“I think Canada has a future”: William Inglis Morse and the Canadian Collection at Yale University Library

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The Canadian collection at Yale University Library is believed to be among the two or three best in the United States.¹ Housed in several departments across the library system including the Sterling Memorial Library, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, and the departments of Manuscripts and Archives and Maps, Yale's significant collection of Canadiana owes its rapid growth during the 1940s and 50s to William Inglis Morse (1874-1952), the Nova Scotia clergyman, historian, and bibliophile. From 1939 until his death, Morse made significant donations of rare printed books, maps, manuscripts, and ephemera to Yale, all the while cajoling and encouraging Yale to grow its Canadian collection using dedicated funds he and his wife provided for that purpose. While Morse's generosity towards Dalhousie, Acadia, and Harvard Universities is well-known and has been described in printed catalogues issued by those institutions, as well as in great length and detail by his granddaughter, Susan Hilles Bush, in *“The Book Disease”: Atlantic Provinces Book Collectors* (1996), his role in shaping Yale's Canadian collection has received little examination. By reviewing Morse's archived correspondence with Yale librarians, particularly James Babb, this essay will describe how Morse, while simultaneously enriching Harvard's collection, helped to form an important collection of Canadiana at Yale. In doing so, and in the absence of a printed catalogue or open accession files, it will also identify some of the rare and unique Canadian materials he donated to Yale University Library.

William Inglis Morse was born in Paradise, Nova Scotia, on 4 June 1874. He claimed descent from Samuel Morse of Essex who

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1 Yale University Library, “Canadian Studies Research Guide,” available at <http://www.library.yale.edu/humanities/canada/cancoll.html> (accessed 16 June 2008).

landed at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1631, and whose descendants settled in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley in the 1760s.² Morse chronicled his early years in *Autobiographical Records of William Inglis Morse, 1874-1905* (1943) and recalled that his "greatest adventure during youth – 5 to 16 years of age – had to do with reading, which I have always accounted as one of my greatest blessings."³ In 1891, at just seventeen, Morse taught school for a year in the fishing village of Port Lorne on the Bay of Fundy before a year of preparation at Horton Academy in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. He studied for his first degree at Acadia College (now University) between 1894 and 1897 and decided on a career in the ministry, having received a licence to preach from a Baptist church in 1895.⁴ From 1897 to 1900 he attended the Episcopal Theological School (now the Episcopal Divinity School) in Cambridge, Massachusetts, during which time he began to frequent the bookstores of Boston. In describing this period of bibliographic discovery, Morse later wrote, "My first appreciation of books as classics began at this time, but limited means kept the purchases to a minimum. This sort of lure increased and theological books eventually began to decrease in importance – their place taken by works of English literature, philosophical treatises, and so-called 'first editions' – much sought after by collectors."⁵ After divinity school he completed a post-graduate course in philosophy at Harvard and was ordained a priest of the Episcopal Church in Boston in May 1901, having been confirmed in 1898.⁶

After completing his formal studies, Morse spent two years as chaplain and English instructor at the Westminster School in Simsbury, Connecticut, a town sixteen kilometres northwest of Hartford. There he met his wife, Susan Alice Ensign (1874-1951), a member of the town's leading family whose fortune came from the manufacture of safety fuses and explosives. Morse and Ensign were married in 1904, by which time he had been assistant at St. John's

2 Benjamin F. Arlington, *Municipal History of Essex County in Massachusetts* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1922), 3:120.

3 William Inglis Morse, *Autobiographical Records of William Inglis Morse, 1874-1905* (Boston: McIver-Johnson Co., 1943), 15.

4 Susan Hilles Bush, "William Inglis Morse, A Book Collector Extraordinaire," in *"The Book Disease": Atlantic Provinces Book Collectors*, ed. Eric L. Swanick (Halifax: Dalhousie University, School of Library and Information Studies, 1996), 34.

5 Morse, *Autobiographical Records*, 37.

6 Bush, 34.

Church in Stamford, Connecticut, for two years. Their only child, Susan, was born in 1905, the same year that Morse became the rector of the Church of the Incarnation in Lynn, Massachusetts. In 1906 he began to edit and publish *The Chronicle*, originally the newsletter for his Lynn parish, but eventually the record of his collecting and scholarly interests.⁷

By the 1920s, Susan Hilles Bush writes that Morse's bibliographic and historical projects began to evolve as antiquarian interests supplanted those theological, and between 1926 and 1931 he collected and donated a scholar's library, as well as funds for student assistantships and essay prizes, to his alma mater Acadia. He undertook a similar program of generosity for Dalhousie University from 1933 and 1942, donating 598 books, the Douglas Cockerell Collection of fine bindings, manuscripts, maps, and a suite of furniture for a reading room.⁸ The catalogues of these collections were printed by the Curwen Press for Acadia in 1931 and Dalhousie in 1938, and both schools awarded him honorary degrees, as did the University of King's College.

Morse was first listed as a donor to the Yale University Library in 1921, but his role as patron of its Canadian collection was actively cultivated and encouraged by two successive university librarians, Bernhard Knollenberg (1892-1973) and James Babb (1899-1968).⁹ On 7 December 1939, Knollenberg wrote to Morse telling him that he "looked over with interest and pleasure the catalogue of the William Inglis Morse Collection at Dalhousie University. It is a remarkable collection, and we are very glad to have the catalogue here."¹⁰ In response, Morse sent Knollenberg back issues of *The Chronicle* and an autographed copy of his bibliography of works by the Canadian poet Bliss Carman. In 1941, Knollenberg, aware of Morse's interest in items connected to George Ramsay, ninth Earl of Dalhousie, sent him an autograph letter by the colonial administrator. Morse replied that, "I was quite overcome on receipt of the MS. of Lord Dalhousie, which I shall treasure as a gift from you &

7 Bush, 34.

8 Bush, 35.

9 *Report of the Librarian of Yale University, July 1, 1920-June 30, 1921* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1921), 21. The type of donation made by Morse is not recorded.

10 Bernhard Knollenberg to William Inglis Morse, 7 December 1939, Records of the Librarian, Yale University, RU 120, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

eventually turn over to the WIM Coll. Dalhousie Univ, Hlx, N.S., where many of the other items repose. Your goodness deserves high praise.”¹¹ Knollenberg’s goodness was also rewarded with a \$300 cheque for the library and he responded, “Since you yourself have not given any instructions as to how the fund should be used, I am taking the liberty of asking Mr. Wing, the Head of our Accessions Department, to devote the money primarily to the purchase of books dealing with Eastern Canada (especially Nova Scotia) and to filling in any gaps in our collection of books written by William Inglis Morse.”¹²

When Bernhard Knollenberg left Yale in 1943 to become deputy administrator of the Office of Lend-Lease Administration, correspondence with Morse was taken up by James Babb, Yale’s assistant (and eventual) university librarian and a friend of Morse’s daughter and son-in-law, Frederick W. Hilles, a member of Yale’s English department. In October 1943, two years after his first monetary gift, Morse sent Babb a cheque for \$100 from his “esteemed wife for the purchase of materials with reference to Canadian History & Literature. This sort of thing has followed me for at least thirty years & [I] have found it interesting.”¹³ Less than five months later Morse wrote, “Mrs. Morse & myself have made new wills ... I persuaded her to leave to Yale University Library a bequest of \$10,000, (Hope it’ll be some time before you get it) the fund to be permanently invested & interest & income to be devoted to ‘The William Inglis Morse Fund for the Purchase of Books on Canadian History & Literature’ ... This may give you the ‘jumps’ one way or another, but do not think it will injure your fair reputation in the years to come ... Don’t say I never did anything for Yale!”¹⁴

Morse’s increasing interest in Yale’s Canadian collection in the early- to mid-1940s simultaneously paralleled his better known efforts towards Harvard, Yale’s ancient rival in all things. By 1928 he and his wife had moved back to Cambridge, Massachusetts, and retirement from the ministry in 1930 allowed him to devote his time to the study of Canadian history and collecting Canadian books and manuscripts. He was appointed Honorary Curator of Canadian History and Literature at Harvard College Library in May 1943 and

11 Morse to Knollenberg, 4 November 1941, Records of the Librarian.

12 Knollenberg to Morse, 6 November 1941, Records of the Librarian.

13 Morse to Babb, 28 October 1943, Records of the Librarian.

14 Morse to Babb, 8 March 1944, Records of the Librarian.

he and his wife immediately set up an endowment for the purchase of Canadian materials.¹⁵ From 1944 to 1949 Harvard also issued an annual bulletin, edited by Morse, that documented the collection's growth, recent acquisitions, and sources for the study of Canada at Harvard. Given Morse's appointment at Harvard and his active commitment to that library's Canadian collection, his attitude towards Yale can be summed up in a letter he wrote to Babb on 23 March 1944: "I'd like to see your collection grow & if I can do a little bit to help, you're welcome."¹⁶ Over the next several years, however, Morse's donations of books to Yale were frequent and between 1943 and 1948 Babb received a number of letters offering "extra copies of Canadiana books & duplicates from Canada, or Harv. Library. They are all O.K. & I'd be glad to offer them, if not in the Y.L. [Yale Library]."¹⁷ Babb considered all offers and accepted all gifts: "Please send us lists [of titles] whenever you can, and we shall check them."¹⁸ Morse also counselled him to build up Yale's collection of works by Bliss Carman, as well as his own writings: "Have you many items by Carman? I take it you have my bibliography on Carman &c. Move fast!"¹⁹ Babb dutifully replied with a list of Carman materials held by the library, although Donald Wing, head of the accessions department and compiler of the Wing *Short-Title Catalogue*, noted in a memorandum to Babb that Morse's bibliography was "a check-list of what I take to be his own collection."²⁰ During this same period, the frequency and quantity of Morse's donations, as well as increasing correspondence from him, prompted an attempt by Babb to moderate his new patron's philanthropic and bibliographic enthusiasm: "I think that we have the beginnings of a good collection. You will note that Miss Reid, a member of the staff who comes from Nova Scotia, has checked against the holdings of the Yale Library the Toronto Public Library Bibliography of Canadiana. Do you have a copy of this bibliography? If so, would you wish to send it here to have us note in it in pencil the items that are in the Library? This would give you a very good idea of what we have and would also enable you to find out promptly material that we lack, when and if it should come your

15 Bush, 48.

16 Morse to Babb, 23 March 1944, Records of the Librarian.

17 Morse to Babb, 11 March 1944, Records of the Librarian.

18 Babb to Morse 20 March 1944, Records of the Librarian.

19 Morse to Babb, 23 March 1944, Records of the Librarian.

20 Donald G. Wing to Babb, 24 March 1944, Records of the Librarian.

way.”²¹ Morse replied that he had a copy of Staton and Tremaine’s *Bibliography of Canadiana* (1934), but held little faith in its use as a reference or collection development tool: “Bibl. of Canadiana I have. The book is not up to par & shows weakness on 1st editions. Many of these reproductions.”²² In 1945 Morse wrote to Babb that “If I could get about 50 Canadian books out of boxes in the garage, I’d send you a list for checking & any copies not in your stacks could be sent forward.”²³ Babb replied “that there are fifty Canadian books in boxes in your garage intrigues me. If you don’t succeed in getting them out, perhaps someone from here can help you sometime.”²⁴ Morse rejected this and earlier offers of assistance, telling Babb in 1944: “I’ve found it doesn’t pay to allow librarians in my den ... My library is now a wreck so far as Canadian or Acadian items are concerned & the booth is almost closed.”²⁵ Over the next several years, Babb had to content himself with irregular but substantial donations of “extras” or duplicates from Harvard’s collection, but also with some rare materials that Morse specifically decided to send to Yale over Harvard, including Appianus of Alexandria’s *Historia Romana*, printed in Venice in 1477, Thomas Jeffery’s *Conduite des François, par Rapport a la Nouvelle Ecosse* (London, 1755), and Robert Auckmuty’s *The Importance of Cape Breton to the British Nation* (London, 1745), purchased by Morse from Henry Stevens, Sons & Stiles for \$250, and donated to Yale in November 1946. The online English Short-Title Catalogue (ESTC) reveals that today it is held by only seven libraries, none of them Canadian.²⁶

In the third bulletin of *The Canadian Collection at Harvard University* (1945), Morse quoted from a memo forwarded to him by Babb, which noted that Yale had 7,831 subject cards pertaining to Canada in the library catalogue, including 4,680 general cards on Canada, and others specific to provinces and regions: “Quebec, 765; Ontario, 495; Nova Scotia, 360; British Columbia, 315; Manitoba, 180; Hudson’s Bay and the Hudson’s Bay Company, 180; New Brunswick, 180; Northwest Canada, 180; Alberta, 135; Saskatchewan, 112; the Maritime provinces, 112; Prince Edward Island, 70; and the Yukon and Northwest Territories, 67. Other subject catalogue entries such

21 Babb to Morse, 31 March 1944, Records of the Librarian.

22 Morse to Babb, 1 April 1944, Records of the Librarian.

23 Morse to Babb, 6 May 1945, Records of the Librarian.

24 Babb to Morse, 8 May 1945, Records of the Librarian.

25 Morse to Babb, 21 March 1944, Records of the Librarian.

26 ESTC citation no. T686.

as Agriculture, Finance, Taxation, Railroads are difficult to estimate. Canadian literature is classed with English, rendering the survey incomplete. Some official documents at present are uncatalogued. Newspaper files 'incomplete and scrappy.' Our thanks to Yale."²⁷ In the quoted memo, housed within the correspondence of the Yale University librarian, its author, Winnifred Reid, also noted that, "About three years ago I checked the Toronto Public Library Bibliography of Canadiana, compiled by Staton and Tremaine, Toronto, 1934. This has 4646 entries ... For the period before 1831 we had 40 per cent of the titles, for the later period only about 10 per cent."²⁸ Interestingly, Canadian bibliographers and readers of the *Papers/Cahiers* will remember that Marie Tremaine spent two years at Yale as a Carnegie Fellow between 1935 and 1937 where she first began her research into Canada's early printing history.²⁹

During the mid- and late-1940s, Babb also sought Morse's advice when contemplating purchases of rare Canadian material. In March 1945 he wrote to Morse asking for his opinion of a 1688 edition of Saint-Vallier's *Relation des Missions de la Nouvelle France* that had been offered to Yale by the Rosenbach Company. The letter contained a not-too subtle request for assistance: "We do not have this book in the Library and, at the present time, do not have the money to acquire it. Is it a very important volume? Your help and advice would be greatly appreciated."³⁰ Morse replied that it was "an important book on New France," but that the price "seemed high." Unfortunately for Yale, help was not forthcoming: "Taxes reduce us," he wrote, "& pennies are getting scarce. What next?"³¹ Despite the ongoing torment of taxes, a little over a year later Morse wrote to Babb that he was eager to establish a dedicated fund for the purchase of Canadiana at Yale: "I hope we can make a start on the William Inglis Morse Fund at Yale for the purchase of Canadian material for Yale University Library – said fund to be kept in perpetuity & the income alone to be used for above purpose. Perhaps we'll begin with \$1000, before the year is out & doubtless you'll live long enough to see another \$10,000 added to this fund unless the New Dealers strip

27 William Inglis Morse, "Note on the Canadian Collection in Harvard University," *The Canadian Collection at Harvard University* 3 (1945): 53.

28 Winnifred R. Reid to Babb, 31 March 1944, Records of the Librarian.

29 Liana Van der Bellen, "Marie Tremaine, 1902-1984 – A Tribute," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Canada*, 23 (1984): 13.

30 Babb to Morse, 10 March 1945, Records of the Librarian.

31 Morse to Babb, 13 March 1945, Records of the Librarian.

us to the skin.” Perhaps remembering mid-letter that most of the principal for this fund would come from his wife, Morse crossed out his own name and wrote a note in the margin beside it: “See p.3!” Two paragraphs later he explained,

I’ll suggest that the name of the fund be changed from the above to The Susan A.E. Morse and William Inglis Morse fund for the purchase of Canadian Materials for Yale University Library – the said income (interest) to be used for the buying of books, etc. The principal is to be kept in tact [sic] & safely invested.

This will start a little competition with Harvard College Library...

The blessing of the gods on this proposed venture & may it prove a blessing to Yale when the waters have closed over us & we have departed to an unknown address.

William Inglis Morse
H.C.C.H.&L. in H.C.L.
[Honorary Curator of Canadian History & Literature
in the Harvard College Library]³²

Morse made good on his promise to start a competition with Harvard a few days later, sending Babb cheques totalling \$1,500 and some dramatic instructions:

Strike while the iron is hot & ere the evil days come nigh. Enc^{ld} find cks. for permanent endowment of “Susan A.E. Morse and William Inglis Morse Fund for the purchase of Canadian materials for Yale University Library-” [...] The interest on the fund to be used yearly or as occasion arises. The principal to be kept in perpetuity as long as Yale lasts.

As a native Canadian, born Paradise, N.S., 1874, I believe this move to be a sound one & principally because I think Canada has a future.³³

In January 1947 the *Yale University Library Gazette* announced the creation of the Morse fund and noted that its principal, assuming additional unrecorded gifts from the Morses, stood at \$8,000.³⁴ Both Morse and his wife continued to add to the fund during their lifetimes, sending cheques on an irregular, but welcome, basis. In

32 Morse to Babb, 14 October 1946, Records of the Librarian.

33 Morse to Babb, 17 October 1946, Records of the Librarian.

34 *Yale University Library Gazette*, 21, no. 3 (January 1947): 46.

comparison, the fund established by the Morses at Harvard stood at \$15,000 by December 1945³⁵ and a letter to Morse from Keyes D. Metcalf, director of the Harvard University Library, and printed in the second bulletin of *The Canadian Collection at Harvard University* (1945) recorded that Morse, by donation and through his endowment, was responsible for the addition of 250 books and 750 manuscripts to the Houghton Library's collection and 3,500 books and pamphlets to that of the Widener Library.³⁶

YALE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

THE SUSAN A. E. MORSE
AND
WILLIAM INGLIS MORSE
FUND

For the purchase of
Canadiana

Figure 1. Bookplate of the Morse Fund at Yale University

³⁵ Keyes D. Metcalf, "Harvard College Library," *The Canadian Collection at Harvard University* 3 (1946): 46.

³⁶ Metcalf, "Harvard College Library," *The Canadian Collection at Harvard University* 2 (1945): 61.

In addition to “extras” and endowed funds, Morse’s donations to Yale during the 1940s included important gifts of American and Canadian manuscripts. In 1944 he donated the manuscript diary of the Reverend Jacob Eliot covering a number of years between 1716 and 1764. Eliot (1700-1766) was the Congregationalist minister of the Third, or Goshen, Society of Lebanon, Connecticut, and distinguished himself as an Old Light, or moderate preacher, during the Great Awakening, a period of increased religious activity in New England during the 1730s and 1740s. Morse first mentioned the diary in a letter to Bernhard Knollenberg in 1941, telling him, “Sometime later I hope to turn over to you Rev. Jacob Eliot’s diary, which [I] am trying to edit, a tedious job.”³⁷ Purchased by Morse from A.S.W. Rosenbach for \$1,300, the diary’s daily entries include weather reports and records of financial transactions, journeys made for work or pleasure, and local events. At the bottom of the pages and in the margins, however, are notices of people in Lebanon and Boston, as well as information on books, sermons, and meetings of the General Association of Ministers in Connecticut. Many entries also refer to the Trumbull and Williams families, both staunch pillars of public life in Connecticut before and after the American Revolution. In and of itself, the diary is an important primary source not only for historians of Connecticut, but also for scholars and students of religion in the United States.

While most of the manuscripts by the Nova Scotian journalist and politician Joseph Howe (1804-1873) and the Howe family obtained by Morse in 1933 were donated to Harvard in 1944, he sent a very small number of autograph letters and related documents to Yale in 1946. Morse was given the collection by one of Howe’s daughters who hoped it might prove of value to historians and scholars. If they were not useful, Morse was urged to “burn the d----- things.”³⁸ In one of three separate letters to Babb, all written on 28 October 1946, Morse noted: “I gave Harvard about 1200 MSS, re Howe & so send you a few ... I doubt if you have these letters, or much of Howe, but might as well begin. So here goes! Excuse me forcing these letters on you, but thought Yale might like a few.”³⁹ Yale’s small collection of Joseph Howe manuscripts includes ten autograph letters by Howe, a number of letters addressed to him, several addressed to

37 Morse to Knollenberg, 5 November 1941, Records of the Librarian.

38 Morse to Babb, 28 October 1946, Records of the Librarian.

39 Morse to Babb, 28 October 1946, Records of the Librarian.

his children during the course of their lives, and ephemera related to the settling of Howe's estate. The most interesting are five letters written by Howe on the evening before his duel with Thomas C. Haliburton, the son of Nova Scotia's chief justice, on 14 March 1840 and addressed to Herbert S. Huntington, Arthur R. Godfrey, John S. Thompson, the "People of Nova Scotia," and his wife, Catherine Howe. In the covering letter to Huntington, Howe simply wrote "If any thing happens – deliver the enclosed."⁴⁰ Howe's letters to his wife and the Nova Scotian public were later transcribed and published by J.W. Longley in his 1905 biography of Howe.⁴¹ In this instance, however, Canadian historians, archivists, and Howe scholars can be forgiven for wishing that Morse's well-intentioned generosity had been better directed in keeping the Howe manuscripts together, either at Harvard or the Public Archives of Canada, which had received a number of Howe items in 1912. The split of the Howe manuscripts between Harvard and Yale also mirrors the collection of maps and watercolours formerly owned by the ninth Earl of Dalhousie that were purchased by Morse in 1931 and divided between Acadia and Dalhousie Universities that same year.⁴²

Morse's additional gifts of Canadian manuscripts to Yale were, like their donor, eclectic and eccentric, and ranged from a 1925 photograph of Edward VIII as Prince of Wales to a sale grant of land certificate for a Samuel Wilson of Clarendon Township in Pontiac County, Quebec, dated 12 May 1865. Sent to Yale between 1946 and 1948 and kept together as the William Inglis Morse Collection in the department of Manuscripts and Archives, they include assorted ephemeral items, but also autograph letters spanning 1710 to 1939 by writers Lucy Maud Montgomery and James Oliver Curwood, public officials and politicians Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Sir John W. Dawson, principal of McGill University, Supreme Court Chief Justice Sir Charles Kirkpatrick, and Camille Roy, and Canadian Governors-General Cathcart, Elgin, and Aberdeen, as well as assorted French-Canadian manuscripts. Of particular interest are a large group of letters addressed to Charles Gordonsmith (1870-1945), editor-in-chief

40 Joseph Howe to Herbert S. Huntington, 13 March 1840, William Inglis Morse Collection, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

41 See J.W. Longley, *Joseph Howe* (Toronto: Morang, 1912).

42 Walter K. Morrison, "Manuscript Maps From the Earl of Dalhousie's Library Located at Dalhousie and Acadia Universities, in the Nova Scotia Museum, and in the National Archives of Canada," *Association of Canadian Map Libraries Bulletin* 63 (June 1987): 2-11.

of the Montreal *Family Herald and Weekly Star*. In his *Canadian Who's Who* entry for 1936, Gordonsmith listed his sole recreation as "collecting Canadiana" and portions of his personal library were sold at auction by Fraser Bros. of Montreal in 1929 and 1935.⁴³ Many more letters to Gordonsmith from Canadian public and literary figures were deposited by Morse at Harvard in 1946 and 1947.⁴⁴ These two collections provide a wealth of material for scholars to examine Gordonsmith's personal and professional relationships with Canadian politicians, public figures, and authors, as well as the intersections between early twentieth-century Canadian journalism and print culture.

In 1948 Morse claimed that his scholarly efforts were "drawing to a close" and he wrote to Babb that he was "Cleaning up debris" from his work at Harvard and "saving up any extras for Yale," including a batch of eighty-four Canadian books: "Some of them should be useful. The rest burn up in your Yale furnace."⁴⁵ That same year he also sent twenty-one items from the Charles Chadenat collection of manuscripts to Yale. According to Morse, Chadenat was "an eccentric Paris bookseller," whose collection of manuscripts related to New France and Quebec was sold piecemeal by his heirs after the Second World War.⁴⁶ In the letter that accompanied the gift, Morse told Babb, "If you behave, you may get more."⁴⁷ Babb, courteous in reply, assured Morse, "We are behaving very well down here, so we shall expect more of the Chadenat collection."⁴⁸ Four additional French and French-Canadian manuscripts were eventually deposited at Yale, although the bulk of the Chadenat material purchased by Morse in 1948 – 187 items in total – was sent to Harvard.⁴⁹ Despite a polite prompt from Babb, Morse does not seem to have donated any of the manuscripts he purchased at the Harmsworth Trust sale in late May 1948 to Yale, sending them to Harvard instead.⁵⁰ Babb alerted

43 "Gordonsmith, Charles Robert William," in *The Canadian Who's Who, Volume II*, ed. Sir Charles G.D. Roberts and Arthur Leonard Tunnell (Toronto: Murray Printing Co. Ltd., 1936), 430.

44 See Miscellaneous Canadian Papers, 1646-1935, MS Can 3, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

45 Morse to Babb, 1 June 1948, Records of the Librarian.

46 Morse, "Chadenat," *The Canadian Collection at Harvard University* 6 (1946): 4.

47 Morse to Babb, 17 June 1948, Records of the Librarian.

48 Babb to Morse, 19 June 1948, Records of the Librarian.

49 Morse, "Chadenat," 4.

50 William Inglis Morse, "Manuscripts from the Harmsworth Collection," *The Canadian Collection at Harvard University* 6 (1949): 44-47.

Morse to the sale in April 1948, pointing out that it "contains quite a bit of Canadian materials, and I thought I should let you know about it. I imagine that we should reserve our funds for Canadian material for the purchase of books rather than spend it for manuscripts."⁵¹ Morse, with some mock frustration, fumed in reply "Do those fellows in New Haven ever give up? You'll have to choose what you can. Later we may benefit Yale, but be careful on your assumptions."⁵² A year earlier in 1947 Morse declined Babb's suggestion that he and his wife contribute towards the purchase of two volumes of manuscripts of François de Lévis (1719-1787), commander of French forces in North America after Montcalm's death, then being offered to Yale for \$10,000.⁵³

Throughout 1948, Morse's letters to Babb, sometimes as many as four a month and usually answered by Babb within a day of receipt, are harmlessly cajoling with Morse complaining with curmudgeonly vigour at the demands put upon him by Yale: "When I think of anyone to damn, Yale always occurs to me. So I write to you & you think I'm a tough nut," he wrote to Babb in November 1948. In a dig at Yale, the letter was signed "Your lost Canadian Curator," an obvious reference to Morse's Harvard appointment.⁵⁴ In two more letters written during November 1948, he teasingly encouraged Babb to "Improve your Canadiana. I find at Harvard, that we have about 75,000 items"⁵⁵ and, "I hope your Canadian collection increases. You can try & improve that. It will help you in years to come. It was poor at least 20 years ago ... Sorry I can't do more for Yale, but you have much to be thankful for."⁵⁶ Babb, with some justifiable frustration, wrote back: "I don't enjoy hearing about all of the items in the Harvard Canadian Collection. We are pegging away at ours, and the Morse Fund is a big help."⁵⁷ Despite their bluff and blunder, Morse's letters demonstrate that he was genuinely fond of Babb, telling him in 1948, "I always appreciate your letters. They're like breezes from the Andes."⁵⁸ Their correspondence illuminates a friendly relationship, detailing a pleasant evening spent together at the

51 Babb to Morse, 26 April 1948, Records of the Librarian.

52 Morse to Babb, 28 April 1948, Records of the Librarian.

53 Morse to Babb, 22 March 1947, Records of the Librarian.

54 Morse to Babb, 30 November 1948, Records of the Librarian.

55 Morse to Babb, 15 November 1948, Records of the Librarian.

56 Morse to Babb, 19 November 1948, Records of the Librarian.

57 Babb to Morse, 19 November 1948, Records of the Librarian.

58 Morse to Babb, 28 April 1948, Records of the Librarian.

Morse house in Cambridge in March 1944, and invitations from the Morses to Babb and his wife for lunch over the annual Harvard-Yale football game weekends. Morse also made occasional visits to Sterling Memorial Library during trips to New Haven to see his daughter and grandchildren, or while en route to his wife's family in Simsbury, and Babb was the periodic recipient of gifts of boxes of candy or oranges, the latter sent by Morse from his winter home in Florida.

In his last letter to Babb, written in November 1950, Morse wrote that he was "keeping quiet. Not much fun, but a little more active ... Keep cheerful, active and get what you can."⁵⁹ Susan Ensign Morse died seven months later on 9 June 1951, and the *New York Times* reported that Mrs. Morse left \$2 million to Yale to support research fellowships for junior faculty in addition to the ten thousand dollars promised to the Yale Library in 1944.⁶⁰ Although a letter of condolence cannot be found within his correspondence files, Babb wrote to Morse on 2 July 1951, telling him that with this bequest the Morse fund stood at "twenty-one thousand dollars and will enable us to make more important and valuable purchases annually."⁶¹ Over six decades later, the Susan A.E. Morse and William Inglis Morse Fund continues to generously supplement the library's acquisitions budget for the purchase of Canadian materials.⁶²

The record of Morse's and Babb's correspondence ends in July 1951, and William Inglis Morse died on his seventy-eighth birthday, 4 June 1952. Susan Hilles Bush writes that after his death a list of valuable books in his Cambridge library was drawn up "in haste."⁶³ Most were sent to Harvard, but an unknown and unfortunately unrecorded portion was sent to Yale including travel books, reference works, and some nineteenth-century American and English literary classics.⁶⁴ A number of Canadian maps from Morse's collection had also been deposited at Yale by his daughter shortly before his death. Letters from the library to Susan Morse Hilles acknowledge the gifts in January 1952, while the Yale Map Collection's accession files record

59 Morse to Babb, 13 November 1950, Records of the Librarian.

60 "Name of Yale Donor Is Revealed by Will," *New York Times*, 15 June 1951.

61 Babb to Morse, 2 July 1951, Records of the Librarian.

62 Ann Okerson, Associate University Librarian for Collections and International Programs, Yale University Library, e-mail message to the author, 9 July 2007.

63 Bush, 52.

64 Bush, 52.

that the maps were received in March of that same year.⁶⁵ The maps reflected Morse's life-long interests in Acadia and the Maritimes and included Gastaldi's *La Nvova Francia* (Venice, 1565), *Partie Orientale de la Nouvelle France ou du Canada*, by Bellin (Nuremberg[?], 1755), Morris' *A New and Correct Map of the Province of Quebec* (London, 1788), Cary's *A New Map of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland &c., from the Latest Authorities* (London, 1811), Aspin and Hewitt's *Discoveries of Capts. Ross, Parry & Franklin in the Arctic Regions* (Edinburgh, 1827), and two states of Robert de Vaugondy's *Partie de l'Amérique septentrionale? Qui comprend la Nouvelle France ou le Canada* (Paris, 1755 and 1785). Over the next two decades, Susan Morse Hilles continued to send volumes from her parents' library to Yale and a 1953 gift included Alexander McNutt's *The Constitution and Frame of Government of the Free and Independent State and Commonwealth of New Ireland*, printed by Robert Aitkin (Philadelphia, 1780); the first editions of parts one and two of *Don Quixote* (Valencia, 1605 and Madrid, 1615); and *Processionum Ordine Fratrum Predicatorum* (Seville, 1494), then the oldest Spanish incunable in Yale's collection. In 1974 Yale announced that Hilles had given "More than 700 volumes on art, history, literature, and travel ... from the library of William Inglis Morse," including Patrick Campbell's *Travels in the Interior Inhabited Parts of North America* (Edinburgh, 1793), Haliburton's *The Bubbles of Canada* (London, 1839), and *Acadie, or, Seven Years' Explorations in British America* by Sir James E. Alexander (London, 1849).⁶⁶ A blank book bound by Samuel Mearne was part of the 1974 gift, as was Sebastian Brant's *Stultifera Navis*, printed by Georg Wolf in Paris for Geoffrey de Marnef on 8 March 1498. A pencil inscription in Morse's hand on the pastedown notes that it was purchased by him in 1930 at Vindel's in Barcelona for 2500 pesetas.

In the conclusion of her own essay, Susan Hilles Bush writes that "it is ... enough to draw attention to the vast body of primary sources on history and literature available at various Canadian and American libraries brought about by [Morse's] efforts and generosity."⁶⁷ Morse's gifts to Yale, like those to Harvard, Acadia, and Dalhousie, were diverse and eclectic, both in life and after his death: rare printed books, examples of fine binding, manuscripts, maps, ephemera, and assorted

65 Robert J. Barry, C.A. Stonehill, Inc., to Susan Morse Hilles, 15 January 1952, Records of the Librarian.

66 *Yale University Library Gazette* 50, no. 2 (October 1975): 128.

67 Bush, 53.

duplicates amassed for other projects that may or may not have been of interest to the recipient. While his generosity to Yale was not on the same scale as that shown towards Harvard, his enthusiasm for Canadian and Acadian materials, his personal and family connections to Yale and Connecticut, and his warm corresponding relationship with James Babb stimulated genuine and generous efforts towards the university's Canadian collection in the 1940s and 1950s. Just as important was the bequest of dedicated funds for the ongoing purchase of Canadiana, ensuring the collection's future and continued growth. Today, given his frequent and cajoling letters, unannounced deliveries of books, and strongly held opinions on taxes, New Dealers, and collection development, Morse would be labelled a "hands on" donor by librarians and administrators. In urging James Babb to "improve your Canadiana" and his exhortations to the same effect elsewhere in *The Chronicle* or *The Canadian Collection of Harvard University*, Morse demonstrated an obvious enthusiasm and passion for the history, literature, and geography of Canada, as well as a deep personal connection to his native Nova Scotia. By 1962, a decade after Morse's death, Yale had approximately sixty-five percent of titles identified by Staton and Tremaine, including sixty-nine of the first one-hundred listed items.⁶⁸ Given Yale's collecting enthusiasm over the succeeding four decades, it is highly likely that the number of items now held is as close to complete as possible. The library has also increased its holdings of Canadian manuscripts, most notably through acquiring the papers of the famed medical missionary Sir Wilfred Grenfell (1865-1940) between 1943 and 1996, and Yale has been a depository library for Canadian federal government publications since 1961. Collection development has also become standardized, with librarians responsible for Canadian history and literature, and active approval plans for the systematic and regular acquisition of new titles. Looking back and looking ahead, however, the Canadian collection at Yale University Library can draw on the words of encouragement issued by its greatest champion, William Inglis Morse: "Building up means tearing down & reverse & then some ... Keep up the struggle & never give in!"⁶⁹

68 Robin W. Winks, "Canadiana at Yale: A Report," *Yale University Library Gazette* 36, no. 3 (January 1962): 101.

69 Morse to Babb, 26 December 1948, Records of the Librarian.

SOMMAIRE

La collection canadienne de la bibliothèque de l'université Yale, considérée comme l'une des deux ou trois meilleures aux États-Unis, doit sa croissance durant les décennies 1940 et 50 à William Inglis Morse (1874-1952), un pasteur originaire de la Nouvelle-Écosse qui fut aussi historien et bibliophile. De 1939 à son décès, Morse fit d'importants dons de livres rares, cartes, manuscrits et autres documents éphémères à Yale. Lui et son épouse ont toujours encouragé cette institution à accroître sa collection canadienne en affectant des fonds à cette fin. Même si la générosité de Morse à l'égard des universités Dalhousie, Acadia et Harvard fut proverbiale, voire reconnue dans des catalogues imprimés publiés par ces mêmes institutions ainsi que par un article écrit par sa petite-fille, Susan Hilles Bush, et inclus dans *The Book Disease: Atlantic Provinces Book Collectors* (1996), son rôle dans la création de cette collection n'a été abordé que d'une façon superficielle. En procédant à l'examen de la correspondance de Morse avec les bibliothécaires de Yale, en particulier James Babb, cet article rappelle la contribution de Morse dans la formation d'une importante collection Canadiana à Yale, y compris celle de Harvard qu'il n'a jamais cessé pour autant d'enrichir. Il recense également quelques rares et uniques documents canadiens dont il a fait don à la bibliothèque de Yale.