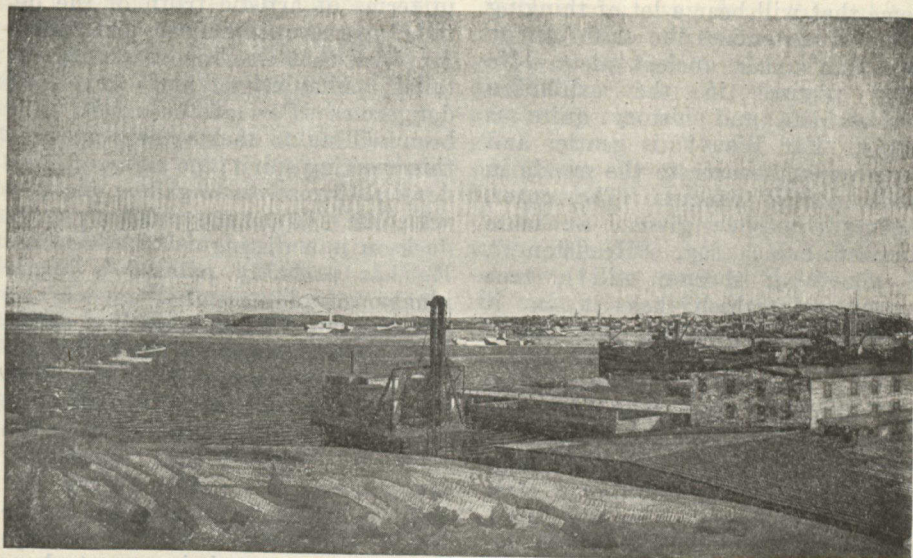




Halifax Harbour—Evening

From the War Memorial Painting by Harold Gilman

convey either the peculiar and perishable facts of war or the peculiar and perishable emotions which these evoked in the hearts of men. Nash and Roberts have expressed the emotional reaction of war on their own natures, but they have done so at the expense of general intelligibility. Their work is esoteric and will probably remain so. It will speak to a few only. There is but one painter in the whole group who has succeeded in conveying an intense human emotion concerning warfare in a manner that does not break outright with traditional forms of expression. That man is F. H. Varley.

Varley's "For What?" and "Some day the People shall Return" are a thing apart in the collection. It is not to be wondered at that they attracted attention in England, though it is not easy to see why they should have been described, as they were in a London daily, as ultra-modernist. They are executed in an impersonal way, neither laboured nor mannered; they are not the product of a passing fashion. They will never become widely popular, but neither will they ever be

appropriated by a clique. As time goes by they will simply be found standing where they now stand—in the forefront of Canadian paintings.

They are both graveyard pictures, one military, the other civilian. In "For What?" a soldier grave-digger is seen resting from his work for a moment. He stands erect and thoughtful against a rain-curtained sky with the whole of Flanders at his back. As one approaches, the eye travels along the two rows of little white crosses to a tip-cart stuck in the mud. It contains portions of dead bodies, half-covered by a gray cloth. The cart is reflected in the foul water of a little shell-hole in the foreground. The restraint of this picture, given the subject and the artist's feeling for it, is admirable. The tip-cart and its contents are neither concealed nor obtruded. They are well below the sky-line and seem half-absorbed already by the vast country-side that is patiently waiting for them. The olive-green colouring falls in well with the mood of elegy.

The other picture, slightly larger, is one of a group of shattered headstones. Varley has here hit on a