of the historical profession's professionalization. The sentiment of isolation and disconnect between the academic historian and the public is corroborated by historian Thomas Cauvin. He states that this trend of isolation from the public is the leading factor in the birth of public history as field of history in the United States and internationally in the 1970s.⁸⁷

Through these two distant conversations around the nature of the historical field and the challenges that it faces, both in the past and the present, the significance of Thomas Raddall and his work becomes apparent. Through the popularity of his book *Halifax, Warden of the North* Thomas Raddall was able to provide a bridge between the public and the past. Through this retelling of the story of Nova Scotia and its importance within the broader story of Canada, Raddall presented a history that his audience could be invested in. Although the book was not financially successful upon its release, the positive critical and academic reception allowed it to attain importance within the historical landscape. As the book gained traction in the literary market and reached a wider audience, he would make himself into a public historian of unmistakable importance. As described by Professor Smith in his *Canadian Historical Review Halifax, Warden of the North* "is undoubtedly the most valuable single contribution to a popular knowledge and understanding of the history of the old city."⁸⁸ Through Smith's review and the praise from Raddall's vast network of social connections, his work was undoubtedly a strong connection between the public and the past. As the 1940s ended this

⁸⁷ Thomas Cauvin, "The Rise of Public History: An International Perspective," Pg. 6

⁸⁸ Smith, "Halifax, Warden of the North. Historic Halifax, in Tales Told under the Old Town Clock. The History of Nova Scotia," 164.

work of non-fiction would not be his last as the accolades and success garnered by the *Warden* would continue to inspire his work in writing history.

Entering the Landscape of History

Halifax, Warden of the North held a strong place within the historiographical landscape of Atlantic Canadian history upon its release. Unlike many of the works produced by historians focusing on this region, Thomas Raddall offered a clear, coherent, and comprehensive overview of its role from past to present. To best display the position it held within this landscape it is pertinent to look at what was produced in the decade leading up to its release and how its content compared to the *Warden*. This can be accomplished by combing through the *Canadian Historical Review*. The *Canadian Historical Review* is an important publication when looking to access the historical work produced across Canada. It is organized into several sections featuring Original Publications, Reviews of Articles and Books, and a list of highlighted publications relating to Canada for their readers. The latter of these three sections is broken down into most commonly two categories, “The Relations of Canada within the Commonwealth” and “Canada’s International Relations”.⁸⁹ Going through the different issues prior to 1948, provides a good sense of what is being covered in Canadian historical writing but more importantly, what is being noticed at the national/regional level within the historical field.

Between volumes 30 and 19, which span from the years 1939 to 1949, there are numerous articles, books, and reviews which focus on Atlantic Canadian history. From an

⁸⁹ University of Toronto Press, “Recent Publications Relating to Canada,” *Canadian Historical Review* 23, no. 4 (December 1942): 424.

overview of what was produced for and reviewed in the *Canadian Historical Review*, Atlantic Canadian History was not neglected as a region of historical focus. From several recurring contributors, there is a focus given to each of the provinces within Atlantic Canada. Authors like George Stanley, H. B. Mayo, Gerald S. Graham, and Gordon Rothley produced many articles and books focusing on the newly confederated province of Newfoundland and Labrador. One highlight of these publications would be “Britain’s Defence of Newfoundland: A Survey, From the Discovery to the Present Day” by Gerald S. Graham from Volume 23 issue number three of 1942.⁹⁰ For the province of New Brunswick historians like Alfred G. Bailey produced and reviewed many works focusing on its industry, infrastructure, and government. Prince Edward Island was given attention through Helen Champion and J. B. Tyrrell.⁹¹ Finally, between issues 30 and 19 there were also several works which focused on Nova Scotia produced by historians such as D.C. Harvey, Donald F. Warner, E.A. Corbett, and Marion Gilroy. Acknowledging this thick and well-written historical space it is evident that *Halifax, Warden of the North* was not entering an empty field.

Where *Halifax, Warden of the North* begins to stand out amongst this formidable crowd of historical literature is in the nature and scope of what it presents to its readers. In the *Canadian Historical Review*, each province receives focus but often this focus is on specific events, periods, or topics. In the works highlighted between 1939 and 1949, very few of them try to present a grand narrative or overview of the region or a specific province. There are however three examples of potential rivals in content and scope

⁹⁰ Gerald S. Graham, “Britain’s Defence of Newfoundland: A Survey, From the Discovery to the Present Day,” *Canadian Historical Review* 23, no. 3 (September 1942): 250-279.

⁹¹ Helen Jean Champion and J.B. Tyrrell, “The Disorganization of the Government of Prince Edward Island During the American Revolutionary War,” *Canadian Historical Review* 20, no. 1 (March 1940): 37-40.

which can be seen in issues 28, 25, and 20 in the book reviews section. These are in order “Colony to Nation: A History of Canada”⁹² by Arthur Lower and reviewed by C.P. Stacey, “Dominion of the North: A History of Canada”⁹³ by Donald Creighton and reviewed by Albert C. Corey, and lastly “The Book of Newfoundland: The Story of Newfoundland”⁹⁴ edited by J.R. Smallwood and reviewed by A. Lacey. Even within this group of books which look to provide an audience with a larger and more comprehensive historical narrative, none of them specifically focus upon the province of Nova Scotia or the Atlantic Canadian region in a larger narrative. This gap in the historical landscape upon its publication in late 1948 *Halifax, Warden of the North* truly filled an existing hole within the historical landscape, providing an expansive history of Halifax touches on its importance in the Atlantic Canadian region. Acknowledging this Thomas Raddall's original claim from as early as 1946 that “no one is attempting a full-scale history of the city like mine and in this respect, we, have a virgin field” rings true.⁹⁵ The historical landscape *Halifax, Warden of the North* was truly “the first real history of Halifax since Akins’ work more than a hundred years ago.”⁹⁶

The Perception of Thomas Raddall

Before the release of *Halifax, Warden of the North* Thomas Raddall was perceived in many ways and embodied many roles. Through his membership within the Queens

⁹² C.P. Stacey, “Book review of Colony to Nation: A History of Canada,” *Canadian Historical Review* 28, no. 2 (September 1947): 194-197.

⁹³ Albert B. Corey, “Book review of Dominion of the North: A History of Canada,” *Canadian Historical Review* 25, no. 4 (December 1944): 432-343.

⁹⁴ A. Lacey, “Book review of The Book of Newfoundland The Story of Newfoundland,” *Canadian Historical Review* 20, no. 1 (March 1939): 79-80.

⁹⁵ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, June 7th, 1945. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 17, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

⁹⁶ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and McClelland and Stewart, June 7th, 1945. MS-2-202, Box 44, Folder 17, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

County Historical Society and his involvement with the Simeons Perkins House, he was understood within the field of history as an important local historian. Thanks to the widespread dissemination of his stories within alternative forms of print media and radio broadcasts he was further perceived by his listeners, readers, and even colleagues as a burgeoning popular historian. Furthermore, more than anything else, he was perceived and understood himself to be a prominent and respected Canadian author, whose love of the past enriched his work and facilitated his livelihood. Now with the release of his book on Halifax, he had begun to cement himself as a public historian whose work informed people about the past on a provincial as well as national level. When looking at Thomas Raddall and his many roles within the field of history during this period it is important to recognize this evolution and the dynamic nature of the roles which he embodied.

In just the first two years following the release of *Halifax, Warden of the North* the perception of Thomas Raddall underwent a seismic shift. As previously mentioned by this point in his career he had come to be known as, and understood himself to be, a writer, as well as a local and popular historian. However, with the release of the *Warden*, he suddenly found himself in the role of a public historian. Unlike his previous roles as author and popular amateur historian, he had slowly fostered and grown comfortable with the label over the previous decades of his career, this new role came swiftly and with it many new responsibilities. Within the field of history, his work as a local and popular historian was to preserve and promote history at an amateur level, strictly divided and excluded from the academic sphere of historical work. Through his work on Simeon Perkins house and the widespread dissemination of his stories, he acted in a supporting role within the field of history. With his newly ascribed role as a public historian, he had

now become a frontline historian whose work was perceived as playing a role in informing the public about the past and its value.

To better understand the significance of this role it is crucial to explain what a public historian is and why they matter within the field of history. Unlike the strictly defined professional and amateur historians which existed in the mid-twentieth century historical landscape, public historians represented a wide range of professionals whose work contributed to the public understanding of history. They were often people who worked within a variety of fields and through their work could be classified as a public historian. Some examples of our modern understanding of a public historian would include museum professionals, archivists, oral historians, and government historians working within the field of heritage. Despite the wide range of potential backgrounds and possible avenues in which these people contribute to historical understanding, they all use at least some historical methodology when creating their work.⁹⁷ There exists within this period, as displayed by the work of Donald Wright, a basic understanding of what public history is and the value that it has for the field.⁹⁸ They exist outside of the confines of amateur and professional historians, with the greatest defining characteristic of their work being their contributions to shaping and influencing the public understanding of the past. This is important as the metric to understand their work is not through their academic merit or stringent historical analyses of the past, instead, it is their impact. Through this understanding of what public history is and those who created it is clear to see that

⁹⁷ National Council of Public History. <https://ncph.org/what-is-public-history/about-the-field/> Accessed January 19th, 2024.

⁹⁸ Wright, *The Professionalization of History in English Canada*, 66.

Thomas Raddall, through *Halifax, Warden of the North*, was now important in shaping public understanding of the past.

This new role was the outcome of his landmark work and the impact that it had on developing the historical understanding of the public. Thomas Raddall in this way shifted from a figure who was previously responsible for simply supporting the field of history to one capable of influencing the perception of it. In time, Thomas Raddall would not only maintain this role through his historical writings but also his contributions within the government. He would continue to garner the attention of figures such as Nova Scotian premier Angus L. Macdonald, who would place Raddall into positions within the government's heritage and tourism sectors. Whilst this would not occur until after this period, *Halifax, Warden of the North* played a crucial part in facilitating Raddall's advancement and growth within this role.

Conclusion

Halifax, Warden of the North, had a meaningful impact on the landscape of history. Through its focus on the city of Halifax, its place within the province of Nova Scotia, and the role they both played within the larger narrative of Atlantic Canadian history he provided his readers with an accessible yet grand narrative. Through this focus, he filled a gap within the existing historical literature which had, within his own words, not been written on since a century prior. In addition to the scope of his work, his meticulous and detailed research in preparing for the book, and the connections he made while doing so, contributed to its overall positive reception within academic historical circles. It was a unique book within his catalogue of work being his first foray into non-fiction. Despite this bold change in genre and the strategic release of the book on the

city's 200th anniversary, it was not the breakout financial success that he and his publisher had hoped for. Despite the financial disparity between it and his other publications it nevertheless had a positive impact on the growth of his career through its critical acclaim. From his newly acquired Governor Generals Award for English Language Non-fiction and the other positive reviews of his work, he was able to further advance his career, grow his social connections, and evolve others' perceptions of himself and his body of work. *Halifax, Warden of the North* stood as a valuable contribution to the historical literature of the time, with its legacy continuing to influence the public understanding of the past in Atlantic Canada and Beyond. Furthermore, it acted as the catalyst in the evolution of Thomas Raddall into an important public historian during this period.

CHAPTER FOUR

A Public Historian in Motion – 1950 to 1958

Introduction

The process of Thomas Raddall's evolution from a fiction writer to a public historian took over a decade, from the beginning of his literary career in 1936 to the years following the release of *Halifax, Warden of the North*. In addition to his literary accomplishments, his groundwork within the historical community of Atlantic Canada during this time was equally as valuable. This combination of his landmark historical book, his involved work within his local historical society, and the myriad of connections and collaborations within the archives and academia had built up his status as a public historian. Despite the long journey that he had taken to reach this point, the 1950s saw continued growth for Thomas Raddall's popularity and importance to the shaping of Atlantic Canadian public history. An important relationship to highlight in this period of growth is Raddall's political connection to Nova Scotian Premier Angus L. Macdonald and how their relationship ties Raddall to the province's understanding of the past. Furthermore, the increasing web of connections that allowed his career to grow and prosper and his historical literature, *The Path of Destiny*, will be examined. This period may not have marked the end of Thomas Raddall's writing career, as he would continue his work as an author until the late 1970s, but it marks the final chapter in his making of Nova Scotian public history.

An Exceptional Decade

The 1950s were a decade of significant social growth for Thomas Raddall. His meticulously cultivated web of social connections to many important individuals had

reached a critical mass in the 1950s. In its massive number of correspondences, official letters, documents, and even some addresses and lectures, this period stands out from the previous decade. More specifically this period is unique thanks to the increasing political reach and nature of these letters. Thomas Raddall had been a powerful member of the Canadian Authors Association (CAA) and other organizations but now he had a footprint within the political space in Nova Scotia. The content of his letters provides clear evidence of his growing political engagement and its impact on his work and image. In addition, his correspondence within this period increasingly appears to be the greatest tool in his professional arsenal. It allowed him access to the social webs of some of the most critical figures in the development of history not only of Nova Scotia but of Canada, as well.

In the late 1957s, Thomas Raddall embarked on several trips to places like New Hampshire, Boston, and England to conduct research for his ongoing projects. These series of trips to different archives and libraries prompted him to write to his friend Dr. Bruce Fergusson requesting for him to “furnish [him] with a to-whom-it-may-concern letter, stating [who he is and what to do].” In his letter sent to Dr. Fergusson on September 9th, 1957, he rationalizes that it would serve to let him more easily navigate these prospective archives and their employees with a recommended letter from him. By the 11th of September Fergusson had sent in a letter which would fulfill such a request, highly praising Thomas Raddall. In this letter, he states Raddall’s research goals, some personal information about him and his professional achievements, and a positive reference from Fergusson as an archivist. This letter provides an interesting insight into how Raddall’s colleagues presented him by this point in the 1950s. Two points within the

letter worth highlighting are when Fergusson starts by referring to Raddall as “one of Canada’s most outstanding authors” and then shortly after that since starting his career “he has become widely known as a s short story writer, a novelist, and an historian.”⁹⁹ While this letter was created to present the best possible view of Thomas Raddall, Fergusson undoubtedly understood how Raddall wished to be presented. Letters such as this would also be a useful tool in helping build Raddall's social network. Having such a letter of recommendation would help form positive first impressions and allow him more easily into a sphere which he deemed beneficial to his work.

Without a doubt, the greatest professional tool in Thomas Raddall’s arsenal was his web of social connections maintained through his extensive use of correspondence. Since the earliest period of his writing career in the late 1920s his habitual letter writing allowed him to maintain long-standing relationships and grow his reach as an author. These letters allowed Thomas Raddall from his home in Liverpool Nova Scotia to maintain relationships on a national level with some of the most important historians in Nova Scotia and beyond. Two figures worth highlighting whom Thomas Raddall wrote to and maintained relationships with during the 1950s are D.C. Harvey and C. P. Stacey. In Carl Berger’s *The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing since 1900* published in 1986 he singles out the work of these two historians, crediting each with playing an important role in constructing Canada's historical literature in the twentieth century. The first to be mentioned is D. C Harvey, taking center stage in Carl Berger's exploration of the origins of Canada’s archival system in the early twentieth

⁹⁹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and C.B. Fergusson , September 11th, 1957. MS-2-202, Box 41, Folder 10, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

century. Berger states that “the list of scholars who frequented the archives in the twenties reads like a roll-call of the men who were to reshape Canadian historical writing”, listing D.C. Harvey among these scholars for his work on his early history of Prince Edward Island.¹⁰⁰ This is not the sole contribution of D.C. Harvey that Berger notes. He later highlights the impact Harvey’s work had on the greater maritime region. He explains in his book that by the late 1940s and into the 1950s there was a “rejuvenated recognition of the common history of the Atlantic civilization” brought about by the “growing interest in the history of ideas [and] in the way cultural baggage from the old world was transferred and maintained in the new.” Berger credits the work of D.C. Harvey as contributing to this growing biographical approach to the past by stating his work was crucial in “[examining the] intellectual awakening of Nova Scotia.”¹⁰¹

By the time D.C. Harvey was contributing to these developments in Atlantic and Nova Scotian historical literature, he had been longtime colleagues and friends with Thomas Raddall. The two shared a nearly decade-long correspondence dating back to as early as 1943.¹⁰² The conversations between the two in the 1940s, primarily focused on Thomas Raddall's research for his books and the Simeon Perkins house. D.C. Harvey, alongside fellow archivist C.B. Fergusson, was an invaluable source of support for Raddall's writing as they helped guide his research for his fiction and non-fiction books alike.¹⁰³ In addition to assisting in the writings of Thomas Raddall, Harvey also

¹⁰⁰ Carl Berger, *The writing of Canadian history: Aspects of English-Canadian historical writing since 1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1986), 30.

¹⁰¹ Carl Berger, *The writing of Canadian history: Aspects of English-Canadian historical writing since 1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1986), 174.

¹⁰² Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and D.C. Harvey, December 2nd, 1943. MS-2-202, Box 41, Folder 94, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹⁰³ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and D.C. Harvey, February 1st, 1947. MS-2-202, Box 41, Folder 94, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

collaborated with Raddall to secure and collect new primary sources documents for the Public Archives of Nova Scotia. These documents include the Liverpool transcript compiled by T. Brenton Smith, the Simeon Perkins diary, and other works acquired through his correspondence with Thomas Raddall.¹⁰⁴ On top of securing documents for the archive through Raddall, the two also worked together to safeguard the Perkins diary, getting it transcribed and published by the Champlain Society.¹⁰⁵ Transitioning into the 1950s, their relationships further evolved as the two worked together as members of the Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council (NSHSAC) and through Harvey's role on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC). With access to HSMBC resources, Raddall and Harvey's collaboration on the Simeon Perkins House continued, securing a plaque and government funding to maintain the house as early as 1952.¹⁰⁶ Thomas Raddall would eventually come to replace D.C. Harvey on the HSMBC in 1954 with Harvey's retirement.¹⁰⁷ The final letter between the two in the 1950s, would be from Harvey congratulating Raddall on his second governor general's award-winning non-fiction *The Path of Destiny* in 1958.¹⁰⁸

C.P. Stacey, like D.C. Harvey, was another important contributor to the development of Canada's historical literature in the mid-twentieth century where Thomas

¹⁰⁴Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and D.C. Harvey, September 11th, 1944. MS-2-202, Box 41, Folder 94, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives; Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and D.C. Harvey, February 12th, 1945. MS-2-202, Box 41, Folder 94, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹⁰⁵ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and D.C. Harvey, January 28th, 1947. MS-2-202, Box 41, Folder 94, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹⁰⁶ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and D.C. Harvey, July 28th, 1952. MS-2-202, Box 41, Folder 94, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹⁰⁷ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and D.C. Harvey, November 3rd, 1954. MS-2-202, Box 41, Folder 94, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹⁰⁸ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and D.C. Harvey, November 5th, 1958. MS-2-202, Box 41, Folder 94, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

Raddall maintained some correspondence. Carl Berger credits Stacey with being steadfast in his approach to writing Canada's military history throughout the interwar period and highlights his work in the 1970s on Canada's involvement in WW2 and its place on the international stage.¹⁰⁹ In addition to his written works of history, Stacey also maintained a key role as Director of the Department of National Defences Historical section in Ottawa in the mid-twentieth century. The first recorded correspondence between Stacey and Raddall comes from June 29th, 1949 where Stacey sends Raddall a "spare copy of a paper about Halifax which I read at the meeting of the Canadian Historical Association [which] might have some interest for you." In addition to sharing this information with Raddall, he ends the letter by stating "congratulations on the Governor General's Award [...] I am looking forward to seeing you at Halifax the week after next."¹¹⁰ This letter is effective in displaying the familiarity which existed at this point between Raddall and Stacey. The two had known one another for a great many years, bound by their common interest in the past as well as their military and family backgrounds. In the remaining six letters of the correspondence series, the two often refer to meeting one another across various cities in Canada.¹¹¹ An important set of letters to highlight in this series is when the two discussed the Thomas B. Costain's *The White and the Gold*, the first book in the series of Canadian History that Costain had asked Raddall to contribute to. In Stacey's letter to Raddall on June 14th, 1956 he looks to assist in Raddall's work on his book *The Path of*

¹⁰⁹ Carl Berger, *The writing of Canadian history: Aspects of English-Canadian historical writing since 1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1986), 276.

¹¹⁰ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and C. P. Stacey, June 29th, 1949. MS-2-202, Box 47, Folder 85, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹¹¹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and C. P. Stacey, June 22nd, 1956. MS-2-202, Box 47, Folder 85, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

Destiny by sharing with him articles and sources which may be helpful.¹¹² Raddall's responds to this letter on the 19th of June sharing his skepticism about contributing to the series, stating "history – even "popular" history – isn't a matter of mad interest to the public" adding further that there is little money in it and that he worries about its quality.¹¹³ Three days later on June 22nd, Stacey reassures Raddall stating that "if I hadn't been quite sure that your book would be much better than Costain's, I wouldn't have troubled you about it at all."¹¹⁴ This final statement of the last letter in the series shares insight into the confidence that Stacey has in Raddall as a writer and his ability to present the past in his work.

The correspondence series between Thomas Raddall and historians D.C. Harvey and C.P. Stacey reveal not only the reach of Raddall's web of correspondence but also its ability to bring him into the social spheres of prominent individuals in the 1950s. As noted in the work of historian Carl Berger, these two historians played a key role in the development of critical historical literature during the mid-twentieth century in Canada, making Raddall's association with them significant. In Raddall's relationship with Harvey, he was able to continually advocate for the preservation of the Simeon Perkins house and many other historical sites and documents. In the case of Raddall's relationship with Stacey, he was given guidance, information, and encouragement to continue work

¹¹² Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and C. P. Stacey, June 14th, 1956. MS-2-202, Box 47, Folder 85, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹¹³ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and C. P. Stacey, June 19th, 1956. MS-2-202, Box 47, Folder 85, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹¹⁴ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and C. P. Stacey, June 22nd, 1956. MS-2-202, Box 47, Folder 85, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

on his governor-general's award-winning *The Path of Destiny*, and his other literary endeavours throughout the decade.

Beyond Thomas Raddall's blossoming relations with important historical figures during the 1950s, he had also grown ever-more-prominent in many regional and national organizations. On the national level, Raddall participated in the Canadian Authors Association as Vice-President, he was a member of the Royal Society of Canada and of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, he was a guest of the Canadian Library Association, and he maintained correspondence with many others. On the regional level, focusing on organizations within the Maritimes and Nova Scotia, Thomas Raddall was a member of the Queen's County Historical Society, Liverpool Library Association, and Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council, and was acknowledged by several other institutions for his contribution to the region. Many of these organizations have been involved with Thomas Raddall for many years. However some of those relationships were specifically the result of his productive time in the late 1940s. To not overwhelm this period by focusing on each of these organizations and his work with them only a selective but exemplary few will be given focus.

Two positions he held which are significant to highlight are his appointment to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in 1954 and his re-appointment to Vice-President of the Maritimes branch of the Canadian Authors Association (CAA) in 1952. In the case of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, he would come to replace, as previously mentioned, his longtime colleague D.C. Harvey in representing the

province of Nova Scotia for five years.¹¹⁵ This position is significant as it coincided with his time on the Nova Scotian Historic Sites Advisory Council, which he was also a member. By 1954, Thomas Raddall held positions of authority on both a provincial and national level in advising and decision-making on what was given historic recognition by the government. Two years before this in 1952, Thomas Raddall was approached to maintain his role as Vice-President of the Maritimes division of the CAA. In a letter sent by chairman A.J. Child to Raddall on February 5th, 1952 where they state that “we should like you to continue in the office of Vice-President for the Maritimes [as was suggested] to me by several persons and unanimously approved by those present at the executive meeting.”¹¹⁶ As is typical of Raddall with the CAA his response on February 7th initially rejects the offer with him stating that “it is time someone more suitable received the appointment [and that I feel] the V/P should be someone in a more central position and able to attend regularly the meetings of his or her branch.”¹¹⁷ Despite Raddall’s clear dislike of the idea, the CAA’s response on the 11th of February states that due to the state of the CAA at this time that there is “nobody else at the moment seems to have the professional weight to carry the title of Vice-President for the Maritimes.”¹¹⁸ Like many times before, Raddall would relent and accept his appointment as the Vice-President representing the Maritimes.

¹¹⁵ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the National Historic Sites and Monument Board, November 10th, 1954. MS-2-202, Box 45, Folder 64, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹¹⁶ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, February 5th, 1952. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 16, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹¹⁷ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, February 7th, 1952. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 16, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹¹⁸ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Canadian Authors Association, February 11th, 1952. MS-2-202, Box 38, Folder 16, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

While Thomas Raddall maintained a mixed relationship towards the various offices he held in the 1950s he continued to pursue his life's passion, storytelling. In both print media as well as the emerging radio and television broadcasting he told stories shared across Canada. His work as a writer during this period sold exceptionally well, such as his best-selling book *The Nymph and the Lamp* from 1950, selling 861,399 copies by the end 1952.¹¹⁹ His various short stories and smaller works were captured and printed across Canada through *Maclean's* magazine whom he corresponded no less than one hundred times between 1950 and 1958. Despite the lack of correspondence records between Thomas Raddall and the CBC between 1950 and 1958, Raddall was making use of radio during this period. An example of the reach of Raddall's broadcasts comes from a letter sent by B.G. Ballard of the National Research Council of Canada on the 12th of December 1951. In the letter sent from Ottawa, Director Ballard remarks:

It has been my good fortune to hear the two radio addresses which you presented on Canadian wireless and I shall look forward to further talks in the same series. They are most appropriate at this time, and I should like to express my personal appreciation of their excellence. You speak as well as you write.¹²⁰

It may have been lucky for the wireless broadcasts of Thomas Raddall to reach the ears of Ballard but simultaneously it shows the reach and appeal of his work through this medium. Beyond the realm of publicly available broadcasts, Thomas Raddall also worked with the Nova Scotia Department of Education to share his stories through school broadcasts. In a letter from January 24th, 1956 from Ralph Kane, the Director of Radio Education for Nova Scotia, he asks Raddall if “[we could] dramatize the story known as

¹¹⁹ Writing Earnings 1928-1990 pg.15. Thomas Head Raddall's Financial Records Subseries. MS-2-202, Box 51, Folder 1, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹²⁰ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the National Research Council, December 12th, 1951. MS-2-202, Box 45, Folder 66, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

the “Amulet” written by you and which is found in one of the school readers, *The Golden Caravan*.” Kane goes on to state that Raddall has allowed them to use stories in the past from books like *The Wedding Gift* and hoped he would allow them to do so again.¹²¹ Raddall in his response on the 1st of February agrees to the request without issue.

Thomas Raddall's use of wireless broadcasts throughout his career especially during this era is significant. Due to his training in the Canadian School of Telegraphy, this medium of storytelling was as comfortable and natural to him as was his pen and paper.¹²² In Monica Macdonald's 2019 book *Recasting History: How CBC Television Has Shaped Canada's Past*, she explores the significance of radio and television in Canada and its role in shaping the public perception of the past. In her book, Macdonald explains that Canada began receiving widespread radio broadcasts, largely from American sources, by the early 1920s. In response to the growing influence of American radio, “R.B. Bennett created a national public service radio broadcaster: the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission” in 1932.¹²³ By 1936, the organization was renamed to the CBC and was dominated by American programs due to their appeal and ability to bring in advertisers. In 1949, the CBC began creating public sector-funded programming for television, wary of letting this new medium be dominated by American media like it had with radio. Throughout his career and well into the 1950s, Thomas Raddall presented many broadcasts through the CBC. As shown in his correspondence his influence in broadcasting extended beyond the waves of the CBC, reaching people through private

¹²¹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and Nova Scotia Dept. of Education, January 24th, 1956. MS-2-202, Box 46, Folder 8, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹²² Ian McKay, Robin Bates, *In the Province of History: The Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 202.

¹²³ Monica Macdonald, *Recasting History: How CBC Television Has Shaped Canada's Past* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019), 8.

and closed broadcasts as well. These broadcasts and their positive reception are important because as pointed out by Monica Macdonald during this period radio had largely been dominated by American programming. Thomas Raddall and his stories provided Canadian stories written by a Canadian to a wide audience, acting as a bulwark against the dominant radio programming coming from the south. Thomas Raddall's work in radio seems to be an early participant in the national-building focused programming which wouldn't be mandated by the CBC until 1968, a decade after this period.¹²⁴

The 1950s was an exceptional decade for Thomas Raddall. Through his hard work as a writer, historian, and member of many organizations he had grown his reach across Canada. In his written work he had produced his best-selling book *The Nymph and the Lamp* at the beginning of the decade, bringing in nearly one million sales within two years. Through his social web of correspondence, he maintained connections with and garnered support from prominent historians writing during this period. Finally, his involvement and recognition from many organizations during this period had grown his political and social reach to new heights. While in later decades Thomas Raddall would go on to receive more accolades, and recognition, and find further success as an author, the 1950s stand out as a time of critical mass for many of his personal and professional endeavours.

The Angus L. Macdonald Regime of History

An inescapable figure in the history of Nova Scotia is its former premier Angus L. Macdonald. In his lifetime he held the office of premier twice, first from 1933 to 1940

¹²⁴ Monica Macdonald, *Recasting History: How CBC Television Has Shaped Canada's Past* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019), 8.

then from 1945 till his death in 1954. In the nearly two decades he held the highest office in the province Angus L. Macdonald left an unmistakable mark on the province and its history. Contemporary histories of Nova Scotia prominently feature or entirely focus on Angus L. Macdonald, describing him as a key figure in the province's development in the twentieth century. Some of the most important of these histories which focus on him include Stephen Henderson's *Angus L. Macdonald: A Provincial Liberal* as well as Ian McKay and Robin Bates *In the Province of History: The Making of the Public Past in twentieth-century Nova Scotia*. Whilst these two works and their authors greatly diverge in their perspectives and interpretations of Angus L. Macdonald's life and work, they agree on the sheer impact that he had. Through his time in office, he guided the province toward his own unique political, social, and historical aspirations, leaving a legacy which is still felt today.¹²⁵

The best source to establish a fundamental understanding of Angus L. Macdonald is T. Stephen Henderson's *Angus L. Macdonald: A Provincial Liberal*. This first comprehensive academic biography of the life of Macdonald offers insight into not only who Macdonald was but the greater context which surrounded his life and work. Henderson himself argues early within the book that the two decades that Angus L. Macdonald served in provincial politics "were perhaps the most transformative in the history of the province and its government."¹²⁶ Henderson argues that this is due in great part to Macdonald's major contributions to the development of infrastructure, social programs, and the growth of his unique tourist-friendly image he pushed for the

¹²⁵ T. Stephen Henderson, *Angus L. Macdonald: A provincial Liberal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2007), 3.

¹²⁶ T. Stephen Henderson, *Angus L. Macdonald: A provincial Liberal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2007), 3.

province.¹²⁷ Macdonald's political reach was not limited to the provincial sphere as his popularity in the 1930s and 1940s landed him within William Makenzie King's cabinet by 1940, granting him the position of Minister of National Defence for Naval Services which he served well.¹²⁸ Whilst Macdonald's popularity within the national Liberal party waned in the 1940s as his time in King's cabinet became more strained, his popularity within the province was still indomitable. His popularity within his home province was secure as Henderson points out that as early as his first reign as premier "conservative newspapers trod carefully when criticizing the premier after 1937."¹²⁹ Angus L. Macdonald was a powerful figure within the province, a dominating force throughout the 1930s to the 1950s. It is for this reason that Thomas Raddall's interactions and later cooperation with such a figure are important to explore during this time.

The earliest recorded correspondence between the two was April 6th of 1935, which is found in a letter to Raddall from Macdonald from June 10th, 1935. In the letter, Macdonald apologizes for failing to answer Raddall's inquiry on the visit of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald due to the time restraints of his office. Macdonald explains to Raddall that his meeting with former British Prime Minister Ramsay Macdonald was not spoken in Gaelic as the media reported, rather he stated to reporters that they "spoke of Scotland and the Old Country, of people of Scottish descent in this Province, and other kindred matters." This letter is important because it helps trace their earliest recorded interactions within Raddall's correspondence as well as reveals a level of familiarity between the two before

¹²⁷ T. Stephen Henderson, *Angus L. Macdonald: A provincial Liberal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2007), 4.

¹²⁸ T. Stephen Henderson, *Angus L. Macdonald: A provincial Liberal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2007), 213.

¹²⁹ T. Stephen Henderson, *Angus L. Macdonald: A provincial Liberal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2007), 213.

Thomas Raddall was a fully-fledged writer. The letter is also important because it displays the Scottish character of Angus L. Macdonald during this period which would be of great importance in his second run as premier in the mid-twentieth century.¹³⁰

The second recorded correspondence between the two is a response letter written to Raddall on December 14th, 1943. At the time the letter was written, Angus L. Macdonald was a member of parliament working as Canada's Minister of National Defence for Naval Services. In this letter, Macdonald congratulated Raddall for winning the Governor General's Award for English Language Fiction, for his book *The Pied Piper of Dipper Creek*. The letter is interesting as it shows the ties that have formed between the two over the years since the first letter. It is clear through the language of the letter that there is mutual admiration for the work of each other and their shared common identity as Nova Scotians. After Macdonald's congratulations to Raddall, he goes on to state that "I often think of Nova Scotia" and that "I believe that you have done more than anyone else in recent years to bring something of the life of Nova Scotia to the eyes and minds of a very large body of the reading Public." As the letter continues, Macdonald notes the progress Raddall has made in his literary career since their last set of letters stating, "You have now gained access to the leading magazine of two worlds, and I hope that you will not let your pen rust." Lastly, in the final section of the letter Macdonald further comments on how much has been produced on the province which he loves so dearly. He shares with Raddall his hope that, just as a century ago the province enjoyed a rich body of writing "so today we may be able to witness a rebirth of letters in the

¹³⁰ Correspondence between Thomas Raddall and Angus L. Macdonald, June 10th, 1935. MS-2-202, Box 43, Folder 3, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

province, which has given more to history and literature than any other part of Canada. I shall watch your career with the warmest interest and the greatest hope.”¹³¹

The difference between these first two sets of letters is striking. While there exists a noticeable silence between the two sets, as well as the third and final letter from 1952, there is a clear change over time. In the first letter, there merely exists evidence of familiarity between the two. However, with the letters from 1943, there is evidence of an understanding and respect for one another displayed. As time moved forward Macdonald’s final words to Raddall in 1943, would not be empty as his appreciation for Raddall's work retelling the past would materialize in real collaboration through their shared interest and commonly envisioned past in promoting Nova Scotia. By the mid to late 1940s, Thomas Raddall and a myriad of his colleagues and friends would be recruited into Angus L. Macdonald’s sphere during his second run as premier of Nova Scotia. Through Raddall's correspondences with his colleagues during this period and from his time with Macdonald’s Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council (NSHSAC), we see their relationship and cooperation continue. Furthermore, the work of Henderson and McKay through each of their works on Angus L. Macdonald help enrich this exploration of their growing ties to one another.

Angus L. Macdonald was born on Cape Breton Island in northern Nova Scotia and from a young age embraced the Scottish heritage of his family. During his first term as premier in the mid-1930s this love of his and his province's heritage materialized

¹³¹ Correspondence between Thomas Raddall and Angus L. Macdonald, December 14th, 1943. MS-2-202, Box 43, Folder 3, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

through him “[preaching] the economic value of history and ethnicity.”¹³² This decision to promote and emphasize this “Scottishness [was a] calculated and self-conscious promotion for the tourist industry”, an era which Macdonald enthusiastically saw as a vital tool in growing the Nova Scotia economy.¹³³ Henderson states that “[Macdonald] sensed that North America’s middle-class families were drawn to images of a simpler, nobler past, complete with romantic narratives.”¹³⁴ To create such an image for the province to spur on this tourist history Macdonald created groups like the Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council, facilitated the development of national and provincial parks, as well as employed “independent cultural producers.”¹³⁵ Some of these independent producers Henderson notes during this early period were Will R. Bird, a longtime friend of Macdonald’s, as well as various authors including Thomas Raddall. In the correspondence between Thomas Raddall and Angus L. Macdonald, the appreciation he has for Raddall's work reflects this desire to create such a past in the minds of readers.

While the literary and organizational work of Thomas Raddall and Will R. Bird is only briefly mentioned in the work of Henderson, their contributions to this tourist history are further explored in Ian McKay and Robin Bates, *In the Province of History: The Making of the public past in twentieth-century Nova Scotia*. In this book McKay and Bates explore in greater detail the formulation of and complications with Angus L.

¹³² T. Stephen Henderson, *Angus L. Macdonald: A provincial Liberal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2007), 68.

¹³³ Marjory Harper and Michael Vance, *Myth, Migration and the Making of Memory: Scotia and Nova Scotia, c. 1700-1990* (Halifax, N.S: Published for the Gorsebrook Research Institute for Atlantic Canada Studies by Fernwood Pub. and John Donald Publishers Ltd 1999), 65.

¹³⁴ T. Stephen Henderson, *Angus L. Macdonald: A provincial Liberal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2007), 68.

¹³⁵ T. Stephen Henderson, *Angus L. Macdonald: A provincial Liberal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2007), 69.

Macdonald's approach to tourism and Heritage, putting particular emphasis on the work of political and cultural figures including Thomas Raddall. In the book, there are separate sections each dedicated to the triumvirate of figures which they assign responsibility for creating this province of History. They tackle Will R. Bird, Thomas Raddall, and Angus L. Macdonald as these daunting figures. In the section titled "Down the Twisting Path of Destiny: The Impossible Liberalism of Thomas Raddall," they take a critical look at the role and the kind of past his history portrayed.¹³⁶ In their opening pages, they establish that Bird's work faded while Raddall's continued to hold sway over the historical consciousness of the province. They claim that whilst this is certainly the case, the differential treatment of the two shouldn't be the case as they "worked within the same networks, jointly argued for the same linkage of history to tourism, and shared similar perceptions of Nova Scotian identity."¹³⁷

Their chapter acknowledges Thomas Raddall's position in the province's modern consciousness and highlights the importance of Raddall in creating the province of history that Macdonald's government had formulated during this period. They identify Will R. Bird, but also importantly Thomas Raddall, as the "cultural cartographers who mapped the Province of History – or perhaps, the songwriters who most fully developed many hits beloved within tourism/history."¹³⁸ Despite this credit to Raddall's impact, their work argues that Thomas Raddall's presentation of the past was to the detriment of the field of history, the result of its propagation of many harmful narratives and its

¹³⁶ Ian McKay, Robin Bates, *In the Province of History: The Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 200.

¹³⁷ Ian McKay, Robin Bates, *In the Province of History: The Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 200.

¹³⁸ Ian McKay, Robin Bates, *In the Province of History: The Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 250.

exclusionary view of the past. An example comes from their assessment of his written work on French-Canadians where they state that “Raddall’s historical survey of Canada increasingly disparaged their credulity, parochialism, and demagogic political leadership.”¹³⁹ While their work does acknowledge Thomas Raddall’s impact on the field, their over emphasis on the negative impact of his narratives leaves little room to explore and unpack the positive aspects of his contributions to the historical field.

In Hendersons' work, he highlights Thomas Raddall's early connection with Macdonald as one of his independent cultural contributors. This role of independent contributor is reflected in the early correspondences between the two, which convey Macdonald’s appreciation of Raddall's specific contributions. In McKay and Bates's book, they shine a further spotlight on Raddall, identifying him as one of two crucial cultural cartographers within Angus L. Macdonald's tourism and heritage efforts. Through a further exploration of Raddall's correspondences the work that made him one of these cartographers is illuminated. Using letters written to fellow members of the Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council such as Will R. Bird, C.B. Fergusson, and D.C. Harvey, and a letter from the council itself the groundwork that Raddall undertook to create this history is revealed.

The Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council, created in Macdonald’s second run as premier in the 1940s, was a group of selected individuals whom he entrusted to carry out the locating, accessing, and securing of historic sites of importance. The body of individuals who made up this organization, some of whom have been listed, were

¹³⁹ Ian McKay, Robin Bates, *In the Province of History: The Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2010), 226.

longtime colleagues of Thomas Raddall and came from a variety of professional backgrounds. They were archivists like Nova Scotia's Archives C.B. Fergusson, historian D.C. Harvey, and other culturally or politically important figures.¹⁴⁰ Members of this council were also not exclusively members of this council alone, with members like D.C. Harvey being a member of the Historical Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.¹⁴¹ For Thomas Raddall to be accounted in the ranks of such individuals, those given the trust and backing of the premier, was of great importance.

The earliest letter within the correspondence between Thomas Raddall and the council dates as far back as 1949, with a letter being sent to him by Will R. Bird on February 10th. This first letter marks the start of these correspondences which go to 1962, and reveal the inner workings of the council and Thomas Raddall's motivations for being on it. Bird begins by requesting that Raddall take charge of the meeting as he will be occupied. In addition, he states that "Prof. Harvey is a liaison between provincial and federal and cannot be asked." This shows the confidence in Raddall that Will Bird has as the leader of the council and shows the council's reach through its cooperation between both federal and provincial governments. The body of the letter contains information about what the meeting should focus on, primarily the proposed establishment of an Acadian Museum at West Pubnico, requested by Mr. Connolly. In the final part of the letter, Will Bird proposed to Raddall that this meeting is an opportunity to "[ask for] definite action on the Perkins House." This is crucial as it highlights a potential internal

¹⁴⁰ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council, Minutes of the 2nd meeting, February 18th, 1949. MS-2-202, Box 46, Folder 10, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹⁴¹ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and D.C. Harvey, July 28th, 1952. MS-2-202, Box 41, Folder 94, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

motivation for Thomas Raddall's presence on the council, offering him a seat at the table lobby for this longtime project as a local historian in Liverpool.¹⁴²

The role that Thomas Raddall played within the council becomes evident when scouring through the meeting notes and the council's correspondence for the second convening of the Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council on February 18th, 1949. Since the 2nd meeting of the council, there has been a back-and-forth between the members over the allocation of resources. Each member of the council either supports or dismisses the vote to support sites of potential historic value. As the one charged to head the meeting Thomas Raddall makes several proposals which result in various levels of support from the other members. In the meeting the council further discussed finances requiring “[\$50,000] to cover the expenses of purchase and upkeep for buildings, during 1948, and that \$15,000 will be required for annual maintenance in succeeding years, with exception of amounts [required to purchase other historic building].”¹⁴³ The end of the meeting notes make a few suggestions which include placing members in positions to cooperate with the department making these purchases and restorations and propose making the meetings a full day to accommodate the proposal agenda. From this first meeting found within the correspondence record, Raddall is a key member whose connections with figures on the council and its creator Angus L. Macdonald place him as

¹⁴² Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council, February 10th, 1949. MS-2-202, Box 46, Folder 10, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹⁴³ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council, Minutes of the 2nd meeting, February 18th, 1949. MS-2-202, Box 46, Folder 10, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

an equal amongst them. He was embedded into a funded organization whose role was to facilitate the selection of worthy sites of historic value for the province to acquire.

Beyond the meetings which Thomas Raddall took part in during his time with the council, he also had other tasks he performed for them. Through his correspondences, there is evidence of him appraising claims of historical value sent directly to him or by the council to access. Throughout 1949 and well into the 1950s there are several such letters between Raddall and primarily Will R. Bird. Two prominent examples come from a letter sent by Raddall to Bird on November 16th, 1950 and another from December 12th, 1958. The first letter is a response letter to Bird which shares his insight into an Acadian cottage, the Flora Macdonald plaque, and the Hyde coach. A highlight from the letter is from the section on the Flora plaque in which Raddall states “I consider the Premier's suggestion a good one. If the addition of that quotation makes the inscription too long, I’m sure Dr. Harvey would agree to eliminate the final sentence of his inscription.”¹⁴⁴ This is interesting as it shows Macdonald’s direct involvement and influence in the council's work as well as the collaboration which goes into their heritage work. Eight years on from the first letter is another response letter to Will R. Bird from Raddall, this time about a house referred to as Gorsebrook. In this letter, Raddall shows, in no uncertain terms, his assessment that “the house has no historical significance whatsoever.”¹⁴⁵ He briefly describes the history of the house creation and ownership then sidelines his assessment with a vicious assessment of the previous owner Enos Collins,

¹⁴⁴ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council, November 16th, 1950. MS-2-202, Box 46, Folder 10, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹⁴⁵ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council, December 12th, 1958. MS-2-202, Box 46, Folder 10, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

emphasizing that “his meanness still [survives] here in Liverpool.” He ends the letter by stating coldly “I doubt very much that anyone nowadays will weep to see the last trace of him swept away.”¹⁴⁶ This letter shows the sometimes intimate and strangely personal knowledge of some of the sites he is accessing for the historic site’s advisory council.

Thomas Raddall's relationship with Angus L. Macdonald is a uniquely important one. The vision which Macdonald envisioned for the province aligned greatly with the historical fiction and nonfiction which Thomas Raddall had written throughout his career. As Angus L. Macdonald began his second term as premier, he recruited Thomas Raddall into his government-led project to promote and expand historical tourism, promoting him as one of his key “government sponsored intellectuals and writers.”¹⁴⁷ Through his close ties with Will R. Bird, Macdonald, and his role in the Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council he was able to continue to shape how history was understood in his province. To add to that he made use of these close ties and access to such resources to further promote his longtime projects as a local historian, continuing to advocate for the Simeon Perkins house and its valuable documents. Even after the death of Angus L. Macdonald in 1954, Raddall would continue his role within the council well into the 1960s. In addition to this his connections through the council nearly brought him within the fold of the Historic Site and Monuments Board of Canada itself. However in 1953 due to ill health and finding it hard to balance his professional obligations he had to refrain from becoming a

¹⁴⁶ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and the Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council, December 12th, 1958. MS-2-202, Box 46, Folder 10, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

¹⁴⁷Sara Hollett, “‘Trading Up’ the New Nova Scotia: Postwar Tourism Promotion and Marketing”, (Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society 23, 2020), 3.

member until late in 1954.¹⁴⁸ The 1950s were a time when Thomas Raddall had grown his reach and made his mark on the cultural and historical landscape of Nova Scotia. From a creator of simple costume histories, he had made himself a cartographer of Nova Scotian History during and beyond the historical regime of Angus L. Macdonald.

¹⁴⁸ Correspondence between Thomas Head Raddall and C.B. Fergusson , June 7th, 1953. MS-2-202, Box 41, Folder 10, Thomas Head Raddall Fonds, Dalhousie University Archives.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

The narrative surrounding Thomas Head Raddall and his significance in the development of Nova Scotian history and its historical profession has been dominated by two conflicting positions. In the work of T. Stephen Henderson he relegates Thomas Raddall to a supporting role within this formative process taking place during the mid-twentieth century. Ian McKay, in stark contrast to Henderson, acknowledges that Thomas Raddall played a key role within this vital process of memory formation. Despite McKay's acknowledgement of Thomas Raddall's impact his work largely laments the position which Thomas Raddall and his writing holds during this period and beyond. In McKay's and Bate's book *In the Province of History: The Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia*, which has long dominated the narrative surrounding Raddall, he presents a highly critical view of him. Whilst they overwhelmingly focus on challenging the pro-British and racially exclusionary nature of Raddall's narratives, which is well-warranted, he also contests the significance placed on Thomas Raddall in Nova Scotia's memory formation and historical craft. They make it clear through their language that Thomas Raddall and his work should have long faded away from the public's understanding of this period and the cultural memory of Nova Scotia like in the case of Will R. Bird. However, the primary source evidence suggests there needs to be a reengagement with Thomas Head Raddall, as it reveals that he is a crucial figure within this period of Nova Scotian History whose literary and organizational work influenced its development.

This reengagement with Thomas Raddall is accomplished through a comprehensive exploration of his correspondence series between the years of 1945 and

1958. These years of Raddall's career are of particular interest because it was a time when he was producing many of his most important works of historical fiction and non-fiction and became increasingly involved in the field of history. These productive years are broken down into three distinct periods, each featuring crucial developments which require an unpacking to fully explore their significance. These three include the preliminary years leading up to the release of his first non-fiction book *Halifax, Warden of the North* between 1945 to 1948, the years following its release and reception between 1948 and 1950, and lastly the busy and eventful period of 1950 to 1958 which culminated in the release of, *The Path of Destiny*. By exploring the correspondences and records of Thomas Raddall during these periods, it becomes apparent that through his meticulous use of letters he curated for himself a vast social network across Canada, connecting him to many important and influential individuals. Through these connections he was able to form and maintain powerful relationships, elevate his status as a writer and historian, and enter influential social circles which he used to shape the understanding of the past. Through this network and the correspondences which maintained it is revealed that through both his written and organizational work Thomas Raddall took on the roles of a local, popular, and a public historian. Through this approach to exploring the career of Thomas Raddall during this period an expanded understanding of his involvement in the field of history and his role in shaping our perceptions of the past is understood.

In Chapter Two the first period of focus during this peak in Thomas Raddall's between 1945 and 1948, the years leading up to the release of his landmark non-fiction book *Halifax, Warden of the North*, was explored. In this period the principles and practices of Thomas Raddall that influenced his approach to writing this history are

explored in detail. The *Warden* was a book long envisioned and carefully planned to be released on the 200th anniversary of Halifax's founding. Whilst this project was long anticipated by Raddall it caused him great concern as he had never written anything beyond his fictional costume histories. Despite this anxiety, this was not his first foray into the field of history as he had long been considered a local historian through his work of preserving the Simeon Perkins House as a key member of the Queens Country Historical Society. It was also through his time with the society that he made vital connections with many Canadian historians and archivists whose correspondence helped guide his research and writing methodology. Beyond his work on the *Warden* and as a local historian this period also marked a rise in his status within the Canadian Authors Association, with its leadership promoting him within the organization and praising him as a valued contributor to their craft. The final critical factor to acknowledge during this period is that Raddall was not restricted to the medium of long-form novels, rather his work with *Maclean's* and the CBC displayed versatility in how he shared his storytelling ability. Through his relationships with *Maclean's*, dating as far back as 1928, and his CBC broadcasts he began to lay the foundations for himself to be perceived as a popular historian. This was accomplished through a combination of both his long and short-form storytelling, impressing his visions of the past on an ever-expanding audience of people. By examining the correspondence taking place within these short few years it reveals that Raddall was already a rising star in his craft as a writer and steeped in the field of history. His work had classified him as a local and popular historian yet excluded him from the increasingly regulated academic field due to his lack of education.

The release of *Halifax, Warden of the North* had a powerful impact on Thomas Raddall's career as a writer and his perception as a contributor to the historical field. In the two years which followed its release from 1948 to 1950, explored in Chapter Three, several crucial professional developments took place. In both the academic field of history and literature his book was received well and brought him high praise through various reviews and letters from his colleagues. In the *Canadian Historical Review*, Wilfred Smith notes that despite his lack of academic analysis the book offered an expansive history of Halifax which gripped its reader. The year of its release in 1948 it would go on to receive the Governor General's Award for English Language Non-Fiction, placing Thomas Raddall and his work alongside highly respected historians and academics. Interestingly during this period issues in the largely professionalized field of history arose where there was a disconnect between the work being written by academic historians which failed to engage the public with the past. With this issue being at the forefront of the field Raddall was well positioned to alleviate this issue thanks to the more public appeal and readability of *Halifax, Warden of the North*. Whilst *Halifax, Warden of the North* was not the financial smash hit Raddall desired it nevertheless worked to his advantage. Its reception showed a shift in the perception of Thomas Raddall from a fiction author to a researcher capable of producing real history, something which could appeal to a wide audience and engage the public with the past. With this book's release and the reception that he received, Thomas Raddall further evolved his image into a burgeoning public historian.

The success and accolades brought about by *Halifax, Warden of the North* and his other writing projects accelerated Raddall's career during the 1950s. The years of 1950 to

1958, explored in Chapter Four, exhibited the peak of Thomas Raddall's renown as an author and capabilities as a historian. While he wouldn't publish his second and final non-fiction book, *The Path of Destiny* until 1958, his work within the field of history continued through his other endeavours. This period was exemplified by the increasing power of his social web of connections fostered by his correspondence. Through his correspondence, he brought himself into proximity with historians whose work was vital during the post-war development of Canadian history such as D.C Harvey and C.P. Stacey. It was also during this time that Thomas Raddall was recruited into Premier Angus L. Macdonald's state-sponsored initiative to promote a particular form of Nova Scotian history to drive tourism. He would occupy a vital role on Macdonald's Nova Scotia Historic Sites Advisory Council throughout the 1950s, tasked with leading meetings, consulting with historians, and assessing the historic significance of many sites and items. By 1954 he would also be appointed to the position of representative of Nova Scotia on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada 1954, serving in that capacity for the remainder of the decade. It was during the 1950s that Thomas Raddall's influence as a public historian grew through his many organizational endeavours. The historical writing and groundwork he accomplished during the 1940s allowed him to take a key position within the government-supported historical initiatives of the 1950s. At both the provincial and the national level Thomas Raddall was making critical decisions on what was and wasn't history during the 1950s, shaping the understanding of the past for decades to come.

This thesis reengages with Thomas Raddall by examining his role within the field of history and development of Nova Scotia's past during the mid-twentieth century. It

challenges the dichotomy which exists in his current historical representation, as exhibited through the work of historians Stephen Henderson and importantly Ian McKay. Through analyzing his correspondences and governmental records the long dominant narrative is challenged as it becomes clear that he played an important role in shaping the public perception of Nova Scotian History during the mid-twentieth century. As an author, he produced many best-selling historical fiction and award-winning non-fiction books between 1945 and 1958, some of which include *Pride's Fancy* in 1946, *Halifax, Warden of the North* in 1948, and *The Path of Destiny* in 1958. Through these costume histories and carefully constructed historical non-fictions, he cemented himself as a growing popular historian whose tales of the past engrossed and engaged his readers, sharing with them his reconstruction of the past.

Beyond the pages of his books, he continued to share his stories in his voice through the emerging medium of radio, finding a place for his stories in both public broadcasts across Canada and within the halls of private institutions. This period of growing popularity as a storyteller and historian allowed Thomas Raddall to rise in his station within local, provincial, and national organizations. During his tenure with organizations such as the Queen's County Historical Society, Nova Scotia Historical Sites Advisory Council, and Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada he was an invaluable asset, vital in assessing and preserving historical documents and sites. His work with these various organizations allowed him to be at the helm of a new state-sponsored remoulding of the past taking place in post-war Nova Scotia. These various feats of literary and organizational success would not have been possible without the carefully cultivated web of social connections that Thomas Raddall maintained during

this time. Through his use of letters and correspondence, he was able to advance his reputation into new social spheres, maintain vital relationships, and keep himself close to other important historians during this period. Whilst other periods in Thomas Raddall's career feature greater book sales and higher accolades, this period stands out as the epicentre of his historical impact. It was a time when he made for himself a place amongst historians, securing a spot as a founding member of a new class of public historians, and positioned himself to become a key architect in the constructed past which is still traceable to this day.

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