

(Un)settling Mary Weekes: Collecting Indigenous
Beadwork and Confronting Settler Identity in Twentieth-
Century Saskatchewan

by

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Abstract

This thesis examines the acquisition and exhibition history of a collection of Plains Indigenous beadwork donated to the Royal Saskatchewan Museum by the Regina-based author and collector Mary Weekes (1884-1980). Taking the rural cottage where she acquired her collection as a contact zone, this thesis considers how Weekes developed unusually intimate settler-Indigenous friendships that forced her to confront her complicity in colonial practices of dispossession and assimilation. It also interrogates how her dedication to Saskatchewan's marginalized Indigenous peoples at times irreconcilably conflicted with her own marginalized status as a woman with persistent professional ambitions—the pursuit of which was aided by participation in the same colonial systems she critiqued. Consequentially, while collecting is typically understood as a settler's attempt to invent a sense of belonging, I argue that the social circumstances of her collecting activities alternatively (un)settled Mary Weekes, as she both resisted and confirmed colonial hierarchies.

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Lastly, this thesis is dedicated to my loving grandparents Lawrence and Sheila Crosthwaite who were both born and bred on the vast Prairies Mary Weekes came to call home.

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Introduction

*“Little connection but to the hills, the low cows, the saskatoons, the story,
its refrains opening each interpretive sign, skidding over land I don’t belong on
without permission. Every step a camera, a mouth, communion of saskatoons
thick
beyond the barbed wire. Scared. An old man, scared maybe he’s watching,
maybe I’m already stepping out of line, there’s a circle of blue sky over us, and
later I’ll eat
cherries at Frenchman Butte and peer into the rifle pits. Who was it that came
into my dream
last night? Raw leather around the forehead and the arms, telling me something
I can’t remember
now, that belonged to sleep, hands moving as he spoke, his eyes, telling a lost
story,
telling a lost person a story. And then a dead crow between subdivision fences,
on the white line of the through-road home, its mate trying to go to the body and
getting
turned back to the grass by each car passing. And I’m supposed to claim I’ve
met the land,
that I know where the limits are placed.”*

—Laurie D. Graham, “Woodland Country,” *Settler Education*, 2016.¹

*“Food, shelter, the return of their hunting grounds was all these poor people
wanted. These things had been wrest from them by the pioneers—by herself!”*

—Mary Weekes, “The Wedding Dress,” *Prairie Sketchbook*, ca. mid-1930s.²

Mary Weekes (née Mary Loretto Girroir, 1884-1980) was a writer and collector of Indigenous artifacts whose activities during the first half of the twentieth century epitomize a predicament still faced by empathetic Canadian settlers desirous to know the land they call home but hesitant to claim a right to intimacy (Figure Intro

¹ Laurie D. Graham, “Woodland Country,” from the series *Settler Education*, entry to the 2014 CBC Poetry Prize competition. Quoted in full with the author’s permission. Re-published as part of “Frog Lake,” in *Settler Education* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2016), 21-24.

² Mary Weekes, “The Wedding Dress,” *Prairie Sketchbook*, unpublished manuscript, ca. mid-1930s, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, I. 143, Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan (hereafter referred to as SAB for the Saskatchewan Archives Board).

1).³ Despite apprehensions expressed by some about the legitimacy of their rights, the realities of settler life demanded that they develop farms, homes and towns on what was and still is Indigenous territory—oftentimes unceded or ceded contingent upon unfulfilled treaty obligations.⁴ The construction of settlements and homes thus implies an intimacy with the land that was not without its discomforts for some. Unusually for her time, Mary Weekes was conscious of the privileges accorded to her by the violent seizures of land and rights from Canada’s Indigenous peoples by earlier settlers not unlike herself. She expressed her discomfort in short stories like “The Wedding Dress,” newspaper and magazine articles, and novels for adults and children. Her collecting activities also reflected an unusual desire to engage more intimately with Indigenous makers and their communities in social and economic relations enabled by her privilege as a white woman. In this thesis I explore the tensions and contradictions that informed Weekes’s activities and understand them as negotiations of her own gendered, settler identity.

In spite of her evidently uncomfortable relationship to the land, Weekes was an enthusiastic landowner—the first of several contradictions in her beliefs and behaviours.⁵ Although her simultaneously uneasy and enthusiastic landownership

³ I use the term settler after Patrick Wolfe who observes the systematic and ongoing nature of settler-colonialism: the settler’s “invasion [of a territory] is a structure not an event” and “settler colonizers come to stay.” I apply the term settler not only to the first European settlers, but also to their descendants—people like Mary Weekes and myself—who continue to benefit from settler-colonialism’s systematic stratification of rights and privileges. Patrick Wolfe, “Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (December 2006): 388.

⁴ I use the term Indigenous to be inclusive of the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples Mary Weekes either met or concerned herself with in her writing and collecting. Where possible I use specific group names. When quoting primary sources, I retain the use of the term “Indian” to more accurately reflect its semantic usage during the historical moment under consideration. For more information on the history of Treaty 4, the territory in which Weekes lived, see: Arthur J. Ray et al., *Bounty and Benevolence: A History of Saskatchewan Treaties* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2000).

⁵ Weekes’s granddaughter Catherine recalls her grandmother holding the mortgage on several homes in Regina. Distrusting of the stock market, she was apparently a great believer in owning property. As a result, she fared very well during the 1930s depression while her husband lost a considerable amount of money in stocks. Catherine Higgins, oral history interview with the author, conducted via phone from Ottawa, December 3, 2015 (hereafter Catherine Higgins, interview).

demonstrates her ambivalence towards the colonial system, the construction of physical boundaries in the form of houses and fences is, as cultural geographer Paul Carter argues, a necessary pre-requisite for the settler's ability to develop and narrate her identity.⁶ The boundaries that frame the narrative Weekes's archive tells about her identity, and which this thesis interrogates, are both physical and imagined. They include the boundary between a settler self and an Indigenous Other; the difference between an urban and a rural home; the threshold between domestic and public space; and, the conceptual distance between at home and away. The powerful presence of these boundaries and their potential porousness is most clearly demonstrated through a consideration of 'Many Maples,' Weekes's affectionately named summer cottage in the Qu'Appelle Valley (Figure Intro 2).⁷

It was over the cottage threshold where Weekes encountered her "Indian friends," inviting them across the boundary into her home for "tea and cakes," and acquiring from them a large collection of beadwork, and enduring inspiration for her prose.⁸ The term boundary is often considered synonymous with the frontier; however, Carter's use of the term, and my own, more closely resembles what Mary Louise Pratt names the "contact zone." While the frontier privileges expansion and domination, the contact zone alternatively emphasizes "how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other."⁹ It thus treats relations between colonizers and colonized "in terms of copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power."¹⁰ The exchange of

⁶ Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay: An Exploration of Landscape and History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1987), 156.

⁷ Robert Weekes, oral history interview with the author, conducted via Skype from Ottawa, November 18, 2015 (hereafter Robert Weekes, interview).

⁸ Mary Weekes to Alice MacKay, undated correspondence in response to a letter from MacKay to Weekes, September 19, 1939, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, III.37, SAB.

⁹ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008), 7.

¹⁰ Ibid.

material between Weekes and the Indigenous peoples she encountered at her cottage produced a contact zone within which developed social and economic relationships with significant impacts on all involved.

The argument I make about Weekes's collecting practice differs from the prevailing understanding that the settler's appropriation and consumption of Indigenous culture attempts to naturalize territorial rights and invent a sense of belonging.¹¹ While I do not dispute that the Weekes Collection likely originated from similar impulses, I argue that its unusually intimate conditions of acquisition alternatively and somewhat paradoxically led to the *(un)settling* of Mary Weekes. I use the term *(un)settling* to describe Weekes's uneasy realization of her complicity in a colonial system with harmful consequences for Indigenous peoples and to evoke the discomforts associated with the resultant feelings of alienation from one's assumed homeland. While the collection itself does not explicitly reveal the *(un)settling* it helped produce, Weekes's prose evidences her reflections on colonialism and her complicity in it. Still, I place the prefix 'un' in parentheses to illustrate that processes of unsettling and settling are not mutually exclusive nor did confronting her complicity prevent Weekes's continued involvement in projects that perpetuated colonial power.¹² I use the present participle form of the verb to further capture the incomplete nature of the *(un)settling* process, both on Weekes and contemporary Canadian settlers to this day.

Significant to the incomplete effect of the *(un)settling* process on Weekes was her position as a woman settler in a predominately patriarchal society within which

¹¹ Ruth Phillips, "Why Not Tourist Art? Significant Silences in Native American Museum Representation," in *After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and Postcolonial Displacements*, ed. Gyan Prakash (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 111; Damian Skinner, "Settler-Colonial Art History: A Proposition in Two Parts," *Journal of Canadian Art History* XXXV, no.1 (2014): 137.

¹² If settling is an act associated with comfort, and unsettling an act associated with discomfort, it reasons that "unsettling" oneself to overcome a latent discomfort with colonial history may also be understood as an attempt to more comfortably assert a sense of belonging. In this sense, the acts of settling and unsettling are not mutually exclusive.

she was advantaged by race and disadvantaged by gender.¹³ This thesis thus foregrounds the tensions between Weekes's tentative recognition of her inherited role as a colonizer in a system of which she disapproved and yet the benefits she unreflectively gained from the same. It also considers the challenges of reconciling a tentative personal experience of *(un)settling* with dominant colonial discourses. In recovering the complex personal and historical dynamics of race and gender involved in the making and displaying of the Weekes Collection, this thesis responds to James Clifford's appeal that "ideally the history of its own collection and display should be a visible aspect of any exhibition" of collected materials.¹⁴ In this spirit, it considers how the acquisition of her collection impacted how Mary Weekes negotiated her gendered and settler identity; it also considers how recovering her presence in the history and display of her collection offers unconventional possibilities for decolonizing the collection and unsettling its contemporary settler audiences.

A Woman of Many Names: A Biographical Note

Mary Loretto Girroir (1884-1980) was born in Tracadie, Nova Scotia in 1884 to Eliza Jane Reddy and David Girroir. She claimed to be descended from Charles Saint Etienne de la Tour, the first governor of Acadie; however, the privilege imagined to accompany such a pedigree was absent from her later childhood.¹⁵ Her father was a shipbuilder who suffered both from the relocation of the industry to Canso, Nova Scotia and from alcoholism. Eliza Jane Reddy separated from her husband sometime around 1893 in light of his illness and loss of livelihood. Financially insecure, she arranged for relatives to care for her five children while she

¹³ Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 6.

¹⁴ James Clifford, "On Collecting Art and Culture," in *The Predicament of Culture: 20th Century Ethnography, Literature and Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 229.

¹⁵ "Weekes, Mary Loretto," Canada's Early Women Writers, Simon Fraser University Library Digital Collections, Burnaby, BC, Canada, <http://content.lib.sfu.ca/cdm/ref/collection/ceww/id/279>.

relocated to Boston.¹⁶ In an effort to distance her children from their father, Reddy also changed the family name to Gerrin.¹⁷ A young Mary Gerrin was left in Tracadie under the care of the Pettipas, prosperous relatives of her father overseen by her maternal grandparents. Reddy had arranged for the accommodation and care of her daughter in exchange for extra household duties but insisted that Mary also attend school. After high school, Mary's teachers and extended family suggested she either attend normal school or live in a teaching convent with an aunt who was a nun. Mary and her mother opposed both options and instead her mother sent enough money for her to travel to Boston, where she was reunited with her mother and three sisters.¹⁸

In 1907, Mary began training as a registered nurse at the Boston City Hospital Training School. Why she waited until she was twenty-three years old and what occupied her in the interim between arriving in Boston and beginning training is unknown. In any event, she received her certificate of Professional Education in Nursing in 1910 and went on to serve as Superintendent of Nursing at the Boston Psychopathic Hospital for four years.¹⁹ In 1914, she married Melville Bell Weekes, a thirty-eight-year-old land surveyor from Regina, Saskatchewan (Figure Intro 3).²⁰ With her new husband and a new surname, Mary Weekes moved to Regina, where she gave birth to three sons—Henry in 1915, John in 1919, and Richard in 1925. While the 1916 census lists her profession as nurse, there are no records indicating

¹⁶ It is unclear whether Reddy brought any of her children—Mary (Weekes), Winifred (Cregg), Ida, Beatrice, and John—with her to Boston or if all were placed in the care of relatives. In any event the children were separated from each other. Kathy Weekes Southee, oral history interview with the author, conducted in person in Ottawa, November 17, 2015.

¹⁷ “Weekes, Mary Loretto,” *Canada's Early Women Writers*.

¹⁸ Kathy Weekes Southee, interview.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ The circumstances of Mary and Melville Bell Weekes's acquaintance are unclear. Kathy Weekes Southee remembers that her grandfather met her grandmother when his first wife was being treated for tuberculosis in an institution where Mary was working. Melville's first wife died in 1874, making it unlikely that he met Mary at this time. Catherine Higgins remembers that the two met while her grandfather was vacationing in Boston. Kathy Weekes Southee, interview; Catherine Higgins, interview.

that Weekes was ever employed as a nurse after leaving Boston.²¹ Instead, she settled into domestic life in Regina, where her husband became the Director of Surveys for the Provincial Department of Highways.²²

And yet, Weekes's self-identification as a nurse in the 1916 census and elsewhere suggests her desire to maintain a professional identity beyond that of a homemaker and mother—an identity she pursued as a member of the Local Council of Women, as an author, and as a collector. In 1924, under various pennames, she began to write for the Boston University *Nurses Alumni Quarterly*.²³ By 1927 she was submitting articles to local newspapers and national magazines, including *Canadian Home and Gardens* and *Canadian Forum*.²⁴ Writing for both children and adults, she published approximately 140 short stories and articles, another thirty of which remained unpublished, eleven books, and had stories included in ten different children's anthologies.²⁵ She also helped to establish the Regina branch of the

²¹ Government of Canada, *1916 Census of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta*, District 27, S. District 3, Enumeration District 4, p. 22, accessed through www.ancestry.com. Weekes maintained her identity as a nurse in several ways. In 1929 the Local Council of Women charged her with establishing a branch of the Victorian Order of Nurses and elected her as the Order's first president. Similarly, despite being 55 years old at the outset of the Second World War, she volunteered her services to the American Red Cross (they were never needed). Annotation made by Weekes on "Annual Meeting of the VON," *Leader Post*, February 11, 1965, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, SB 3, p.71, SAB; Weekes to American Red Cross, undated, Mary Weekes fonds, R-395, 4a, SAB.

²² "Melville Bell Weekes," Member Biography, Saskatchewan Land Surveyors Association, <http://www.slsa.sk.ca/biographies/009.php>.

²³ "Weekes, Mary Loretto," *Canada's Early Women Writers*. Pennames Weekes employed during her career include: Bungalow Ten, Glow Worm, Jane Reddy and SaskAlta.

²⁴ Weekes, "Antique Indian Beadwork," *Canadian Home and Gardens*, December 1927, re-published in the *Nurses Alumni Quarterly*, April 1928, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, I.1 and F106, SB 3, p.16, SAB.

²⁵ While it is beyond the scope of this project to account for a chronology of Weekes's published and unpublished manuscripts, the finding aid for the Mary Weekes fonds at the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan offers useful categories of: Articles and Short Stories, Manuscripts, Periodicals, and Publications, within which some works are repeated. In addition to her prose work, Weekes also wrote a considerable amount of poetry that I have not addressed in this thesis, but which warrants further attention.

Canadian Authors Association, serving for a time as its president and regional representative.²⁶

While her nursing experiences inspired Weekes's foray into publishing and remained an influence long into her career, her foremost inspiration was the history and traditions of Saskatchewan's Indigenous peoples.²⁷ The extent to which Weekes became associated with the subject is indicated by the monikers "Lady Buffalo" and "Lady of the White Wampum" bestowed on Weekes by her fellow settler author and friend Ethel Kirk Grayson.²⁸ Her most successful novel remains *The Last Buffalo Hunter: As told to Mary Weekes by Norbert Welsh*, published by Macmillan Canada in 1945. Begun in 1931, it consists of the recollections of Norbert Welsh, an elderly Métis buffalo hunter Weekes interviewed at his home in Lebret, whose life brought him in contact with many of the most prominent figures in Métis history.²⁹ In addition to her work on Welsh, Weekes wrote extensively about individuals in the communities surrounding her summer cottage in the Qu'Appelle Valley. These include non-fiction articles dedicated to the preservation and revival of traditional beadwork, the history of the buffalo pound, and literary portraits of famed chiefs such as Poundmaker and Crowfoot.³⁰ She also wrote fictional stories about settler-

²⁶ Mary Weekes to Fred Bard, biographical note, September 25, 1947, Mary Weekes papers, Royal Saskatchewan Museum (hereafter RSM). It is unclear how long Weekes served as president of the Regina branch.

²⁷ Weekes returned to the theme of nursing in her 1968 book *High White Beds*, a novel about "the scientific nursing, medical and surgical care of patients" told through the eyes of a young nurse. Weekes, *High White Beds* (New York: Vantage Press, Inc., 1968).

²⁸ EKG [Ethel Kirk Grayson] to Lady Buffalo, no date, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, XII.9k, SAB; EKG to Lady of the White Wampum, no date, Mary Weekes fonds, R-395, VII.8, SAB.

²⁹ Weekes, *The Last Buffalo Hunter* (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, Ltd., 1945).

³⁰ See for example, Weekes, "Beadwork of the Prairies," *Canadian National Railways Magazine*, September 1931, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, SB 5, p.32, SAB; Weekes, "An Indian's Description of the Making of a Buffalo Pound," *Saskatchewan History*, Autumn 1948, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, SB 7, p. 54, SAB; Weekes, "Poundmaker the Peacemaker," *The Canadian*, April 1934, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, VI.2, SAB; Weekes, "Crowfoot Kept his Trust," *Canadian Magazine*, August 1935, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, SB 5, p.25, SAB.

Indigenous relations and about Indigenous cultural practices such as naming.³¹ Some of her most interesting non-Indigenous related writing was for the Sky Line Trail Hikers of the Canadian Rockies' magazine, where her articles, for example, cheekily endorsed the health benefits of hiking and recounted her genuine delight traversing the old Assiniboine trail (Figure Intro 4).³²

Due to her own successful career and her husband's government position, Mary and Melville Bell Weekes kept company with the upper echelons of Regina society.³³ Ephemera in Weekes's archive testify to her prominence. For example, a 1933 letter to Weekes from W.D. Cowan, a member of parliament from Regina, recounts how he begged their mutual friend Mrs. Thornton for an introduction.³⁴ (Mrs. Thornton is likely Mildred Valley Stinson Thornton, an artist who lived in Regina from approximately 1910 to 1934, and who would have shared Weekes's interest in Indigenous culture and unconventional professional ambitions.³⁵) Nellie McClung, the renowned Canadian feminist and social activist (and no less complicated a figure than Weekes), commended Weekes on her submission to *The Spirit of Canada* and apologized for not calling on her in person during a recent trip.³⁶

³¹ Weekes, "The Wedding Dress"; Weekes, "The Pathfinder—Ochan-ku," unpublished manuscript, unknown date, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, I.136, SAB.

³² Weekes, "Laura May and the Silhouette," *Sky Line Trail Magazine*, November 1946, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, I.58, SAB; Weekes, "The Lure of the Trails," *Sky Line Trail Magazine*, October 1942, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, I.129, SAB.

³³ Weekes was apparently quite proud of her high society friends. Kathy Weekes Southee, interview.

³⁴ W.D. Cowan to Mary Weekes, March 5, 1933, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, V.14a, SAB.

³⁵ Mildred Valley Stinson Thornton had what she described as "an uncontrollable urge to paint the Indians, and to record everything [she] could on canvas." Like Weekes, she devotedly pursued her career despite the seemingly incompatible task of managing a family. For more on Thornton, see Roberta J. Pazdro, "Mildred Valley Thornton (1890-1967): Painter of the Native People," *Canadian Woman Studies*, 1, no. 3 (1979): 103-104; Shay Wilson, "Portrait of a Vanishing Artist," *The Beaver* (February-March 2010), 32-34.

³⁶ In 1939, Weekes was invited to contribute to *The Spirit of Canada*, a souvenir of welcome produced for the visit of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. Authors contributed texts about each province and Charles W. Simpson of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts provided sketches of their respective legislature buildings. Weekes, "Saskatchewan," in *The Spirit of Canada: Dominion and Provinces, A Souvenir of Welcome to H.M. King George VI and H.M. Queen Elizabeth* (Canada Pacific Railway, 1939); Nellie McClung to Mary Weekes, July 27, 1939, Mary Weekes fonds, R-395, 4a, SAB.

She also received a Christmas card from Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Massey and an invitation to a February 1932 skating party at the Governor General's residence.³⁷

Yet, despite her many social opportunities, Weekes relished the summer months spent at the family cottage in the Qu'Appelle Valley.³⁸ Writing in 1941 when the family was vacationing at Sainte Agathe in the Laurentians, she nostalgically longed for the far away cottage "baking under a prairie sun while the great hills which sloped up from it would be brown and lonely."³⁹

Many Maples and the "Weekes Indian Beadwork Collection"

It was at her summer cottage where Weekes met and became friends with a number of community members belonging to nearby reserves and from whom she acquired a large part of her 140 piece strong collection.⁴⁰ The collection consists primarily of beaded work, including: twenty-three beaded belts, twenty-one pairs of moccasins, ten beaded strips, four firebags, three beaded clubs, two handbags, and one beaded saddle, among other items (Figure Intro 5).⁴¹ According to Weekes's own records, the objects originate from eight nearby communities, with a particular strength in materials from the Muscowpetung (Saulteaux) and Standing Buffalo (Dakota) communities (Figure Intro 6).⁴² Exceptions include a selection of Northwest Coast and Mi'kmaq baskets, Navajo blankets and jewellery, and selection of Algonquin artifacts. A prolific collector, Weekes sought the artistic integrity of her

³⁷ Christmas card from Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Massey to Mary Weekes, Mary Weekes fonds, R-395, 4a, SAB.

³⁸ Robert Weekes, interview.

³⁹ Weekes, "Summer Cottage in Saskatchewan," *Saturday Night*, May 17, 1941, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, SB 3, p. 19, SAB.

⁴⁰ Due to changes in cataloguing systems, the RSM now claims a collection of 81 pieces belonging to Mary Weekes. The drastic reduction in number accounts, for example, for pairs of moccasins now counted as single rather than double entries.

⁴¹ Mr. F.G. Bard to Mary Weekes, September 25, 1947, Mary Weekes papers, RSM.

⁴² I use the term Dakota here to reflect the contemporary name of the Standing Buffalo Dakota First Nation. The name Sioux was a French translation of the Ojibwe name for the Dakota people meaning 'snake or enemy,' and is considered by some people to be derogatory. However, for the sake of clarity and to reflect the historical discourse of the time, I henceforth retain Mary Weekes's use of the term Sioux.

collection and sold duplicate pieces in order to refine it.⁴³ Her records indicate that pieces from her collection entered the Victoria Provincial Museum, McCord Museum, McGill University Museum, the permanent collection of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, and the Hudson's Bay Company collection now in the Manitoba Museum.⁴⁴ Weekes frequently exhibited her collection to local clubs and at venues such as the Canadian Handicrafts Guild's 1946-1947 *Indian Arts of Canada* exhibition in Montréal and its associated travelling exhibition.⁴⁵ In 1947 she offered her collection to the Provincial Museum of Natural History in Regina (now the Royal Saskatchewan Museum) for \$1500.⁴⁶ With the encouragement of Director and Curator Fred Bard, the collection was purchased in 1947 for \$1000 with funds from the provincial government's Department of Reconstruction and Rehabilitation.⁴⁷

The Provincial Museum of Natural History in Regina was the first provincial museum in the Prairie Provinces, founded in 1906 under the mandate "to secure and preserve natural history specimens and objects of ethnological interest."⁴⁸ By 1913 the museum established an ethnology program and appealed to the public to donate Indigenous artifacts. In 1915, the *Morning Leader* reported that a "new departure at the provincial museum" was "the establishment of a department devoted wholly to the

⁴³ See letters exchanged between Clifford P. Wilson and Mary Weekes, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, III.37, SAB.

⁴⁴ Mary Weekes to Fred Bard, September 25, 1947, Mary Weekes papers, RSM.

⁴⁵ For instance, Weekes's collection was displayed at the Y.W.C.A. in 1928. "Primitive Implements will be Displayed by Regina Historical Club," *The Morning Leader*, March 24, 1928, 8.

⁴⁶ Mary Weekes to Mr. F.G. Bard, September 25, 1947, Mary Weekes papers, RSM.

⁴⁷ Fred Bard to Mr. E.E. Eisenhauer, Deputy Minister, Department of Reconstruction and Rehabilitation re: Weekes collection, Indian beadwork, December 4, 1947, Mary Weekes papers, RSM. Weekes also made group contributions to the museum. In 1932 Weekes and her fellow members of the Local Council of Women had set aside a small sum of money to purchase beadwork and hoped to make it an annual commitment of the committee. The small collection "which it [was] hoped by the committee may form the nucleus of a permanent collection for a museum, [was] placed in the library of the parliament buildings, Regina..." in a space provided by Hon. J. F. Bryant, the Minister of Public Works. Weekes, "Indian Beaded Belts," *The Beaver*, September 1934: 27-28, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, SB 3, p.100, SAB.

⁴⁸ Alison K. Brown, *First Nations, Museums, Narrations: Stories of the 1929 Franklin Motor Expedition to the Canadian Prairies* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014), 75.

exhibition of Indian relics.”⁴⁹ By 1916, the museum had twice moved locations but settled into a permanent home in the old Regina Normal School building.⁵⁰ It was there, much to Weekes’s satisfaction, that the “Weekes Indian Beadwork Collection” was put on display in 1947 (Figure Intro 7). She expressed her gratitude to Fred Bard, writing “I am sincerely glad that this representative collection of the Indians of this province is to be kept permanently in this province. It is only natural that I should have a strong personal interest in it as it recalls the many years of pleasure and work, and tracking down good specimens, which I have had in assembling it.”⁵¹

Mary Weekes continued to write well into her late eighties; however, it seems the collection donated in 1947 was her last. After the death of her husband in 1958, Weekes adopted a more peripatetic lifestyle. She moved back and forth several times between Regina and Toronto, where her son John lived with his family, possibly spending some time in Edmonton with her son Richard. “She couldn’t settle on a place where she was happy,” says her granddaughter Kathy Weekes Southee. “I think as she got more elderly she wanted to be closer to family...[but] I think she was happiest in Regina during the winter.” Fiercely independent, Weekes also continued to travel alone to her other summer cabin, on an island in the harbour of Tracadie, well into her nineties. She died in Toronto in 1984, just a few years short of her centenary, and is buried with her husband in Regina on the Prairies she wholeheartedly adopted as her home.⁵² Her collection has since been exhibited at the

⁴⁹ “Bird Now Extinct Added to Prov. Museum Here,” *The Morning Leader*, January 7, 1915, 8.

⁵⁰ Brown, *First Nations, Museums, Narrations*, 75.

⁵¹ Mary Weekes to Fred Bard, December 10, 1947, Mary Weekes papers, RSM.

⁵² Kathy Weekes Southee, interview; City of Regina Online Cemeteries Database, <http://www.regina.ca/opencms/opencms/residents/cemeteries/cemetery-plot-search/online-cemetery-search/results.htm?page=1&lastName=Weekes&firstName=&cemetery=&yearOfDeath=&ageOfDeath=&yearInterred=>

Royal Saskatchewan Museum, where it is part of the ethnology section of the Museum's Aboriginal Studies program.⁵³

Methodology

Although Weekes was a prolific and regionally popular author during her lifetime, there has been no in-depth analysis of her literary career and even less attention paid to her collecting practice. The most extensive considerations of Weekes's literary work during and after her lifetime focus on *The Last Buffalo Hunter* and consist of reviews ranging from favourable to sceptical about its historical accuracy.⁵⁴ In the 1970s, some historians and folklorists singled out Mary Weekes for her meaningful and respectful texts on Indigenous peoples.⁵⁵ More recently Mary Lynn Gagné, a historian of education, briefly commends Weekes's publishing for schoolchildren in her article on the Saskatchewan School Aids and Text Book Publishing Company.⁵⁶ Weekes's collecting activities have not thus far been acknowledged by scholars, but her encounter with Indigenous material culture is a footnote to a number of larger projects, including Gerald R. McMaster's "Tenuous Lines of Descent: Indian Arts and Crafts of the Reservation Period," which references Weekes as a Regina Branch member of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild.⁵⁷ Like

⁵³ At the time of writing I was unable to determine whether any pieces from the collection are currently on display.

⁵⁴ Heather Devine, "The Last Buffalo Hunter," by Norbert Welsh (book review), *Prairie Forum* 21, no. 2 (Fall 1996): 274-276. *The Last Buffalo Hunter* was republished by Fifth House Publishing in 1994. Fifth House Publishing also republished Mary Weekes's *Trader King: The Thrilling Story of Forty Years' Service in the North-west Territories* in 2007.

⁵⁵ Ronald G. Haycock, *Image of the Indian* (Waterloo: Wilfred University Press, 1974), 41; Carole H. Carpenter, "The Ethnicity Factor in Anglo-Canadian Folkloristics," in *Explorations in Canadian Folklore*, ed. Edith Fowke and Carole H. Carpenter (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1985), 359.

⁵⁶ Mary Lynn Gagné, "Print, Profit and Pedagogy: School Aids and Text Book Publishing Company," *Saskatchewan History* 60, no.1 (2008): 17-27. Gagné also delivered an unpublished paper on Weekes at the Eighteenth Annual Conference of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing; MaryLynn Gagné, "Lady Buffalo—Voice and (re) presentation in the writings of Mary Loretto Weekes," unpublished manuscript, 2010, courtesy of the author.

⁵⁷ Gerald R. McMaster, "Tenuous Lines of Descent: Indian Arts and Crafts of the Reservation Period," *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* IX, 2 (1989): 219. Note that McMaster refers to her as 'Mary Weeks,' a misspelling of her last name also reflected in some records at the RSM.

McMaster, Sherry Farrell Racette invokes Weekes to illustrate regional efforts to preserve and revive Indigenous handicrafts, without mentioning her role as a consumer or collector of these same products.⁵⁸ Given the paucity of literature specifically addressing Weekes, my approach is grounded in extensive archival research and oral history interviews with family members.⁵⁹

The Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan are steward to the Mary Weekes Fonds, a collection of three-point-two meters of textual records, ninety-nine photographs, and a selection of drawings, paintings, prints, and maps.⁶⁰ The majority of the records pertain to Weekes's career as an author and contain manuscripts, acceptance or rejection letters, historical research and correspondence. My entry point into the fonds was a paper Weekes delivered to the Regina Natural History Society on February 21, 1949, in which she recounted her motivations for collecting.⁶¹ Before consulting the finding aid, staff at the Provincial Archives advised that there were no direct references to her collecting activities, which prevented any exhaustive or systematic approach to selecting files for consultation. Of her fiction and non-fiction work, I concentrated on stories and articles whose titles suggested Indigenous subject matter, issues of gender, and regionally specific topics that I suspected might give insight into her collecting. Of her correspondence, I consulted exchanges regarding publications, research, and personal matters, finding exceptional value in her

⁵⁸ Sherry Farrell Racette, "Looking for Stories and Unbroken Threads: Museum Artifacts as Women's History and Cultural Legacy," in *Restoring the Balance: First Nations Women, Community, and Culture*, ed. Gail Guthrie Valaskakis et al. (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2009), 298.

⁵⁹ The Carleton University Research Ethics Board found this research project (project number 103721) to meet appropriate ethical standards and cleared it on November 10, 2015 and approved a change to protocol on March 17, 2016.

⁶⁰ "Weekes, Mary, 1884-1980," Saskatchewan Archives Board, <http://sab.minisisinc.com>. Weekes donated a number of these records herself in seven accessions between 1948 and 1980. Dr. John Archer, President of the University of Saskatchewan, donated others in 1975 on behalf of Mary Weekes, and a representative from the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation donated some records on Weekes's instructions in 1976. For this reason items in the Mary Weekes fonds are variously referenced as belonging to F106 and R-395.

⁶¹ Evelyn Siegfried at the RSM provided me with the first copy of this speech I consulted, but there is also a copy at the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan. Mary Weekes, "Speech to the Regina Natural History Society," Mary Weekes fonds, F106, XV.1, SAB.

correspondence with the Hudson's Bay Company for whose publication, *The Beaver*, she frequently wrote and to whom she often sold or loaned artifacts. I also consulted the extensive collection of ephemera Weekes compiled in seven scrapbooks, which evidence her insistent impulse towards self-archiving and the diversity of her interests. Although references to the acquisition of her collection and its impacts on her are not explicitly noted in titles or file descriptions, I found them nestled in semiautobiographical stories, correspondence, speeches, and articles.⁶²

Accompanying the physical collection at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum is a small collector's file that predominately consists of original acquisition paperwork and correspondence between Weekes and Fred Bard. Also of note is a series of letters from Ochankugahe (Dan Kennedy), Chief of the Carry the Kettle Nakoda (Assiniboine) First Nation, a friend, fellow author and source for much of the Indigenous history contained in Weekes's prose. Also significant is a list compiled and annotated by Weekes with the names of communities or individuals from whom she acquired pieces—a crucial document for understanding the cultural biography of various pieces and what they meant to Weekes.

Correspondence between Weekes and the Canadian Handicrafts Guild in both her fond at the Provincial Archives and collector file at the museum led me to the Guild's Montréal-based archives, where I consulted a small collection of correspondence between Mary Weekes and Alice Lighthall—chair of the Guild's Indian Committee. References to the Guild's alliance with and differences from the Department of Mines and Resources' Indian Affairs branch and their division for Welfare and Training in turn directed me to Library and Archives Canada, where I

⁶² Neither archive nor museum staff have previously linked the archival material to the physical collection, perhaps due to discrepancies in the spelling of 'Weekes' in some records at the RSM.

consulted records pertaining to the division's policies regarding Indigenous handicrafts.

Despite Mary Weekes's meticulous record keeping, my archival research failed to answer a number of questions about her biography and collection. I attempted to fill these gaps by conducting oral history interviews with three of her grandchildren: Kathy Weekes Southee and Bob Weekes, children of Weekes's son John, and Catherine Higgins, daughter of her son Henry. I provided questions to help direct our conversations (carried out in person, via Skype and over the phone), but allowed them to flow as naturally as possible. These interviews contributed significantly to the process of piecing together Weekes's life and confirmed some of the personality traits hinted at in the archival materials consulted. I recognize, as Linda M. Morra and Jessica Schagerl maintain, that as a researcher I am "an active participant in the forging of meaning" not inherent to archival records, and therefore I also found significant value in sharing my interpretations with those who knew Weekes personally.⁶³

This project is necessarily preliminary in nature and limited in scope, offering several avenues for further research to scholars interested in Plains Indigenous material culture; twentieth-century feminism; Canadian literature; tourism on the Canadian Prairies; and, issues of gender and settler-colonialism, among other topics. While beyond the scope of my project, considerable knowledge stands to be gained from a material examination of the Weekes Collection and from interviews with descendants of the Indigenous peoples Weekes considered friends and from whom she acquired pieces. For the purposes of this thesis, a broader theoretical literature on

⁶³ Linda M. Morra and Jessica Schagerl, "Introduction," in *Basements and Attics, Closets and Cyberspace: Explorations in Canadian Women's Archives*, ed. Linda M. Morra and Jessica Schagerl (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier Press, 2012), 9.

collecting, gender and settler-colonialism, and settler-Indigenous dynamics informs the interpretation of my archival research and oral history interviews.

Theoretical Models and Literature Review

I. The History and Theories of Collecting

In considering Weekes as a collector I draw on a large literature theorizing post-Renaissance collecting practices in the West.⁶⁴ Critical to my approach are Walter Benjamin and Jean Baudrillard whose characterizations of collecting as a passion balanced between order and disorder capture the inherent ambiguity of Weekes's collecting activities.⁶⁵ Baudrillard's observation that collectors acquire as a means to systemize and impose order on the world around them is also more generally consistent with the history of settler-colonial collecting as a symbolic assertion of belonging and territorial rights.⁶⁶ Benjamin and Baudrillard further provide a model for understanding collections, such as the one belonging to Weekes, as sites of identification and self-discovery, arguing that although we collect that which is Other to ourselves, "it is invariably oneself that one collects."⁶⁷ Susan Stewart's seminal text *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* similarly considers the act of collecting as a process of identity formation. Stewart is concerned with how objects mediate experience and the meaning-making functions of narrative, both of which inform my approach to Weekes's collecting and authorial

⁶⁴ See also: John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, "Introduction," in *The Cultures of Collecting* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), ed. John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, 1; Eva Schulz, "Notes on the history of collecting and of museums: in the light of selected literature of the sixteenth to the eighteenth century," *Journal of the History of Collections* 2, no. 2 (1990): 205; Maria Zytaruk, "Cabinets of Curiosities and the Organization of Knowledge," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 80, no. 1 (Winter 2011): 1-23.

⁶⁵ Walter Benjamin, "Unpacking My Library: A Talk about Book Collecting," in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1969, first published in July 1931 in *Die literarische Welt*), 60.

⁶⁶ Jean Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting," in *The Cultures of Collecting*, trans. Roger Cardinal, 7.

⁶⁷ Benjamin, "Unpacking My Library," 59; Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting," 12.

work as the respective origin and corroboration of her gendered negotiation of settler identity.⁶⁸

Mieke Bal expands on the association between narratives and collections, which both exist objectively and yet have meanings that are subjectively produced and re-produced.⁶⁹ In applying her narrative theory to the act of collecting, Bal discusses it “not as a process about which a narrative can be told, but as itself a narrative.”⁷⁰ Bal recognizes the meaning-making role of the collector, as taken up by Weekes in several sources that demonstrate the interwoven nature of her biography and collection, but also extends semiotic agency to the collection itself. She subjectifies the collection as the *focaliser*, “an agent of vision [in a narrative] whose view of the events will influence our interpretation of them.”⁷¹ For example, once collected, an object is “denuded of its defining function so as to be available for use as a sign” whose meaning is synecdochical of the collection itself.⁷² The way Bal imbues the collection with agential power over both objects and people is similar to the type of agency anthropologist Alfred Gell proposes for individual art objects in theorizing their ability to shape and produce social relations.⁷³ Together they offer the opportunity to interrogate the agency of a collection in both transforming the meaning of the objects that constitute it and the subjectivity of its owner—a theory I take up in considering the role Weekes’s collection played in the negotiation of her identity and production of social relationships.

⁶⁸ Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984).

⁶⁹ Mieke Bal, “Telling Objects: A Narrative Perspective on Collecting,” in *The Cultures of Collecting*, 97-115.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 100.

⁷³ Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: A New Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

James Clifford's "On Collecting Art and Culture" in *The Predicament of Culture* analyzes more specifically how non-Western and Indigenous objects move through the art-culture system by which the dominant culture assigns them a status within different categories of the authentic and inauthentic and fine art and artifact. Clifford's analysis of "how particular discriminations made at particular moments [by the social groups and institutions that invented anthropology and modern art] constitute the general system of objects within which valued artifacts circulate and make sense," advances the theory that the narratives collections tell are subject to change over time.⁷⁴ By embracing Clifford's insistence upon recovering and making explicit critical histories of collections when they are displayed or discussed, this thesis seeks to demonstrate the positive and subversive potential of what otherwise appears to be a conventional settler collection.⁷⁵

Literature specifically concerning the history of settler collections of Indigenous material culture in Canada is limited. In her book *First Nations, Museums, Narrations: Stories of the 1929 Franklin Motor Expedition to the Canadian Prairies*, Alison Brown observes that much of the existing literature has focused on the Northwest coast, Arctic and Subarctic, with very little attention paid to collecting on the Canadian Prairies.⁷⁶ Brown's reconstruction and analysis of the collecting activities of Robert and John Rymill and Donald Cadzow during their 1929 expedition seeks to help remedy this gap in scholarship. In addition to providing a rich contextual background to collecting activities on the Canadian Prairies at the time

⁷⁴ James Clifford, "On Collecting Art and Culture," in *The Predicament of Culture: 20th Century Ethnography, Literature and Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 246.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 223.

⁷⁶ Notable exceptions include Arni Brownstone's "Ancestors: The Deane-Freeman Collections from the Bloods," and Hugh Dempsey's autobiography about his experiences collecting Blackfoot articles for the Glenbow Museum in the 1950s. Brown, *First Nations, Museums, Narrations*, 22; Brownstone, "Ancestors: The Deane-Freeman Collections from the Bloods," *American Indian Art Magazine* (Summer 2002): 38-77; Dempsey, *Always an Adventure* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2011).

Weekes was active, Brown's focus on "the collection as an artifact" rather than on the manufacture or use of individual pieces informs my approach.⁷⁷ Like Brown, my analysis will "emphasize how social relations were mediated by the exchange and circulation of artifacts."⁷⁸ In so doing, Brown's research and my own draw on the premises put forth by material culture theorist Jules Prown, who observes that "objects made or modified by man reflect...the beliefs of the individuals who made, commissioned, purchased, or used them," and Igor Kopytoff, who argues that the cultural biography of objects is no less complicated and subject to change than those of people.⁷⁹

Brown's approach also responds to her concern that collecting studies tend "to privilege the experience of collectors and [gloss] over the dialogic nature of acquisition processes," which emerges through her incorporation of contemporary Indigenous reflections on historic exchange processes.⁸⁰ Unavoidably, my thesis does privilege the experience of Mary Weekes over those of her Indigenous neighbours, in part due to an archival absence of Indigenous voices, and in part due to the limits of my own subjectivity as a settler scholar.⁸¹ Future research on this subject should consider the perspectives of the Indigenous communities with stakes in the Weekes Collection, which I was unable to pursue in this project because of constraints of time and geography. Instead, my goal has been to contribute to the emerging literature on amateur collecting activities by Canadian settlers through a case study of Mary

⁷⁷ Brown, *First Nations, Museums, Narrations*, 34.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁷⁹ Jules David Prown, "Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method," *Winterthur Portfolio* 17, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 1-2; Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 90.

⁸⁰ Brown, *First Nations, Museums, Narrations*, 20.

⁸¹ My analysis also responds to a lack of scholarship considering Canadian collectors rather than foreign collectors active in Canada. Weekes herself actively resisted the removal of Indigenous material culture from Saskatchewan and even more strongly resisted its removal to American or British museums. Diamond Jenness, Head of the National Museum of Canada, shared Weekes's concerns. Mary Weekes, "Antique Indian Beadwork"; Alison Brown, *First Nations, Museums, Narrations*, 90.

Weekes, whose sustained encounters and exchanges with Indigenous peoples, I argue, had a transformative impact on her identity.⁸²

II. Gender and Colonialism

Of the literature on settler-colonial collecting in Canada, few address collections composed by women outside the parameters of souvenir consumption, from which Mary Weekes consciously distanced her own activities.⁸³ While I am hesitant to reduce her collecting activities to gender, the predominantly patriarchal conditions of early twentieth-century Canadian society necessitate its serious consideration.⁸⁴ In distinguishing Weekes's collecting from conventional touristic consumption and in considering her gendered settler experience, I draw on a large literature theorizing settler women's participation in the implementation (and sometimes subversion) of colonial power.⁸⁵ Anne McClintock's proposition that "white women were not the hapless onlookers of empire but were ambiguously complicit both as colonizers and colonized, privileged and restricted, acted upon and

⁸² For literature on amateur settler collections, see: Moira T. McCaffery, "Rononshonni—The Builder: David Ross McCord's Ethnographic Collection," in *Collecting Native America, 1870-1960*, ed. Shepherd Krech III and Barbara A. Hail (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1999), 43-73; Patricia A. Roome, "'From One Whose Home is Among the Indians': Henrietta Muir Edwards and Aboriginal Peoples," in *Unsettled Pasts: Reconceiving the West through Women's History*, ed. Sarah Carter et al. (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 478

⁸³ For literature on women's souvenir consumption in Canada and the United States see: Elizabeth Cromley, "Masculine/Indian," *Winterthur Portfolio* 31, no. 4 (Winter 1996): 265-280; Elizabeth Hutchinson, *The Indian Craze: Primitivism, Modernism, and Transculturation in American Art, 1890-1915* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

⁸⁴ My consideration of Weekes's gender builds on Griselda Pollock's assertion that the historical recovery of women in art history is necessary but insufficient without a framework through which to understand the specificity of women's work. In avoiding the homogenization and reduction of women's experiences to their gender, Pollock encourages scholars to stress the heterogeneity of women's involvement in the arts and the specificity of individual circumstances. Integral to her framework, however, is the recognition of historically variable social structures and systems that produce differentials in power according to gender. Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and the Histories of Art*, 3rd ed. (1988; repr., London: Routledge Classics, 2003), 77.

⁸⁵ Literature on the subject of women in art history owes much to the pioneering work of Linda Nochlin and Griselda Pollock, while studies of women collectors are indebted to the work of Kathleen D. McCarthy's pioneering study of women as art matrons. Nochlin, "Why Have there Been No Great Women Artists?" in *Art and Sexual Politics*, ed. Thomas B. Hess and Elizabeth C. Baker (New York: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1971), 1-43; Pollock, *Vision and Difference*; McCarthy, *Women's Culture: American Philanthropy and Art, 1830-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

acting” is at the core of how I understand Weekes’s encounters with Indigenous peoples as both empathetic and strategic.⁸⁶

Several other scholars have explored white women’s invocation of race as compensation for the disadvantages of gender in order to strategically obtain cultural authority.⁸⁷ For example, Lianne McTavish argues that by donating Aboriginal objects to the New Brunswick Museum of the Natural History Society, women in the Ladies Auxiliary aligned themselves with male members in race and class and “claimed the right to participate in the colonial representation of [Indigenous] people within the museum.”⁸⁸ My analysis similarly considers Weekes’s strategic implementation of race, but concentrates more extensively on what it means to be “*ambiguously* complicit” in colonialism by uncovering the inherent contradictions in her collecting and writing activities.⁸⁹ Capturing the ambiguity involved in Weekes’s Indigenous encounters necessitates a close focus on their quotidian nature, as informed by Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale’s assertion that “colonial relationships of power were expressed locally and in different times and places that

⁸⁶ McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 6.

⁸⁷ In considering the dynamics of race and gender, I am wary of the potential complacency of feminist scholarship in regards to “hegemonic classed, raced and sexual positions” and seek the “differencing” of the history of collecting on several registers of race, class and gender. Pollock, “Introduction,” *Vision and Difference*, 3rd ed., xxxi.

⁸⁸ Lianne McTavish, “Strategic Donations: Women and Museums in New Brunswick, 1862-1930,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 42, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 102. See also: Anne Whitelaw, “From the Gift Shop to the Permanent Collection: Women and the Circulation of Inuit Art,” in *Craft, Community and the Material Culture of Place and Politics, 19th-20th Century*, ed. Janice Helland et al. (Aldershot: Ashgate Press, 2014), 105-123; Ruth Phillips, “Genre, Gender, and Home Craft: Victoriana and Aboriginal Art,” *Trading Identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art from the Northwest, 1700-1900* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), 197-261.

⁸⁹ McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 6 (emphasis mine). For literature on the specific encounters between settler women and Indigenous peoples on the Canadian prairies see: Sarah Carter, “The Cordial Advocate”: Amelia McLean Paget and *The People of the Plains*,” in *With Good Intentions: EuroCanadian and Aboriginal Relations in Colonial Canada*, ed. David C. Nock and Celia Haig-Brown (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006), 199-228. For an overview of how scholars have approached Saskatchewan women’s history, see: Aileen C. Moffat, “Great Women, Separate Spheres, and Diversity: Comments on Saskatchewan Women’s Historiography,” in *“Other” Voices: Historical Essays on Saskatchewan Women* ed. David De Brou and Aileen Moffat (Regina: University of Saskatchewan Plain’s Research Centre, 1995), 10-26.

were grounded in the materiality of women's day-to-day lives."⁹⁰

III. Bridging Boundaries and Intimate Contact Zones

Like Pickles and Rutherforddale, I embrace Mary Louise Pratt's aforementioned concept of the contact zone in order to theorize how Weekes's collection mediated "the interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by diffusionist accounts of conquest and domination."⁹¹ In considering the settler-Indigenous dynamics involved at the cottage where Weekes acquired her collection, I draw on scholarship theorizing the intimate spaces of colonialism and the impact of boundaries (and their transgression) in producing colonial identities. Albert Hurtado coined the term "intimate frontiers" to describe the role of sexual relationships between Spanish and Indigenous peoples in eighteenth-century California.⁹² His term has since been adopted and expanded on by scholars such as Ann Laura Stoler. She defines intimate frontiers (or contact zones) as "a social and cultural space where racial classifications were defined and defied, where relations between colonizer and colonized could powerfully confound or confirm the strictures of governance and the categories of rule."⁹³ The ambivalence of the cottage as a space for both the confirmation and subversion of colonial power is critical to my analysis of the relationship between Weekes and her Indigenous friends.

I refer to these relationships as unusually familiar or intimate not simply because Weekes proudly recounted stories about her "Indian friends," but because her prose demonstrates how she established social bonds and a sense of community through which her copresence with Indigenous peoples became a defining feature of

⁹⁰ Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherforddale, "Introduction," in *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Past*, ed. Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherforddale (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005), 1.

⁹¹ Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 7.

⁹² Albert L. Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers: Sex, Gender, and Culture in Old California* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999).

⁹³ Ann Laura Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties," *The Journal of American History* 88, no. 3 (Dec., 2001): 831.

her identity. Because the evidence for this intimacy arises directly from Weekes's self-conscious efforts in constructing her literary oeuvre and archive, I do not pretend to know the legitimacy of these social bonds or whether the friendship she proudly acknowledged was in fact reciprocal. However real or fictional this intimacy might have been, Weekes's perception of it is worth serious consideration for how honestly her prose comments—often from an Indigenous perspective—on the empty promises and radically asymmetrical benefits of the colonial encounter. Investigating these intimate spaces and relations of colonialism offers, as Stoler observes, “histories that run across and oblique to, not parallel with, official paper trails.”⁹⁴ In much the same way, Weekes's private archive offers an alternative source for the history of colonial collecting than those of professional anthropologists and collecting institutions.

In conceptualizing Weekes's cottage as a site of tentatively transformative colonial encounters, I rely on cultural geographer Paul Carter's analysis of the symbolic function of imaginary and physical boundaries in developing both a settler's identity and voice. Carter argues that boundaries are not barriers to communication but rather places of “communicated difference,” a fact that becomes clear in much of Weekes's writing.⁹⁵ Carter also considers the transgression of spatial boundaries through the occasion of the Australian picnic, which “licensed the breakdown of social, and even personal barriers.”⁹⁶ This transgression is on behalf of the settler and is a temporary move from bounded settled space to unsettled space. My analysis of Mary Weekes considers a similar breakdown of social barriers that occurs when Indigenous peoples are invited across boundaries into settler space for the exchange of

⁹⁴ Stoler, “Matters of Intimacy as Matters of State,” *The Journal of American History* 88, no. 3 (Dec., 2001): 896.

⁹⁵ Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, 163.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 156.

material culture over “tea and cakes.”⁹⁷ I find Victor Turner’s interpretation of liminality equally useful in understanding the temporary suspension of colonial hierarchies at the cottage—removed as it is from the dictates of daily urban life and set apart as a space that is “neither this nor that,” neither fully at home nor fully away, neither urban nor entirely rural.⁹⁸

Chapter Breakdown

The structure of this thesis follows that of Weekes’s 1949 speech to the Regina Natural History Society, in which she meditated first on the acquisition of her collection before turning to its social life and exhibition history. Chapter one explores the acquisition of the Weekes Collection and how it mediated the negotiation of her identity as a settler advantaged by race and a woman disadvantaged by gender. It opens with the moment Weekes identified as the beginning of her collection and considers how the conditions of its acquisition, centred on her summer cottage, distinguish Weekes from other collectors. The chapter then turns to the role the cottage played in shaping the relationship between Weekes and her Indigenous neighbours. In-depth analysis of her prose and the conditions that enabled its production reveals the tensions produced by her attempt to reconcile her lived relationships with the dominant cultural discourse and patriarchal constraints of her time. I consider these tensions indicative of her tentative *(un)settling*.

Chapter two studies the print and exhibition history of the Weekes Collection, considering what happens when intimately acquired pieces and the cultural sensitivities that accompany them are displaced from the private to the public sphere. I open by interrogating how Weekes’s understanding of “authenticity” differed from

⁹⁷ Mary Weekes to Alice MacKay, undated correspondence in response to a letter from MacKay to Weekes, September 19, 1939, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, III.37, SAB.

⁹⁸ Victor W. Turner, “Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in *Rites de Passage*,” in *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion: An Anthropological Study of the Supernatural*, 5th edition, ed. Arthur C. Lehmann and James E. Myers (Houston: Mayfield Publishing Co., 2000), 49.

beliefs held by the Canadian Handicrafts Guild and the Department of Mines and Resources. By situating Weekes as a participant in the Guild's exhibition projects, I consider how ethnographic display conventions overshadowed Weekes's intimately acquired sensitivities. I propose that she may have more successfully communicated her own *(un)settling* experience in the form of prose for schoolchildren than in the exhibition of her collection. The chapter closes by addressing the fragmentary trace of Indigenous voices in the Weekes Collection. I propose that we need to recover Weekes's private relationship to her collection in future public exhibitions. While not an adequate replacement for a vocal Indigenous presence, recognizing the collection as a product of its collector makes conspicuous the narrative gaps in the social lives of individual pieces.

Collectively these chapters recover the history of a single collection and the people involved in its making. They reveal the contradictions inherent in the attempts of one woman to negotiate the lived realities of twentieth-century settler-colonial Canada and how her dedication to the history of Saskatchewan's marginalized Indigenous peoples at times irreconcilably conflicted with her own marginalized status as a woman. This analysis also offers a case study of what I believe to be a wider phenomenon experienced by some twentieth-century Western Canadian women and moves toward a dialogic history whose inclusion in the collection's future display I propose as a method of unsettling colonial collections.

Chapter One

Collections and Compositions: Gendered Negotiations of Settler Identity

“Dr. Ledingham has asked me to say something to you tonight about my collection of Indian beadwork which Mr. Bard persuaded me to let the (shall I say his?) museum have. In order to do this, I fear I shall have to say something about myself—how I started collecting and what spurred me on. I hope, therefore, I may be forgiven for the number of ‘I’s’ I shall have to employ.”

“I learned from a Yale University professor who was doing field work in the Sioux reservation one summer that the Indians of that reserve call me ‘wagon-sida-winga,’ which meant, ‘good woman, kindly woman, but exact woman,’ and they elaborated by saying that when they needed help I gave it to them, but that when I advanced them five dollars for a load of wood, I insisted upon them delivering the wood. They seemed to respect me for this trait.”

— Mary Weekes, Speech to the Regina Natural History Society, 1949.⁹⁹

Mary Weekes humbly began her lecture to the Regina Natural History Society by apologizing for her own presence in the history of her collection. She also deemphasized the active role she played in finding a steward for her collection by identifying Mr. Bard, of the Provincial Museum of Natural History in Regina, rather than herself, as the agent of persuasion (Figure 1.1).¹⁰⁰ In so doing, Weekes situated her agency within the polite and passive confines of mid-twentieth century expectations of the female gender. But, in the colonial encounter between Weekes and those who called her “wagon-sida-winga,” Weekes occupied a position of racial power that Anne McClintock observes implicated white women as “ambiguously complicit” in the colonial project.¹⁰¹ In the colonial encounter Weekes was thus disadvantaged by gender but advantaged by race—both social positions she contested.

⁹⁹ Weekes, “Paper delivered to the Regina Natural History Society,” February 21, 1949, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, XII.1, SAB.

¹⁰⁰ It was in fact Weekes who offered her collection to Mr. Bard and persuaded him to accept it. Furthermore, although she characterizes its acquisition as a donation, it was a sale. Mary Weekes to Mr. F.G. Bard, September 25, 1947, Mary Weekes papers, RSM.

¹⁰¹ McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 6.

This chapter considers how Weekes negotiated her identity as a woman settler and the enabling role her collection played in this negotiation.

Humility aside, the number of personal pronouns employed by Weekes in her lecture is by no means unusual. The fact that she considered it impossible to speak of her collection without referencing herself reveals the mutually constitutive nature of the collection and her personhood, a phenomenon cultural theorist Jean Baudrillard has observed of collectors more widely.¹⁰² This chapter begins by considering how Weekes self-reflexively narrated her collection and the importance she accorded to her cottage as the location of material and personal exchange. I understand Weekes's collection as a "channel of agency," by which I mean that I recognize her own intention in the act of collecting but also acknowledge how in "render[ing] [her] agency effective," the collection functions as an actor that facilitated social relationships that would not otherwise have been possible.¹⁰³ Although defined by an uneven power distribution, the settler-Indigenous friendships developed cannot be summarized as positive or negative. Instead, they reveal the negotiation, contestation and sometimes reconfirmation of colonial attitudes involved in the lived, intimate settler experience that may be overlooked in studies of colonialism writ large.¹⁰⁴ I analyze pieces of Weekes's prose as evidence of her ambiguous contestation of the colonial system, while also considering how her conscious complicity in the same system allowed her to pursue her writing profession. Taking the act and location of acquisition as facilitators of unusually close settler-Indigenous relationships, this chapter considers the tentative (*un*)settling of Mary Weekes and how confronting the

¹⁰² Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting," 12.

¹⁰³ Gell, *Art and Agency*, 20.

¹⁰⁴ Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, "Introduction," in *Moving Subjects: Gender, Mobility, and Intimacy in an Age of Global Empire*, ed. Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton (Champaign: University of Illinois, 2009), 2.

advantages of her race conflicted with her desire to overcome the disadvantages of her gender.

I. “The first piece of Indian work I bought”: Narrating the Weekes Collection

According to a chronological narrative framework, the first Indigenous pieces Weekes purchased were a Navajo rug, a Navajo saddlecloth, and a Cheyenne cloth at Glacier National Park, Montana, in 1914.¹⁰⁵ One year later, at the Panama-Pacific Exhibition in San Francisco, she bought a Palur Bark Hat.¹⁰⁶ Despite evidence of this early impulse to collect, in her handwritten acquisition records she identified a handwoven Cree belt acquired at her B-Say-Tah Point cottage in 1918 as the “first piece of Indian work [she] bought” (Figure 1.2).¹⁰⁷ Mieke Bal maintains that “only retrospectively, through a narrative manipulation of the sequence of events, can the accidental acquisition of the first object become the beginning of a collection,” highlighting the unavoidable subjectivity of narratives such as the one Weekes offers.¹⁰⁸ By delaying her self-identification as a collector until 1918, Weekes constructed a narrative of collecting whose personal significance was rooted less in the exchange of the physical product itself and more in the social circumstances of exchange produced at her summer cottage and absent from the tourist market.

In narratively disowning the tourist origins of her collection, Weekes also distanced her attitude towards collecting from the popular consumption characteristic of what Elizabeth Hutchinson terms the “Indian Craze.”¹⁰⁹ The so-called craze consisted of an avid late nineteenth and early twentieth-century passion for collecting

¹⁰⁵ Weekes, Handwritten list of objects donated to the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, Mary Weekes papers, RSM.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ The list reads, “bought at my cottage at B-Say-Tah 29 years ago.” While the list is undated, it accompanied the collection she donated to the RSM in 1947. This suggests that the Cree belt must have been purchased in 1918. Weekes, “Item 47,” Handwritten list of objects donated to the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, Mary Weekes papers, RSM.

¹⁰⁸ Bal, “Telling Objects,” 101.

¹⁰⁹ Hutchinson, *The Indian Craze*, 2.

Indigenous material culture in the domestic sphere and the creation of spaces called "Indian corner[s]." ¹¹⁰ Although Hutchinson's subject is the United States, the enthusiasm for Indigenous material culture was no less present in Canada where, for instance, in 1929 the Canadian National Railway commissioned Edwin Holgate to design a "Totem Pole Room" for the Chateau Laurier's dining room. ¹¹¹ Over two decades later, *Chatelaine* magazine offered Canadian women inspiration for a "totem [recreation] room" of their own. ¹¹²

Weekes did not participate in the conspicuous display characteristic of this trend, referencing the domestic display of her collection only once in her archive when she commented that "high on my wall [an Assiniboine belt] hangs with my other pieces, and the sun striking through the window makes the colors live and glow." ¹¹³ Although there is no photographic evidence to testify to the relative presence or absence of her collection in the décor of her home, her apparently elevated presentation of belts and other pieces, together with an absence of the family recollections one might expect of such an avid collector, suggest a deliberately inconspicuous and restrained display practice. ¹¹⁴ Without delving deeply into psychoanalytic theory, it seems probable that having had little of her own as a child, Weekes maintained her collection as a "personal microcosm" over which she alone

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Daniel Francis, *The Imaginary Indian: the Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992), 184.

¹¹² See, "Five Rooms for Fun," *Chatelaine Magazine*, August 1952, as reproduced in Valerie J. Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and the Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 210.

¹¹³ Weekes, "Gone is the Old Trail," *Saturday Night*, January 2, 1937, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, 1.36, SAB.

¹¹⁴ All of Weekes's grandchildren were born shortly before or after the collection's donation (Catherine being the first grandchild and born in 1946). Note that the private and inconspicuous nature of Weekes's collection differs immensely from those belonging to collectors such as David Ross McCord, whose family was driven out of various rooms in their home because of McCord's collection. McCaffrey, "Rononshonni—The Builder," 61.

“[held] sway.”¹¹⁵ However, I also propose that Weekes considered the actual possession and display of her collection to be of secondary importance to the relationships it facilitated. Even so, Weekes did help others participate in the incontrovertibly conspicuous consumption of the “Indian craze,” by publishing on the best acquisition practices for amateur collectors of Indigenous handicrafts.¹¹⁶

To define the collectors involved in the “Indian Craze” Hutchinson invokes the phenomenon T.J. Jackson Lear names “anti-modernism” and establishes a set of parameters within which some of Weekes’s activities can be situated and from which others deviate. Lear’s anti-modernism describes a late nineteenth and early twentieth-century desire to turn away from urban industrial America and retreat to pre-industrial values typified by the domestic interior and by handcrafted objects. The colonial association between Indigenous peoples and a pre-industrial, “primitive” past meant that Indigenous material culture was an ideal venue for the somewhat contradictory ideals of pre-industrial consumption and the retreat from modern life to converge. Still, the rejection of modern existence did not alone motivate the drive to collect Indigenous material culture. In many ways the passion for consumption also indicated an embrace of modern culture. Lear argues that nineteenth-century consumer culture changed how individuals developed their sense of self. Instead of relying on work, religion or community, the development of a capitalist society encouraged individuals to find and express themselves through the acquisition and display of things.¹¹⁷ Hutchinson accordingly suggests that because collectors sought to express themselves

¹¹⁵ Baudrillard, “The System of Collecting,” 7. This theory is substantiated by reflections from her granddaughter Catherine who remembers the value her grandmother put on possessions such as dolls, which she didn’t have as a child. Catherine Higgins, interview.

¹¹⁶ See for example: Weekes, “Antique Indian Beadwork.”

¹¹⁷ T.J. Jackson Lear, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), 37; Hutchinson, *The Indian Craze*, 23.

through consumption, “the origins of the Indian corner reveal it to be an artifact of the very modernization it was thought to ameliorate.”¹¹⁸

Mary Weekes is unusual in regards to this conspicuous consumption. Although the negotiation of her identity was unmistakably tied to her collecting activities, neither her efforts at narrating her collection nor her archive suggest that the objects themselves or their display exerted substantial influence over her self-definition. Instead the collection she acquired can more accurately be viewed, as Alfred Gell views art, “as a system of action intended to change the world rather than encode symbolic propositions about it.”¹¹⁹ The likelihood that Weekes’s collection functioned as an agent rather than a symbol of her identity is consistent with observations made by scholars exploring the gendered nature of the anti-modern encounter with Indigenous material culture. Marsha C. Bol suggests that men, who were particularly fond of collecting implements of war belonging to a perceived warrior society, predominately constructed collections of Plains material culture that were often displayed in rooms designated as masculine spaces.¹²⁰ Elizabeth Cromley alternatively suggests that such spaces “domesticated” the artifacts and were “feminized in [their] presupposition of leisure for cozy snuggling among the war trophies.”¹²¹ The differences in their analyses confirm the contradictions inherent in the anti-modern impulse. On the one hand, anti-modernism drove men to take refuge in the domestic space of the home; on the other hand, fears of over-civilization and the feminization of American culture motivated a renewed interest in sport, war,

¹¹⁸ Hutchinson, *The Indian Craze*, 19.

¹¹⁹ Gell, *Art and Agency*, 6.

¹²⁰ Marsha C. Bol, “Defining Lakota Tourist Art, 1880-1915,” in *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds*, ed. Ruth B. Phillips and Christopher B. Steiner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 224-225.

¹²¹ Cromley, “Masculine/Indian,” 270.

nature and the cult of strenuousness.¹²² In either case, collected items symbolically represented or stood-in for qualities of morality and masculinity perceived to be lost in man's overcivilization.

While the symbolic fulfillment of a perceived lack historically characterizes the anti-modern encounter between many men and Indigenous material culture during the "Indian craze," many women's material encounters with Indigenous culture enabled their active subversion of the social structures responsible for their lack of public agency. Hutchinson suggests that women were the largest group of "Indian craze" collectors and joins scholars, such as Dianne Sacho Macleod, who identify women's formation of collections as part of their exploration of expanded social roles and foray into the public sphere.¹²³ The act of collecting Indigenous material culture for these women existed at the crossroads between the anti-modern and the modern. Mari Yoshihara suggests that the influx of material culture considered Other to a woman into her domestic sphere introduced the expanded, exotic world into an approved space where society perceived that her "genteel femininity" would not be threatened.¹²⁴ The presence of Indigenous objects in the domestic sphere thus provided women with safe access to a world of adventure and danger. But, at the same time, the incorporation of such objects into the conventionally coded woman's sphere of the home bestowed upon women an element of control and an entry point to a world outside the confines of domesticity. As Hutchinson observes, many women aligned their collecting practices with philanthropic work on behalf of Indigenous peoples, while others, like Mary Weekes, aligned their collecting with their

¹²² Lears, *No Place of Grace*, 108.

¹²³ A selection of American female collectors of Indigenous arts includes: Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton, Millicent Rogers, Amelia Elizabeth White, Mabel Dodge Luhan, Mary Austin, and Alice Corbin Henderson. Hutchinson, *The Indian Craze*, 33; Dianne Sacho Macleod, *Enchanted Lives, Enchanted Objects: American Women Collectors and the Making of Culture, 1800-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

¹²⁴ Mari Yoshihara, *Embracing the East: White Women and American Orientalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 17.

professional aspirations to be journalists or writers.¹²⁵ Therefore, the anti-modern turn towards the home enabled many enterprising women, like Weekes, to negotiate their modern identities and paradoxically turn away from the home.

In addition to enabling Weekes to confront and subvert expectations of her gender at a moment when she was seeking to expand her identity beyond that of a homemaker and mother, her collection also compelled a confrontation with her settler status. The location where Weekes confronted her settler identity was the cottage in the Qu'Appelle Valley where she considered the origin of her collection and where I argue she engaged in transformative social encounters.

II. “Put the kettle on”: The Social Rituals of Cottage Life and Collecting

In 1939 Mary Weekes wrote to Alice MacKay, acting editor of *The Beaver*, reflecting on the importance of her cottage and the social ritual of tea in producing relationships with Indigenous peoples from communities surrounding her cottage: “...at my cottage there is always tea and cakes...from the time my smoke splits the April air I am ‘at home’ to my Indian friends. My cottage on the Qu’Appelle Lakes lies between two Indian Reservations—a Cree and a Sioux. It is twenty years now since I first began to ‘put the kettle on.’”¹²⁶ Recall that in distinguishing her collecting activities from those of souvenir consumption, Weekes designated a Cree belt purchased at her cottage as the beginning of her collection. Together these narrative fragments make clear that Weekes conceived of her collecting as a process defined by the domestic space of her cottage and the relationships facilitated therein.

As her granddaughter Catherine remembers: “My Grandmother would talk about ‘going to the lake’ when the family spent summers in the Qu’Appelle Valley at

¹²⁵ For example: Olive May Percival, Irene Sargent, Claudia Stuart Coles and Neltje Blanche Doubleday. Hutchinson, *The Indian Craze*, 34.

¹²⁶ Mary Weekes to Alice MacKay, undated correspondence in response to a request from MacKay to Weekes, September 19, 1939, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, III.37, SAB.

a cabin. They left Regina at the beginning of the summer and stayed until school began in the fall.”¹²⁷ On the surface, the Weekes’s annual vacations to ‘Many Maples’ conform to conventions of tourism. The Qu’Appelle Valley had very rapidly become a major tourist destination for the growing urban populations of Regina and Moose Jaw in the 1920s. Accessible by rail and road, wealthier individuals began to build cottages and resort communities, including Katepwa on Katepwa Lake and B-Say-Tah on Echo Lake.¹²⁸ For many Saskatchewan settlers, the Qu’Appelle Valley offered “a respite from the dry and sunburnt open spaces to the north and south, east and west.”¹²⁹ In considering the appeal associated with cottage life, Patricia Jasen’s study of Ontario tourism between 1790 and 1914 proposes that tourism is a state of mind in which imagination and romanticism play key roles.¹³⁰ Jasen suggests that middle-class Canadians vacationed at cottages where they could pursue an ideal of wilderness, meanwhile maintaining a ‘civilized’ or ‘primitive’ way of life as desired.¹³¹ While metropolitan social values could be maintained at cottages, they were also naturally relaxed.¹³² Weekes certainly viewed her cottage experience romantically. As she wrote of her return to the cottage: “In the kitchen, the kettle, which I had put on the stove, began to sing. The cottage, as if by a miracle, came alive. It returned our voices. It answered our footfalls. I glanced out of the window that looked up the valley. Mystery enwrapped the long smooth Western hills.”¹³³

While the surrounding hills were enwrapped in a romantic mystery, the familiar whistle of the kettle seems to domesticate the cottage with the social mores of

¹²⁷ Catherine Higgins, interview.

¹²⁸ Dan Ring, “Qu’Appelle: Tales of Two Valleys: An Introductory Essay,” in *Qu’Appelle: Tales of Two Valleys*, ed. Dan Ring (Saskatchewan: Mendel Art Gallery, 2002), 13.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Patricia Jasen, *Wild Things: Nature, Culture, and Tourism in Ontario, 1790-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 4.

¹³¹ Ibid. , 123-124.

¹³² Ibid. , 124.

¹³³ Mary Weekes, “Summer Cottage in Saskatchewan.”

hospitality and comfort the sound connotes. This whistling kettle thus suggests that rather than treating her time at the cottage as a vacation, Weekes treated her cottage like a home to which she returned each summer. Returning to the quote with which this chapter began, it is significant to note that in envisioning her cottage as a home, Weekes insisted on her copresence with her “Indian friends” who also considered her to be “at home” at B-Say-Tah.¹³⁴ In distinguishing the settler from the traveller, Paul Carter argues that the settler “externalizes his existence as a place,” much as Mary Weekes personified the cottage as a living symbol of her family’s experience of summer.¹³⁵ Similarly, in her analysis of the concept of home in Canada, Brenda LaFleur invokes Bourdieu’s *habitus* to argue, “the experience of home is strongly bound up in the practices of everyday life within systems of social, economic and cultural power.”¹³⁶ The cottage, a place where Weekes practiced a routine set of habitual social actions such as cleaning and making tea, thus functioned as a home for all intents and purposes—a space where she was comfortable.

Weekes’s granddaughter suggests that the cottage, where Weekes “kept a large teapot at hand and a good supply of tea and cakes especially for [her] Indian visitors,” may even have felt more like home to Weekes than her house in the city.¹³⁷

I have a hunch that she may have felt as comfortable as she felt with anyone with the Indigenous people who she met down at the lake. I did hear a bit about some of these other people in Regina—Elsie Stapleford and Dr. McCallum—and she took some pride because they were high in society in Regina, but I don’t imagine she was having the neighbours in for a cup of tea.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ Mary Weekes to Alice MacKay, undated correspondence in response to a request from MacKay to Weekes, September 19, 1939, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, III.37, SAB.

¹³⁵ Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, 156.

¹³⁶ Brenda LaFleur, *Imaging Settlement and Displacement: At Home in Ka-na-ta* (PhD dissertation, University of Amsterdam, 2013), 265.

¹³⁷ Mary Weekes, “Paper delivered to the Regina Natural History Society.”

¹³⁸ Kathy Weekes Southee, interview.

Many of the people Weekes invited in for tea were, as she recalls in her eloquent farewell to “the old trail” torn up by Government engineers, those from whom she collected beadwork. As Weekes wrote: “often, down this old luring trail came, on moccasined feet, Indian women to my cottage door. Bits of beadwork they brought—treasured pieces worked in tribal patterns by the artistic beadworkers of the past. Carefully, they’d have them wrapped in new-washed flour-sacks and tied just so, lest the beads, or porcupine quills should get broken.”¹³⁹

The threshold at ‘Many Maples,’ where Weekes met these women, is thus a significant physical and symbolic boundary in Weekes’s collecting narrative.¹⁴⁰ Writing about the Australian settler-experience, Paul Carter articulates the symbolic function of boundaries in producing a location from which the settler can speak.¹⁴¹ He argues that physical enclosures such as fences and thresholds contribute to the construction of symbolic differences that allow the settler to speak or write about her identity in relation to that which she is not.¹⁴² Likewise, enclosures produce a conceptual distance through which the frightening is transformed into the picturesque.¹⁴³ Thus, the mystery of the hills Weekes admired is best appreciated from the comfortable vantage point of the cottage. The significance of the threshold in the acquisition of Weekes’s collection is best demonstrated by a piece of prose Weekes wrote from the perspective of a character named Standing Deer. She wrote a number of texts about settler-Indigenous relations in which settler women such as Ellen LeMoyne in “The Wedding Dress” and Belinda, in the following quote from “The

¹³⁹ Mary Weekes, “Gone is the Old Trail.”

¹⁴⁰ While I identify the cottage as the crux of Weekes’s collecting narrative, I do not ignore that she also actively sought pieces for her collection elsewhere. In a 1927 article Weekes advised that, “one never knows where [antique Indian beadwork] may be found” and suggested that one must look in “the homes of old settlers and pioneers,” “in the possession of storekeepers, in the small towns,” and in the possessions of postmasters who often “have fine pieces of Cree beadwork lying in neglected places.” Mary Weekes, “Antique Indian Beadwork.”

¹⁴¹ Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, 155.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 156.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 155.

Buffalo Skull,” seem to stand in for Weekes herself: “At the door of the cottage [Standing Deer] paused, then walked over and sat under a maple tree that commanded a view of the porch. How would Belinda receive him? She was a good woman, but hard.”¹⁴⁴ The threshold of the cottage symbolizes the uneven possession of power in the encounter between Mary Weekes and her Indigenous neighbours. Standing Deer (and thus, as the author, Weekes herself) is conscious that the cottage and porch are symbols of the asymmetrical distribution of power in their encounter, over which Belinda has significantly more authority as a gatekeeper.

Victor W. Turner’s anthropological analysis of the liminal period in *rites de passage* offers a helpful conceptual framework through which to situate the symbolic emphasis on boundaries and the value Weekes ascribed to the cottage. Turner expands on Arnold Van Gennep’s pioneering analysis of the *rite de passage*, which in 1909 he defined as “rites which accompany every change of place, state, social position or age.”¹⁴⁵ According to this definition, the transition from urban to rural space for the cottage vacation can be understood as a *rite de passage* bestowed upon Weekes and her family by the privilege of their class and race. In moving from Regina to B-Say-Tah Point, Weekes crossed a spatial boundary physically and ideologically constructed both by the settler’s assertion of territorial rights and imagination of an idealized, ‘primitive,’ Indigenous Other. As Patrick Wolfe argues, the settler’s construction of Indigenous authenticity depends on spatial separations that locate Indigeneity “somewhere else.”¹⁴⁶ Weekes’s own prose demonstrates these spatial separations, incorporating Indigenous peoples as an integral part of the rural Prairie

¹⁴⁴ Weekes, “The Buffalo Skull,” *Saturday Night*, March 29, 1947, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, SB 2, p.22, SAB.

¹⁴⁵ Arnold Van Gennep, *Les Rites de Passage* (Paris: Emile Nourry, 1909), quoted in Victor W. Turner, “Betwixt and Between,” 47.

¹⁴⁶ Wolfe, “Nation and Miscegenation: Discursive Continuity in the Post-Mabo Era,” *Social Analysis* 36 (October 1994): 110.

landscape while, more often than not, remaining silent about their urban presence. Weekes's denial of the urban presence of Indigenous peoples confirms a colonial insistence on contemporary Indigenous invisibility through policies of assimilation and of controlled movement.¹⁴⁷ The privilege of a cottage vacation and the transgression of these spatial boundaries is thus both a rite and a right through which middle-class Canadians could entertain themselves by flirting with wilderness and bearing witness to a perceived Indigenous past.

Although a space associated with her colonial privilege, Weekes's cottage is also a space of separation and liminality, both of which are important phases in the *rite de passage*. Separated from urban social structures, the cottage offers the possibility for the relaxation of some social boundaries and the maintenance of others. As Turner observes of the liminal condition, it is "one of ambiguity and paradox, a confusion of all the customary categories."¹⁴⁸ In the case of Mary Weekes, the cottage threshold is the site of this potential confusion. While the threshold symbolizes the uneven power relations between Weekes and her Indigenous friends (as demonstrated in "The Buffalo Skull"), the invited transgression of this rural spatial boundary for tea and cakes allows for an unconventional exchange.

In the 1949 paper she delivered to the Regina Natural History Society, Weekes wrote that "Indians from the Muscowpetung, Sioux and other nearby reservations brought their work to me—for word soon got about that I was a potential buyer for their goods," positioning herself as a passive buyer from Indigenous peoples who

¹⁴⁷ By "controlled movement," I refer to the pass system, which was first initiated on a large scale during the 1885 North-West Rebellion. Although it was never codified under the Indian Act, the pass system was a policy that required those who wished to leave their reserves to obtain a pass from the agent or farm instructor declaring the reason and length of their absence and whether or not they had permission to carry arms. The extent to which the pass system was enforced varied, but Dan Kennedy describes the conditions associated with it as follows: "In the early days of reservation life, the Indians were plagued with all kinds of restrictions, imposed on them by the guardian government. We could not sell grain, cattle, horses, wood, hay, etc., unless we got a permit from the Indian Agent. We also had to get passes from the Indian Agent to go anywhere on social visits or business trips. The Indian reserve was a veritable concentration camp." Dan Kennedy, *Recollections of an Assiniboine Chief* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1972), 87. For a detailed discussion of the pass system see: Sarah Carter, *Aboriginal People and Colonizers of Western Canada to 1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 164-166.

¹⁴⁸ Turner, "Betwixt and Between," 48.

actively sought out her patronage.¹⁴⁹ According to this narrative, collected items functioned as agents in producing a social encounter that would not have been possible without the intended material exchange. Thus, in a decision facilitated by the rural location of the cottage and the exchange of material goods, Mary Weekes invited her Indigenous neighbours in for tea. The same kettle that defined Weekes's cottage as a home when it began to whistle after a season away, also defined her relationship with her Indigenous neighbours. Together with the transgression of the threshold, the social ritual of tea provided a framework that "temporarily suspended the constraining rules of [colonially prescribed] social behaviour," enabling the development of friendships that went beyond the impersonal commercial relationships fostered by ethnographic and tourist collecting.¹⁵⁰ In fact, Weekes suggested that her maternalistic friendships enhanced her collection, noting that her friends liked her well-enough to "keep for me the finest pieces of beadwork which they have for sale."¹⁵¹

When she began collecting, Weekes acquired work from many different groups although she ultimately found it to be "unsatisfactory" as she lived too far from the sources of supply (Figure 1.3).¹⁵² Instead Weekes sought a geographic intimacy fulfilled by devoting her interest not just to the "work of prairie Indians," but more specifically to the work of those people she considered neighbours and friends.¹⁵³ The narrative identification of the cottage as the beginning of her collection therefore further distinguishes Mary Weekes from the tourist-collector, ethnographer

¹⁴⁹ Weekes, "Paper delivered to the Regina Natural History Society."

¹⁵⁰ Carol Duncan, "The Art Museum as Ritual," in *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (London: Routledge, 1995), 11.

¹⁵¹ Mary Weekes to Alice MacKay, undated correspondence in response to a request from MacKay to Weekes, September 19, 1939, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, 3.37, SAB.

¹⁵² Mary Weekes, "Paper delivered to the Regina Natural History Society."

¹⁵³ Ibid.

and rare art collector.¹⁵⁴ She did not travel to acquire souvenirs or specimens, nor did she pursue singularity or fulfillment of a predetermined narrative. Rather, her mode of collection illustrates Susan Stewart's observation that while "we go to the souvenir," "the collection comes to us."¹⁵⁵ In Mary Weekes's self-reflexive narrative of herself as collector, the collection came to her as a result of the domestic ritual of tea, which in turn led her to confront her settler-identity.

III. "They became my friends": Collecting and (Un)settling Colonial Friendships

"Curiosity about the article one has collected is only a step to becoming curious about the individual," wrote Weekes, explaining that the process of acquisition drew her into the individual lives of the seller.¹⁵⁶ Her curiosity about individuals distinguishes her from collectors like Gustave Heye, whom Ruth Phillips identifies as an example of the rare art collector. One biographer suggests that Heye "didn't give a hang about Indians individually and he never seemed to have heard about their problems in present-day society... George didn't buy Indian stuff in order to study the life of a people, because it never crossed his mind that that's what they were."¹⁵⁷ For collectors like Heye, collecting began with acquisition and ended with display, with little concern for the nuanced differences between Indigenous groups or

¹⁵⁴ These are three of the four actors involved in the collecting projects offered by Ruth Phillips: the professional ethnologist, the rare art collector, the Native American collector-agent, and the tourist-collector. Throughout the thesis I loosely compare Weekes to these defined models. The tourist-collector has already been discussed in depth, but the Native-American Collector Agent (with whom ethnologists collaborated and who asserted an important type of agency and resistance) will not be addressed, as the role does not offer a useful framework against which to compare Weekes. The professional ethnologist as collector arrived in the field with a shopping list of representative objects he or she desired for the museum or academic institution sponsoring the expedition. The ethnologist was consumed with ideals of completion, the fulfillment of a pre-determined narrative and was informed by the salvage ethnography paradigm. Ethnologists were disinterested in hybrid objects but not above re-inventing imagined objects that did not exist in the field in order to satisfy their vision of 'authentic' Indigenous culture. The rare art collector shared the ethnologist's preoccupation with age, but while the ethnologist transformed Indigenous objects into commodities to be located in typologies, the rare art collector privileged unique objects. Both attitudes denied the contemporaneity of Indigenous peoples.

¹⁵⁵ Susan Stewart, *On Longing*, 164-165.

¹⁵⁶ Weekes, "Paper delivered to the Regina Natural History Society."

¹⁵⁷ K. Wallace, "A Reporter at Large: Slim-shins Monument," *New Yorker* 36 (1960): 104-46, quoted in Brown, *First Nations, Museums, Narrations*, 88.

the social contexts of acquisition. Unlike Heye, Weekes truly became interested in individuals and in the social problems they encountered. Her prose demonstrates the extent to which she satisfied her curiosity by learning from the Indigenous sources of her collection and also reveals her critique of colonialism and confrontation with her own complicity.¹⁵⁸

On many occasions, known sources for Weekes's collection and individuals she employed appear in her prose, evidencing her genuine interest in the lives of her Indigenous friends and the perceived intimacy she shared with them. For example, Frank Isnanna—"a fine old Indian who often worked for [her]"—features in surname only in the story "Captive to Color: Or the Wooing of Indian Jacob," in which a Maggie Ishnanna (perhaps named after the Maggie who made a pair of beaded floral moccasins for Weekes's mother) decides to get re-married to Jacob, a handsome middle-aged Indian brave, named likely for Weekes's neighbour Jacob Leswiss.¹⁵⁹ As previously mentioned, in much of her prose, Weekes herself appears in the guise of various settler women. For example, Belinda, the settler figure in Standing Deer's story, appears again in "Captive to Color." In the "Buffalo Skull," Belinda firmly requests that Standing Deer complete the work for which he was advanced money, but in the end still loans him five dollars to enjoy the regional exhibition.¹⁶⁰ Similarly, in "Captive to Color," Maggie Ishnanna gratefully reflects that not all employers are

¹⁵⁸ Although Weekes's interest in individual artists was on a more personal level, Janet Catherine Berlo suggests that the beginnings of scholarly interest in Indigenous artists as individuals can be found in Franz Boas's 1897 essay "The Decorative Art of the Indians of the North Pacific Coast." Anthropologists such as James Teit and Herman Haerberlin were also among the first to consider the study of individual artists in Indigenous societies in the early twentieth century. See: Janet Catherine Berlo, ed., *The Early Years of Native American Art History: The Politics of Scholarship and Collecting* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992), 9-14.

¹⁵⁹ Mary Weekes, "Captive to Color: Or the Wooing of Indian Jacob," *Saturday Night*, May 8, 1948, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, XV.2, SAB; Mary Weekes, Handwritten list of objects donated to the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. Weekes does not offer a consistent spelling of the surname, but ancestry research suggests the correct spelling is 'Isnanna.'

¹⁶⁰ Weekes, "The Buffalo Skull."

“good white women like Belinda.”¹⁶¹ These positive characterizations of Belinda (read Weekes) demonstrate the extent to which Weekes valued the good opinion of her Indigenous friends and her self-identification as an emergent settler-ally. Self-knowledge, Craig Calhoun argues, is “never altogether separable from claims to be known in specific ways by others.”¹⁶² In discussing her collection in her 1949 speech and elsewhere, Weekes could thus no more avoid discussing the perceptions of her Indigenous neighbours than she could avoid discussing herself.

The emphasis Weekes put on the development of social relationships with the Indigenous sources of her collection reflects Sharon MacDonald’s observation that collecting “not only produces knowledge about objects but also configures particular ways of knowing and seeing.”¹⁶³ To this end, the way that Mary Weekes collected informed her understanding and view of Indigenous peoples. The interpersonal relationships Weekes cultivated with members of source communities likely influenced the empathy she showed in her prose for their financially and culturally impoverished situation and the role of colonialism (and by extension herself) in producing such conditions. In her discussion of colonial friendships, Vanessa Smith contends that “friendships are never the sum of their records,” and thus their interpretation requires “a scholarship understood not to be redressing an imbalance...” but one that explores “both the constitutive and precarious aspects of imbalance and cultural difference.”¹⁶⁴ In my analysis of Weekes’s friendship with Indigenous peoples I am, with a few exceptions, limited by a one-sided description of the

¹⁶¹ Weekes, “Captive to Color: Or the Wooing of Indian Jacob.”

¹⁶² Craig Calhoun, “Social Theory and the Politics of Identity,” in *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1994), 10.

¹⁶³ Sharon Macdonald, “Collecting Practices,” in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. S. Macdonald (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell), 94-95.

¹⁶⁴ Vanessa Smith, *Intimate Strangers: Friendship, Exchange and Pacific Encounters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 20.

relationship.¹⁶⁵ I do not redress this imbalance by validating or discrediting Weekes's claims to friendship. Instead, as Vanessa Smith models in her analysis of the Pacific colonial encounter, I "focus not on what particular friendship claims represent, connote or imply, but rather what they enabled."¹⁶⁶

I contend that Weekes's friendships enabled her tentative recognition of her settler privilege. The collecting around which these conversations centered and the location where they took place therefore contributed to her *(un)settling*. Theories of collecting suggest that the acquisition of things can mediate tensions and help the collector gain a feeling of control. For example, Baudrillard writes, "it is because he feels himself alienated or lost within a social discourse whose rules he cannot fathom that the collector is driven to construct an alternative discourse."¹⁶⁷ Similarly, psychoanalysts argue that individuals turn to objects as a means to "diminish the internal tension and conflicts that arise" during maturation or times of change.¹⁶⁸ Such theories endorse the premise that collections can be understood as sites of identity negotiation. In regards to colonial collections, those that are not motivated by the salvage paradigm are often motivated by attempts to naturalize the settler's claim to the land and overcome the territorial alienation inherent in the settler's condition.¹⁶⁹

As previously mentioned, Weekes's collection no doubt filled a psychological gap relating to her lack of material wealth as a child and likely began with an

¹⁶⁵ Letters exchanged between Mary Weekes and Dan Kennedy offer an exception to this bias. They demonstrate the extent to which Kennedy valued Weekes's friendship and Weekes's respect for Kennedy. For example, a letter sent from Kennedy to Weekes in 1941 suggests the seriousness with which Weekes treated their friendship. In his letter, Kennedy recounts how his own ancestry is bound up in settler-Indigenous relations, but requests that Weekes not share these details at least until after he has passed. Despite the fact that Kennedy was the source for much of Weekes's historical knowledge and served as inspiration for at least one story, Weekes seems to have respected his wishes in regards to this disclosure. Dan Kennedy to Mary Weekes, January 16, 1941, Mary Weekes papers, RSM.

¹⁶⁶ Smith, *Intimate Strangers*, 14.

¹⁶⁷ Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting," 24.

¹⁶⁸ R.D. Hirschelwood, *A Dictionary of Kleinian Thought* (London: Free Association Books, 1991), 393.

¹⁶⁹ Ruth Phillips, "Why Not Tourist Art?" 111; Skinner, "Settler-Colonial Art History," 137.

unconscious attempt to invent her belonging as a settler and migrant to her new province. However, rather than settle her further to the land, I argue that the liminal circumstances of the cottage and the conversations that accompanied the material exchange of goods in fact *(un)settled* Mary Weekes—by which I mean, caused her to confront her colonial complicity and thus exacerbated rather than remedied her feelings of alienation. Analysis of three examples of Weekes’s prose, featuring individuals Weekes counted as friends or recounting semiautobiographical stories of close settler-Indigenous friendships, demonstrates how her own encounters compelled a tentative recognition of the violence of colonialism and her complicity in the colonizing project.

In an unpublished and undated story titled “These Summer Women—Such hurry, hurry!” Weekes writes from the perspective of Moses, a Cree man of sixty summers who wonders about the “paleface girl” who stares “impudently at his Indian dress” and complains about the “paleface summer women” with money flowing in and out of their purses “like water.” Moses reflects on the paleface women’s privilege in stark contrast to a seventy-year-old woman who has limped the long way from the reserve to the village to spend the few cents left from her treaty payment. Moses himself has a sick grandchild at home in need of “the nourishing broth that good meat would make.” He tries to sell a pair of moccasins at the grocery store, but the manager does not offer enough for Moses to afford fresh beef. He resigns himself to snaring a chicken or rabbit instead. At a small wooden bridge, Moses passes Miss Norah in her car. He reflects that she has been trying to buy his saddle for two years now, despite him having already told her that his ancient saddle, “beaded in the old patterns and fringed finely by his mother so long ago” is a saddle “for an Indian only.” Avoiding another confrontation, Moses rushes away from Miss Norah but later reflects “when

times were hard, she had paid him handsomely for his work and never did she bargain as sharply as other white folk for moccasins or other articles.” His reflection turns to anger as he recalls how his father and the other chiefs had set their names to a treaty without understanding that “they were giving their children a heritage of poverty and degradation.” Aroused from his anger by the cries of his grandchild, he is about to snag a rabbit when Miss Norah arrives with a doctor and meat, upset that Moses did not tell her about his sick grandchild.¹⁷⁰

As with the other settler women in Weekes’s prose, it is no great stretch to imagine Miss Norah as an alter ego of Mary Weekes. Both collect Indigenous material culture and both are exact but generous in their exchanges. In her speech on collecting, Weekes prided herself on the fact that she learned early on “that to try to beat down [the] price was to invite animosity.”¹⁷¹ Like Miss Norah, she developed what she considered a “mutual trading respect” between herself and her sources; if she believed an article to be worthy of its price, she bought it without bargaining.¹⁷² Additionally, in the Weekes Collection there is a beaded, tasselled, Cree saddle that may have inspired the story (Figure 1.4).¹⁷³ Remarkable in the text are Weekes’s explicit condemnation of unfulfilled treaty promises and self-critique of her own position as a collector, whose very mission is predicated on the assertion of certain colonial desires and privileges at odds with Indigenous rights to own their own culture. For example, Miss Norah’s inappropriate desire for a saddle that she knows is significant to the culture and people who made it. By writing from the perspective of Moses, Weekes demonstrates consciousness of her privilege and complicity in the

¹⁷⁰ Weekes, “These Summer Women—Such hurry, hurry!” unpublished manuscript, unknown date, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, I.148, SAB.

¹⁷¹ Weekes, “Paper delivered to the Regina Natural History Society.”

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Note, however, that the saddle belonging to Mary Weekes was in fact acquired at the Regina Fair and not from a named source. Mary Weekes, “Item 68,” Handwritten list of objects donated to the Royal Saskatchewan Museum.

colonial project as a “paleface summer woman.”¹⁷⁴

In addition to semiautobiographical stories written from an Indigenous perspective, Weekes also directly featured the voices of her Indigenous friends in her prose. For example, Frank Isnanna, then the Standing Buffalo Sioux Chief, is a recurring figure in Weekes’s extensive archive and characterized as a close friend and source for historical knowledge. In response to a query about a bustle, Weekes wrote “[Frank Isnanna] is a walking history [...] I am as a daughter to him, and when I go to my cottage in the valley in the spring he will tell me all.”¹⁷⁵ In “Gone is the Old Trail,” Weekes’s text becomes a platform for Frank Isnanna’s condemnation of his people’s colonial condition:

Sixty years have I lived in this place. I am a Canadian. Long ago, my people the Great Sioux Nation owned all the country to the East. Silver medals have we from King George III. Now I am old and poor. My woman, too, is old and poor. The Government will not give me a pension. New people have come to this country and the Government gives them money and houses to live in. My people are sad. We should not be sad. This is our country. I am a Canadian. Canada is the country of my people.¹⁷⁶

Elizabeth Cromley suggests “for both men and women in mainstream culture, using Indian goods in domestic space for decoration narrowed their encounter with Indians, protecting them from fully connecting with the tragic life Indians endured at the turn of the century.”¹⁷⁷ In contrast, for Mary Weekes the incorporation of Indigenous goods (and by extension the invitation of Indigenous peoples) into the domestic sphere expanded her encounter with Indigenous peoples and her understanding of some of the harsh realities of Indigenous life.

As previously demonstrated, the rural location of the cottage seems to have enabled Weekes to invite her Indigenous neighbours in for tea, while, the ritual of tea

¹⁷⁴ Weekes, “These Summer Women—Such hurry, hurry!”

¹⁷⁵ Weekes, undated correspondence with Hudson’s Bay House, Winnipeg, 1926-1925, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, III. 37, SAB.

¹⁷⁶ Weekes, “Gone is the Old Trail.”

¹⁷⁷ Cromley, “Masculine/Indian,” 280.

itself and the liminal condition of the cottage allowed for the development of close social relationships. By causing her neighbors to cross her threshold and inviting them in for tea, Weekes played the role of hostess and enabled conversation. While we cannot know the content of the conversations that took place, pieces of Weekes's prose suggest the *(un)settling* impact these relationships had on her. Through them, she became conscious of the fact that she, and not her Indigenous neighbours, might in fact be the guest.

Nonetheless, although she clearly valued Indigenous history, culture, and rights, Weekes was not beyond judgment or at the very least bewilderment. Annotating the provenance of a Sioux Porcupine Quill breast piece in her collection, Weekes noted: "Used at ceremonial dances which are carried on privately in the Sioux Reserves, despite the opposition of the Indian authorities. I am their friend. Once they put on a dance to honour me. I assure you it was a weird affair. But: wonderful dancing."¹⁷⁸ On the one hand her comment suggests a perfunctory acceptance of the colonizer's right to disallow important cultural practices; on the other hand, it demonstrates her willing participation in an Indigenous gesture of resistance. Her bewilderment at the "weird affair" similarly suggests the maintenance of colonial practices of othering that which is different from a presumed Euro-Christian norm, while her appreciation of the dancing suggests her ability to suspend judgment. The coexistence of dominant colonial discourse with Weekes's intimately acquired sensitivities to the problems of colonialism characterizes much of Weekes's writings and reveals the complex, lived-experience of settler-colonial relations with Indigenous peoples in mid-twentieth century Saskatchewan.

¹⁷⁸ Untitled list in response to a letter from Clifford P. Wilson to Mary Weekes, January 15, 1940, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, III.37, SAB. For further information on the repression of Indigenous ceremonies see: Katherine Pettipas, *Severing the Ties that Bind: Government Repression of Indigenous Religious Ceremonies on the Prairies* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1994).

While frustrating to a researcher trying to reconcile Weekes's empathetic and critical prose with phrases and behaviours that betray her continued participation in the colonial system, literature scholar Arnold Krupat's work suggests these tensions are actually the most valuable aspect of Weekes's activities. He insists that the ethnographic work of amateurs—more so than their professional counterparts—reveals the conflictual and contradictory truth of cultural encounters that are erased by the professional ethnographer's claim to authority.¹⁷⁹ While not ethnographic per se, the article "A Statue She Seemed," published in *Saturday Night* in 1937, demonstrates in a single text the conflicts and contradictions inherent to Weekes's cultural encounters. The text is an affectionate obituary for Matawqua, an elderly woman who lived on Echo Lake, across the water from Weekes's cottage (Figure 1.5). Weekes first met Matawqua when Matawqua's granddaughter brought her along to the cottage to bargain about some beadwork:

I remember being attracted by the younger woman's beautiful English. It was so clear. And her voice, like velvet. Free, too, from the slang and ugly catch phrases that fumbled the speech of white girls. She'd been through the Lebrét Mission School. But, all the time, my mind was on the older woman. A statue, she seemed, against the body of my great maple tree. 'Over ninety, she is now,' said the young woman. Only forty or so years, I thought, have white men occupied the great empire that lay about us. Before this, it belonged to her. To her people. She is one of the last.¹⁸⁰

Weekes distinguishes between what she considers an Indigenous past and an Indigenous present. Identifying Matawqua as one of the last of her people, Weekes characterizes her by past experiences and traditions. While she laments Matawqua's cultural loss, she praises the flawless English of her granddaughter and thus paradoxically endorses assimilation policies practiced in residential schools such as

¹⁷⁹ Arnold Krupat, "On the Translation of Native American Song and Story: A Theorized History," in *On the Translation of Native American Literatures*, ed. Brian Swann (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 3-33; Shelly Hulan, "Amelia Paget's *The People of the Plains*: Imperialist and Ethnocritical Nostalgia," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 37, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 51.

¹⁸⁰ Mary Weekes, "A Statue She Seemed," *Saturday Night*, June 5, 1937, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, I.9, SAB.

the Le Bret Mission School.¹⁸¹ In one respect, the story evokes what Renato Rosaldo calls imperialist nostalgia—“when people mourn the passing of what they themselves have transformed.”¹⁸² Weekes refers to Matawqua as “the symbol of Death” symbolically suggesting the approach of death not only for Matawqua but also for her culture. Just as she now walks on “old faint feet,” so too are her people “no longer brave and resourceful—else they would not shy off the road to let the new white people go past.”¹⁸³

Coexistent with this imperialist nostalgia, however, is what Shelly Hulan calls an “ethnocritical nostalgia”—when critical reassessments of agency and complicity accompany the mourning of a loss.¹⁸⁴

From my veranda, I used to watch her tipping the hammock softly, softly, softly with her old quavery hand, and become impatient with my own aliveness and restlessness: my revolt against the misery, the vanity, the cruelty—everything that was Life. Then, I’d remember the human scalplocks, I’d seen hanging from the rafters of her miserable mud-hut. She had taken them herself. And, a calmness of a kind, would come to me.¹⁸⁵

Weekes’s impatience demonstrates her self-criticism and consciousness of her privilege relative to the cruelty of life and misery imposed upon someone like Matawqua. She is unsettled by what she witnesses. Yet, she is calmed by the remembrance that while Matawqua has faced the cruelties of life (read colonialism), she has not behaved as a victim. Commenting on contemporary practices of discussing and displaying Indigenous history, Deborah Doxtater argues, “to present Indians as victims is a [safe] way of discussing the injustices of history.”¹⁸⁶ By recognizing Matawqua’s strength, Weekes does not discount the violence of

¹⁸¹ Note that the Le Bret Mission School and Qu’Appelle Industrial School are one and the same.

¹⁸² Renato Rosaldo, “Imperialist Nostalgia,” *Representations* no.26 (Spring 1989): 108.

¹⁸³ Weekes, “A Statue She Seemed.”

¹⁸⁴ Hulan, “Amelia Paget’s *The People of the Plains*,” 53.

¹⁸⁵ Weekes, “A Statue She Seemed.”

¹⁸⁶ Deborah Doxtater, *Fluffs and Feathers: An Exhibit on the Symbols of Indianness: A Resource Guide* (Brantford: Woodland Cultural Centre, 1992), 14.

colonialism but rather precociously disputes the assumption that Indigenous peoples were the passive objects of colonialism and that Indigenous cultural loss was inevitable. Instead, she tentatively and implicitly considers Indigenous resistance and the violent efforts involved on the part of her own settler ancestors.

These three examples of prose demonstrate the tentative emergence of Weekes's *(un)settling*, a process empowered by the cottage as a space outside the cultural hierarchies that governed day-to-day life in the city, wherein the exchange of material culture over a ritual of tea and cakes produced a set of unusually intimate and sustained relationships. In observing how Weekes's personal encounters with Indigenous peoples resulted in prose that questioned her own colonial privilege, I have argued that the cottage functioned as a liminal space that Turner describes as a space or condition of "undoing, dissolution, decomposition...accompanied by processes of growth [and] transformation."¹⁸⁷ Slippages between condemning and complimenting the colonial system evidence the tentative nature of Weekes's transformation and the only partial applicability of the concept of liminality to the cottage—it is a space of "ambiguity and paradox," but it is not, after all, completely free from the prevailing rules of social behaviour in settler-Indigenous encounters. While some of the social hierarchies governing the interaction between races were relaxed, those governing gender remained intact, presenting a barrier against which Weekes's racial privilege was an ideal weapon.

¹⁸⁷ Turner, "Betwixt and Between," 49.

IV. “I had to write the story under trying domestic circumstances”: Domesticity, Professionalism and Colonial Privilege

The cottage is, in the words of Sylvia Van Kirk, a space of the intimate, human-dimension of colonialism where “tender ties” were produced.¹⁸⁸ But, as Ann Laura Stoler observes, and as previously demonstrated, these intimate (or liminal) spaces of colonialism are not fully removed from the simultaneous “production of colonial inequities.”¹⁸⁹ The accordingly “tense and tender ties” between Mary Weekes and her Indigenous friends were bound up in the realities of white women’s roles as both “colonizers and colonized.”¹⁹⁰ Explaining to her publisher, Miss Jessie McEwen, the process of writing *The Last Buffalo Hunter*, Mary Weekes wrote:

Partly too, I had to write the story under trying domestic circumstances. At the lake, I always kept an Indian girl to help look after the children (Indian girls are perfect with children), but like all girls from the Reserves, she would leave, when the notion took her—and at the most awkward times—to go off with her people to a Pow-Wow or Municipal Fair, returning when the fun was over.¹⁹¹

Weekes seems, therefore, to precociously occupy what Gayatri Spivak calls the deconstructive position, in which she offered an “impossible ‘no’ to a structure that [she] critique[d] yet inhabit[ed] intimately.”¹⁹² While individual texts express Weekes’s critique of colonial structures, her very ability to write on a professional level relied on her exploitation of these same structures. Specifically, her career relied on the domestic training Indigenous women received at residential schools and put to use in settler homes like her own.

As an ambitious woman disadvantaged by her gender, Weekes profited somewhat consciously from invoking the advantages of her race in pursuit of a

¹⁸⁸ Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in the Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670-1870* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983).

¹⁸⁹ Stoler, “Tense and Tender Ties,” 831.

¹⁹⁰ Pickles and Rutherford, “Introduction,” in *Contact Zones*, 1.

¹⁹¹ Mary Weekes to Miss McEwen, August 21, 1939, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, V.14a, SAB.

¹⁹² Gayatri Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 191.

professional identity—much like other nineteenth and twentieth-century women for whom the introduction of Indigenous material culture into the home offered avenues out of the home. While certainly not a common occupation for women, authorship was by no means unconventional. A number of late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century women supplemented their family incomes with novels or poetry while some unmarried women made their living as writers.¹⁹³ Given her husband's lifelong service to the provincial government, Weekes did not need the financial benefits of publishing. Nonetheless, she did not treat her writing as an amateur occupation and passionately pursued it by selling material to newspapers and Canadian and American publishing houses. Rejections Weekes received—sometimes for the same story from multiple firms—demonstrate her perseverance and professionalism as an author.¹⁹⁴ Her persistent attempts to publish *The Last Buffalo Hunter*, which took fourteen years and considerable personal expense, exemplifies the extent to which she wanted to use her writing as a platform to discuss Indigenous culture and history. Her persistence also indicates the extent to which she wanted Norbert Welsh's story to provide some financial benefit for his family, having suggested that a percentage of the royalties go to his estate.¹⁹⁵ Clearly interested in a wide distribution of her work for both self-serving and magnanimous reasons, Weekes also corresponded with Fox Film Corporation, the Allied Artists Pictures Corporation, and Paramount Pictures in

¹⁹³ Alison Pentice et al. ed. *Canadian Women: A History*, 2nd ed. (Scarborough: Nelson, 2004), 139.

¹⁹⁴ For example, even after receiving a critical rejection letter from *The Leader Post* for her anti-war story "Men Want War," Weekes submitted the story to *The Canadian Forum* the very next day, receiving another rejection. Maxwell B. Cody to Mary Weekes, September 21, 1939, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, XII.9h, SAB; G.M.A. Grube to Mary Weekes, November 14, 1939 and Earle Birney to Mary Weekes, November 8, 1939, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, III.17, SAB.

¹⁹⁵ Melville Bell Weekes to Mr. Sworder, April 12, 1938, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, VII. 9k, SAB. This letter is a rare occurrence in the Weekes archive. It reveals a situation in which Weekes's husband intervened on her behalf in a dispute between herself and Mrs. Norbert Welsh. The letter suggests that Mrs. Welsh had taken advantage of Mrs. Weekes's charity and that Weekes had, on many occasions, provided her with considerable amounts of money. In response to a letter from Mrs. Welsh to Mary Weekes in which she questioned Weekes's honesty and demanded more money, Mr. Weekes wrote a cease and desist letter to the executor of the Welsh estate.

unsuccessful but persistent attempts to have her books turned into feature films.¹⁹⁶

She did succeed in having a few of her short stories broadcast by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, including *The Last Buffalo Hunter* in 1939 and *Painted Arrows* in 1947.¹⁹⁷

Weekes was also concerned with improving her writing skills and acquiring academic credentials to validate her status as a writer. The urgency with which she desired to be considered a professional is suggested by the way publishers described her. Despite being a prolific author, her author biographies consistently recorded her as “the wife of Melville B. Weekes, Director of Surveys, Province of Saskatchewan,” while other women authors were identified by their university affiliations.¹⁹⁸ In 1930 Weekes wrote to Burns Martin, a professor of English at Harvard University, to inquire about summer school courses in English. Between 1930 and 1938, she attended summer school and acquired regular academic credits at Harvard in Advanced English and Technique in the fields of short stories and novels.¹⁹⁹ Her granddaughter Kathy Weekes Southee remembers how Weekes sometimes privileged her career as an author over her duties as a mother:

I gather that every second summer Grandmother would go down to do some of these courses at Harvard and she would bring these little guys along. I feel like Dad was probably 11 or 12, while Dick was about 4 years younger. She would put them in a boarding house and she would go and do her courses. The woman who ran the boarding house was basically in charge of these two boys.

¹⁹⁶ Weekes, Correspondence with Allied Artists Pictures Corporation re: Acadian Betrayal, 1955, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, III.1, SAB; Weekes, Correspondence with Fox Film Corporation Re: Rejection of Trader King, “Chief Payepot,” and “Tecumseh, Patriot,” 1935, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, III.27, SAB; Mary Weekes to Clifford Wilson re: Paramount Pictures and *The Last Buffalo Hunter*, February 9, 1940, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, III.37, SAB.

¹⁹⁷ “Painted Arrows” (6:45 pm), CBC Program Schedule, April 19, 1947, digitized by the Old Time Radio Researchers Group; Lyn Harrington, *Syllables of Recorded Time* (Toronto: Simon & Pierre Publishing Company, Ltd., 1981), 192.

¹⁹⁸ “Mary Weekes” and “Mary Ainslie,” biographies, Contributors to the Canadian Forum, November 1933, Mary Weekes fonds, SB 3, p.29, SAB.

¹⁹⁹ Mary Weekes to Fred Bard, May 12, 1947, Mary Weekes papers, RSM; Burns Martin, “Foreword to *A Prairie Sketchbook*,” unpublished manuscript, ca. mid-1930s, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, I.6, SAB.

[It] sounds like Peter Pan—you know, really fun to not have anyone checking on you during the day.²⁰⁰

Weekes did not receive a degree from Harvard, although her professional contacts with Burns Martin led to his writing an introduction to her unpublished series *A Prairie Sketchbook*.²⁰¹

Weekes also characterized her collecting in professional terms. Early on in her 1949 speech to the Regina Natural History Society, she proclaimed that “collecting is work” and that every collector “is in effect a research worker.”²⁰² She continued that “the patience and labour involved in searching for, and selecting, particular pieces or specimens is unlimited,” and placed great value on the act of careful and discriminating acquisition. She further boldly urged that:

Those collectors who have done recognizable research in his or her particular field should be entitled to a Phd—the title could be Dr. Of Shellotomy or Dr. Of Beadotomy, or Dr. Of Plantotomy—for there is as much, perhaps more, original specialized study, observation and attention applied to this work as is sometimes required for a University degree.²⁰³

The dedication with which she pursued the development of her collection suggests that such remarks were not offhand.²⁰⁴ Letters exchanged with a series of editors at *The Beaver* between 1926 and 1951 reveal Weekes actively attempting to

²⁰⁰ Kathy Weekes Southee, interview.

²⁰¹ In 1938, Weekes approached Columbia University in hopes of pursuing advanced study in English. Recognizing that her background was primarily in nursing she sought a personalized application that would have her publications count towards her academic credits. Columbia denied her request and although she was accepted into the program Weekes was unable to attend summer school that year and ultimately never did attend Columbia. Mary Weekes to Miss Weiss, May 31, 1938, Mary Weekes fonds, R-395, 4a, SAB.

²⁰² Weekes, “Paper delivered to the Regina Natural History Society.”

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ It is possible that Weekes’s dedication to professionalism and financial independence arose from witnessing her mother’s dependence on others after her separation from her husband.

sell various pieces in her collection to the Hudson's Bay Company and others.²⁰⁵ It seems she financed her collecting through such sales and by loaning materials to Hollywood film sets for costumes.²⁰⁶ Although not explicitly noted, it is probable that the financial rewards of her publishing also contributed to her acquisition of Indigenous objects.

In spite of her material and literary interests in Indigenous culture, the extent to which she was able to simultaneously fulfill her duties as a mother while pursuing at a professional level the life of an author and collector were the direct product of settler-colonialism and the Canadian state's assimilation policies. She relied heavily on the domestic help of Indigenous women—that she was herself (apparently) a terrible cook suggests why, in their absence, Weekes considered herself to be living “under trying domestic circumstances.”²⁰⁷ In the introduction to their volume on the intimate frontiers of colonialism, Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton argue that an academic investment in the intimate requires a “reconceptualization of space as a technology of imperial power and agency.”²⁰⁸ While I have thus far discussed the cottage as a subversive space, it can thus also be conceived of as a space or technology through which she enacted her “borrowed” imperial power.²⁰⁹ She wrote of the Indigenous women she hired to care for her children, for example:

They became my friends. When Chief Standing Buffalo heard that I was looking for a nursemaid for my small children, he brought his daughter

²⁰⁵ Weekes persisted in offering beadwork and other articles to the Hudson's Bay Company, despite repeatedly being notified that the HBC was not currently buying pieces. Weekes's largest sale was to the Hudson's Bay House in London in 1933 for which she was paid \$1000. With this sale she was able to dispose of some duplicate objects and thus “divide [her] collection without impairing its value in any artistic way.” Mary Weekes, correspondence with Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg, 1926-1951, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, III.37, SAB; Weekes, “Paper delivered to the Regina Natural History Society.”

²⁰⁶ Weekes, “Paper delivered to the Regina Natural History Society.”

²⁰⁷ Mary Weekes to Miss McEwen, August 21, 1939, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, V.14a, SAB.

²⁰⁸ Ballantyne and Burton, *Moving Subjects*, 2.

²⁰⁹ Anne McClintock suggests that disadvantaged women “borrowed” the power of their race against that of their gender in colonial contexts. McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 6.

Vitaline, just out of Lebret Mission school.²¹⁰ She was a splendid girl. She worked for me for several summers. When she got married, her sister Annie came to me. When she got married, Jacob Leswiss brought his Eve, and later her sister. Always at the lake, I had fine Indian girls.²¹¹

Thus, while some passages in Weekes's prose demonstrate the genuine impact her colonial friendships had on her, her reliance on Indigenous women's domestic labour indicates her maintenance of colonial hierarchies. Education in residential schools was one component of the settler government's multivalent approaches to solving the 'Indian Problem' (Figure 1.6).²¹² A key component in residential schooling and assimilation efforts included the policing of gender. Male and female students were divided into strictly separated spheres of activity where girls were taught "sewing, plain and fancy, cutting out and making up their clothes, darning, knitting, laundry work and scrubbing, and other domestic work."²¹³ A young girl's experience of domestic labour at the residential school was intended to prepare her to have a "civilizing" influence on her community and future family.²¹⁴ Similarly, her domestic labour helped maintain underfunded schools and prepared her for entrance into the labour market as a domestic servant, a menial role for which school administrators understood Indigenous women to show considerable aptitude.²¹⁵

Weekes importantly prefaced her own use of Indigenous domestic labour with friendship, disassociating herself from the institutionalized market for Indigenous women's labour and also insinuating that the provision of labour was appropriate

²¹⁰ The Lebret Mission School from which Vitaline graduated (also known as Qu'Appelle) was founded in 1884 under the administration of Joseph Hugonnard, an Oblate of Mary Immaculate, with the assistance of his Oblate brothers, the Grey Nuns and lay workers. Jacqueline Gresco, "Everyday Life at Qu'Appelle Industrial School," *Western Oblate Studies* 2 (1992): 71.

²¹¹ Weekes, "Paper delivered to the Regina Natural History Society."

²¹² See Woolford for a more thorough history of residential schools in Canada. Andrew Woolford, *This Benevolent Experiment: Indigenous Boarding Schools, Genocide, and Redress in Canada and the United States* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), 63.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 167.

²¹⁴ Mary Jane Logan McCallum, "'I Would Like the Girls at Home': Domestic Labor and the Age of Discharge at Canadian Indian Residential Schools," in *Colonization and Domestic Service: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Victoria K. Haskins and Claire Lowrie (New York: Routledge, 2015), 193.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 195.

compensation for friendship. This is not to say that Weekes did not pay the women on whose domestic labour she relied, but rather to comment on the societal value ascribed to this labour. Historian Mary Jane Logan McCallum observes that colonialism produced a system in which “young Indigenous women [were] in fact only considered ‘useful’ when their labour [was] harnessed to non-Indigenous projects,” the extent of which is demonstrated by Standing Buffalo and Jacob Leswiss’s voluntary displacement of their daughter’s labour from their own communities to Weekes’s home.²¹⁶ Consequently, through the enforced initiation of Indigenous women into the so-called cult of domesticity, women like Weekes were able to escape their own domestic obligations and therefore devote their time to other interests—in Weekes’s case, the development of a professional writing career.²¹⁷

The complex and contradictory relationships discussed in this chapter recall the name Weekes claimed her Sioux friends called her and speak to its potential accuracy in describing her. *Wagon-sida-winga*—believed by Weekes to mean “a good woman, a kindly woman, but exact woman”—exemplifies the closeness of Weekes to her Indigenous friends while at the same time maintains colonial hierarchies. She was kind and empathetic, but methodical in regards to her relationships and how they benefitted her. By examining the circumstances surrounding her collecting, this chapter has interrogated how close settler-Indigenous relationships impacted Mary Weekes and how she negotiated her gendered identity as

²¹⁶ Ibid. , 196.

²¹⁷ Taking on Indigenous girls into domestic service also played an integral role in the residential school system’s “training in dispossession under the guise of domesticity,” which helped to develop a “habitus shaped by messages about subservience and one’s proper place.” A productive mode of analysis I have explored elsewhere considers Weekes’s involvement in this phenomenon as part of the stratification of social reproduction as discussed by Shellee Colen. K. Tsianina Lomawaima, “Domesticity in the Federal Indian Schools: the Power of Authority over Mind and Body,” *American Ethnologist* 20, no. 2 (May 1993): 231; Shellee Colen, “‘Like a Mother to Them’: Stratified Reproduction and West Indian Childcare Workers and Employers in New York,” in *Conceiving the New World Order: The Global Politics of Reproduction*, ed. Faye D. Ginsburg and Rayna Repp (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

a consciously uneasy settler—oscillating between her opposing empathetic and methodical tendencies. The coexistence of Weekes’s precociously reflexive colonial consciousness with her acceptance of her racial advantage in overcoming the limitations of her gender in a patriarchal society reveals the ambivalence inherent in the lived realities of twentieth-century settler-colonial encounters. This chapter has thus proposed Mary Weekes as an *(un)settling* collector because her writing demonstrates how she inconsistently began to recognize the violence of the colonial system and yet was, at the same time, the product of her complicity in it. The tentative emergence of this sentiment of *(un)settling* in turn complicates narratives of settler-colonial collecting that emphasize the settler’s possession of the Other as a means of seeking belonging and settling oneself. It also offers evidence of the early emergence of an ongoing *(un)settling* process that continues to this day.

Chapter Two

Authenticity and Authority: Exhibiting and Writing the Weekes Collection

“My last (I assume it is to be my last) collection, before it came, finally, to rest in the Provincial Museum—where it belongs—was shown in many parts of Canada at various times.”

—Mary Weekes, “Paper Delivered to the Regina Natural History Society,” 1949.²¹⁸

“I must say that we Indians are deeply indebted to you in presenting the Indian’s side of the story to the reading public. There is much to be told yet and we have no better scribe to do justice to our stories than yourself.”

—Dan Kennedy to Mary Weekes, June 6, 1945.²¹⁹

Spatial and emotional intimacies are paramount in the self-reflexive collecting narrative told by Mary Weekes and interrogated in chapter one; however, her collection also led an extensive public life beyond its intimate conditions of acquisition. It was exhibited to various local clubs in Regina and in venues across Canada, including the Canadian Handicrafts Guild in Montréal, in an associated touring exhibition, and at the Rosedale, Toronto home of Mr. Charles Shaw Band (then president of the Toronto Art Gallery).²²⁰ In addition to its physical exhibition, Weekes also disseminated her collection in the form of illustrations for two school textbooks, in which she included chapters on the beadwork of Saskatchewan’s Indigenous peoples. She further exhibited her collection to the students at a local school in an effort “to arouse the interest of children in the beautiful native craft of their own province and to preserve this old time craft before it is gone forever.”²²¹ In this chapter, I study the exhibition and print history of the Weekes Collection and

²¹⁸ Weekes, “Paper delivered to the Regina Natural History Society.”

²¹⁹ Dan Kennedy to Mary Weekes, June 6, 1945, Mary Weekes papers, RSM.

²²⁰ Weekes, “Paper delivered to the Regina Natural History Society.”

²²¹ Weekes, “Address read to the Regina Historical Association,” 1927, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, XII.21, SAB.

consider what happens when intimately acquired pieces and the cultural sensitivities that accompany them are displaced from the private to the public sphere.

I begin by considering how the motivations Weekes articulated for her collecting oscillate between the salvage ethnography paradigm characteristic of professional anthropologists at the time and the craft revival policies pioneered by the Canadian Handicrafts Guild. Of particular interest is how the collection's conditions of acquisition impacted Weekes's understanding of Indigenous "authenticity," a concept whose employment in colonial contexts Patrick Wolfe considers repressive and productive of harmful restrictions on the contemporaneity of Indigenous peoples.²²² I turn to the differing philosophies of the Indian Affairs branch of the Department of Mines and Resources and the Canadian Handicrafts Guild to contextualize Weekes's understanding of authenticity, which although significantly nuanced by her relationships with producers was not necessarily less repressive. Like the experience of *(un)settling* discussed in chapter one, Weekes's understanding of authenticity both resisted and confirmed prevailing perspectives on consuming Indigenous material culture. Considering Weekes's participation in the Guild's 1946-1947 *Indian Arts of Canada* exhibition further reveals the challenges she faced in reconciling her precocious colonial discomfort with participation in prevailing colonial discourses and the display practices that perpetuated them. While the exhibition's display conventions failed to communicate the *(un)settling* experienced by Weekes, I argue that she more successfully translated this *(un)settling* in her writing for children and consider the positive role she thought Indigenous material culture could play in their respectful education.

²²² Wolfe, "Nation and Miscegenation," 111. Like Patrick Wolfe, I consider colonial designations of authenticity to be a repressive strategy that denied the contemporaneity of Indigenous culture and also asserted the colonizer's right to determine what was and was not Indigenous. I place the words "authenticity" and "authentic" in quotations only the first time I use them, but my recognition of the socially constructed nature of the terms carries throughout.

I conclude by addressing the imbalance implicit in this thesis, in which I have analyzed a collection that purports to represent Indigenous history but touched only tangentially on what it might communicate about this subject. Instead, I have adopted a seemingly regressive strategy that responds to a lack of Indigenous voices in the collection by amplifying that of the collector. In so doing I do not mean to further silence Indigenous voices in museum collections, but rather attempt to both make conspicuous their absence and reveal an unusual, but perhaps not unique, collecting narrative. A narrative in which the exchange of materials and ideas led to the tentative emergence of a sentiment of *(un)settling*, the impacts of which we are still just beginning to feel today.

I. “They sit in happy groups around the camp fires”: Locating Authenticity

Susan Stewart observes that, “within the development of culture under an exchange economy, the search for authentic experience and, correlatively, the search for the authentic object become critical.”²²³ This preoccupation with authenticity parallels the anti-modern retreat from urban industrial society that informed the “Indian Craze” discussed in chapter one. Early Canadian anthropologists were deeply concerned with the impact colonial encounters had already had on Indigenous cultures and sought to “rescue something ‘authentic’ out of destructive historical changes.”²²⁴ While anthropologists sought to salvage what was left of a culture presumed to be dying, federal policies of assimilation sought to guarantee the anthropologist’s presumptions. And yet, confronted with the incomplete process of assimilation and the growing amounts of relief paid to Indigenous communities during the Great Depression, the Welfare and Training Division within the Indian Affairs Branch of

²²³ Stewart, *On Longing*, 133.

²²⁴ James Clifford, “The Others: Beyond the Salvage Paradigm,” *Third Text* 3, no. 6 (1989): 73.

the Department of Mines and Resources encouraged the sale of Indigenous handicraft work in order to provide economic relief.²²⁵ The Canadian Handicrafts Guild also endorsed craft production, but saw beyond its economic value to its impacts on cultural survival in the face of federal assimilation policies.²²⁶

Mary Weekes's collecting activities reveal the influences of all three attitudes—as contradictory as that combination might seem. On the one hand, her collecting practice reflects a desire similar to the salvage paradigm, advising as she did that “the old time techniques in bead and quill work [are] fast disappearing and it is important for collectors to be able to distinguish between the old and recent work.”²²⁷ On the other hand, the distinction she made between cultural preservation and cultural survival was superficial at best and elsewhere she reflected that “happily of late...the demand for beadwork by collectors, who unable to find the old pieces are turning their attention to reproductions, [which] is causing the Indian women to take up this old time handicraft with fresh interest.”²²⁸ Similarly her interest in cultural survival through craft production was not divorced from the development of a viable market that would contribute to economic self-sustainability for Indigenous peoples. Although her collecting activities reflect these competing attitudes, her writing demonstrates her difference from all three in regards to what she valued as “authentic” and considered worthy of preservation, survival and consumption.

²²⁵ Trudy Nicks, “Indian Handicrafts: The Marketing of an Image,” *Rotunda* 23, no.1 (Summer 1990): 15.

²²⁶ Ellen Easton Mcleod, *In Good Hands: The Women of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 216. Inspired by the arts and crafts movement, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild was founded by a group of women who sought to revive traditional crafts in Canada in order to develop self-sufficiency among marginalized groups and combat the increasing numbers of women turning to the “convenience of readymade goods.” They believed that the exhibition and fair sale of Canadian handicrafts could “help women find productive work in the arts” and participate in a culture of self-help. They invested this notion of self-help into marginalized groups such as rural French Canadians and Indigenous peoples. The Guild's Indian Committee was founded in 1933 by Alice Lighthall to work both for the preservation of Indian arts and crafts and for amendments to the Indian Act.

²²⁷ Weekes, “Address read to the Regina Historical Association.”

²²⁸ Weekes, “Beadwork of the Prairies.”

Each attitude towards Indigenous craft differed to the concept of authenticity it invoked—to which my analysis will return—but all three located authenticity in the material product. Weekes alternatively located authenticity in the social circumstances of production, emphasizing in particular “the nonmaterial aspects of culture, such as kinship or political activities” which, as Phillips suggests, ethnographic collections tend to suppress in favour of the object.²²⁹ Take for instance the following reflection from a 1929 newspaper article authored by Weekes titled “The Charm of Indian Beadwork”:

The poise and restfulness of these brown-skinned women at their bead work gives rise to reflection. They sit in happy groups around the campfires, and occasionally they pause to caress the colourful beads and to let them filter lovingly through their fingers. Sky, woods, water and fire all seem to reflect their colors in the glowing beads.²³⁰

Weekes, like Walter Benjamin, finds that “the unique value in the ‘authentic’ work of art has its basis in ritual, the location of its original use value.”²³¹

Without ignoring the partial nature of Weekes’s knowledge as a settler speaking for the Indigenous women whose beadwork she admired, her sense of the social and cultural relationships that made this beadwork authentic to her is strikingly similar to Indigenous beliefs. For example, Indigenous scholar Dr. Lois Edge echoes Weekes’s observations of beading circles as spaces of reflection and intimacy:

In the enactment and engagement of a timeless spiritual dimension that resides with the activity of beadwork, in movement of needle, thread and bead, a beadworker becomes ‘still’ in their involvement in the process of exercising one’s creativity, as in an awakening of consciousness in a spiritual sense. To experience such stillness is to experience a sense of timelessness, power, strength and beauty, communally.²³²

²²⁹ Ruth Phillips, “Why Not Tourist Art?” 101.

²³⁰ Weekes, “The Charm of Indian Beadwork,” *The Sunday Province*, February 17, 1929, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, SB 3, p.36, SAB.

²³¹ Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art In the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 224.

²³² Lois Elizabeth Edge, “My Grandmother’s Moccasins: Indigenous Women, Ways of Knowing and Indigenous Aesthetic of Beadwork” (PhD dissertation, University of Alberta, 2011), 124.

Weekes's sensitivity to this custom no doubt emerged from the conversations enabled by the intimate conditions of her collection's acquisition. Unlike anthropologists, such as Marius Barbeau, who believed "that authentic Aboriginal culture existed only in the minds of the aged" and that participant-observation would therefore be superfluous, Weekes's prose demonstrates how her observations of contemporary Indigenous women at work was integral to her understanding of authentic Indigenous culture.²³³

Weekes further designated intimacy as integral to authenticity in her observations on the "true Indian feeling":

When an Indian woman fashions garments for her husband or sons and embroiders designs on them in beads or quills she blends the colors with all the artistic skill of her race and in her work she expresses all the love of her heart. But when she makes moccasins to sell to the White Campers she weaves no sentiment or tenderness into her work, consequently it lacks that true Indian feeling.²³⁴

Weekes's reflections on the social conditions of production and the use of handmade material as a way to form and signify bonds of kinship recall the social relationships formed between Weekes and the Indigenous peoples who arrived at her cottage door with beadwork for sale.²³⁵ The emphasis Weekes put on both types of relationships—among Indigenous peoples and between them and herself—suggests a desire for a perceived intimacy that is not altogether removed from the quest for belonging undertaken by other settlers through the appropriation of Indigenous culture. Where Weekes differs is in the impact that this perceived intimacy had on her subjectivity as a settler tentatively beginning to recognize her complicity in the colonial system.

²³³ Andrew Nurse, "Marius Barbeau and the Methodology of Salvage Ethnography in Canada," in *Historicizing Canadian Anthropology*, ed. Julia Harrison and Regna Darnell (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006), 58. A letter from Campbell Innes to Mary Weekes indicates that she may have worked with Marius Barbeau to record early folk songs. Campbell Innes to Mary Weekes, May 27, 1947, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, VII.10e, SAB.

²³⁴ Weekes, "Antique Indian Beadwork."

²³⁵ Judy Thompson, *From the Land: Two Hundred Years of Dene Clothing* (Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1994), 39.

That being said, her accurate observations about the intimacy of beading customs did not prevent her from asserting the colonizer's presumed right to own authentic Indigenous culture. In contrast to the self-reflexivity involved in the story "These Summer Women—such hurry, hurry!" which recognized that some objects, such as Moses's saddle, are intended for Indigenous uses only, Weekes still exercised the proprietary authority associated with her settler status. For instance, in preferring pieces made for Indigenous purposes and not for souvenir consumption, Weekes asserted her right to determine what was and was not a commodity. In so doing, she reified the ritual of production and further distinguished herself from the tourist collector discussed in chapter one—as Susan Stewart observes, "in the souvenir, the object is made magical; in the collection, the mode of production is made magical" (Figure 2.2).²³⁶ Weekes's enactment of her colonial privilege is most strikingly illustrated by a pair of moccasins in her collection that, according to her records, she literally bought off the feet of an Assiniboine woman she met on the trail near Fort Qu'Appelle.²³⁷

The emphasis Weekes placed on the rituals of production did not preclude the value she also saw in the commercial potential of Indigenous beadwork (Figure 2.1). In a 1931 article for the *Canadian National Railways Magazine* titled "Beadwork of the Prairies," Weekes observed, "now that their work has a definite commercial value, the old women are busy once again reproducing with great success their favourite patterns."²³⁸ Although she invoked issues of age and reproduction, she also suggested the presence of Indigenous agency in commercial production. By reproducing their "favourite patterns," Indigenous women did more than respond to commercial demands. As Ruth Phillips argues about Haudenosaune (Iroquois) bead workers,

²³⁶ Stewart, *On Longing*, 164-165.

²³⁷ Weekes, Handwritten list of objects donated to the Royal Saskatchewan Museum.

²³⁸ Weekes, "Beadwork of the Prairies."

some Indigenous women used new commoditized art forms as “repositories of artistic traditions that could not be easily expressed in other formats during this repressive age.”²³⁹ By noting that women returned to patterns they considered favourites, Weekes suggests that Plains Indigenous women similarly strategically used commoditized art forms to perpetuate their traditions.

While Weekes seems to have valued the joy Indigenous women derived from the perpetuation of their artistic traditions—sometimes to an insensitive extent when combined with her collecting impulse—other stakeholders in Indigenous craft felt otherwise. The Welfare and Training Division of the Indian Affairs branch of the Department of Mines and Resources, for instance, was more interested in marketability and economic relief. For example, Kathleen Moodie—a fieldworker for the department—wanted to distance her work with Indigenous peoples from the word handicraft. She preferred that the work be known as “Reserve Industries,” associating the products with profitability rather than preservation.²⁴⁰ Moodie insisted that she and her agency tried to find markets for anything Indigenous peoples could make, but admitted that she did her best to persuade them not to make certain items, culturally significant or not, that proved difficult to sell.²⁴¹ As a result, the department encouraged the production of marketable crafts with little regard for “the preservation of arts and crafts for their cultural or historical significance,” a mission the department considered the Canadian Handicrafts Guild to already be fulfilling.²⁴²

For an example of the department’s disinterest in cultural specificity, a series of letters exchanged between R.A. Hoey, the superintendent of the Welfare and Training

²³⁹ Ruth Phillips, “Genre, Gender and Home Craft: Victoriana and Aboriginal Art,” in *Trading Identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art from the Northwest, 1700-1900* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), 259.

²⁴⁰ Kathleen Moodie to Alice Lighthall, January 9 1940, C4 D1 048 1939, Canadian Handicrafts Guild Archives (hereafter CHG).

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Ibid.

division, and Thos. Robertson, the Inspector of Saskatchewan Indian Agencies, explored the possibility of teaching Indigenous women on the Prairies to weave. They were impressed by the profitability of the “Coastal Indians” who “[spun] and knit mitts, sweaters, pull-overs, socks, etc. with which they clothe themselves and their families and secure a large market amongst the tourists.”²⁴³ The department believed that it could teach Prairie women the art of weaving and produce a similarly active tourist market in Saskatchewan. Disregarding cultural differences among Indigenous peoples, the commercial motivations of the Training and Welfare Division therefore produced standardized handicrafts, which, Trudy Nicks suggests, “reinforced a generalized public perception of ‘Indian’ material culture, which remains even today.”²⁴⁴

Like Weekes, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild alternatively valued creating a viable market for the diverse products made by Canada’s distinct groups of Indigenous peoples. Still, the Guild relied on an equally repressive understanding of what constituted “pure Indian” aesthetics.²⁴⁵ Much like anthropologists, such as Marius Barbeau and Edward Sapir, concerned themselves only with objects characteristic of pre-contact life, so too did the Guild consider more authentic those pieces with no evidence of European influence. To both groups, objects that betrayed evidence of hybridity or simply similarities between Indigenous and European cultures became “signs of cultural displacement and part of the history of Aboriginal cultural demise.”²⁴⁶ The result of this attitude was the marginalization of contemporary Indigenous experience.²⁴⁷

²⁴³ A lack of evidence suggests that this project did not go forward. Report attached to a letter from Sgd W.E.J. Paul to Inspector T. Robertson re: Spinning and Weaving, May 10th, 1937, Correspondence Regarding Resolutions and Accounts of Canadian Guild, Reel C-12145, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC).

²⁴⁴ Trudy Nicks, “Indian Handicrafts: The Marketing of an Image,” *Rotunda* 23, no.1 (Summer 1990): 20.

²⁴⁵ Mcleod, *In Good Hands*, 210.

²⁴⁶ Nurse, “Marius Barbeau and the Methodology of Salvage Ethnography in Canada,” 60.

²⁴⁷ Mcleod, *In Good Hands*, 210.

Although Weekes put significant emphasis on the social circumstances of production as the source of authenticity, she too participated in the marginalization of contemporary Indigenous experience by retaining an interest in the reproduction of “traditional” patterns. She did not, however, participate in the wholesale dismissal of pieces bearing marks of European influence. For example, unlike practitioners of salvage ethnology and the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, she did not dismiss floral designs, which were understood as hybrids derived from a Catholic repertoire.²⁴⁸ Although Weekes privileged the geometric designs she considered to “represent Indian art in purity” before the arrival of the colonizers, she nonetheless encouraged the acceptance of floral designs, which were “despised by so many collectors.”²⁴⁹ Weekes reasoned that since collectors willingly paid “high prices for old hand worked rugs in flower designs, surely the flower work in beads should have its place (if only a small one) in the history of Indian art.”²⁵⁰

Weekes’s motives for collecting are inherently contradictory, oscillating between salvage, revival, and economic relief, and between a focus on the processes of production and the final product. Confusing as such contradictions may be, they reveal the tentative and ongoing nature of the *(un)settling* process. Weekes

²⁴⁸ Ruth B. Phillips and Christopher B. Steiner, “Introduction,” in *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds*, 9. It is worth noting that some scholars and practitioners insist that floral patterns were being used in North America prior to the arrival of Europeans, albeit in more abstract forms than what we see today. Christi Belcourt, *First Peoples’ Beading History and Techniques* (Owen Sound: Nigwakwe Learning Press, 2010), 9.

²⁴⁹ Weekes, “Antique Indian Beadwork.”

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.* Between 1914 and 1931, the Qu’Appelle Industrial School was the only residential school in Canada with a budget line item for craft instruction in the annual reports of the Department of Indian affairs. Amelia Paget of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild had begun a campaign in 1913 to have a Métis woman from the Qu’Appelle Valley named Melanie Blondeau hired on the staff of the local residential school to teach handicrafts. Duncan Campbell Scott approved her employment and her impact on her students can be seen in the shift from geometric patterns traditionally used on the central and southern plains to floral designs. A 1930 article indicates that “in the Indian work of the younger generation may be seen a tendency to newer designs. The block design for bead work is the most original pattern used, and is most commonly seen in Indian work, although some of the younger people show an interest in flags and flowers as a medium for design work,” perhaps suggesting the influence of Blondeau’s instruction. Sherry Farrell Racette, “Sewing Ourselves Together: Clothing, Decorative Arts and the Expression of Métis and Half-Breed Identity,” (PhD dissertation, University of Manitoba), 244; “Bead Saddles, Rag Rugs are Indian Work,” *The Leader Post*, August 2, 1930, 8.

exemplifies the lived realities of a settler reconciling her consciousness of colonial oppression with dominant cultural discourses. Her writings thus reveal the contradictions in her cultural encounters and point to her tentative emergence as a self-conscious settler. An examination of the public exhibition of her collection, however, suggests how conventions of display neutralized tentative articulations of the complexity of Weekes's colonial encounters.

II. "Attention Indian Agents!!": The Canadian Handicrafts Guild and the 1946-1947 *Indian Arts of Canada* Exhibition

In 1946, Mary Weekes took up residence on Rue Côte Saint-Luc in Montréal for the fall and winter season to assist with planning the Canadian Handicrafts Guild's 1946-1947 *Indian Arts of Canada* exhibition (Figure 2.3).²⁵¹ The Guild had earlier displayed loan collections of Indigenous handicrafts at the 1924, 1928, 1931 and 1935 annual exhibitions, which sought to educate the public and to combat what the Guild considered the "fast disappearing Indian crafts and the wholesale importation of copies."²⁵² In 1935 the Guild had convinced the Department of Indian Affairs to send out a questionnaire enquiring into the current state of Indigenous crafts on various reserves.²⁵³ The introduction to the questionnaire explained its purpose: "The answers obtained should form a basis for the planning of work for preservation and furtherance of these arts, and so help to foster the Indians' own pride in the best

²⁵¹ Mary Weekes to Dan Kennedy, October 21, 1946, C4 D1 065, CHG.

²⁵² Mcleod, *In Good Hands*, 221. Writing in 1935, George Raley criticized the Canadian Handicrafts Guild for "indifferently" displaying and representing Indigenous handicraft in such a way that did not "appeal to the eye or advertise the existence of an Indian craft to the tourist." He noted that Indian handicrafts were overshadowed by the Guild's work for other nationalities settling in Canada. Raley's critique arises only two years after the Guild's Indian Committee formed. The Guild would eventually pay a great deal of attention to Indigenous handicrafts. Although, their display practices remain subject to critique for different reasons that I will later discuss. G.H. Raley, "Canadian Indian Art and Industries: An Economic Problem of Today," *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 83 (1935): 999.

²⁵³ McMaster, "Tenuous Lines of Descent," 213.

features of their racial heritage.”²⁵⁴ In response to the questionnaire, whose final question asked whether “the finding of an outlet for [traditional work] [would] stimulate its revival,” the Guild organized the 1946-1947 exhibition.²⁵⁵ Dividing the country into four major geographic regions (Eastern Woodlands, Plains Tribes, Athapascan and Interior British Columbian, and West Coast Tribes) the Guild prepared a nation-wide competition and exhibition. Weekes, who was actively involved in advertising the competition to reserves across Canada, proposed to Alice Lighthall that “only hard-hitting tactics” would “arouse agents out of their lethargy,” an indication of her dissatisfaction with those responsible for governing Indigenous affairs.²⁵⁶ She thus put forward an advertisement that would begin with the order “Attention Indian agents!!” and end by commanding them to “get busy!”²⁵⁷

The educational mission of the *Indian Arts of Canada* exhibition was to (a) reawaken among Indigenous peoples pride in their traditional work, and (b) educate the consuming public about the difference between good and bad craftsmanship.²⁵⁸ The Guild had been saving a \$50 yearly grant from the Indian Affairs branch since 1935 to award prizes in the competition.²⁵⁹ To show how much the exhibition was “indebted to Mrs. Mary Weekes,” Alice Lighthall sent Weekes a series of photographs of the exhibition, which had opened after Weekes returned to Regina.²⁶⁰ The display arranged material according to tribal groups and historical sequence.²⁶¹ On the west wall of the exhibition space—the Montréal Art Association’s lecture hall—three vitrines displayed pieces from the Plains and North West Territories (Figure 2.4). Beneath each case hung a panel identifying each piece, the group who made it, and whether it was submitted to the competition or loaned by a collector. In

²⁵⁴ G.A. Dodds (Indian Agent for File Hills) to the Assistant, Deputy and Secretary of the Department of Indian Affairs, response to the Canadian Handicraft Guild questionnaire, September 16, 1935, Correspondence re: Resolutions and Accounts of Canadian Guild, Reel C-12145, LAC.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Mary Weekes to Alice Lighthall, 1946, C4 D1 065 1946, CHG.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Mcleod, *In Good Hands*, 225.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 224.

²⁶⁰ Alice Lighthall to Mary Weekes, July 24, 1947, C4 D1 092 1949, CHG.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

the first case from the left, five sets of moccasins are displayed with their decorated vamps oriented towards the viewer. The moccasins are framed on either side by two beaded strips. The centre case features a child's deerskin suit and moccasins, a beaded belt and necklace, and a pouch. The case on the right contains woven porcupine quill strips and belts, beaded wall pouches, sewn quill shelf decoration, and various bags. With a few exceptions, the vast majority of the loaned items featured in the Plains and North West territories display belonged to Weekes.²⁶²

This display sits uncomfortably at the intersections of art, craft, commodity and artifact in the art-culture system James Clifford outlines. The art-culture system “classifies objects and assigns them relative value” according to their mobile location between four semantic zones that distinguish fine art from artifact and the authentic from the inauthentic.²⁶³ In many respects, the pieces in the Canadian Handicrafts Guild's exhibition are displayed like artifacts in an ethnographic museum. David Jenkins observes that early ethnographic displays were often set up as if they were photographs, “flattened, bounded, glass-covered, to be viewed (never touched) as a direct connection to the world they represented.”²⁶⁴ The Guild's shallow glass cases similarly flatten three-dimensional, previously useful garments—if only for the ease of the exhibition's transport, which travelled from Montréal to Calgary, Edmonton, Victoria, Battleford, Winnipeg, Toronto, and London.²⁶⁵ Regardless of intent, the objects function metonymically, substituting partial physical material for Plains Indigenous cultures.²⁶⁶ The division of Canada's Indigenous peoples into four major geographic areas also conforms to an ethnographic practice championed by Franz Boas who believed the ideal museum should be organized according to tribe.²⁶⁷ The

²⁶² Annotated back of photo, west wall of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild *Indian Arts of Canada* exhibition, 1948-1949, Mary Weekes papers, RSM.

²⁶³ The four zones of the art-culture system according to Clifford are: (1) the zone of authentic masterpieces, (2) the zone of authentic artifacts, (3) the zone of inauthentic masterpieces, (4) the zone of inauthentic objects. See Clifford, “On Collecting Art and Culture,” 223.

²⁶⁴ David Jenkins, “Object Lessons and Ethnographic Displays: Museum Exhibitions and the Making of American Anthropology,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 36, no. 2 (April 1994): 246.

²⁶⁵ Mcleod, *In Good Hands*, 225.

²⁶⁶ Jenkins, “Object Lessons and Ethnographic Displays,” 246.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 266.

size of the Guild's categories, however, betrays their superficial homogenization of the diverse groups within these geographic areas.

In her own writing, Weekes was attentive to the unique histories and styles associated with various Indigenous groups. For instance, in "Beadwork of the Prairies," she distinguished between the rigid effects accomplished by Sioux beaders (who sew beads on in rows) compared to the smooth effects of their Cree counterparts (who sew beads on individually).²⁶⁸ Weekes also distinguished the work of individuals, arguing that, "each worker's color combination was her own."²⁶⁹ Ostensibly, the Guild was also concerned with individuality, and awarded prizes on an individual basis. They did not, however, set competition pieces apart from those items considered historical models. Pieces from the Weekes Collection dominate the left vitrine on the west wall of the exhibition space, with the exception of one pair of moccasins made by a student from St. Michael's School in Duck Lake, Saskatchewan. Because they are not distinguished from the other pieces in the vitrine, except by a low hanging label, the moccasins are implied to represent a successful continuation of tradition. Although Weekes's personal reflections and accession records indicate that she valued individuality, the Guild's display of her collection visually homogenized individuals, distinct groups, and past and present. By blurring temporal distinctions, the Guild contradicted its own purported dedication to the revival of Indigenous culture. Instead, its display conventions located Indigenous material culture in an ethnographic present by, in the words of Susan Stewart, "making temporality a spatial and material phenomenon" that is easily suppressed.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁸ Weekes, "Beadwork of the Prairies."

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Stewart, *On Longing*, 153. Johannes Fabian describes the ethnographic present as a distancing device that gives accounts of other cultures and societies in the present tense. It is a device that locates cultural practices from the distant past in the present, denies temporal distinctions, and refuses to acknowledge the contemporaneous existence of subject and researcher. This "denial of coevalness" is a "persistent and systematic tendency to place the referent(s) of anthropology in a time other than the present of the producer of anthropological discourse." Thus, by not visually distinguishing between historical works and contemporary competition pieces, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild visually and materially suppressed important temporal considerations. Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 81; 31.

Although the Guild's display conforms in some ways to ethnographic display practices, in other respects it evokes the aestheticization of Indigenous material culture also characteristic of the early to mid-twentieth century. Modern artists first promoted Indigenous material culture from ethnographic specimens to works of art as they sought refuge from the staid conventions of Western naturalism.²⁷¹ Attempts to grow the market for Indigenous material culture as a source of economic relief also promoted aesthetic elements in order to appeal to collectors. René D'Harnoncourt pioneered the decontextualization and aestheticization of Indigenous art in the 1941 *Indian Art of the United States* exhibition at Museum of Modern Art (MOMA). Like the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, D'Harnoncourt was interested in encouraging appreciation of Indigenous art as something "nation-wide in its scope and truly American [Canadian in the case of the Guild] in style and concept."²⁷² D'Harnoncourt believed the adaptation of Indigenous people's "rigorously simplified designs to modernistic homes and personal decoration" would help Indigenous peoples to attain "economic self-respect" and to compete with luxury trade imports.²⁷³ While the 1941 MOMA show contextualized historic art, it aestheticized contemporary art in a section titled "Indian Art for Modern Living."²⁷⁴ D'Harnoncourt located functional and decorative pieces in model modern interiors or integrated them with contemporary fashion; however, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild's aestheticization relied on a model of display that eliminated functionality in favour of design.²⁷⁵ The conflation between contemporary and antique models thus failed to suggest the contemporary relevance of Indigenous aesthetics beyond cultural preservation.

Furthermore, the Guild's insistence on traditional technologies of production in many ways offered a barrier to their simultaneous desire that "authentic" Indigenous

²⁷¹ Diana Nemiroff, "Modernism, Nationalism and Beyond: a critical history of exhibitions of First Nations art," in *Thinking about Exhibitions* ed. Bruce W. Ferguson and Reesa Greenberg (New York: Routledge, 1996), 292.

²⁷² W. Jackson Rushing, "Marketing the Affinity of the Primitive and the Modern: René d'Harnoncourt and 'Indian Art of the United States,'" in *The Early Years of Native American Art History*, ed. Janet C. Berlo (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992), 207.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 204.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 214.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 215.

work replace imported copies. Feedback provided to competitors went so far as to state that St. Michael's School student Marie Louise Badger's prize winning coat, whose beading was "well balanced, and excellently distributed and in thoroughly good tribal tradition," could neither be included in the travelling exhibition nor sold in the Guild's shop "because it had a great deal of machine work about it."²⁷⁶ These comments reveal how strongly the Guild privileged a traditional aesthetic and traditional technology of making over the social circumstances of production emphasized by Weekes's writing on Indigenous beadwork. This emphasis on traditional technologies and aesthetics demonstrates the repressive authenticity that Patrick Wolfe describes. The Guild's emphasis on preservation and educating consumers to understand machine work as bad craftsmanship denied the contemporary realities of Indigenous life and in many ways prevented them from competing with imitation work, which could be produced on a large scale.

The failure of the exhibition to communicate the *(un)settling* experience the collection facilitated for Weekes signifies the importance of studying the more intimate spheres of colonial collecting. While the material nature of the artifacts offers an interpretation of the collection as a product, a consideration of how Mary Weekes narrated her own collecting activities indicates how she more dynamically considered collecting as a process. In many ways it was in the process rather than the product of her collecting activities that Mary Weekes found value. Consequentially, in this thesis I argue for a recovery of processes of collecting as a way of reconceiving how this collection (and potentially others) facilitated a contact zone where copresence and interaction led to an experience of *(un)settling*, whose ambiguous and incomplete existence is easily overwritten by dominant narratives about settler-colonial collecting.

III. "A wonderful gift of the pen": (Un)settling Saskatchewan Schoolchildren

On March 12, 1948 Dan Kennedy wrote to Mary Weekes "you have a wonderful gift of the pen—bringing back to life the glories of the past—good luck," a

²⁷⁶ Alice Lighthall to Reverend E. Rheame, August 5, 1947, C4 D1 082 1947, CHG.

comment on one of the most enduring ways Weekes put her pen to use in her writing for schoolchildren.²⁷⁷ Of the eleven novels she published, seven were for children, not including her extensive publication in both American and Canadian school readers.²⁷⁸ In a paper delivered at the 1941 convention of the Canadian Authors' Association, Weekes began by admiring how discerning the juvenile audience is: "there are perils and problems and modest rewards for those who recognize that the juvenile, on his own ground, is as exacting a critic as his elders."²⁷⁹ Weekes's confidence in her young readers astuteness makes her candid writing about Canada's Indigenous peoples all the more significant. While the exhibition of the Weekes Collection by the Canadian Handicrafts Guild neutralized its *(un)settling* impact, Weekes's writing for schoolchildren demonstrates how she actively transmitted what she learned to a younger generation of settlers and the role she believed collecting could play in respectful settler-education.

The Saskatchewan School Aids and Text Book publishing company, with which Weekes published extensively, was established in 1929 and remained in operation until 1978.²⁸⁰ In her analysis of the company, Mary Lynn Gagné observes the qualities that made the company distinct, including: "a strong interest in and focus on the history of Aboriginal peoples on the prairies, incorporation of considerable local content, translation of home-grown textbooks into French, and suggestions of socialist influences."²⁸¹ Weekes published five books with the company, many of which supported the Social Studies curriculum at Saskatchewan elementary schools. As previously demonstrated in her adult short-fiction, Weekes did not shy away from language asserting the rights of Indigenous peoples or condemning their dispossession. The introduction to *Indians of the Plains*, for example, refutes what

²⁷⁷ Dan Kennedy to Mary Weekes, March 12, 1948, Mary Weekes papers, RSM.

²⁷⁸ See references for full list of Weekes's novels.

²⁷⁹ Weekes, "Writing for the Young," Canadian Authors Convention, 1941, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, XV.1, SAB.

²⁸⁰ Gagné, "Print, Profit and Pedagogy," 17.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

Gayatri Spivak describes as the “worlding of the world on uninscribed earth”—the production of colonized space through the assumption of uninscribed land.²⁸² A study of prejudice in Saskatchewan social studies textbooks cites Marion J. McVeety and Anne MacMillan’s 1953 textbook *Friends—Far and Near: Grades 3 & 4 Social Studies* for its objectionable prejudice, within which one might include its perpetuation of the assumption of uninscribed land.²⁸³ Of note is a passage claiming that “people are not native to America, but horses and other animals are.”²⁸⁴ In contrast, Weekes asserted the widespread presence of Indigenous peoples:

We do know definitely that long before white men came, the North American continent was inhabited by numerous bands of Indians who lived in every part of the country from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts and from the barren northern wastes to the waters of the southern shores.²⁸⁵

Weekes also recognized and delineated differences among Indigenous peoples, avoiding the homogenizing tendencies characteristic of works such as her contemporary Mary Graham Bonner’s *Made in Canada*—a book aimed at young audiences about arts and handicrafts manufactured in Canada.²⁸⁶ Bonner, for example, refers to the almost twenty distinct Northwest Coast First Nations only as “Indians.”²⁸⁷ Weekes alternatively began *Indian of the Plains* by distinguishing four major groups in Western Canada (although there are many more), namely the Cree, Assiniboine, Blackfeet and Sioux. She then dedicated a chapter to the unique history of each group. Writing about the Cree, Weekes referred openly to land appropriation in early colonial encounters:

²⁸² Spivak, “The Rani Of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives,” *History and Theory* 24, no. 3 (Oct., 1985): 253.

²⁸³ It is important to note that the Saskatchewan School Aids and Textbook Publishing Company also published the McVeety and MacMillan textbook, demonstrating the company’s own internal contradictions much like those of Weekes. Gagné, “Print, Profit and Pedagogy,” 17.

²⁸⁴ Marion J. McVeety and Anne MacMillan, *Friends—Far and Near: Grades 3 & 4 Social Studies: “B” Course in Saskatchewan* (Regina: School Aids and Text Book Pub., 1943), 34, quoted in Gagné, “Print, Profit and Pedagogy,” 23.

²⁸⁵ Weekes, *Indians of the Plains* (Regina: School Aids and Text Book Pub., 1950), 6.

²⁸⁶ Mary Graham Bonner, *Made in Canada* (New York: Knopf, 1943), 24.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

The Crees have from the earliest times been generally friendly with the French and English who invaded their country, first to trade goods of little value for their priceless furs, and later when the Canadian government took over their vast lands.²⁸⁸

Weekes believed that the writer of juveniles “must not present incidents that will shock or disillusion” but “nor must he falsify facts.”²⁸⁹ In the excerpt cited, Weekes does not explicitly condemn the dispossession of Indigenous peoples, but her rhetorical use of the terminology of invasion narrates the encounter between the Crees and settlers in such a way that identifies the colonizer as answerable for the faults and negative impacts of the encounter. Similarly, she comments on the inherent asymmetry of colonial trade by critically suggesting that the French and English took advantage of the Crees in trading objects of little value for priceless furs. She ends with a note on the Canadian government’s dispossession without any positive reference to treaties.

Weekes’s writings thus encouraged her young audience to begin to recognize (as she had begun to) their complicity in the colonial project. As a further example, while Weekes praised the artistry of Sioux beadwork, she decried the display of ceremonial costumes in parades “for the entertainment of white men.”²⁹⁰ She noted that this custom is “regarded by thoughtful people as degrading to the descendants of the proud people who once ruled the plains,” presumably encouraging respect and tolerance among her student audience.²⁹¹ The School Aids and Text Book Publishing Company supported Weekes’s tolerant and sympathetic texts, as did the Provincial Department of Education. Henry Janzen, the Director of Curricula, wrote that he had read with great interest the material Weekes sent on treaties, noting that “we understood far too little of the manner in which the territory west of the Great Lakes

²⁸⁸ Weekes, *Indians of the Plains*, 9.

²⁸⁹ Weekes, “Writing for the Young.”

²⁹⁰ Weekes, *Indians of the Plains*, 20.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*

was taken over by the white man” and that “it is information which all our western school children should know.”²⁹²

In an epigraph at the beginning of this chapter Dan Kennedy expressed his gratitude to Mary Weekes for sending him an autographed copy of her book *Round the Council Fires*. In his letter he announced that his people “have no better scribe to do justice to our stories than yourself.”²⁹³ Kennedy’s praise reveals the extent to which Mary Weekes’s writings disputed dominant colonial discourse by telling “the Indian’s side of the story” to the reading public, and particularly to a younger generation of settlers.²⁹⁴ Yet, the fact that Kennedy felt the need to rely on Weekes as a settler-ally in order share his people’s history demonstrates once more the power imbalance between Weekes and her Indigenous friends.²⁹⁵ The advantages of Weekes’s race gave her a platform largely inaccessible to the Indigenous peoples about whom she wrote. Similarly, although she was indeed a “scribe” for the stories taught to her by people like Dan Kennedy, she was by no means passive in the act of finding a platform. As previously discussed, her attainment of this platform relied on participation in the residential school system’s training of Indigenous women to be domestic labourers.

Weekes also emphasized material culture as a source of respectful education. Both *Indians of the Plains* and *Great Chiefs and Mighty Hunters of the Western Plains* include references to Indigenous material culture with illustrations of

²⁹² Gagné, “Print, Profit and Pedagogy,” 23.

²⁹³ Dan Kennedy to Mary Weekes, June 6, 1945, Mary Weekes papers, RSM.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Mary Weekes seems to have supported Kennedy in both a research capacity (by obtaining files from the Indian Affairs Department archives for him), and by recommending Kennedy to the Dr. Hilda Neatby, editor of *Saskatchewan History*, and to the Canadian Authors’ Association for membership. Later, in 1972, when he was 97 years old, Dan Kennedy would publish his own book, *Recollections of an Assiniboine Chief*, for which the Federal Indian Affairs department honoured him. Dan Kennedy to Mary Weekes, June 6, 1945, Mary Weekes papers, RSM; Dan Kennedy to Mary Weekes, December 11, 1945, Mary Weekes papers, RSM; Dan Kennedy, *Recollections of an Old Assiniboine Chief* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972); Donald Leitch, “Assiniboine History Recorded,” February 5, 1970, unknown newspaper, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, XIV.24, SAB.

beadwork from the author's collection (Figure 2.5). Although not unproblematic for the distinctions she continues to make between the cultural significance of old and new work, Weekes more successfully communicated in text than exhibition the value she ascribed to the intimate, respectful and friendly relationships she established with Indigenous peoples during her collecting activities. As chapter one demonstrated, through her own friendships with Indigenous peoples, Mary Weekes confronted her settler status. Her school text similarly encourages her young audience to learn about Indigenous beadwork directly from the cultural source, advising "if you are a friend and ask [a bead worker] the meaning of her patterns, she will come immediately alive, draw her shawl around her shoulders and tell you of the long past glory of her tribe."²⁹⁶ In addition to writing about craft, once a year Weekes took her collection to the Lakeview School for the students to examine. She wrote that it "has aroused such an interest and liking in the children of the beautiful examples of aboriginal art to be obtained in their own province that many of them have started little private collections of their own."²⁹⁷

In advocating that collecting and cultivating friendships with Indigenous peoples were constitutive practices, Mary Weekes advanced a type of collecting similar to her own, which in turn suggests her attempt to share the *(un)settling* she experienced. Weekes's production of textbooks for schoolchildren that did not ignore a complicated and radically unequal colonial past prefigures the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's recommendations for mandatory

²⁹⁶ Weekes, *Great Chiefs and Mighty Hunters of the Western Plains* (Regina: School Aids and Text Book Pub., 1947), 117-118.

²⁹⁷ Weekes, "Speech to the Regina Historical Association." It is notable that in the handwritten edition of her speech Weekes crossed out "Indian" in this sentence and replaced it with "Aboriginal," suggesting an early recognition of the inappropriateness of the term Indian (although on a whole she retains use of the term).

Kindergarten to Grade Twelve education on residential schools, treaties, and Indigenous peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada.²⁹⁸

Weekes further pursued the educational potential of her collection at the Provincial Museum of Natural History in Regina. In 1947 she wrote to Alice Lighthall that “[Mr. Bard] thinks my idea of opening the museum to the public for a few days (putting on a show), and inviting the various craft groups, a good one and something may come out of it,” suggesting her educational plan for her collection.²⁹⁹ Elsewhere, she wrote about “Mr. Bard’s plans for developing the museum (Indian) idea in an educational way.”³⁰⁰ It is unclear whether Weekes meant to include settler or Indigenous women’s craft groups in her educational plan. In any event, her educational mission complicates the museum’s then mandate for preservation of ethnological specimens and instead reveals her insistence that the collection be a source of revival and evidence of the continuation of Indigenous culture.³⁰¹ Unlike the failures of the Canadian Handicraft Guild exhibition to communicate Mary Weekes’s emerging consciousness of her complicit position as a settler, Weekes’s writing for schoolchildren and her dedication to the collection’s educational role suggests an effort to relay her *(un)settling* to others.

IV. “Of lasting interest and importance”: Remediating the Mary Weekes Collection

This thesis has approached the Weekes Collection primarily by examining the circumstances of its acquisition and suggesting how the valuable lessons Weekes learned failed to be communicated in contemporary exhibitions, but were captured in

²⁹⁸ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, “Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action,” 2015, http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf.

²⁹⁹ Mary Weekes to Alice Lighthall, November 24, 1947, C4 D1 082 1947, CHG.

³⁰⁰ Mary Weekes to Mrs. Hertz, November 15, 1947, C4 D1 092 1948, CHG.

³⁰¹ Shepard Krech III, “Introduction,” in *Collecting Native America: 1870-1960*, ed. Shepard Krech III and Barbara A. Hail (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1999), 12-13.

her writing for schoolchildren. I have evoked the lived realities of one woman's experience as a settler in order to replace, as Stoler eloquently puts it, "colonialism's stick figures with actors who combined goodwill and sympathy for the dispossessed with racist beliefs."³⁰² She contends that such scholarship "underscores that colonial regimes were not less complex racially inflected social and political configurations than are ours today."³⁰³ Mary Weekes underwent a tentative (*un*)*settling* akin to the decolonizing impulses of contemporary scholarship whose similarities indicate that contemporary Canadian society is by no means fully unsettled or decolonized. Because the process is ongoing, I would argue, Weekes's collection is, as she herself believed, "of lasting interest and importance" to contemporary practices for decolonizing colonial collections.³⁰⁴

Although the Weekes Collection purports to be "representative of the Indians of Saskatchewan," Indigenous voices have been conspicuously absent from the analysis I have presented because they are absent from the archives associated with the collection.³⁰⁵ Jacques Derrida understands archives as sites of violence, meaning that archives are predicated on selection and exclusion and are by definition evaluative.³⁰⁶ Moreover, because archives and those who use them are wont to forget their selective origin, they come to be incorrectly understood as neutral repositories.³⁰⁷ Mary Weekes was conscious of archival power and carefully pieced together the documents of her life in seven scrapbooks and numerous boxes of manuscripts, correspondence, and photos. Weekes ensured the preservation of her story by donating some of these

³⁰² Stoler, "Matters of Intimacy as Matters of State," 896.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Mary Weekes to Fred Bard, December 10, 1947, Mary Weekes papers, RSM.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 7.

³⁰⁷ Pierra Nora observed that "modern memory is, above all, archival" suggesting that as a result, archival absences do not form part of our collective memory. Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire," trans. Marc Roudebush, *Representations* 26 (Spring 1989): 13.

records to the provincial archives herself between 1948 and 1980 and leaving instructions to others to donate on her behalf, thus ensuring the availability of the documentation on which this thesis relies.³⁰⁸ The self-conscious nature of her actions is further evidenced by her annotations of newspaper articles and photographs, which testify to her personal involvement (Figure 2.6).³⁰⁹

Although evidently concerned with maintaining her own record for posterity, Weekes also made efforts to include her Indigenous friends in the archive. For instance, letters exchanged between Mary Weekes and Dan Kennedy attribute the source of Weekes's historical knowledge to Kennedy. Likewise, a considerable number of the pieces in her collection record the maker's name in acquisition records, which was an unusually attentive gesture for the period.³¹⁰ These fragmentary traces of Indigenous agency and voice are nonetheless mediated through the perspective of Weekes—an empathetic settler whose archive testifies to the negotiation of her identity and not the negotiations of the Indigenous peoples she encountered.

Such scholars as Sherry Farrell Racette and Stacey Loyer have proposed strategies that work against the fragmentary traces of Indigenous voices in the collections that purport to represent them. Racette reconceives of museum collections as valuable sources of Indigenous women's history even though their voices “are often conspicuously absent from historic documents.”³¹¹ Racette reads this history through the colours and designs on pieces in museum collections, which “reveal critical information about the worlds and circumstances in which they were

³⁰⁸ See footnote 95 for details of the construction of the Weekes fonds.

³⁰⁹ See annotation made by Weekes on “Annual Meeting of the VON,” *Leader Post*, February 11, 1965, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, SB 3, p.71, SAB and the annotation on figure 2.6 indicating “Mary Weekes in skirt.”

³¹⁰ Sherry Farrell Racette suggests that historically, collectors and museums did not record the names of the women who made the beadwork they acquired. Weekes's records are an exception to this tendency. Racette, “Looking for Stories and Unbroken Threads: Museum Artifacts as Women's History and Cultural Legacy,” in *Restoring the Balance: First Nations Women, Community, and Culture*, ed. Gail Guthrie Valaskakis et al. (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2009), 285.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, 285.

created.”³¹² Motifs, materials and methods of production all reflect Indigenous negotiations within the colonial encounter and also “the power of the creative process to provide respite in times of trouble.”³¹³ Racette also considers museum collections of Indigenous women’s handicraft as repositories of a “remarkable intellectual, technical, and artistic legacy,” through which contemporary artists can reconnect with traditional objects and reactivate them.³¹⁴ Museum collections, such as that of Mary Weekes, can thus be reactivated as sites that do not simply preserve Indigenous culture, but rather insist upon the contemporaneity and continued presence of Indigenous culture.

Stacey Loyer’s analysis of Onkwehonwe lacrosse sticks alternatively traces the fragmented Indigenous voices in archives as “starting points for narratives which contextualize Indigenous negotiations within anthropological collecting projects.”³¹⁵ Piecing together various written notes and physical objects relating to lacrosse sticks, plant medicines and other stories, Loyer emphasizes the interconnections among elements of Onkwehonwe life.³¹⁶ In so doing, she seeks to “revitalize material in ways that open interpretations so they might better resonate with communities, and reflect complicated histories of negotiations with both tradition and colonization.”³¹⁷ Both Loyer’s and Racette’s strategies endeavour to fill-in archival gaps, recover historically silenced voices, and reclaim Indigenous ways of knowing through colonial collections.

My approach to the Weekes Collection proposes an alternative strategy based on James Clifford’s assertion that “ideally the history of its own collection and

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Ibid. , 306.

³¹⁴ Ibid. , 285.

³¹⁵ Stacey Loyer, “Connecting through Collecting: Locating Lacrosse Sticks in Frederick Wilkerson Waugh’s Collection from the Six Nations of the Grand River,” *Material Culture Review* 75 (Spring 2011): 52.

³¹⁶ Ibid. , 57.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

display should be a visible aspect of any exhibition.”³¹⁸ As chapter one demonstrated, the collection both enabled and was produced by a series of personal encounters between the collector and local Indigenous peoples. Just as Weekes pronounced that she could not speak of her collection without speaking of herself, neither can contemporary scholars ignore her presence in her collection. If as Baudrillard proposes it is invariably oneself that one collects, then the Mary Weekes Collection is ultimately representative more of her identity and experience in the colonial encounter than it is of the Indigenous peoples it claims to represent.³¹⁹

None of which is to say the collection should not equally reflect the Indigenous experience in the colonial encounter. But, in the absence of strong Indigenous voices in the collection, I adopt a strategy that draws attention to silence, but does not overtly seek to fill it. Rodney G.S. Carter’s study of powerful archival silences borrows from Karmen MacKendrick to emphasize that “the naming of silence subverts it.”³²⁰ As a settler scholar I am wary of invoking what scholars have called “native agency as a colonialist alibi,” namely, using evidence of Indigenous resilience to colonialism in order to absolve its perpetrators.³²¹ Neither do I dispute the presence of Indigenous agency in the Weekes Collection, which was in fact largely acquired by Mary Weekes on the offer of Indigenous men and women who came to her cottage door. But, by concentrating on Weekes in the collection’s history, I seek to make conspicuous the absence of Indigenous voices in the collection and its accompanying archives. I propose that amplifying Weekes’s voice in the collection more accurately represents its function as a facilitator in the negotiation of her gendered, settler identity. While

³¹⁸ Clifford, “On Collecting Art and Culture,” 229.

³¹⁹ Baudrillard, “The System of Collecting,” 12.

³²⁰ Rodney G.S. Carter, “Of Things Said and Unsaid: Power, Archival Silences, and Power in Silence,” *Archivaria* 61 (Spring 2006): 222.

³²¹ Robin Brownlie and Mary-Ellen Kelm, “Desperately Seeking Absolution: Native Agency as Colonialist Alibi?” *Canadian Historical Review* 75, no. 4 (December 1994): 1; Sarah Carter, *Aboriginal People and Colonizers of Western Canada to 1900*, 10.

not an adequate replacement for a vocal Indigenous presence in museum collections, hers is a voice that tells a seemingly unusual story about how collecting Indigenous material culture may not always be an act of dispossession. In this case, collecting was a tentative, incomplete, contradictory, but nonetheless active way through which Weekes meaningfully connected with Indigenous communities in ways that challenged her privilege.

While the first chapter of this thesis considered how the liminal space of Weekes's cottage facilitated unusually intimate social relationships with her Indigenous friends, the second considered the narrow limits of liminality and what happens to the objects and sensitivities acquired when they leave the cottage. As Turner observes, in the return to spaces of daily life those who have been transformed by their time in a liminal space and who have "more alert faculties and enhanced knowledge of how things work" still become "once more subject to custom."³²² In the case of the *Indian Arts of Canada* exhibition, the visual rhetoric of ethnological display overshadowed the nuances of Weekes's own positioning of her collection as one defined by the social circumstances of its acquisition. In contrast, the inclusion of her collection to illustrate her school textbooks more accurately communicated the important social value Weekes attributed to both the production of beadwork and the process of collecting. While the Guild's exhibitions were mediated by a multitude of stakeholders and constrained by external factors, Weekes's written works were sole-authored and in this sense liberated from certain customary constraints.³²³ I end by proposing how contemporary exhibitions of the Weekes Collection might more

³²² Turner, "Betwixt and Between," 53.

³²³ A letter from Alice Lighthall to Mary Weekes illustrates some of the constraints the Guild's exhibition faced: "As you probably heard before you left, we were obliged to be in the same Gallery as the great Coronation picture and, therefore, the Indian Art had to be as much attuned to the Royal note as possible. This meant that the material we could otherwise have used had to be greatly curtailed, and only such things as could be shown well in cases were able to find a place—the wall panels excepted." Alice Lighthall to Mary Weekes, July 24, 1947, C4 D1 082 1947, CHG.

successfully communicate the *(un)settling* power of the collection and how the incorporation of histories and processes of acquisition might in turn challenge contemporary discourses about settler-colonial collecting practices.

Conclusion

“Food, shelter, the return of their hunting grounds was all these poor people wanted. These things had been wrest from them by the pioneers—by herself!”

“Olive skin pressed fair; raven hair, yellow; brave heart beat against noble red.”

—Mary Weekes, “The Wedding Dress,” *Prairie Sketchbook*, ca. mid-1930s.³²⁴

This thesis began with a quote from Mary Weekes’s story “The Wedding Dress,” in which Ellen LeMoyne acknowledges the complicity of pioneers like herself in the dispossession of the Indigenous peoples now raiding her town. Looking down on the disorderly scene from a window, Ellen recalls the trunk beneath her bed where she left her treasures, among them her wedding dress. Meanwhile, the other women who have gathered for safety in the barracks chide her for standing so close to the window and inviting her own death at the hands of the “savages” below. Pushing away the hands of a woman who has reached out to pull her away, Ellen contemplates how “she always shrank from the touch of all except those whom she loved.” When Winona, Ellen’s washing woman and friend—whose sick and starving child Ellen had two years earlier helped nurse back to life—arrives on the scene after having fought a woman from the raiding tribe for Ellen’s wedding dress, the two women embrace. Juxtaposing the physical features of Ellen with those of Winona, Weekes captures a fictional moment of tenderness that echoes her own relationships with the Indigenous peoples she simultaneously considered as friends, labourers, and artisans.

The tenderness of the moment between Ellen and Winona is complicated by an inherently asymmetrical distribution of power. Winona may be Ellen’s friend, but she is also her employee and the object of Ellen’s maternalistic charity. These are the “tense and tender” dynamics at stake in this thesis, which has argued that Weekes’s

³²⁴ Mary Weekes, “The Wedding Dress.”

collecting activities fundamentally impacted how she understood and negotiated her identity as a settler and as a woman in twentieth-century Saskatchewan.³²⁵ This negotiation is best captured by the sentiment of *(un)settling* produced by the simultaneity of certain geographic and social circumstances surrounding the acquisition of Weekes's collection.

Chapter one considered the unusual nature of these circumstances and how Weekes located the origins of her collection at her summer cottage in the Qu'Appelle Valley, to which she eagerly returned each summer and where she established what she perceived to be close friendships with surrounding Indigenous peoples. Interrogating the collecting narrative offered by her archive, I argued that Weekes considered the circumstances of acquisition to be more important than the materials acquired. I further argued that the social circumstances she enjoyed at her cottage were the product of its unique position as a liminal space somewhat removed from the social and racial hierarchies governing settler-Indigenous relations in the city. I neither legitimized nor discredited Weekes's claims to friendship, but turned to her prose as evidence that whether real or fictional, Weekes's perceived intimacy with her Indigenous friends compelled her to confront her complicity in a colonial system that consciously disadvantaged them. Her prose demonstrates her *(un)settling* realizations in every sense of the word. Semiautobiographical stories reveal her discomfort but also offer her comfort by excusing her as a "good, kind woman" unlike other settlers; meanwhile, her very ability to pursue a writing career relied on Indigenous domestic labourers trained by residential schools—important institutional agents in the dispossession and assimilation Weekes's prose critiques.

³²⁵ Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties," 831.

Chapter two further considered the parenthetical nature of the prefix in *(un)settling* by elaborating on the genuine insight Weekes gained from her settler-Indigenous encounters and by considering how her resultant beliefs about “authenticity” were no less repressive than other prevailing beliefs. It also considered how, due to conventions of display, the exhibition of her collection could not communicate the non-material value (namely, the facilitation of close social relationships and cross-cultural understanding) that Weekes herself highly regarded in her collection. The non-material value of the collection was more successfully communicated through her writing for schoolchildren and in her educational plan for its use at the Provincial Museum of Natural History in Regina. Chapter two concluded by proposing that the tensions involved in acquiring and displaying the Weekes Collection should be part of its future displays. While scholars have importantly endeavoured to recover the voices of Indigenous peoples in collections like that of Weekes, I argue that it is equally important not to forget the voice of the collector. The collection is, after all, both the reason for and the result of a dialogic encounter between Mary Weekes and Indigenous makers. This dialogue is, as philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin observes, “unfinalizable, always incomplete and productive of further chains of response” that continue to be of interest to contemporary museum practice.³²⁶

While this thesis is fundamentally about recovering the life and collecting activities of Mary Weekes, it has hoped to accomplish a number of different goals concerning the acquisition, historical display, and future of her collection. In so doing, it has opened up a number of avenues for future research on how the *(un)settling* proposed by the Weekes Collection speaks to a broader need in contemporary

³²⁶ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Vern W. McGee (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1986), 170.

museum practice. Although it may seem somewhat regressive to respond to a lack of Indigenous voices in the collection by amplifying that of the collector, I propose it as a strategy of unsettling colonial collections. I distinguish unsettling from decolonizing in regards to the target audience. Efforts at decolonization have largely been led by and targeted at Indigenous audiences by valorizing the culture and traditions that colonization systematically sought to eliminate. As Amy Lonetree observes “museums can be very painful sites for Native peoples, as they are intimately tied to the colonization process.”³²⁷ A decolonizing museum practice must therefore involve assisting Indigenous communities to address the “legacies of historical unresolved grief by speaking the hard truths of colonialism and thereby creating spaces for healing and understanding.”³²⁸ It reasons that museums should also be painful sites for settlers—inheritors of the rewards of colonization. At the very least, museums should be sites where settlers are compelled to not only understand the value and perseverance of Indigenous cultures, but also their own complicity in systems of colonization that continue to this day.

As settler scholar Paulette Reagan observes, reconciliation between Canada’s Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities needs to rely not on what she calls “a misguided, obsessive, and mythical quest to assuage colonizer guilt by solving the Indian problem,” but on solving what Roger Epp has called “the settler problem.”³²⁹ Posing the settler rather than the Indian as the problem, Reagan argues that, “the singular focus on the Other blinds...[settlers] from acknowledging [their own] need to

³²⁷ Amy Lonetree, *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 1.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

³²⁹ Paulette Reagan, *Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010), 11; Roger Epp, “We Are All Treaty People: History, Reconciliation and the ‘Settler Problem,’” in *Dilemmas of Reconciliation: Cases and Concepts*, ed. Carol A.L. Prager and Trudy Govier (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2003), 228.

decolonize.”³³⁰ Only by confronting “the collective responsibility [settlers] bear for the colonial status quo” can reconciliation be realized.³³¹ This methodology of unsettling is not, nor should it be, removed from a decolonizing methodology. I earlier cited Alison Brown’s concern that collecting studies tend “to privilege the experience of collectors and [gloss] over the dialogic nature of acquisition processes.”³³² I have strategically privileged the voice of Mary Weekes, but have nonetheless emphasized the dialogic nature of acquisition by focusing on how Weekes’s Indigenous friends impacted her understanding of her own identity and led to her *(un)settling*.

There is, however, more to be done in order to continue this dialogue. Weekes’s accession records suggest great potential for community engagement, which was unfortunately beyond the scope of this project. Most items in the collection indicate the location of origin such as the Muscowpetung, Standing Buffalo, Piapot, or File Hills reserves. Better yet are those few pieces to which Weekes attached a specific name. For instance, two Sioux porcupine quill strips are attributed to one Mrs. Jacob Leswiss from Fort Qu’Appelle; a caribou gun case is attributed to “Old Dick,” a Cree man Weekes knew at her B-Say-Tah Point cottage; her son Richard’s first pair of moccasins were made by a Sioux woman named Mrs. Jim Bear. While the Isnanna family name does not appear in Weekes’s accession records, Frank Isnanna and his family are also recurring figures in her archive.³³³ Future work on the Weekes Collection should give family and community members the opportunity to reconnect with material pieces of their history.

In fact, the Weekes Collection offers an ideal opportunity for a multi-vocal exhibition that would speak to the complex histories of Indigenous craft production

³³⁰ Reagan, *Unsettling the Settler Within*, 11

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² Brown, *First Nations, Museums, Narrations*, 20.

³³³ Weekes, Handwritten list of objects donated to the Royal Saskatchewan Museum.

and consumption in the twentieth century. Analyzing collaborative exhibitions, Ruth Phillips suggests that it is possible to “create an exhibit that [displays], rather than [elides], the multiple meanings attributed to objects” by different stakeholders.³³⁴ Putting the perspectives of Mary Weekes, the Indigenous producers of her collection, and the more dominant discourses of salvage ethnography and craft revival in dialogue with one another—as this thesis has done—would make conspicuous the multiple stakeholders involved in historical collections of Indigenous material culture. Likewise, the multivocality of the exhibition would underline the sites of contemporary and historical, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, resistance to dominant colonial policies.

The process of studying Mary Weekes has also revealed the likelihood that she was not alone in the *(un)settling* she experienced as a result of intimate encounters with Indigenous material culture and peoples. In fact, her experience may be indicative of a larger phenomenon among settler women who lived in close contact with Indigenous peoples. Further research is required to search acquisition records for collectors similar to Mary Weekes, who acquired pieces of Indigenous material culture through sustained encounters with their neighbours (instead of as tourists or through their professions as anthropologists or Indian agents). But, the stories of people like Henrietta Muir Edwards and Amelia Paget suggest the possibility for further explorations of the tentative emergence of the unsettling experience.

Where Mary Weekes was prepared for her Indigenous visitors with “tea and cakes,” Henrietta Muir Edwards “kept a pot on the stove, never locked her door, welcomed many [Indigenous] visitors and fed anyone.”³³⁵ Better known as one of

³³⁴ Phillips, “Toward a Dialogic Paradigm: New Models of Collaborative Curatorial Practice,” in *Museum Pieces: Toward the Indigenization of Canadian Museums* (Montreal & Queens: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011), 196.

³³⁵ Roome, ““From One Whose Home is Among the Indians,”” 62.

“The Famous Five” who campaigned for women to be recognized as persons under the law, Edwards was also an avid collector. Patricia A. Roome recounts that Edwards and her husband had already compiled a small collection of “Indian curios” in Montréal before leaving for the Prairies where her husband was a government doctor.³³⁶ Their collection grew during their time in the West and family members recall that Henrietta was “all mixed up with the Indians.”³³⁷ Roome observes, much as I have observed of Mary Weekes, the ambivalent nature of Henrietta Muir Edwards’s relationship to Indigenous peoples and their material culture. Signing her cards, “from one whose home is among the Indians,” Edwards demonstrates a certain level of comfort and intimacy between her and the Indigenous women (domestic help, artisans, neighbours or patients of her husband) with whom she spent considerable amounts of time.³³⁸ Roome suggests that while Edwards lamented the destruction of Indigenous culture, she accepted it as inevitable and did not, as Mary Weekes did, blame the colonial process.³³⁹ Nevertheless, evidence of Edwards’s ambivalent discourse suggests a potential link with Mary Weekes and other settler women who found their homes “among the Indians.”³⁴⁰

Amelia Paget, an author and member of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild like Mary Weekes, demonstrates a similar experience of *(un)settling* in her short novel *The People of the Plains* (1909).³⁴¹ Amelia Paget was fluent in Cree and Saulteaux, having grown up the daughter of a Hudson’s Bay Company employee in Île à la Crosse and Fort Pitt, Saskatchewan before moving to Ottawa with her husband. Shelly Hulan suggests that while Paget’s text is at times nostalgic for the inevitable

³³⁶ Ibid. , 55-56.

³³⁷ Ibid. , 57.

³³⁸ Ibid. , 64.

³³⁹ Ibid. , 70.

³⁴⁰ Ibid. , 64.

³⁴¹ Amelia M. Paget, *The People of the Plains* (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2004), originally published Toronto: W. Briggs, 1909.

disappearance of an Indigenous past, at other times the text invites her readers to more critically contemplate the loss of cultural difference “which is not compensated for by a better future.”³⁴² The impact Paget’s intimate and sustained encounters with Indigenous peoples had on her attitude was of great concern to Duncan Campbell Scott, one of the key architects of the government’s assimilation project. Scott wrote the introduction to the first edition of Paget’s text and characterized Paget as a “cordial advocate” for Indigenous peoples, commenting on the warmth of her relationships, but also betraying his hesitation at the strength of her advocacy.³⁴³ Scott’s editorial inputs on Paget’s manuscript and his introduction suggest his genuine fear that the impacts of Paget’s intimate encounters with Indigenous peoples might spread to her readers. Hulan observes that he “warns readers to be wary of [Paget’s personal approach] because her personal experience on the Plains disqualifies her as a professional researcher who can represent the Native past accurately.”³⁴⁴ From a contemporary perspective, his insistence on discrediting Paget’s personal experience does the opposite: it validates the impacts of these intimate contact zones on settlers and the potential power they had to shift settler perspectives.

Paget and Edwards are but two examples among a suite of other women whose intimate encounters with Indigenous peoples in their homes and elsewhere suggest that the *(un)settling* Mary Weekes experienced was a more widespread phenomenon worthy of closer analysis.³⁴⁵ A larger project would consider studying these women as evidence of the slippages in colonial discourse. Such a study would not discredit the violence of colonialism or these women’s participation in it, nor

³⁴² Hulan, “Amelia Paget’s *The People of the Plains*,” 49.

³⁴³ Sarah A. Carter, “The ‘Cordial Advocate’: Amelia McLean Paget and *The People of the Plains*,” in *With Good Intentions: Euro-Canadian and Aboriginal Relations in Colonial Canada*, ed. Celia Haig-Brown and David A. Nock (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006), 200.

³⁴⁴ Hulan, “Amelia Paget’s *The People of the Plains*,” 60.

³⁴⁵ Other women and collectors of potential interest include: Catharine Whyte, Mary Schaeffer (Whyte Museum), Annie Smith Wallis (Moose Jaw), Maisey Hurley (Vancouver Museum), and Alice Ann Nottingham (Royal Saskatchewan Museum).

frame their actions as benevolent but misguided. Instead, it would identify their conscious participation in colonialism, their tentative recognition of this complicity, and, therefore, the beginnings of an *(un)settling* process that continues to this day.

The importance of studying Mary Weekes and those like her is demonstrated by the fact that the impacts of this tentative *(un)settling* impulse are still only recently beginning to be felt in policies across a wide range of governmental and cultural institutions. It is perhaps more important than ever before that non-Indigenous Canadians are willing to see themselves as inheritors of privileges accorded to them by a colonial past that is increasingly relegated to textbooks rather than lived-experience. The effects of this receding colonial past remain a daily reality for Canada's Indigenous peoples, for example, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, the First Nations communities for whom clean drinking water is not guaranteed, and the over-represented Indigenous peoples incarcerated in Canadian jails. While initiatives like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada have importantly drawn attention to the enduring impact of residential schools, the justified vilification of the faceless government and oftentimes unnamed priests and nuns at residential schools threatens to make them scapegoats that allow the rest of Canada's settler population to feign innocence.

Aligning these iconic figures of colonialism with others like Mary Weekes, who behaved ambivalently in the colonial system, suggests that, "colonial regimes were not less complex racially inflected social and political configurations than are ours today."³⁴⁶ It may indeed be easier to find oneself in the contradictory gestures of Mary Weekes than in the easily vilified actions of abusive school staff. In Weekes we might recognize the committed feminist who actively follows the national inquiry on

³⁴⁶ Stoler, "Matters of Intimacy as Matters of State," 896.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, but who wears a headdress to a music festival; the Indigenous studies major who shops at Urban Outfitters even though the store has been repeatedly embroiled in accusations of cultural appropriation; the humanitarian intimately involved in finding houses for refugees who is ignorant of Indigenous housing crises. As Laurel Thatcher Ulrich writes, “history is a conversation and sometimes a shouting match between present and past, though often the voices we most want to hear are barely audible.”³⁴⁷ In the conversation about Canada’s ongoing process of decolonization and reconciliation, Mary Weekes’s is a voice and a story that both deserves and needs to be heard.

³⁴⁷ Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Well-Behaved Women Seldom Make History* (New York: Vintage Books, 2007), xxxiii.

Illustrations

Figure Intro 1. Mary Weekes in field, 1938, photographer unknown. Photographic print. Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, R-A23482-7. Reproduction courtesy of the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan. Copyright courtesy of Kathy Weekes Southee.



Figure Intro 2. ‘Many Maples’ (Weekes family cottage), date unknown, artist unknown. Painting. Photograph taken by author with the permission of Vicky Weekes.



Figure Intro 3. Paired portrait of Melville Bell Weekes and Mary Weekes, date unknown, photographer unknown. Photographic print. Reproduction courtesy of Kathy Weekes Southee. Copyright courtesy of Kathy Weekes Southee.



Figure Intro 4. Mary Weekes showing her collection to Hon. J.H. Sturdy, Minister of Social Welfare, at the Provincial Museum of Natural History in Regina, 1947, photographer unknown. Newspaper clipping. "As the Museum Grows and Expands," *The Leader-Post*, December 17, 1947, Mary Weekes fonds, F106, SB 7, p.39, Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan. Reproduction courtesy of the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan. Copyright courtesy of Kathy Weekes Southee.

THE LEADER-POST, REGINA, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1947—

As Museum Grows and Expands Museum visited

The display of a Great Horned Owl family is shown (right) in its natural habitat. This particular display shows the adult birds bringing food to the young in the nest.

These nests are used each year and are built 20 to 30 feet above the ground in a secluded area.

The Great Horned Owls are beneficial to agriculturists, as they feed on rabbits, mice and crows.

Centre photo shows mounted Sharp-Tailed Grouse before a mural that illustrates the natural habitat of these birds. The Sharp-Tailed Grouse was adopted in 1945, as the provincial bird emblem.

Lower photo shows Mrs. Mary Weekes, well-known Western writer (Painted Arrows; Great Chiefs and Mighty Hunters; Round the Council Fires) showing Indian relics to the Hon. J. H. Sturdy, Minister of Social Welfare. Photo was taken on the occasion of "Museum Night," an annual affair, when members of the Natural History Society hold their meeting and tour the museum. Display at the back is the Weekes Indian bead work collection of one hundred forty-five specimens, collected by Mrs. Weekes and which is now a part of the museum display.





December meeting of the Regina Natural History society took the form of a visit to the provincial museum, Monday night.

Members were welcomed by Reconstruction Minister J. H. Sturdy, under whose department the museum is operated. Mr. Sturdy outlined the past history of the museum and plans for the future.

A collection of Indian beadwork was presented by Mrs. M. B. Weekes and was accepted on behalf of the museum by Mr. Sturdy.

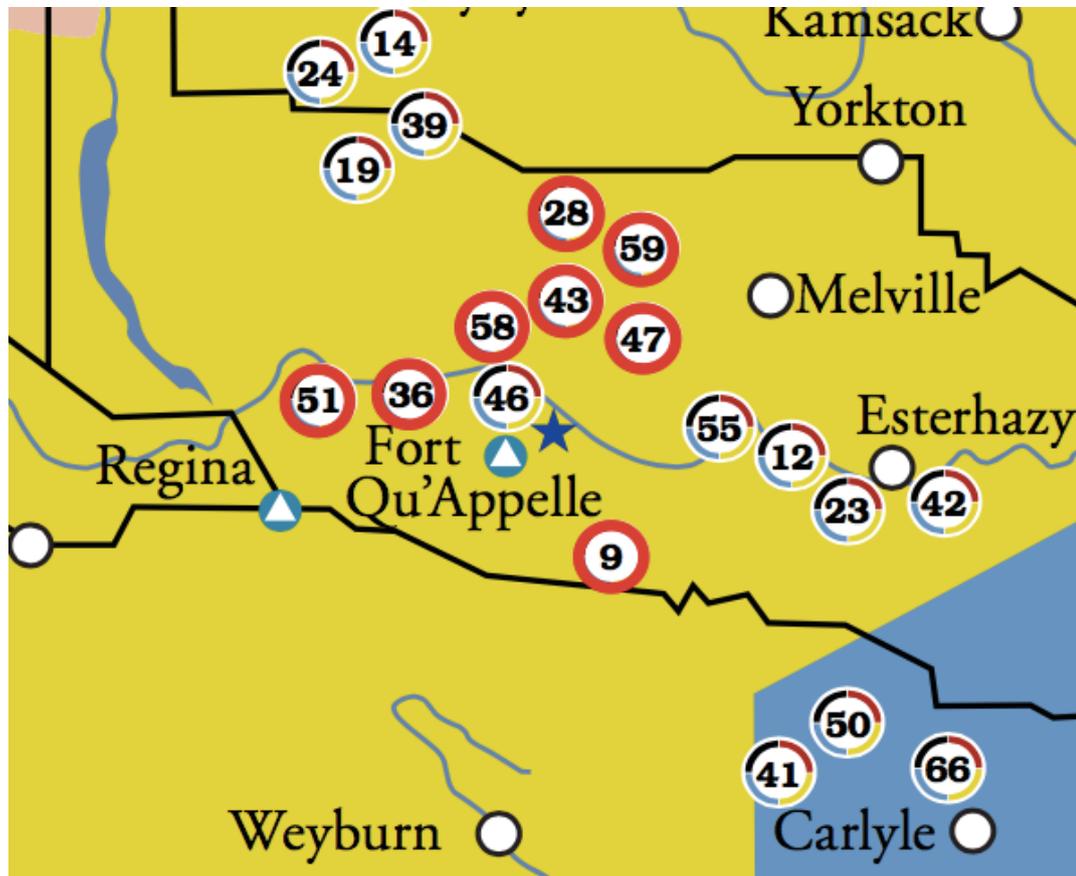
Fred Bard, museum curator, introduced Dr. Charles Dixon to the meeting. Dr. Dixon took a Pacific loon, the first recorded in the province, last fall and presented it to the museum, where it is now on display.

Society members visited various departments in the museum and afterwards spent a social hour in the lunchroom. A vote of thanks to Mr. Bard and his staff was moved by Dr. G. E. Ledingham.

Figure Intro 5. Mary Weekes sitting on a stone, date unknown, photographer unknown. Photographic print. Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, R-395-12. Reproduction courtesy of the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan. Copyright courtesy of Kathy Weekes Southee.



Figure Intro 6. Source communities for the Mary Weekes Collection [annotations made by author]. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, “First Nations in Saskatchewan,” <https://www.aadncaandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100020616/1100100020653>, last modified September 15, 2010.



Legend

- 51- Piapot First Nations
- 36- Muscowpetung Saulteaux First Nation
- 58- Standing Buffalo Dakota First Nation
- 43- Okanese First Nation*
- 28- Little Black Bear First Nation*
- 59- Star Blanket Cree Nation*
- 47- Peepeekisis First Nation*
- 9- Carry the Kettle First Nation
- ★ B-Say-Tah Point on Echo Lake

*Mary Weekes often refers collectively to these First Nations as the File Hills in her acquisition records, a name that references the single agency overseeing these four groups.

Figure Intro 7. "Mary Weekes Collection of Beadwork," 1947, typed list. Mary Weekes to Fred Bard, September 25, 1947. Materials from the Mary Weekes collection, accession number 4547, division 418. Photograph taken by author. © The Government of Saskatchewan, represented by the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, reproduced with permission. All rights reserved.

Mary Weekes Collection of Beadwork		
4 Firebags		\$ 80.00
21 prs moccasins	a/c \$20 ea	\$420.00
1 Floral handbag - solid beaded	a/c \$20 pr	15.00
1 Geometric design- " "		20.00
3 Breastpieces	" " a/c \$30 ea	90.00
1 decorated parchment box		15.00
1 Beaded vest		45.00
1 dancing fan		10.00
1 boys' beaded deerskin suit		25.00
3 beaded clubs	a/c \$15.00 ea	45.00
1 roach		5.00
1 pr. deerskin leggings		5.00
1 solid beaded leggings(short)		20.00
1 Indian rattle		6.00
1 knife sheath		6.00
1 solid beaded firebag with quill decoration		35.00
23 " " beits	a/c \$15 ea	345.00
4 Fine porcupine quill beits (\$60 the 4)		60.00
2 small wall pouches	a/c \$5 ea	10.00
4 pr. solid beaded cuffs	a/c \$10.00	40.00
1 Eskimo necklace		15.00
10 Beaded strips - various designs	a/c \$2.00 ea	20.00
1 complete set beaded strips(6 pieces) for costume		40.00
8 Algonquian pieces	a/c \$5	40.00
1 Beaded saddle		50.00
1 Crayon portrait Poundmaker		30.00
1 Indian Head - Rockthunder, by Metzger - in frame		75.00
3 Navajo rugs - \$25; 6; 5		36.00
3 baskets - 2 Nootka, 1 Micmac		4.00
1 Elaborate shelf piece worked in quills		50.00
A number of Indian photographs	(no charge)	
A number of historical H.B. Company calendars	"	
1 Navajo ring		5.00
1 shell earrings		4.00
1 pr. moccasins to be repaired		10.00
140 pieces - each pair of moccasins and cuffs counting as 2 pieces		
All museum pieces		

Figure 1.1 Portrait of Mary Weekes, date unknown, photographer unknown. Photographic print. Materials from the Mary Weekes collection, accession number 4547, division 418. Reproduction courtesy of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. © The Government of Saskatchewan, represented by the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, reproduced with permission. All rights reserved.



Figure 1.2 Excerpt from Weekes's handwritten list showing item 47 as "the first piece of Indian work I bought," date unknown. Materials from the Mary Weekes collection, accession number 4547, division 418. Photograph taken by author. © The Government of Saskatchewan, represented by the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, reproduced with permission. All rights reserved.

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- ✓ 44. Cree Bead. This is a rare piece of work. On "old" canvas. A great many old sold Hudson's Bay company beads. See article in "Great Chiefs and Mighty Hunters." Bought at Cottage 20 years ago.
- ✓ 45. Sioux (woman) belt in suggestive design and color. Hand loom. Has the quality of stained glass. Bought at Cottage.
- ✓ 46. Cree belt in unusually vigorous design. Bought at ~~Cottage~~ Regina Fair from Indian woman from Piapot-Reservation.
- ✓ 47. Hand woven Cree belt - Beautiful color combination and design. Bought at my cottage at Pi-say-Tah 29 years ago. This is the first piece of Indian work I bought.
- ✓ 48. 6 Complete Set (6 pieces) fine Cree beaded strips for costume. Bought at Fair - Piapot - Indian?
- ✓ 49. 1 Parkino necklace
- ✓ 50. 10 Beaded strips (woven) of various designs
- ✓ 51. Navajo ring (silver and turquoise)
- ✓ 52. 2 1/2 shell (polished bone) earrings & brass beads. Sioux

Figure 1.3 Beaded belts from the Weekes Collection, date unknown, photographer unknown. Photographic print. Materials from the Mary Weekes collection, accession number 4547, division 418. Reproduction courtesy of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. © The Government of Saskatchewan, represented by the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, reproduced with permission. All rights reserved.

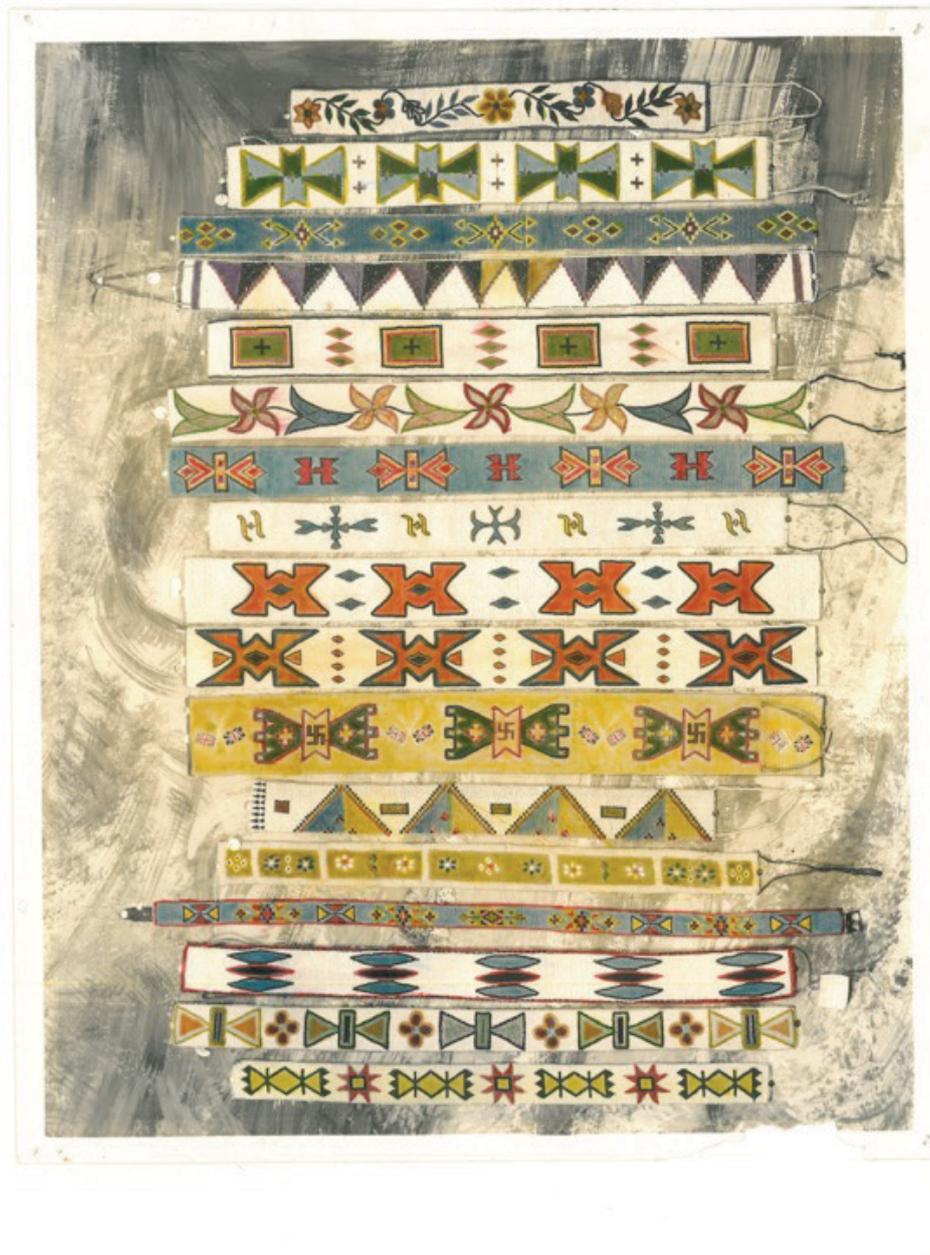


Figure 1.4 Saddle in the Weekes Collection, date unknown, photographer unknown. Photographic print. Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, R-B11635-4. Reproduction courtesy of the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan. Copyright courtesy of Kathy Weekes Southee.



Figure 1.5 Scrapbook page with “A Statue She Seemed” and photograph of unknown Indigenous woman (possibly Matawqua), date unknown, photographer unknown. Textual document and photographic print. Mary Weekes fonds, F106, SB 3, p.26, Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan. Photograph taken by author. Copyright courtesy of Kathy Weekes Southee.

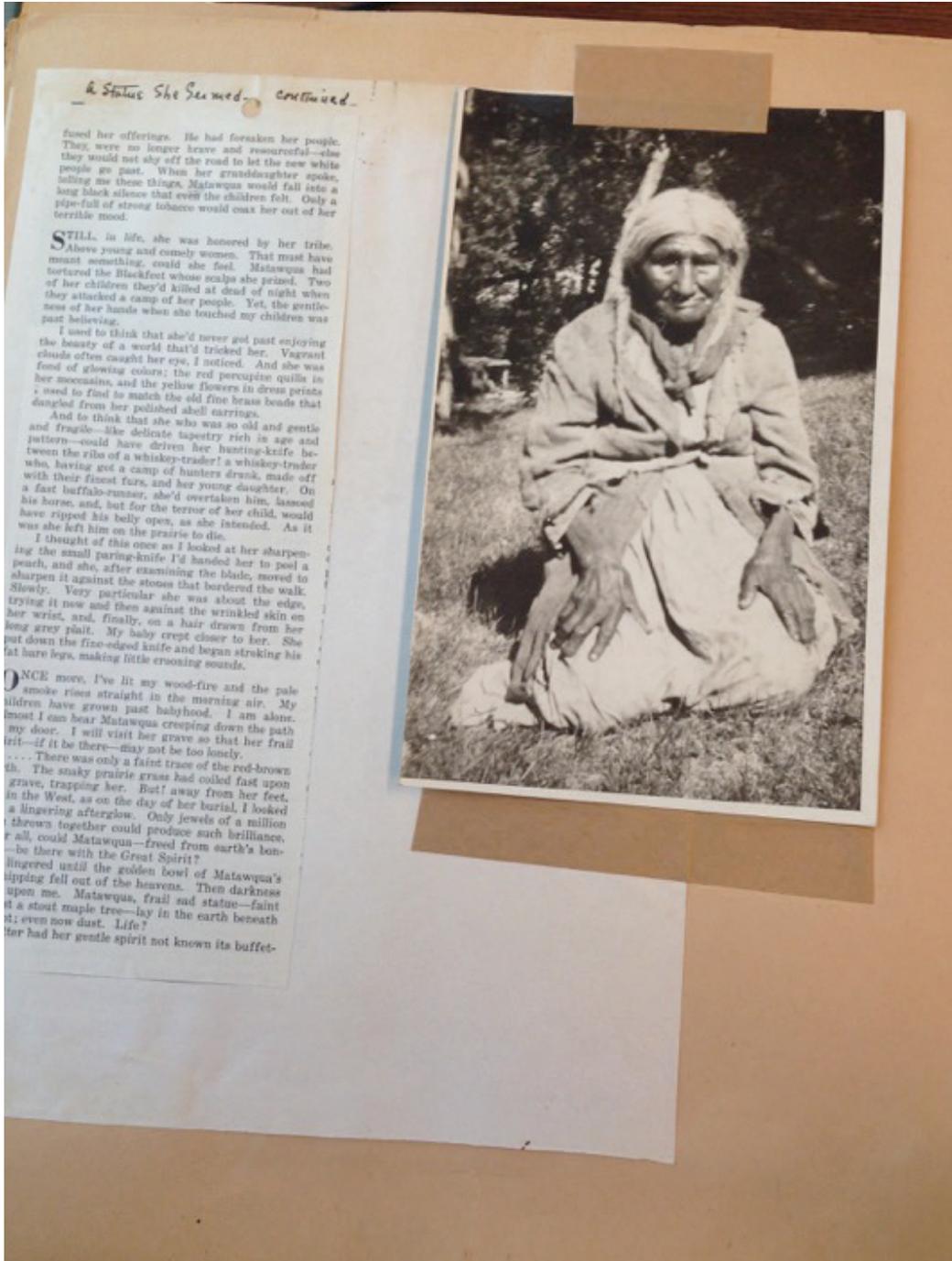


Figure 1.6 Exterior view of Fort Qu'Appelle Industrial School, Lebret, Saskatchewan, date unknown, Steele and Wing. Photographic print. Library and Archives Canada, PA-023092. Photo courtesy of Department of Mines and Technical Surveys.



Figure 2.1 Pieces from the Weekes Collection, date unknown, photographer unknown. Photographic print. Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, R-B11635-1. Reproduction courtesy of the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan. Copyright courtesy of Kathy Weekes Southee.



Figure 2.2 Pieces from the Weekes Collection, date unknown, photographer unknown. Photographic print. Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, R-B11635-2. Reproduction courtesy of the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan. Copyright courtesy of Kathy Weekes Southee.



Figure 2.3 Advertisement for the *Indian Arts of Canada* exhibition competition, 1947. Poster. Materials from the Mary Weekes collection, accession number 4547, division 418. Photograph taken by author. © The Government of Saskatchewan, represented by the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, reproduced with permission. All rights reserved.



Figure 2.4 West wall, Canadian Handicrafts Guild's 1946-1947 *Indian Arts of Canada* exhibition, 1946-1947, photographer unknown. Photographic print. Materials from the Mary Weekes collection, accession number 4547, division 418. Reproduction courtesy of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. © The Government of Saskatchewan, represented by the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, reproduced with permission. All rights reserved.

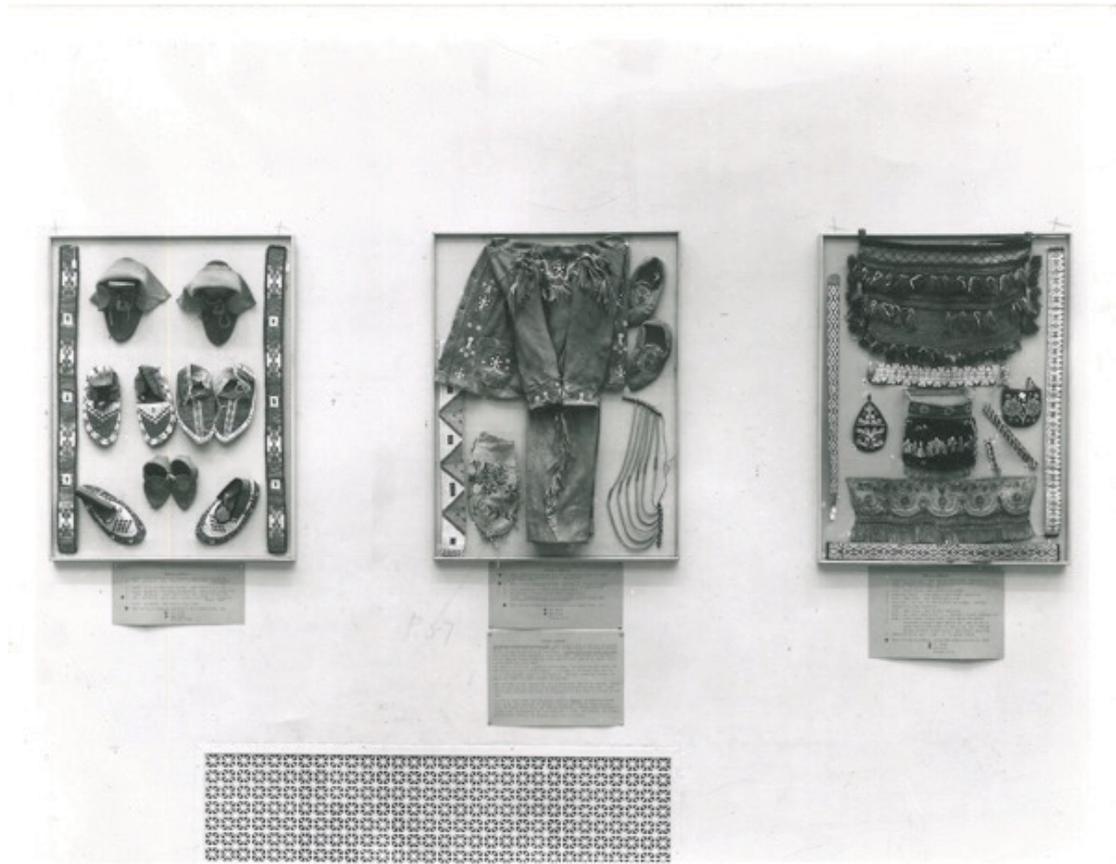


Figure 2.5 “More beadwork designs made by Prairie Indians (Author’s collection),” Mary Weekes, *Indians of the Plains* (Regina: School Aids and Text Book Publishing Company Limited, 1950), 62, photograph taken by author.

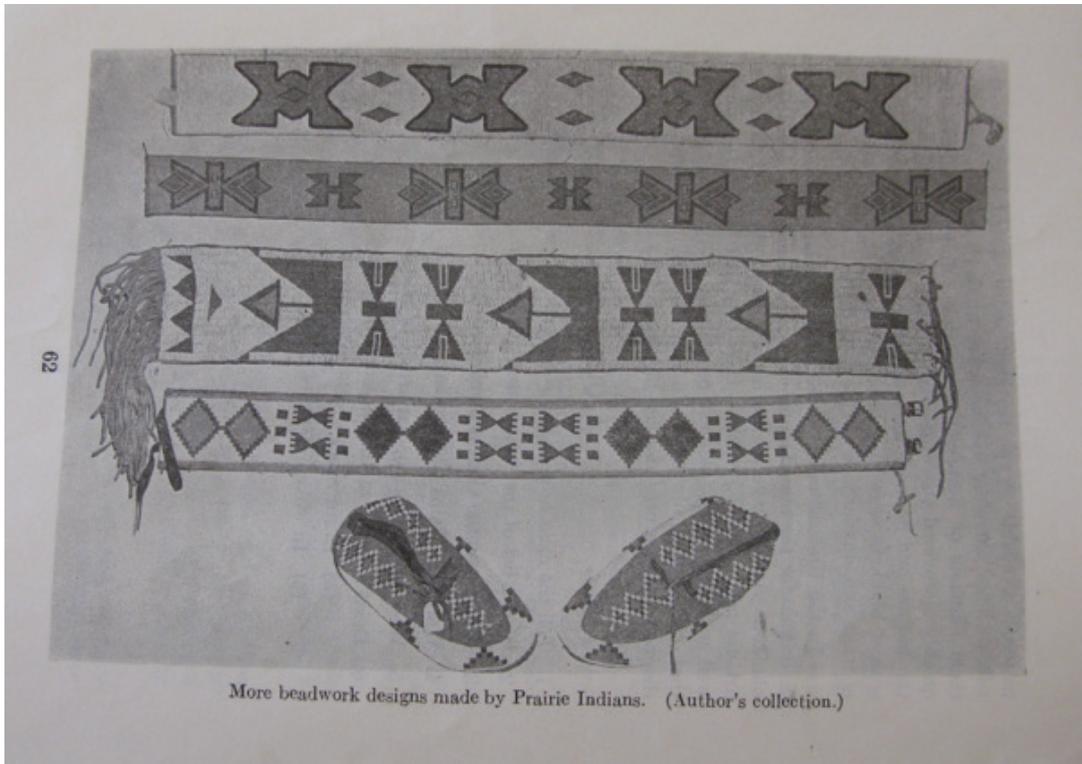


Figure 2.6 Annotated photo of the Sky Line Trail Hikers, unknown date, photographer unknown. Photographic print. Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, R-395-12. Photograph taken by author. Copyright courtesy of Kathy Weekes Southee.



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Appendix A

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Royal Saskatchewan Museum

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Figure Intro 7.

Figure 1.1

Figure 1.2

Figure 1.3

Figure 2.3

Figure 2.4

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Figure Intro 1

Figure Intro 5

Figure 2.6

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Figure Intro 4

Figure 1.4

Figure 1.5

Figure 2.1

Figure 2.2

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Appendix B

Ethics Clearance Received

The Carleton University Research Ethics Board examined this project for ethical clearance. On November 10, 2015, the REB found the research project to meet appropriate ethical standards as outlined in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human, 2nd edition*, and the *Carleton University Policies and Procedures for the Ethical Conduct of Research*. On March 17, 2016, the REB approved a change to protocol request.

Date of Clearance: November 10, 2015

Change to Protocol: On March 17, 2016 the Carleton University Research Ethics Board approved a change to protocol request

Researcher: Ruth Phillips (Primary Investigator), Manon Gaudet (Student Researcher: Master's)

Department: Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences/School for Studies in Art and Culture

University: Carleton University

Research Supervisor: Dr. Ruth Phillips

Project Number: 103721

Project Title: (Un)settling Mary Weekes: Collecting Indigenous Beadwork and Confronting Settler Identity Twentieth-Century Saskatchewan

Clearance Expires: May 31, 2016

Appendix C

Blank Consent Form



Consent to Participate

Title: (Un)settling Mary Weekes: Collecting Indigenous Beadwork and Confronting Settler Identity in Twentieth-Century Saskatchewan

Funding Source: N/A

Date of ethics clearance: November 10, 2015

Ethics Clearance for the Collection of Data Expires: May 31, 2016

I _____, choose to participate in a study investigating the life and collecting practices Mary Weekes. This study aims to recover the Mary Weekes collection of Indigenous beadwork as a valuable artifact of a domestic process of ethnographic collecting. The researcher for this study is Manon Gaudet in the Department of Art History at Carleton University. She is working under the supervision of Dr. Ruth Phillips, a professor in the Department of Art History.

This study involves one 60 to 90 minute interview. You will be provided with a list of questions a week ahead of time. Interview location will be subject to geographic proximity between the researcher and participant. In-person interviews will be conducted in a public coffee shop or library and participants will be responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from the research location. Remote interviews will be conducted via Skype. Participants will be responsible for arranging the appropriate conditions for their participation in the interview. Participants also consent to their understanding that information exchanged over Skype is subject to the United States PATRIOT Act. By agreeing to this interview, participants agree to the use of full names and direct quotations or paraphrase in the publication of the researcher's MA thesis and in any future publications regarding Mary Weekes.

Participants have the right to end participation in this project at any time during research and for up to two weeks after receiving the interview transcript for review. Participants do not need to provide a reason for withdrawal. Participants can withdraw by e-mailing the researcher. If a participant withdraws from the project, all information already provided will be immediately destroyed.

With participant consent, the interview will be recorded. The researcher will transcribe the recorded interview and the original recording will be destroyed. Within a week of completing the interview, the researcher will send the interview transcript to the participant for the review, modification or deletion of responses. Participants will have two weeks after receiving the transcript to send the modified transcript back to the researcher or to withdraw from participation.

The researcher will store the final transcript and any personal information including participant contact information on an encrypted hard drive. Research data will only be accessible by the researcher and research supervisor until such time that interview responses are published in part or in full.

The interview transcript will be retained by the researcher indefinitely for use in the publication of an MA thesis and in future publications relating to Mary Weekes. Personal contact information of participants will not be shared or made public in any way. In the unlikely event of a data breach, participants will be notified that their contact information may have been compromised and the participant will be responsible for taking appropriate steps to ensure his or her privacy.

If the participant would like a copy of the finished research project, participants are invited to contact the researcher to request an electronic copy.

The ethics protocol for this project was reviewed by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board, which provided clearance to carry out the research. Should you have questions or concerns related to your involvement in this research, please contact Professor Louise Heslop, Chair (CUREB-A):

CUREB contact information:

Dr. Louise Heslop, Chair
Dr. Andy Adler, Vice Chair
Carleton University Research Ethics Board-A

You may also contact:

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Supervisor contact information:

Name: Dr. Ruth Phillips
Department: Art History
Carleton University
Tel: 613-520-2600 x2350
Email: ruth_phillips@carleton.ca

Do you agree to have your interview recorded: YES NO
Do you agree to have your interview transcribed: YES NO

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of researcher

Date