

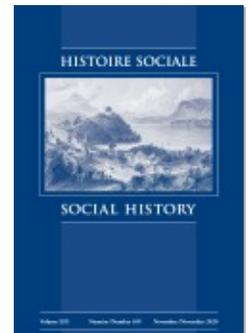


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Les Voyages De Charles Morin, Charpentier Canadien-Français
by Yves Frenette and France Matineau (review)

David Vermette

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family income, occupational status, ethnicity, and gender. The result allows Ellis to contest other (social control) theses relating to who populated these classes and to speculate on the reasons why some ethnic groups (for example, Jewish children) were overrepresented in auxiliary classes.

The topic addressed in this fine book is an important one, of concern to educational historians, to the many educational personnel who work in this field, for whom the history is often opaque, and of course, to the general public as well. By rooting his analysis in one board, the TBE, the author is able to contextualize not only that board's demographic circumstances and political goals, but also broader contextual factors, such as how other city-based jurisdictions dealt with children with special needs in the same period. In this way, the claim is made that this is a history "beyond" Toronto. While I was not convinced of this, I found the case study of the Toronto Board's response to such factors as developments in psychology and immigration patterns well traced and most interesting. This is an outstanding book and an enjoyable read. I recommend it highly.

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FRENETTE, Yves, and France MATINEAU – *Les voyages de Charles Morin, charpentier canadien-français*. In collaboration with Virgil Benoit. Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 2018. Pp. 566

Although its causes are still debated, no one doubts that there was a substantial Québec diaspora in the United States in the late nineteenth century. Although New England claimed the largest share of these migrants, New York, the Midwest, and the Pacific Northwest were other areas of the United States where nineteenth-century *Canadiens* established themselves.

Les Voyages de Charles Morin gives a rare glimpse of the inner life of one of these emigrants, a member of Québec's working class. This class produced the greatest number of the out-migrants, many of them poor farmers, their non-inheriting children, day-laborers, and wage earners in small shops. Since levels of education among this class were modest, documents that reveal firsthand the attitudes and thoughts of an emigrant are precious indeed. This memoir of nineteenth-century *Canadien* Charles Morin allows the modern reader to peer into the mind of one of these peripatetic workers.

Morin was born in 1849 in Deschambault, in Québec's Portneuf region on the north bank of the St. Lawrence River. In 1866, he undertook the first of his voyages when he departed for Montréal. Taking odd jobs at first, Morin eventually learned the trade of a builder and plied it all over North America. After his travels to Montréal and a return home, Morin explored many other parts of the continent over an 18-year period. He visited Upper Canada more than once; then he saw Chicago, California, including a notable visit to San Francisco, and many points in

between. He then traveled to British Columbia and for a time served as a carpenter for Catholic missionaries in the Canadian northwest. In 1884, Morin settled in Argyle, Minnesota, a community in the orbit of Manitoba's Red River. Some of Morin's siblings also made Argyle home. Morin married in Argyle, raised a family, and died there in 1922.

Morin's earliest journeys in Montréal, before he learned his trade, reveal the travails of nineteenth-century Québec's unskilled laborers. He was employed for short stints, a few months here, a few weeks there, toiling everywhere from a box factory, to apprenticing as a bricklayer, to working for a ship's carpenter. At various times in his career, Morin became an entrepreneur, manufacturing and selling sausages with his aunt, and attempting to establish a retail store.

His account shows that the *Canadien* was a ubiquitous figure in the nineteenth-century United States. Wherever Morin traveled on the continent he encountered his compatriots. In Chicago, he wandered the city until he encountered a *Canadien* who led him to a suitable boarding house. Morin found "*beaucoup de Canadiens*" (p. 177) in the Windy City. In San Francisco he found children of rich Montréal families living in a state of destitution. Everywhere he went, he met a *Canadien* who had a small business, or was in a position to help him find a job, or who traveled with him for a time. When he finally settled in Minnesota, the town of Argyle was about one-half *Canadien*.

Morin was a faithful Catholic and he often expressed his moral feelings. He was not shy about criticizing those who did not share his scruples. For instance, what he saw in a San Francisco theatre made him wonder why the city did not put an end to such immorality. He argued with a defender of the French Revolution, lauding the Catholic clergy the Revolution despised as the authors of civilization. As an employee of Catholic missionaries in the Pacific Northwest, he portrayed the priests as heroic, intrepid, and ever faithful. He lamented that many young *Canadiens* who had left their St. Lawrence Valley homeland had lost their faith.

For the most part, Morin had little good to say about the "*Indiens*" and Chinese immigrants he encountered in the West. However, when he became more exposed to the life of Indigenous North Americans, in the course of his work with the missionaries, his attitude appeared to soften. He wrote an essay describing the manners and mores of the northwestern Indigenous peoples he observed. He mustered as much objectivity as he could, given his background and education.

Morin produced two manuscripts of his memoirs, composed in a colloquial French reflecting the spoken language of his day. The editors reproduce Morin's manuscripts in two forms: on the left side of the page, the editors present a transcription, with the author's unique spelling and grammar intact; on facing pages, the text is reproduced with "normalized" spelling, and some corrections that clarify the text. Rather than transcribing Morin's creative spelling, it might have been more effective if the editors had simply shown a photograph of the relevant page from the manuscript on the left-facing page, with their "normalized" text on the right.

The introduction, footnotes, and scholarly apparatus are very thorough, providing historical and genealogical context and satisfying the reader's curiosity regarding the people and places Morin mentions. Generally, the editing of the text is

sensitively done, producing a smooth version for modern readers, while preserving the character of Morin's French.

Morin's language is worthy of a study of its own. Many of its features, some of which the editors identify in their introduction, bear comparison with William N. Locke's 1949 study of the French spoken in the Franco-American mill town of Brunswick, Maine. Such tendencies as a more limited use of the subjunctive than in international French; the use of *avoir* rather than *être* as an auxiliary for intransitive verbs, and the absence of *ne* in negative expressions are evident in both Morin's writing and Locke's analysis of Brunswick's French speakers.

Anyone interested in the nineteenth-century migrations of French Canadians outside of the St. Lawrence Valley will profit from this fascinating memoir. It is a startling find that provides insights into the beliefs, concerns, prejudices, and insights of nineteenth-century working-class *Canadiens*, a precious keepsake that Frenette and collaborators have made accessible to modern readers.

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HARDY, Stephen, and Andrew C. HOLMAN – *Hockey: A Global History*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018. Pp. 582.

While most scholars agree that the modern sport of ice hockey was born in Montreal in or about 1875, Stephen Hardy and Andrew Holman, the authors of *Hockey: A Global History*, point out that the story is not so simple: the sport had antecedents, so Montreal should more accurately be seen as the place of “the game's re-invention” (p. 36). The city had a vibrant bourgeois club culture and institutions such as the Montreal Amateur Athletic Association (MAAA) and the Victoria Skating Rink, where early progenitors such as James Aylwin Creighton, an engineer from Halifax, adapted rugby, field hockey, and lacrosse rules to a pre-existing informal stick-and-ice game and made it popular. For the authors, the publication of a set of rules and the formation of a McGill University hockey club in 1877 marks the birth of what became known as the “Montreal Game,” and subsequent commercialization drove the sport's rapid development, building on tournaments at regional events such as the Montreal Carnivals of the 1880s to the Stanley Cup competitions of the 1890s.

Hardy and Holman frame the overall history of hockey as an oscillation between convergence and divergence over time and geography, with “contingency, individual interest, and luck” (p. 65) being crucial variables, especially before 1920. They identify four vectors of development: without the social groups of the “middle classes” aspiring to manly pursuits, without rail links to join their activities, and without indoor rinks to host them, hockey might not have flourished. And without the hockey evangelists who spread the gospel of the Montreal Game, hockey would not have become a global game.