

☞ An art embodying the very

A major exhibition of Canadian landscape painting from the first half of this century opens at the Barbican Gallery in London on 19 April 1991 and lasts till 16 June. It is the first significant showing of non-contemporary Canadian painting in Britain since 1938. In March, the Mappin Gallery in Sheffield will offer an exhibition of works by Sheffield artists who emigrated to Canada. Among the best known of these painters are Arthur Lismer and F H Varley whose mature works, as members of the famous Group of Seven, feature in the Barbican exhibition. Also on show at the Barbican will be a selection of works by present-day Canadian artists who reflect current views of both urban and rural environments.

DONNA McDONALD

To be educated in Canada is to learn to spell in a room with at least one reproduction of a Group of Seven painting on the wall. It will probably be Lawren Harris' 1916 oil *Lake Simcoe*, Tom Thomson's *The West Wind* (1917) or *The Jack Pine* (undated), or Fred Varley's 1920/21 oil *Stormy Weather*, showing Georgian Bay with the wind up. Most Canadian schoolchildren learn sooner or later that Georgian Bay is that almost-lake on the right hand side of Lake Huron but the majority outside Ontario never learn where Lake Simcoe is unless they move to that province.

Moreover, they usually think that all these

pictures are by Tom Thomson (1877–1917) whose name is easier to remember if not to spell correctly.

If a school room has a picture which is not by one of the Group of Seven, it will almost certainly be by Emily Carr (1871–1945), in which case it is only the children from the coastal areas of British Columbia who will recognise the thick undergrowth of that region's temperate rainforests.

What unites the children from coast to coast is that they all know the paintings are by Canadians and they all know that the landscape portrayed is Canadian, even though the pictures might represent a geographical environment which is

Fred Varley 1881–1969
The Cloud, Red Mountain
oil on canvas, c1928
86.8 x 102.2 cm
Art Gallery of Ontario
Bequest of Charles S Band
1970



Photo: Larry Ostrom, AGO