



HOW COLLECTING & ART COMBINE...

Most collectors love old things from the past, and are often history buffs because of this. It goes with the territory and, the territory in question here is the scenery that Manly E. MacDonald captured in his paintings of old Ontario - scenery now long since changed.

As an example, the landscape below is of Roblin's Mill, Ameliasburg, which years ago was dismantled stone by stone from the homestead property and reconstructed at Black Creek Pioneer Village, Toronto for all to enjoy. Some would denounce its removal, but fortunately, MacDonald was able to paint its spring setting, capturing this mill and many others for eternity on canvas. Hence, the title, "Interpreter of Old Ontario".

This is what collectors do – save the past for the future, and perhaps make an investment along the way. And how do collectors get started? Most of us remember it, just like the first experience of learning to ride a bicycle. It is embedded in our consciousness like other important events of our lives. And how did I begin collecting "Manlys", as I call them? Mine started as a boy growing up in Napanee in the 1950s. The town is more famous for Gibbard's Furniture, the oldest furniture factory in Canada, and of course, Avril Lavigne. But on a warm summer afternoon, I watched this



Manly E. MacDonald

by Charles Beale

prolific Belleville painter dabbling oils on yet another scene of boys fishing in the river. He worked; I watched, but I never forgot the moment.

By the late 1980s I had collected many other Canadiana treasures, but nothing approaching a "picture". However, when a local auction house was selling a Manly, I went to test the waters and check out the selling price. And we all know what happened next. It's the curse or the cure of antiquing, but the painting went for more than anticipated, and I had to have it – and did.



Red Barn, 12" x 16", oil on canvas, signed lower left.