

the art gallery
st. thomas-elgin

"EARLY WORKS "September 11 – October 11, 1987

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that your Gallery, in co-operation with the London Regional Art Gallery, presents an exhibition of Clark McDougall's work. McDougall is one of Elgin's best loved artists. From his basement studio at 56 Inkerman St., St. Thomas, he gained fame and recognition across Canada.

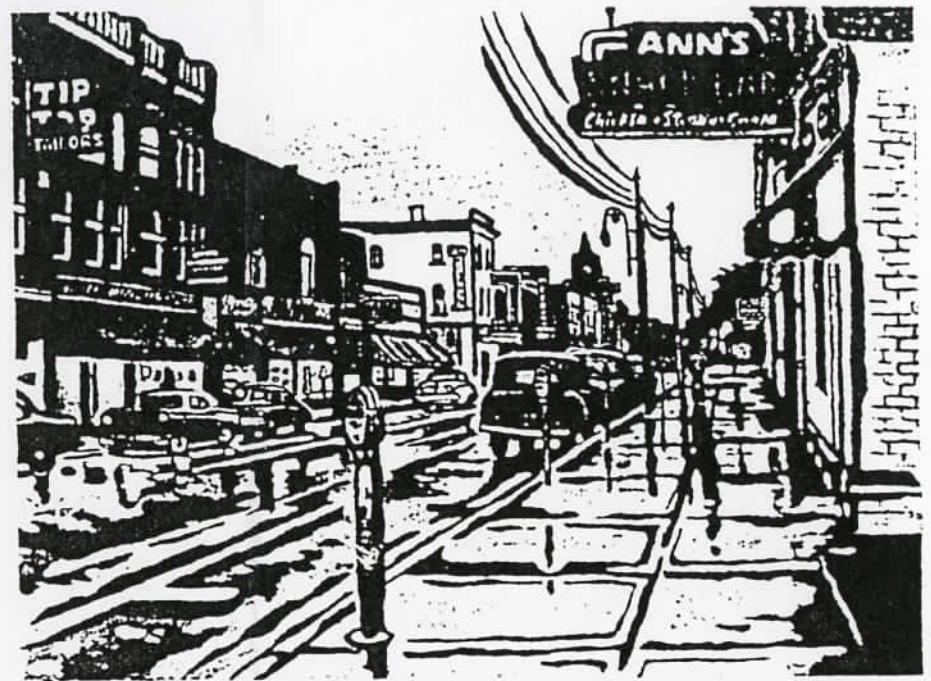
McDougall was born in 1921 and lived and painted in the area of North Yarmouth Township until his death in 1980. By the age of 12, Clark had become friends with William St. Thomas-Smith and Ross Osgoode. With their help, McDougall began painting watercolours directly from nature. He also learned techniques from such books as "The History of British Watercolour", by Cundell. McDougall, however, already possessed a natural ability for composition and colour that could not be found in books.

At age 16, McDougall read about an American painter, Charles Burchfield. Soon after, he journeyed to Buffalo to meet Burchfield, and have him criticize his work. The main advice Burchfield gave him was to avoid art school. At this time McDougall would often paint from 9 o'clock in the morning to 9 in the evening. From 1939 to 1945 this

slowed down by World, War II. McDougall continued to paint watercolours, but he also had begun to develop an interest in oil painting. At the time of his first one man show at the Mellors Gallery in January of 1944, the majority of his works were watercolours. Other one man shows followed, Toronto in 1945 and New York City in 1947.

In 1950, McDougall's works and ideas were changed after a visit to Quebec. He was influenced by Matisse and the Fauvist concept of painting, Morrice and Lyman. From 1950 on, oil had become McDougall's chief medium. In his search for a more controlled approach to painting, McDougall eventually developed his black enamel oil technique in the 1960's. As this change in medium, style, and approach was occurring, McDougall was absent from the exhibition scene. In 1955, McDougall was commissioned to paint a set of 14 "Stations of the Cross" for Holy Angels Church in St. Thomas.

In the late 1950's McDougall suffered a heart attack. Because of this, began to rely on slides as a substitute for direct outdoor painting. The exhibitions continued with a display of 18 paintings at the opening of the new St. Thomas Public Library in 1971. In the following year, a retrospective show of McDougall's work from 1939-1972 was held at the Art Gallery St. Thomas-Elgin.



"TALBOT STREET" 1964

1975, when two of his works were included in the Time Magazine show, "The Canadian Canvas". In 1977, the Vancouver Art Gallery held a show of 47 of McDougall's works entitled "Clark McDougall, Paintings after 1953". In 1978, McDougall painted his last black enamel painting, "Pin Ball Palace". Unfortunately, McDougall did not finish any other large scale black enamel paintings before his death on December 17, 1980.

The St. Thomas exhibition will focus on McDougall's early works from mid 1930 to the early 60's. The exhibition at the London Regional Art Gallery is titled "Clark McDougall Retrospective: John Street is a One Way Street". It is a traveling show and will open in London September 12 and continue to November 1. Entry to the London Gallery is free to members of the Art Gallery St.