

# BOOKS *in* CANADA

VOLUME 1 NO. 7

JANUARY, 1972

GIBSON'S COMMUNION: *Isaac Bickerstaff*  
THE NATIONALIST GENRE *by Philip Sykes*  
SPRAGGETT PROBED *by Joe Nickell*

THE PROJECTOR *screened by Doug Fetherling*  
ANALYZING AISLIN: *Howard Engel*  
THE ERNIE GAME *by Douglas Marshall*

## SUM TOTAL

### THE COLLECTED POEMS OF IRVING LAYTON

*McClelland & Stewart cloth \$14.95. 590 pages*

*reviewed by Robert Weaver*

LAYTON MUST give nightmares to librarians and bibliographers. Here we have *The Collected Poems of Irving Layton* (1971), following *Selected Poems* (1969), following *Collected Poems* (1965), all from the same publisher; and if you want to reach back before McClelland & Stewart, *The Improved Binoculars* was described in its time (1956) as a "selected poems."

But this is the true book, almost 600 pages of poetry drawn from earlier collections, beginning with *Here and Now* in 1946, to remind us of that post-war half-decade when Layton, Souster, Dudek, Sutherland, P. K. Page, Anderson, Anne Wilkinson, Miriam Waddington were changing the atmosphere of modern poetry in Canada. The 1950s, according to our folklore, was a bad decade. Yet Layton published a dozen books during that time, and made himself troublesome to our best critic, Northrop Frye, who had to wrestle with the rude Montrealer almost every year in his poetry reviews for "Letters in Canada" in the University of Toronto *Quarterly*. (The wrestling matches are

there for everyone to see in Frye's recent collection of essays, *The Bush Garden*.)

A dozen books in 10 years – obviously Layton must belong to the God's thunderbolt school of writing. But I cannot be the only editor in the country who, receiving new poems from Layton, has soon also begun to receive letters (or more often postcards) usually written in ink from a pen with a thick nib, those often indecipherable (because of the pen) corrections of a line or simply a word. A poem like the well-known "The Birth of Tragedy" surely wasn't written without second thought:

*And me happiest when I compose poems.  
Love, power, the huzza of battle  
are something, are much:  
yet a poem includes them like a pool  
water and reflection.*

There are quite a surprising number of good statements about the creative act, the burdens and joys of being a writer, in Canadian fiction and poetry, and "The Birth of Tragedy" is certainly one of them. As its images of division



and paradox show, it's a carefully crafted poem: "In me, nature's divided things — / tree, mould on tree — / have their fruition"; or "I am their mouth, as a mouth I serve"; or "A quiet madman, never far from tears." The poem rises superbly to its final rhetorical and paradoxical lines:

*and living things arrange their death  
while someone from afar off  
blows birthday candles for the world.*

A list of the Layton poems that I particularly admire — it could be much longer — would have to include "The Birth of Tragedy"; also the poem for his mother, "Keine Lazarovitch 1870-1959"; a curious and ominous small poem, "Butterfly on Rock": "Berry Picking"; "The Day Aviva Came to Paris"; one or two other poems from Layton's visits to Europe, probably from those about Spain; partly for its crudeness, an early poem like "De Bullion Street"; and two very strong late poems, "Osip Mandelshtam (1891-1940)" and "Shakespeare." In these poems there is, aside from a fine exuberance, a sometimes surprising elegiac tone; the poet Layton is more of a humanist than he himself might want to admit.

Layton has written a foreword to the book, and when I first read it, it seemed quarrelsome, considering the occasion. But on rereading, the foreword turns out to be all right: it includes a story that becomes a metaphor for Layton's career as a poet in Canada, and it provides a statement of his position. "Am I a Canadian poet?" he asks. "Let others use abstractions and thick evasive words . . . God, History, Dialectical Materialism, Free Enterprise, Canadian Identity, all the 'isms' and 'ities' along with the murderous bad temper they evoke — they can have them . . ." Layton has distrusted True Believers, even on occasions when he has tried to be one himself; it's a healthy part of his influence.

It would be pleasant to be able to say that this expensive book is worthy of Layton's life-affirming poetry. But it isn't. It's a ponderous book, death-heavy, with disconcerting changes in the type-face, not a happy example of Canadian book production. □

ROBERT WEAVER is the editor of *Tamarak* and head of Arts and Drama with CBC Radio.

## write-in

Sir:

*Books In Canada*, December issue, came to my attention shortly after the New Year. By coincidence, I had read or received at Christmas, well over fifty percent of the books reviewed. Amongst my gift books was the *Official Automobile Road Guide of Canada, 1912*, which was reviewed in your magazine by Douglas Marshall.

Possibly, with one exception, namely *The Group of Seven* by Peter Mellen, no book was passed from one to the other of us more frequently than the *Automobile Road Guide* nor was more laughter and discourse provoked by any other single book. So much history is contained and so much sociological change can be gleaned from a careful perusal that it, to us, was well worth the price of admission.

In case you may conclude that the family and guests who so enjoyed this production are an uneducated lot of "has beens," I might say that the age range was from under twenty to early sixties, each with university degrees varying from the bachelors level to doctorates in a variety of disciplines including Arts, Library Science, Engineering, Pedagogy, Commerce, etc.

No doubt by now you have gathered that I disagree completely with the childish review by Marshall. Might I suggest that he take to heart the comments of Edith Litt, *Saturday Review*, January 8, 1972, who in the last paragraph of her letter says, "It would seem to me that a review of any art form should consist merely in sketchily describing the subject matter, and should not inflict a personal opinion on other people."

I believe if I were editor of your publication, I would wish to relegate Marshall "to children too young to contribute reviews," *Books In Canada*, p. 18.

A. S. Barber, Waterloo, Ontario

Sir:

This concerns a letter that appeared in the *Write-In* section of your October edition. The writer was lamenting what he termed the "rape and mutilation"

of the English language. His chief focus was on the use of quote for quotation. It seems to me however that he did nothing more than point out many of the misconceptions we have concerning our language and languages in general. The writer used the term "language tradition" in order to back himself up. This seems to imply that some pre-determined formula exists which acts as a moral code for languages. Clearly such a thing is quite mythical. If we examine English or any other language we see that they are characterized by both internal and external innovation. Words are borrowed, altered and receive new meanings yet still there continues to be both mutual understanding and literary art. This innovation is in fact necessary; man requires new stimulation in order to achieve a satisfied state. Each generation goes through this and will continue to. Innovation is an expression of individualism at least on a peer level.

It seems that two arguments are used to challenge the case. The writer of the letter seemed to imply that the innovation process was directed towards less aesthetic forms. If this were the case, English would have been long ago reduced to a vocabulary of a few hundred monosyllabic words instead of the complex list we have now. For every ain't invented there is a coinciding complex word invented somewhere else.

The other argument is that of order. New words seem to challenge the existing (though existing very briefly) order of language. The process towards order (in physics neg-entropy) is natural. Order is a comforter, a stabilizer, a pacifier and a reassurer. Language change is actually guided by two features, order and innovation. Since people must communicate, they must restrict their innovation so that people will understand them.

The attempt to halt language change is in the least ethnocentric. In a symbolic system such as language, how can there be a right or wrong?

Peter Hall, Trent University

Space will always be held open in this magazine for letters from readers, writers, publishers, printers and teachers who have anything to add to or say against our reviews, columns, articles or editorials. Address yourself to: *Write-In, Books In Canada*, 6 Charles Street East, Toronto, Ontario.

OUR MAIN purpose in *Books In Canada* is to put Canadian readers in touch with Canadian writers. What has surprised even us in our first six months is the rich diversity of books being published across the country. Many of you may be astonished also to learn that writing is alive and well in Canada.

New writers have to be persistent wherever they live, but in Canada a new writer finds himself confronted by an unusually harsh environment. To find his readers he must travel a road broken by pitfalls and menaced by inimical giants — native publishers too short of capital to take risks on untried talent, indifference and ignorance amongst the media, too few bookstores crammed with too many American and British books, distribution chains for popular books that are the virtual monopoly of foreign paperback pub-

lishers. These are hazards far in excess of the normal hazards of the marketplace and are on a scale that must repel all but the most persistent and vigorous of writers. Consequently we believe that our writers are owed all the aid and encouragement that can be mustered. We feel that you, as a Canadian reader, might care to help.

As we noted here in December, 1972 has been proclaimed by UNESCO as International Book Year, during which member states are urged to "promote the writing, publishing and distribution of books, and encourage the reading of books."

Since force of historical and economic circumstances have always obliged Canadian readers to be predominantly international in their tastes, we feel it would be an appropriate redress to pursue the UNESCO's objectives in a specifically Canadian way. And so, assuming that as a reader of *Books In Canada* you do wish to increase the demand for the work of Canadian writers, we suggest the following program of personal action:

### HOW TO READ CANADIAN

Whenever you read of a Canadian book in *Books In Canada* which you wish to buy or borrow, insist that your local bookseller or librarian obtain it for you; don't be fobbed off with substitutes, particularly non-Canadian substitutes. If they say they cannot or will not obtain it, write to the publisher of the book and enlist his support.

If you are in a city or large town where there is no bookstore, seek out a likely stationer or druggist or variety store owner and try to persuade him to order the Canadian books you need. Enlist the help of publishers. If enough of you campaign hard enough, we may see a few more bookstores.

If the only source of books in your neighbourhood is the paperback rack in a drugstore or variety store and if the rack is monopolized by American and British books, ask the proprietor why he does not stock some Canadian paperbacks? If he says he can only obtain what his wholesaler will give him, write or call both your MLA (or MPP) and your federal MP and ask him to find out why it is not possible to buy Canadian books in Canadian stores? If you have the time and energy, ask the same question of your provincial Con-

sumers' Bureau and of the Federal Minister of Consumer Affairs. (As you'll see from our reviews, Canadian publishers do publish paperbacks and would publish more at lower prices if they could obtain mass distribution for them.)

If your local newspaper and your local TV and radio stations do not mention books or if they only mention American best-sellers, call the editor and the program directors and ask them why they don't review or talk about Canadian books?

If you feel you have anything new to say about the situation of Canadian books, write to us. If it's pertinent, we'll publish it in WRITE-IN. □

VAL CLERY

## CANADIAN CONTENT

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## BOOKS *in* CANADA

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# PUTTING IT BACK TOGETHER

**RECOVERING CANADA'S NATIONHOOD** D. W. CARR  
*Canada Publishing Co. paper \$4.50, cloth \$7.50; 222 pages*

**SOLD AMERICAN!** PHILIPPE J. BROSSARD  
*Peter Martin Associates paper \$2.95; 150 pages*

**THE STAR SPANGLED BEAVER** Editor JOHN H. REDEKOP  
*Peter Martin Associates cloth \$8.95; 253 pages*

**AMERICAN INVESTMENTS:  
Development or Domination** VICTOR J. GUENTHER  
*J. M. Dent paper \$2.35; 80 pages*

*reviewed by Philip Sykes*

BOOKS ON NATIONALISM, inevitably, are into a new phase. Inevitably and necessarily. Since the appearance last winter of Kari Levitt's *Silent Surrender*, it has scarcely been helpful to go on proving the extent of the United States' grip upon our economy: no need to intone again the long, sad litany of foreign control, all the way from the automobiles and parts industry (97% American) down to iron and steel (14%). No, what we have now is nationalist writing in the noonday flood of its fashionability. We have, quite suddenly, a nationalist *genre*, sprouting factions, a Left and a Right, dissenters and cranks: now we find some of the nuts in the nationalist fruitcake.

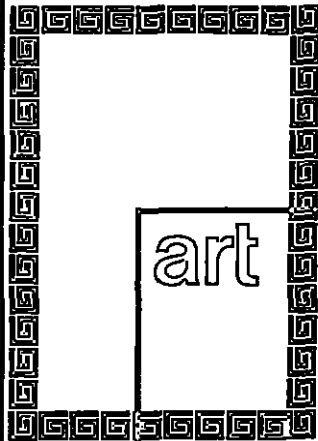
Philippe Brossard starts with the reminder that Canadians, failing to organize needed investment for their less-developed regions, created much of their own dependency. The 1,000 or so affluent rascals who control Canadian stock exchanges are the clear villains of *Sold American!* In its pursuit of the fast buck, Brossard argues, the close-knit Canadian financial Establishment funnelled Canadian savings to New York, starved the Maritimes and the West of development capital and followed blindly the fads and fancies of Wall Street speculation. The first reform in Brossard's nationalist program, therefore, would be the foundation of a Maritimes Stock Exchange.

Brossard writes in pamphleteering hyperboles. The economist D. W. Carr, in contrast, presents rectitude and

dogged logic. He appears in lonely eminence on the conservative side of the nationalist movement, a Paul Heller among nationalists, a direct sort of man dangerously sure of his simplifications. *Recovering Canada's Nationhood* is an odd mix of impeccable economics and constitutional reaction. At his most lucid when explaining the economics of U.S. takeover, he wobbles into mysticism when he deals with "firming the national will." His central point is unexceptionable as an abstraction: a centralized state is better equipped to resist foreign encroachment than a nation in which power is decentralized. Canada has never been a unitary state, but Dr. Carr would apparently nudge it as far in that direction as the most "centralist" possible interpretation of the British North American Act would allow.

The crisis of our nationhood, in this view, was caused by a convergence of negative forces in the 1960s — Canadian acceptance of the "folklore" that the Americans were better developers; provincial "encroachments" on federal responsibility; accelerated U.S. takeovers; and the promotion of ideas of economic integration by Canadian continentalists. This convergence was countered by a Canadian capacity for creating technology and infrastructure that was better than we understood, and by a mounting national spirit.

Dr. Carr, therefore, would look to Ottawa to lead a massive, centrally directed effort to keep decision-making



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in Canada. But, like the historian Donald Creighton, Dr. Carr has a blind spot: Quebec. If there have been vast changes in Quebec's relation to Ottawa since, say, the conscription riots, it is all, for Dr. Carr, an aberration. There have been too many "dissidents," too much pushing for "autonomy," too much "pro-separatist propaganda" on CBC. Though he seems to like Quebec, in a patronizing way — he calls its culture "distinguished" and "delightful" — he has somehow missed the meaning of its modern emergence. For him, the best instrument of nationalism is the good old BNA Act, as is. The War Measures Act was a "positive" influence. He asserts that Quebecers accepted it, and then cites the "acceptance" as evidence that a new Canadian imperative "is beginning to operate strongly in Quebec."

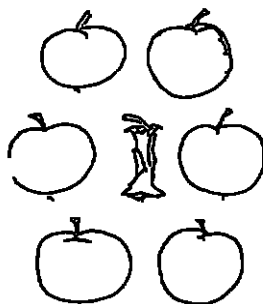
It is a romantic view of our federal situation. Kari Levitt, surely, had the clearer perspective: "What is in question today is the will of English Canada to survive as a distinct national community . . . If the will is waning, if

English Canada is succumbing to a sort of national death-wish in relation to the United States, why should Quebec, and in particular the young people pouring out of the schools and universities, wish to remain junior partners in this sad venture?" Is it reasonable to expect Quebec nationalism to reverse its direction because of an eleventh-hour awakening to the danger of U.S. assimilation among English Canadians?

Ultimately, perhaps, only an alliance of English Canadians and Québécois will prove capable of keeping economic and political decision-making in Canadian hands, but such an alliance seems unlikely to be drawn together under a centralized federalism. That he suggests no more contemporary partnership seems to me the central flaw in Dr. Carr's reasoning. Still, for all its political quirkiness, his book should contribute to the nationalist discussion, helping to move it beyond pious generality to the consideration of ways and means.

The unhappily-named *Star-Spangled Beaver* has no such utility. It is a collection of more or less bland reflections on the United States by varied political Canadians, several of Pickersgill-Martin vintage, and does not stand comparison with that infinitely livelier anthology, *The New Romans*. *American Investment* is a non-committal handbook of the pros and cons of the debate over foreign control, useful, conceivably, for students approaching the subject in a spirit of strict neutrality — but why, one wonders, should even they be neutral? *The Gray Report* paperback is in no sense a citizen's guide, simply the leaked version we read weeks ago in *Canadian Forum*. □

PHILIP SYKES, formerly editor of *Maclean's*, is an editorial writer with the *Toronto Star*



# LYRICALLY OURS

**porcépic**

Edited by DAVID GODFREY,  
TIM INKSTER & ELDON GARNET

porcépic press  
paper, 32 pages

## THE GIFT OF SPACE

WILLIAM HAWKINS

new press  
cloth \$4.95, 128 pages

reviewed by Susan Swan

IF THERE are still doubts that Toronto is undergoing a poetic renaissance, they should be silenced by the appearance of *porcépic*, a new magazine of Canadian writing.

The magazine is the first product of *press porcépic* and it is a small literary windfall. This press, by the way, is the third small publishing firm started in Toronto by David Godfrey, novelist and University of Toronto professor. In 1966, Godfrey launched the literary-minded House of Anansi with Dennis Lee and then moved into publishing more socio-political books at *new press* where he is still an editor. His new venture is intended as an outlet for poetry and creative writing.

The magazine will be published, so its masthead announces, "unperiodically," and the first issue is already something of an underground esoteric item since no more copies are available. Only 300 were printed and all were given away because Godfrey claims it's cheaper to give away 300 than sell the 3,000 copies which a good Canadian literary magazine might sell.

Anyway, the magazine has a quality that isn't due only to its exclusive circulation or the classical elegance of its design. The first issue — 13 poems, a short story and a critical essay — is Canadian writing at its best.

The poets are a mixed bag — there are total newcomers like Tim Inkster, general manager of *porcépic*; poets on the way up like Bill Bissett and Joe Rosenblatt and the established names

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76 CHARLES STREET WEST, TORONTO 5

like Milton Acorn, John Robert Colombo and Earle Birney.

Godfrey used the mixture as a way of introducing unknowns and plans to do it again this spring with *porcépic books*. He welcomes new manuscripts (they must contain self-addressed envelopes), and you can get copies of the next issue by writing to: *porcépic press*, 671 Spadina Ave., Toronto 179.

Two of the most entertaining poems are by Rosenblatt and Acorn. "Extra-terrestrial Bumblebee" by Rosenblatt is a hymn of sensuality while "A Legend Debunked" is vintage Acorn, irreverent and lovable. It claims Ho Chi Minh was really a Newfoundler who happened to impress Stalin.

Birney has included a found poem based on work by Rudyard Kipling and Colombo, the master of the found poem, has written an "Alphabet of Quotations" which contains bon mots from Phil Silvers as well as Thomas Jefferson. At the end of the slim magazine is a short essay by Eldon Garnet, criticizing Canadian poets for abandoning the epic spirit, retreating

instead into lyricism. "the egocentric expression of feeling." Garnet argues with force and depth and no one interested in poetry should miss his essay.

William Hawkins is a lyric poet but perhaps not the kind that Garnet is railing about. In his new book of poems, *The Gift of Space*, Hawkins, 30, talks about hometown Ottawa, "this crazy river-abounding town," his hatred of mediocrity, about youth, love, the meaning of poetry and so on. Most of his poems are fragments of self, pieces floating outward from "the egocentric expression of feeling." But his poems are curiously objective. They form a disjointed sequence of thoughts that remind you of poetry by Imagists such as William Carlos Williams.

Sometimes his poems are distilled beyond recognition and seem to have a mystic meaning known only to Hawkins and others who share his fascination with Eastern religions. Other times, his poems are voluptuous word trips with no special meaning intended. In his poem, "Pounding on the Front Door, Coming in the Back." Hawkins

explains that the poem is a rhythm summoned by the mind for some reason. Hawkins says he has lost the reason and discarded all rules about rhythm.

In another poem, "Paper Roses," he brags that he likes to fling words around, hoping they will fertilize "a couple of dozen literate roses." So Hawkins doesn't pretend to write from the epic spirit either.

But he is a lyric poet with a difference and though his work is occasionally flat, he is still an interesting puzzle, if never a riddle. A songwriter and a journalist, Hawkins wrote the score for the Canadian film *Christopher's Movie Matinee*. *The Gift of Space* is a selection of his poems, some already published in earlier volumes, covering a 10-year period. □

SUSAN SWAN, former journalist and book critic with the *Toronto Telegram*, is now a freelance writer contributing regularly to the *Toronto Citizen*.



## Good reading on a cold night.

### **WITHOUT MARX OR JESUS: The New American Revolution Has Begun** by Jean-Francois Revel

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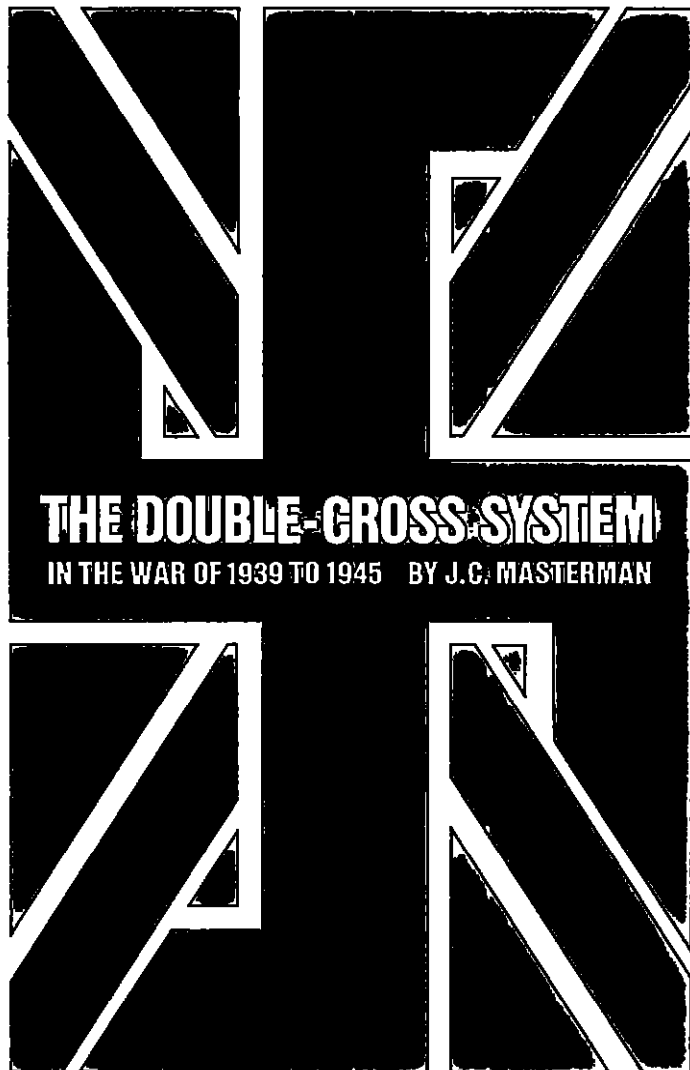
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- \* It contains a preface by Norman Holmes Pearson who played similar games in the OSS.

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# REAR VIEW

## COMMUNION

GRAEME GIBSON

Anansi

cloth \$6.95, paper \$2.50; 119 pages

reviewed by Isaac Bickerstaff

She's right good Lord, what crap she writes!

- *Five Legs*, page 10

At almost ten in the morning my cages are full of diseased shit! That's the problem alright and there's no excuse. No. Absolutely none.

- *Communion*, page 21

ACCORDING TO A bemused oracle in the usually close-mouthed world of Canadian publishing, Graeme Gibson's new novel, *Tish*, is even more magnificent than his earlier masterworks, *Five Legs* and *Communion*, yet it may never see the light of day.

*Tish* (the title is a coy anagram in the manner of Lawrence Durrell's *Tunc*) was to have been produced as a two volume soft-cover edition on rolls of uncoloured, bio-degradable toilet tissue. Gibson's new publishers, Ascot Press, insist the avant-garde format was not meant as a comment on the contents of *Tish*, but was designed in response to a campaign being conducted by a cartel of citizens' groups including Toronto's Pollution Probe.

*Tish* is said to detail the further adventures of Gibson's anti-protagonist, Felix Onanist, as he plunges still deeper into the cesspool of his selfhood trying to finger a purpose or dragoon a plot, but finding, instead, only ordure and stink. Along the way, Onanist has several quasi-sexual encounters with a dying kangaroo which eventually is revealed as his own left foot. During the surrealist and splenetic final chapter, he severs the offending member with his teeth.

Miss Alice Winkstave, a graduate student in English Literature at the University of Western Ontario, Gibson's *alma mater*, has already obtained departmental permission to produce an MA thesis which will explicate the Feely-foot relationship in Jungian terms.

Readers of Graeme Gibson's earlier novels found themselves directly involved in the creative process, as the writer strained to develop a *métier* suited to his largely inconsequential subject matter. *Five Legs*, written in the manner of Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano*, inspired hosannas of acclaim from the Canadian corps of critics, including Gibson's former drinking mate, Alistair Blight, whose own first novel, *Flowering Vomit*, Gibson was shortly to review in the *Globe and Mail* on a grant from the Canada Council.

No charges of plagiarism were raised against *Five Legs*, presumably because those of its critics who had once per-

used *Under the Volcano* for undergraduate literature courses had divined no inkling of its substance or its stylistic techniques from lecturers who had not understood it either. In any case, as one critic remarked privately, Lowry had not been born in Canada, nor had he seen fit to die here.

In *Five Legs*, Gibson's readers were treated to a watered-down version of Lowry's mescal-tormented Geoffrey Firmin: "Beer to freshen me up, that's the thing, brace the mind and spirit. Good ale does more ha-ha, than Milton can. For my trembling soul" (*Five Legs*, page 93). With his first novel, Gibson had performed a service comparable to that of Rachel Lolly-Smith, who first translated Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* into terms suitable for the nursery and the community college.

*Communion*, Gibson's second novel, was a different kettle of fish. Using a "new clear, bone-spare prose" (as the book jacket had it), Gibson demonstrated: (1) that he no longer owed anything to Malcolm Lowry and (2) that left to his own devices and those of the *nouvelle compressionistes* whose late-1950s prose style he had borrowed, he had absolutely nothing to say. In *Communion*, Felix Onanist floundered about in his own diseased subconscious, fondling statues, being sexually assaulted by truck drivers, and contemplating his anus. It was a brilliant *tour de force* that was greeted with the critical accolades it deserved.

Now, with *Tish*, Gibson may well have found his *métier*. His latest work is written in the manner of the concrete poets, the emphasis being placed on the typographical arrangement of words, rather than on logical or thematic arrangement. By way of this clever device, Gibson has captured the whole gut of the heinous Protestant Ethic. And about time, too.

Hopefully, the production difficulties that have so far hindered the publication of Graeme Gibson's latest masterpiece will soon be surmounted. *Tish* is unquestionably an artistic triumph - the end product of Gibson's intestinal pluck and determination. □



ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, a former newspaper editor, is a freelance illustrator whose work appears regularly in these pages.

# CLAIMING THE UNPROBED

## PROBING THE UNEXPLAINED

ALLEN SPRAGGETT

Nelson, Foster, Scott  
cloth \$8.50: 256 pages

reviewed by Joe Nickell

ALLEN SPRAGGETT HAS enlightened us again. Mr. Spraggett is the man (perhaps you've heard the success story) who began as a small-town fundamentalist minister, served an evangelical Methodist sect and finally became a student minister for the United Church. After university, which kindled an interest in parapsychology, he took over the religion page for the Toronto *Daily Star*. He now has a radio show, a TV series, and a newly syndicated newspaper column. He teaches an undergraduate course in parapsychology and is president of a parapsychology club.

Mr. Spraggett's first book, *The Unexplained*, had a bit to recommend it. It brought together such talents as Jeane Dixon (who claims she predicted Kennedy's assassination), the Reverend Arthur Ford (through whom Bishop Pike said he communicated with his dead son), Ted Serios ("the man who photographs things that aren't there")

and Bernard Grad (a biologist who is convinced praying over plants causes them to grow better). And the book had a chapter on fraudulent *séances* and the like which served to make the gullible a bit more wary.

Now two books later Spraggett is grasping at straws. Hot on the heels of such follow-up works as *The Son of Dr. Jekyll*, *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls* and *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* comes Allen Spraggett's *Probing the Unexplained*. As if the title weren't a giveaway, the new book is virtually a rewrite of the earlier one. Served again are warmed-over astrology, re-hashed prophecy, and left-over automatic writing. There is the same philosophical hand-wringing over whether the concept of precognition allows for free will. Dr. Grad is back in the guise of Cleve Backster (former CIA lie-detector man) who claims to prove plants have emotions. Having written of Kathryn Kuhlman's purported ability to heal (that is, cause the lame to walk, the deaf to hear and the blind to see), Spraggett brings out his big guns. This time we are to believe, or at least consider the possibility, that Reverend Fuller can fill teeth by psychic means! With gold or silver or porcelain! Ted Serios, who was challenged by *Popular Photography* magazine to produce his "psychic" photos before a committee of photographers and magicians (who had discovered a childishly simple way of duplicating Serios' effects) not only didn't produce but also declined to ever try again. He has been dropped like a hot potato.

What is left then, that is, what can be called new material, is scant. We're

introduced to "The Amazing Music of Rosemary Brown" who claims to take musical dictation from the ghosts of Liszt, Beethoven and others. To one critic, "... There seems to be only one explanation - the music is coming from the composers themselves." But to another, "If this stuff is all Bach, Chopin, Schubert and the others can dredge up to send down to earth, it looks very much as if they've spent their time up in Heaven doing a lot of second-rate rewrite jobs on some of their better known compositions."

And certainly not least, we have Spraggett's assertion that the lost continent of Atlantis has been found. Well, at least *something* has been found. Although Plato, who first recorded the myth, placed the location of Atlantis near the mouth of the Mediterranean it has since been moved to the Bahamas! Why? Because the famed "Sleeping Prophet" Edgar Cayce predicted so. And he predicted Atlantis would "rise again. Expect it in '68 and '69. Not so far away." Sure enough. Dr. Valentine, a student of Cayce's thought, has uncovered what Spraggett tells us are "huge, elaborate edifices. Also, a paved road, perfectly preserved, runs for miles underwater." Cayce's Atlantis also had vehicles similar to present-day planes, submarines and autos. The world waits breathlessly for one of these to be dredged up. Mr. Spraggett, how can we - who missed the Sept. 12, 1968 issue of the *Miami Herald* and the December, 1969, issue of *Argosy* - ever thank you? □

JOE NICKELL, a professional stage magician, is a confirmed sceptic about occult matters.

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# GREAT CANADIAN COSMIC BOOK

## THE PROJECTOR MARTIN VAUGHN-JAMES

Coach House Press cloth \$7.50: illustrated: 122 pages

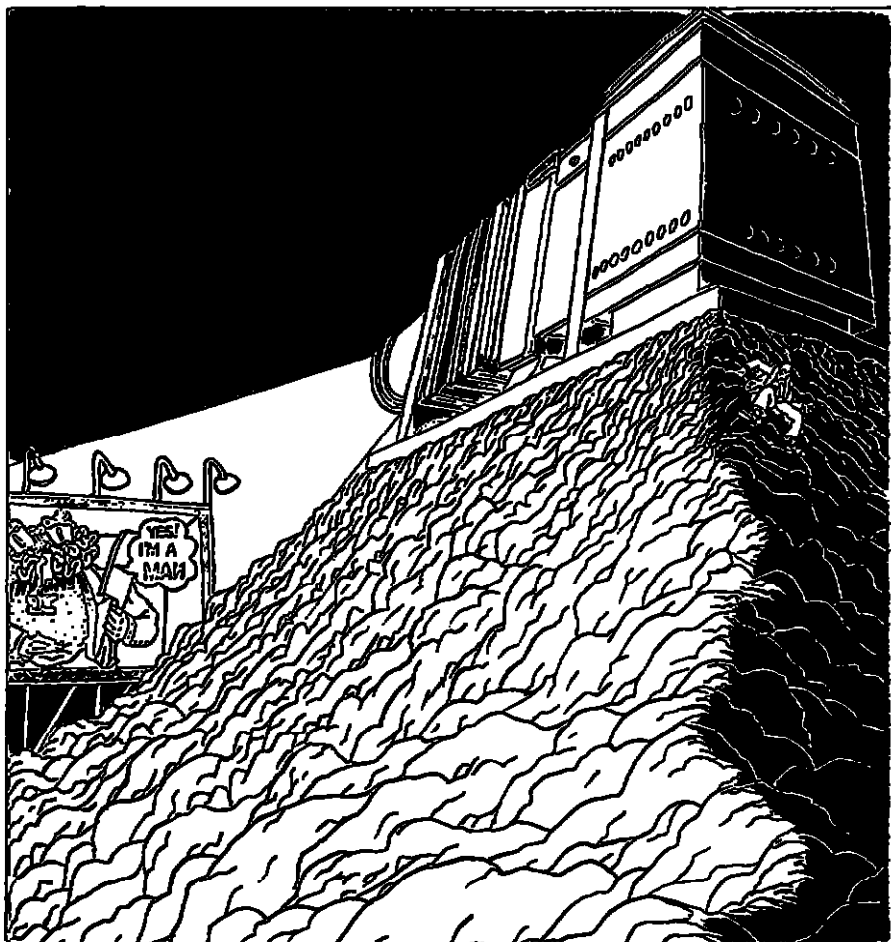
reviewed by Doug Fetherling

CARTOONISTS and similar practitioners of popular quasi-arts always have held an attraction for persons who consider themselves intellectuals. This is mainly, I think, because cartoonists and such can be looked upon to some extent as artists of the masses. This satisfies a desire to swing with the have-nots on the part of the haves, who at the same time can set themselves apart by their concern with the "art" involved.

This highbrow hypocrisy is made possible by the fact that our good cartoonists (and Canada has many of them) do not really aim at any one segment of the available audience but deal mainly with politics (which is everyone's problem but not everyone's

concern) and make fun of all sides. Because of this the cartoon remained until recently a pretty static form. Sure, someone occasionally came along with more humour or a fresher style than the others. But no one used the cartoon for something deeper, better, more lasting till the appearance in 1970 of Martin Vaughn-James' "boovie," *Elephant*.

Now Vaughn-James, whose two-panels are familiar to readers of *Saturday Night*, *Maclean's* and some papers, has left the pack even further behind with the "visual novel" *The Projector*, his second book-length experiment in the art of what might be called the cosmic comic.



A 29-year-old Torontonian born in England, Vaughn-James could be termed a surrealist by straight dictionary definition. Though the real situation, I think, is that the world is too much with him and that the world is winning. He tries to explain it, to fight it or at least to record it in this work, which takes off from everyday settings of his own life and throws the reader on a nightmare journey on which animals and men become one — one whose function is usurped by machines. Machines which eventually go berserk, wrecking it all. Machines like the projector, through which the whole affair is shown in the artist's mind as he walks to his home.

It can be theorized that *The Projector* is presented in comic-book form because the comic book is very much a down-to-earth object of the real world and thereby a base from which to launch the seemingly unreal, to walk the slick rail between known lies and unknown truths. A monster attacking another monster is often too fantastic to believe. But a monster attacking man (as we learn from gothic literature) can be horrendous.

Perhaps it is unfortunate, though, that the book did take this form inasmuch as things resembling comic books are assumed to be funny or at least adventurous and light. That is, Vaughn-James may have lost the popular readers necessary to gain the round-about serious, intellectual ones — a lot notoriously slow to catch on, to champion without precedent. A shame, if true, for his work deserves a great deal of attention.

On the surface Martin Vaughn-James' style seems in league with that of *Playboy's* Grahame Wilson. There also are touches of George Grosz and those 1920s Chicagoans, Herman Rosse and Wallace Smith. But overriding all this is the considerable amount he learned from the collective comic book of our youth. Vaughn-James is a good draftsman with an uncanny sense of the terrific, the grotesque, the plausible unreal. But more importantly, he is a Canadian artist who is doing what he can to push back the frontiers of the linear as well as the visual forms. □

DOUG FETHERLING is a Toronto writer and poet whose latest collection of poems, *Our Man in Utopia*, is published by Macmillan.

# DROPPING ACID

## 100 CARICATURES

AISLIN

Reporter Publications Ltd. (Montreal)  
paper \$2.95; unnumbered

reviewed by Howard Engel

WE ARE A DOUR, humourless lot. Look at our faces among the new appointments in business and industry in the *Globe and Mail*. Look at our frosty eyes and set jaws; faces impressed by the halos of their own backlighting. No wonder our great humourists came from abroad.

One is surprised then to find, given this background, that we have produced such splendid political cartoonists, who have the snap and sting of David Low and Giles, but with a dimension all their own. They work in a tradition that goes back as far as Bengough's unique rendering of John A. Macdonald's bum-tipped nose. And there is something of Bengough's devilish line in the best work of Aislin of the *Montreal Star*.

Aislin was new to me. I'd missed his signature on his *Time* covers of Trudeau and Mordecai Richler. Coming across him for the first time in this collection of 100 caricatures and political cartoons, I felt cheated of the daily acquaintance readers of the *Montreal Star* and *The Last Post* have enjoyed ever since Aislin (Terry Mosher) cut his ties with Ontario and moved to Quebec. Here they could watch him develop the cunning line, a cross-hatching that became a trademark, and the wry imagination that gave us Nixon in track shoes, enthroned and crowned with a ring of bayonets; or the poet Irving Layton with his fly open and his pen hanging out; or the first man on the moon claiming it with a wad of bubblegum.

But the eyes have it. The Aislin eye is something else. Whether it's saucer-eyed Leonard Cohen, pining because he is bored; or the madness he puts into the eyes under the great dome of Jean Drapeau. (Aislin likes crowns: in

one picture he has Drapeau's brow encircled by the interlocking Y's of the Expo 67 symbol, commenting, "Let them eat popcorn!")

His captions and balloons are stunningly filled with acid. John Munro, looking through slits for eyes, thick blubber lips slightly parted, says, "Considering the 'seriousness' of the marijuana situation, Mr. Speaker, the Government recommends that, in future, the Honorable Members refrain from leaving 'roaches' on the Chamber floor." Or again, René Lévesque, in four stages of intense utterance says, "The public must understand that I am not the new Saviour. My promise to feed the Gaspé with five tourtières and two Liberals was taken out of context

by the press. Also, I deny all reports about an attempted barefoot walk across the Saguenay. I must humbly admit to being a mere John the Baptist."

One rejoices in this collection of caricatures and cartoons. They'll compare with the best of David Levine and Gerald Scarfe. My only regret is that from his base in Montreal, Aislin may never have the opportunity to draw Ontario's Bill Davis looking rather like another flim-flam artist, the one and only W.C. Fields, straw boater and all. □

HOWARD ENGEL is executive producer of CBC-Radio's *Sunday Supplement* and *Arts In Review*, writes for *Dialog*, and draws for *Books In Canada*.



# THE FAST BEST WEST

## AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF WESTERN CANADA

TONY CASHMAN

M. G. Hurtig Ltd.  
cloth \$12.95; illustrated; 272 pages

reviewed by Michel Lambeth

TONY CASHMAN'S new book is not much more than a chronological, gushing compilation of western items in 27 sections and 137 illustrations ranging from the Ice Ages to the push-up in 1971 of Mount Blackstrap on the Saskatchewan plain. Though he's company "historian" for Alberta Government Telephones, Cashman's account merely follows Thomas Gradgrind's exhortation in Dickens' Victorian novel *Hard Times*: "Now, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts."

The one additional, gratuitous, important and transparent fact which one can distill from the thousands printed in rather small type is this: Cashman appears to be a sort of romantic-western - Roman Catholic - isolationist-chauvinist-continentalist who writes for the information-education-cum-indoctrination of adolescents. Though his book is racy, sometimes inventive, it is also deceptive, even pernicious. He's the type of "historian" you must read very carefully, every word.

If you are young, you must note seriously the omissions and evasions he makes about our western contemporaries and even coevals who have made distinctive contributions to Canadian life whether they still live in the west or elsewhere. But remember, as only one-third of his book deals with the twentieth century, he has given himself plenty of room for apologetics about lack of space - it's unlikely that an American-educated "historian" would plead ignorance.

Here are a few random "facts" from his book: 1. The dispossession on the Pacific coast of Japanese Canadians in 1942 is a permanent smear on our Canadian record; we didn't treat them as well as the United States. But that's all right, Cashman implies, because it did break up the Japanese ghettos [sic] so that the displaced Japanese became more fully integrated into Canadian society. 2. "... The most important single fact about the depression is that people were not so depressed by it as they should have been." 3. In 1919, "The Bolsheviks [sic] tried to organize the class warfare by bringing all trade unionists in the West into One Big Union..." Was Lenin here, in Canada? 4. In 1921 the Farmers Union of Alberta showed a "narrowness of vision" because they successfully "blocked an attempt by Imperial Oil to build the first prairie pipeline." 5. Five historical illustrations by Canadian artist C. W. Jeffreys are all obsequiously credited as belonging to an American-owned oil company. 6. A portrait postage stamp of Henry Kelsey designed by Lethbridge-born Dennis Burton and used as an illustration gives the artist no credit. The book is chock *full* of interesting "facts."

But to know the history of western Canada is to know where it's really at. A stumbling, ungrammatical question by Cashman near the end of the book on a subject he has carefully avoided up to that point does tell us something about his *astute* awareness of our country in 1972. He asks, at this late date: "Has large-scale ownership by foreign investors endangered Canadian control of her destiny?" Now I ask you. □

MICHEL LAMBETH writes on photography for the *Toronto Star*. He is the publisher of *Photofolio*, which recently published *Made In Canada*, a collection of early photographs of Toronto; a second book in the series is to be issued shortly.

## QUASI QUEBEC

### THE DEATH OF A LEADER

MICHAEL SHELDON

McClelland & Stewart  
cloth \$4.95; 190 pages

reviewed by Boyce Richardson

MICHAEL SHELDON'S thriller about Quebec does not have the political tension that alone could have given its events and characters the focus needed to carry them through the unlikely plot. Anyone living in, say West Germany, would get little idea from this novel of what is going on in Quebec politics. Since the politics are caricatured, it is hard for the reader

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really to care about what happens to the characters on their way to the last page.

The main figure is an External Affairs career man who has quit the service because of his doubts about the continued viability of Quebec in Canada, but who nevertheless accepts the assignment of the federal Prime Minister — a boyhood chum — to investigate the death of the demagogic leader of the *Québec Libre* movement. Posing as a journalist in Montreal, he gets plenty of chicks — nightly, in fact, oh, to be a journalist in Montreal! — and discovers that his findings are already known to the government. Why then did they need him? That is never really made clear. The characterization is flat, the writing is rather undistinguished; and one gets no feeling from the rhythm of the prose or the structure of the story of the fact that the main characters are all French-speaking Canadians. □

**BOYCE RICHARDSON** is a freelance journalist in Montreal.

## VOX POP

### AXES, CHOPS & HOT LICKS: The Canadian Rock Music Scene

RITCHIE YORKE  
M. G. Hurtig Ltd.  
paper \$2.95, 224 pages

reviewed by C. Alexander Brown

RITCHIE YORKE, in addition to being the person in Canada who knows more about the popular music business than anyone else, is also a promoter par excellence, especially when he is promoting himself and his works. So in the past several weeks he has been on radio countless times; a record titled *Axes, Chops & Hot Licks* is getting a heavy promotional push along with the book; there have been numerous articles and reviews in both "straight" and "underground" periodicals, including one long article by a character whose

name, spelt backwards, comes out to Richard Yorke.

It is to be hoped that this heavy-handed "hype" does not put people off, because *Axes, Chops & Hot Licks* is a valuable book indeed, and not only to people interested in rock music or the recording industry or the broadcasting business. It should prove valuable to anyone interested in the survival of Canada as a political, social and economic entity, and not just an appendage of the United States of America. To those who are sceptical, I suggest that they read first of all the Introduction to the book, written by Pierre Juneau, Chairman of the Canadian Radio-Television Commission, and the chapter titled "Conspiracy." Incidentally, it is ironic that Allan Waters, president of CHUM radio station in Toronto, should be appointed by the government to the board of the Canadian Development Corporation in the same month *Axes, Chops & Hot Licks* appeared. His radio station, the most influential in Canada, is believed to have been one of the biggest obstacles to the development of popular

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Dr Anne Keyl

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music in Canada. The station ignored Canadian performers and relied entirely on American program advisers and American hit parade charts. When the CRTC proposed a Canadian-content requirement for music, CHUM was in the forefront of the battle against it. Allan Waters, who is quoted in the book, said some things then he must surely regret now. If enough people in Ottawa had read *Axes, Chops & Hot Licks*, or knew of the fight that Waters and other broadcasters put up against the introduction of the Canadian-content requirements, it is doubtful he would have been appointed to the board of a crown corporation intended to preserve Canadian economic independence. But presumably members of the Cabinet and of the Prime Minister's staff do not read books with titles like *Axes, Chops & Hot Licks*.

The book is made up of 54 articles, based mainly on interviews with performers, including Gordon Lightfoot, Neil Young, and of course Anne Murray. The danger with this format is that the book may read like an extended fan magazine, but Ritchie Yorke is a good enough writer to keep it interesting all the way through. □

C. ALEXANDER BROWN, who has recently completed a novel and is engaged in a federal research project, has been a producer with CBC-TV and has been actively involved in the rock-music scene in Canada and the U.S.

# FROM A LOST COLONY

## DAUGHTERS OF THE MOON

JOAN HAGGERTY

Thomas Allen  
cloth \$9.50. 344 pages

reviewed by *Marian Engel*

IT LOOKS NOW as if the 1960s are going to go down in history with some of the allure of the 1920s. There was the same idiotic gaiety, the same geographical homogeneity. The artistic side began with the Beats in San Francisco in the 1950s, and seems to be ending now as stragglers head home from Ibiza, the little Balearic island off Barcelona.

We used to like to say that Ibiza was the first island spoiled by Canadians, though Elliott Paul had lived in Santa Eulalia del Rio long before; but in the earlier 1960s you could get a house there for \$12 a month in the summer, and Canadian Al ran a bar where the rum was cheaper than the coke, and there were Dick Williams and Eva-Lis

Wuorio and Graham Coughtry, to name a few of us, and all the fishermen smoked pot. Everybody talked a lot about writing; one waited for the books to come out.

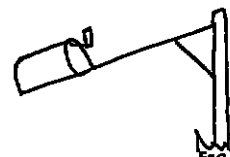
Somehow, they didn't. Perhaps too many typewriters were hocked in Paris. As far as I know *Daughters of the Moon* is the first Canadian Ibiza novel — part of it is set on the neighbouring island of Formentera — and it belongs to the late, decadent Ibiza — post Jolly's Tours and cement apartment blocks, a Balearic horror I am glad I do not know.

The definitive book about living on islands was, of course, Norman Douglas's *South Wind*. *Daughters of the Moon* can't hope to come up to its falsetto gaiety and isn't interested in it. It's a brooding novel, about two girls who meet on Formentera, both pregnant, and spend a broody winter trying to survive there on figs and prickly pear and yoghurt. The blonde, Sarah, is English, separated from her husband, lost but practical. The brunette, Anna, is a suicide's widow and the owner of a mystical fantasy-horse. Called Shane. Their sole true friend is Felix, who goes about in Motley with a motley following.

This sounds terrible, and I think fantasy-horses called Shane are terrible, but somehow, as a whole, the book works because of its *Nightwood* crazy intensity. The writing is often confused and confusing, the pregnant bits are long but not quite sticky enough to be real (Rabelais, we need thee at this hour), but the overall effect of the two girls' desperate attempt to escape the smart-smart, colour-supplement hard-edge finish of the 1960s, finding that it follows them even to isolated islands, is good.

They were beautiful islands, once; now they're totally exploited for tourism. The Hip People have come home. One ought to have known how it would end by Feyer's drawings in the bar in Santa Eulalia. At least one novel came out of it, and that not such a bad one. □

MARION ENGEL, currently at work on her third novel, is a regular contributor to *Books In Canada*.



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# BLAZING OUR TRAILS

## HURTIG REPRINTS

by Susan Jackel

A LONE VOICE from the Great Lone Land, Edmonton's Mel Hurtig adds a distinctive note to publishing in Canada. At times the voice gets a little strident, as with two of last fall's offerings, Dennis Smith's *Bleeding Hearts, Bleeding Country* (Maclean's called the title "inept") and *The Real Poverty Report*. These, like most of the titles on Hurtig's list, reflect their publisher's interest in politics and social commentary. The firm stays clear of poetry and fiction. "You have to admire groups like Anansi and new press," says Hurtig's editor, Jan Walter, "but we think there's enough to do in our own line."

A little-publicized branch of that line, distributed through representatives in several major Canadian cities, is Hurtig's growing list of Canadiana reprints — photographic re-issues of out-of-print books that Hurtig thinks will have enough demand to cover costs, with a little something over. Here the voice takes on the more relaxed, cultivated tone of *belles-lettres*. The titles have so far concentrated on classics of travel writing, mostly dealing with the north and west of the country, although Hurtig judged it worthwhile to buy the rights of Morley Callaghan's *Strange Fugitive* and J. G. McGregor's *North-*

*west of 16* for reprint. Most of the titles, however, are in the public domain: W. B. Cheadle's *Journal of Trip across Canada*, the Earl of Southesk's *Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains*, Paul Kane's *Wanderings of an Artist*, W. F. Butler's *The Great Lone Land*, among others. Volume One of Franklin's Journals came out last year in a quarto edition, and despite a \$22 price-tag has already gone into a second printing, making the recent publication of Volume Two seem like less of a long shot.

The price of the Franklin journals, made necessary by the production costs for such large volumes, is uncharacteristic of the series — most sell for \$5.95, a moderate enough price for good-quality hardcover editions. Hurtig cuts costs by having the books printed in Japan; the printer, Charles E. Tuttle of Vermont, puts out a run of 2,500 or 3,000, with Hurtig taking 1,500 and the rest for distribution in the U.S.

Privately financed since he entered the publishing business four years ago, Hurtig is receptive to tips from booksellers and librarians about titles that have been in request, but in the end relies on his personal knowledge of Canadiana and a businessman's appraisal of the market before deciding on additions to his reprint list. There is only one unfailing criterion — that the books be well-written. Experience with the early issues has shown that the market exists — not large or clamorous, but sufficient. "We don't advertise the reprints much," Jan Walter says. "If the books are properly displayed by the booksellers, they sell." Libraries take some copies. "The orders

Prince of Wales's Fort, 1777, from the Hurtig reprint of Samuel Hearne's *Journey to the Northern Ocean*



I get excited about are the ones from school libraries. If you could put Cheadle's *Journal* in the hands of young readers, Canadian history would mean a good deal more to them."

Hurtig has competition in the reprint field from *Coles Canadiana Collection*, paperback facsimile editions of a wide range of Canadiana, much of it of interest as source material for the study of 19th century Canadian history. So far there has been little overlapping between the two lists. Hurtig's reprint of Cheadle's *Journal* complements the *Coles Northwest Passage by Land*, the form in which Cheadle's account originally reached publication. Both series have editions of Sandford Fleming's

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*Ocean to Ocean*, and although the Coles version sells for half the price, Fleming's book is one of three titles on the Hurtig list that has gone into a second printing.

Thirteen more titles are scheduled for publication in the next year, including two out-of-print books by Hugh MacLennan, and R. W. Ballantyne's *Hudson's Bay*. Even by sticking to literate non-fiction, Hurtig feels, the series could go on indefinitely. The firm is open to suggestions for titles to add to the list. All Hurtig needs is some reasonable indication that 1,500 Canadian buyers can be found, and that probability grows with every reprint, as the hard core of Canadiana addicts extends outwards into the book-buying public. □

SUSAN JACKEL is currently completing a Ph.D. thesis on early western Canadian literature at the University of Alberta in Edmonton.



# INSTANT INDIANS

## INDIANS; A SKETCHING ODYSSEY

JOE ROSENTHAL  
Clarke Irwin & Co.  
cloth \$15.00, line illustrations: 76 pages

reviewed by Joe Tataric

JOE ROSENTHAL'S "odyssey" as he terms it was, in fact, a three-month trip in the summer of 1969 courtesy of the Canada Council. He visited ten Indian settlements from northern Ontario to British Columbia to the Arctic sketching his impressions of the people he encountered and their way of life. He has also written the accompanying text, so this is very much a one-man show.

I found it difficult to classify this book. Although its author is an artist

it is not really an art book. I'm not sure whether the sketches are an adjunct to the text or vice versa. I suppose you'll find it on that overloaded catch-all shelf labelled "Canadiana" in your local bookstore.

Rosenthal spent about a week in each of the ten Indian settlements he visited. He was "particularly anxious to visit the groups least touched by white society". They ranged in character and degree of isolation from the arctic settlement of Colville Lake, N.W.T., with its dozen families of Chipewyans to the bustling tourist centre of Banff, Alberta during its annual Indian Days whoop-de-doo.

It would usually take several days for Rosenthal to be accepted by a new Indian group. By simple calculation this would give him some five days of sketching the Natives before he packed up and departed for the next batch of aborigines. One is reminded of those quickie European package tours — nine countries in three weeks.

This hectic itinerary has resulted in a less than probing study of the Indians' present way of life. Rosenthal

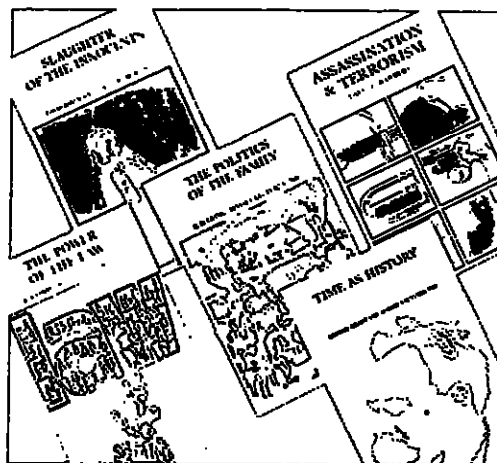
## New Titles from CBC Publications

### George Grant/Time as History

The 1969 Massey lectures. The author's declared purpose is "to write about the word 'history' as it is used about existence in time, not as it is used to describe a particular academic study". He describes himself as not being "concerned with historical inquiry, its proper purposes and methods, to what extent it is a science" but rather, "with what it means to conceive the world as an historical process, to conceive time as history and man as an historical being". In this regard, he explores the thought of the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche who "thought the conception of time as history more comprehensively than any other thinker before or since".  
Paper: \$1.50

### R. D. Laing/Politics of the Family (back in print)

The 1968 Massey Lectures. One of the leading theorists in contemporary psychiatry presents an overview of the interaction within the family, and of the family within society, exposing radical isolation of spoken and unspoken rules which govern individual socialization and help or hinder growth. He develops a provocative thesis which proposes hypnosis as an experimental model of a phenomenon that occurs naturally within the context of family life.  
Paper: \$1.50



### David Bakan/Slaughter of the Innocents

The author, Professor of Psychology at York University, documents — through historical records, literary sources and myths, as well as recent news stories — the thesis that infanticide and child abuse derive from natural primitive urges to control excess population. The book, based on a radio series, presents a deep analysis of this disturbing subject and offers some positive suggestions.  
Paper: \$2.00

### J. A. Corry/The Power of the Law

The Massey Lectures for 1971, by the former principal of Queen's University. In *The Power of the Law*, Dr. Corry deals with the nature of law, the function it performs in our lives, and the appropriate scope of its action. The conditions on which it can hold our loyalties are examined, and also what disposes us to obey or disobey. He then looks at some of the reasons why law has been more widely or more severely challenged in these days than at any other time in our hundred years as a nation, and considers how we might think to restore respect for the law, whether gladly or begrudgingly.  
Soft cover: \$1.50

### David C. Rapoport/Assassination and Terrorism

The author, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of California, Los Angeles, draws upon traditional histories, available political analyses, and reliable journalistic accounts; he discusses the meaning of assassination, its history in western civilization, and various aspects of its creeds, plots, and motivations. He then examines the revolutionary terrorist — his doctrine, strategy, and tactics — and makes reference to recent incidences of terrorism around the world.  
Soft cover: \$2.00

For free catalogue of all titles write, CBC Publications, Box 500, Station A, Toronto 116

has skimmed off a few surface impressions from each of the places he visited. Had he spent his three months concentrating on one or two settlements perhaps something more meaningful might have emerged, some kind of contact established.

Despite the fact that he mentions a number of his subjects by name, Rosenthal's Indians are not people; they are types. They scrape skins, hunt their food, stage their dances, sit rock-like in solitude contemplating some far horizon. In fact they do all the colourful things that Indians are supposed to do.

A few of the incidents recounted are mildly interesting and the artist's spare draughtsmanship manages to bring a few moments alive; for example his sketches of an Ahoust, B.C. fisherman as he impales his catch and flips it into the boat are done with rare economy and quick grace.

Perhaps the best drawing of Rosenthal's journey illustrates an incident at the Williams Lake stampede, in the Caribou country of B.C. The accompanying drunkenness and sad aftermath resulted in the one really moving sketch in the book. A man and a woman lie in a stupor, surrounded by empty bottles. This is a strong work, deftly drawn and monumental in conception. Here is a universal portrait of defeat.

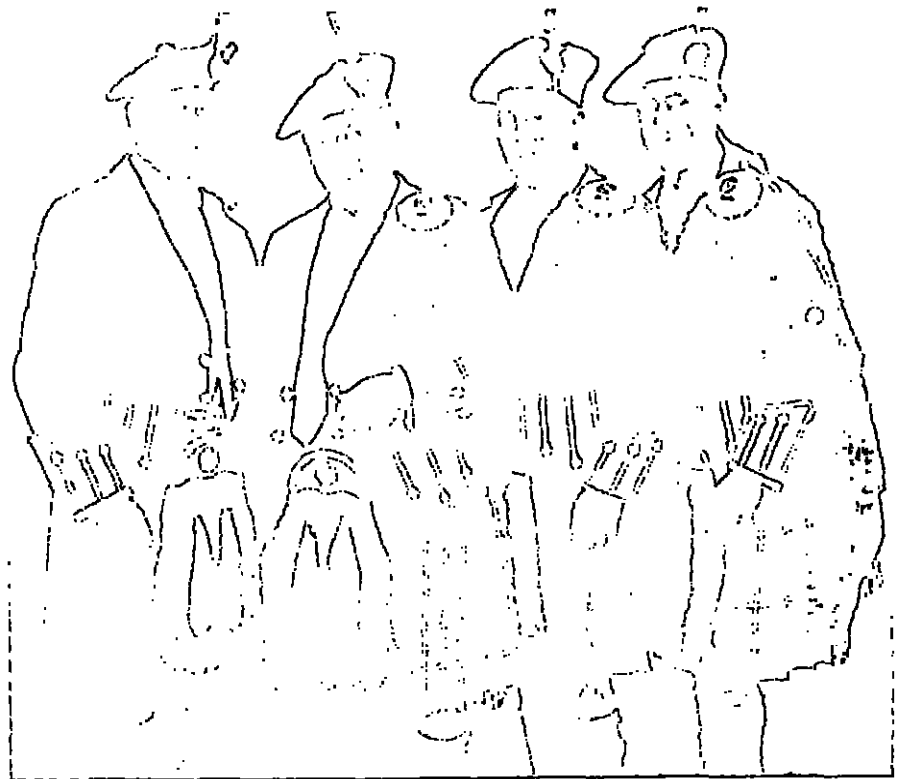
The less said about the text, the better. Being an artist, Rosenthal is visually oriented and his literary style does little to capture the reader's interest.

In his forward to this book, Edward S. Rogers of the Royal Ontario Museum ethnology department states:

"With consistent regularity, the Indians of North America have been a topic of conversation and publication by Europeans since the days of first contact. This situation is still true and hardly a day goes by during which there is not some mention of the Indians in the public media".

Somehow one can't help wishing that some Indian artist would get a Canada Council grant to give us a real look into the lives and hearts of his people. □

**JOE TATARNIC**, a Toronto painter and print maker, is a collector of Eskimo art.



Was this the real birth of the CBC? Tenor Ernie Bushnell (third from left) first picks the commercial beat on the chautauqua circuit.

## THE ERNIE GAME

### MR. BROADCASTING: The Ernie Bushnell Story

*Peter Martin Associates cloth \$8.95. 292 pages*

*reviewed by Douglas Marshall*

CANADA, AS WE all know, is a mid-Atlantic hybrid. Most of what we have and are evolved from a cross-breeding of European institutions with American ideas. Sometimes the genetic gamble paid off and sometimes it didn't.

Hence we have an army that takes its traditions from Aldershot, its psychology from Fort Dix and, man for man, is probably the best in the world. We have a Senate that is neither hereditary nor elected and consequently, like the mule, is a harmless if somewhat stubborn political neuter. And we have what one of its frequently flustered announcers once called the Canadian Broadcorping Castration, which is a monster.

With the CBC, we combined the worst traits of both parents. This brass-crown corporation is more blatantly

commercial than any of the American networks — CBC-TV socks us with blurbs for 12 minutes out of every prime-time hour whereas CBS, NBC and ABC limit themselves to eight commercial minutes — and yet has no compensating efficiency of purpose. Instead, its producers are shackled by a bureaucracy of stupendously uncreative civil shopkeepers who wield far more power than their counterparts in Britain's publicly-owned BBC.

What congenital disaster occurred here? Why was this malformed offspring allowed to grow into the pathetic, shambling, schizoid national institution we have now? *Mr. Broadcasting* supplies some of the answers.

Mr. Broadcasting is Ernie Bushnell. If he deserves the title conferred on him in this semi-autobiography (Sturs-

berg, a friend of Bushnell's who made copious use of his subject's memoirs, is more amanuensis than author) then he has a lot to answer for.

In fact Bushnell never really was the central figure in Canadian broadcasting. He switched sides too often to ever be king, was too outspoken to even be a king-maker. He might have been the heir apparent at one time and he was certainly the fall guy at least twice. But his sustaining role was that of Hotspur — fiery, full of fuzzy ambitions and fated to be cut down by the cooler, calculating Bolingbrokes of his day, those vile politicians.

It is true, however, that the things Bushnell stood for helped to formulate the set of contradictions on which the CBC is based.

Born with the century, he spent his teens and early twenties as a tenor on the chautauqua circuit. In a sense, he has always been a commercial entertainer — with the stress on the word commercial. Once he got involved with radio in the late 1920s, it was almost inevitable that he should invent the singing commercial. (It was a ditty celebrating the Toronto Wet Wash Laundry sung to the tune of *Three Blind Mice*.)

Later, as a life-long advocate of free enterprise, he fought a committee-by-committee battle with Graham Spry's Canadian Radio League to prevent government involvement with broadcasting. His side won a partial victory: from the beginning, public broadcasting in this country has been at the mercy of private advertising. Thus Bushnell was able to join the CBC himself without feeling the need to change his chautauqua-circuit outlook. Thanks in

large part to his ideas about programming, the CBC remained essentially a glorified electronic song-and-lecture touring troupe until well into the 1960s.

Bushnell's tenure at the CBC was bracketed by controversies. In 1936 he was scarred by the *Mr. Sage* scandal — an extraordinary attempt by the Conservatives to use the public airwaves for blatant propaganda. In 1959, as the CBC's acting president, Bushnell bore the brunt of the Conservative government's wrath over the *Preview Commentary* affair. "Heads will roll," Bushnell predicted, and his soon did.

During the 1960s he went back into private broadcasting and began to build an empire around his flagship TV station, CJOH in Ottawa. Two years ago, with a CRTC ruling that surprised even experienced observers, this grand design collapsed and the Bushnell enterprise lost \$4 million.

Stursberg, a former CBC correspondent and more recently a Bushnell employee, writes with a trowel dipped in treacle. He also displays the sort of careless disregard for accurate dates and titles that gave early electronic journalism a name it is still trying to live down. I'm not sure he really understands the complex financial wheeling and dealing that attended the rise and fall of Bushnell's recent empire; I certainly couldn't follow it.

So this is in no way a reference work. But concealed in the congealing prose is the story of a fascinating man. There are glimpses here and there — an anecdote, a candid outburst from Bushnell himself — that form a pattern. Bushnell was part of a faraway time and place about which we know too little, particularly since we continue to live

under its philosophy. If for no other reason, this book should be read by anyone who hopes to comprehend how the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation got that way. □

# FAITHFUL ACCOUNT

## LET THE NIGGERS BURN!

Edited by DENNIS FORSYTHE  
*Black Rose Books*  
cloth \$6.45, paper \$2.45: 208 pages

reviewed by Susan Swan

ALMOST THREE years have passed since students — both white and black — smashed the computer centre at Sir George Williams University in Montreal.

But it was a black power issue from beginning to end, starting with the six black students who charged their biology professor, Perry Anderson, with racism and culminating in the anti-Canada riots a year later in the Caribbean.

For the blacks involved, the incident was a turning point in consciousness based on the discovery that racism existed even in Canada, so-called friend and benefactor to the West Indies. And the discovery was charged with religious energy.

Part of that energy flows through this collection of 13 articles and poems, subtitled "The Sir George Williams

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University Affair and its Caribbean Aftermath." It makes the book more like an article of faith than an explanation, which is what its contributors intended.

They are all blacks from the West Indies, most of them now live in Montreal and some were directly connected with the occupation of the computer centre.

In the preface, the editor, Dennis Forsythe, says the book is not meant as an apology but is instead "the Black manifesto which focuses on the Sir George Affair." As a result, the events leading up to it are discussed with some follow-through, but mostly the book tries to put the disaster into historical perspective, with analyses of Canada *vis-à-vis* the Caribbean, of the problems of black immigrants adjusting to Canada, and, briefly, of the slave trade.

None of the contributors believe the black students were at fault over Sir George. History is their scapegoat. They blame past and present treatment of blacks for the Sir George affair, or as Forsythe puts it, "The Affair and the computer smash-up were logical outcomes of a whole set of antecedent factors."

Another writer suggests that the police set fire to the centre in order to trap the students. LeRoi Butcher, one of the arrested students, claims that early on the computers were destroyed by two artists with wire cutters and spoiled by a temperature change so the students who wrecked the machines were only venting frustration on something already ruined.

Butcher is the only one who criticizes the students' actions, but his objection is that they allowed themselves to be trapped in a locked room waiting for a police bust.

There are good reasons for blaming socio-historical conditions. And good political reasons why revolutionaries must show no guilt. But the blacks' insistence of their moral purity is often pompous and gets in the way of the instruction they're aiming at the unenlightened white. It also seems a bit crummy in light of some of the aftermath.

(For instance, Anderson's sister Betty, a graduate student at Sir George, was recently forced to leave school in

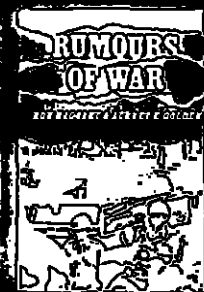
mid-term and go into semi-official hiding. After being hounded by black students, she was advised to leave Montreal by the RCMP, who said they weren't able to guarantee her life if she stayed on.)

The book is still worth reading for its analysis of Canada's dominant role in the Caribbean and for its descriptions of black immigrants in Montreal. Roosevelt Williams, in his article on "The Myth of the White Backlash," makes a convincing argument for the

fact that the backlash was a release of hatred already present. The book's title, incidentally, refers to the morning of the computer smashing when the crowd outside Sir George chanted "Let the niggers burn."

All the injustices of the affair are documented — the extraordinarily high bail placed on the black students, the dismissal of charges against Anderson once the centre was smashed — they all confirm the book's claim that Canadians care more for property than

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for individuals. As for accepting the rest of the arguments, I'll leave that to the reader and his ability to make a leap of faith. □

## NOT JUST CANDY

### LAURA SECORD: The Legend and the Lady

RUTH McKENZIE  
McClelland & Stewart  
cloth \$4.95: 142 pages

reviewed by *Pauline Rhind*

TODAY IF THE name Laura Secord is mentioned the mind swings to one of two images — Laura Secord and her cow or the nearest Laura Secord candy shop.

Ruth McKenzie has presented a credible argument to debunk the myth of Laura Secord traipsing barefooted through the Niagara bushland in June, 1813, driving "bossie" before her as she steadfastly and stout of heart walks from Queenston to Beaver Dams near Shipman's Corners (now St. Catharines) to warn Captain James FitzGibbon of an impending attack by the American forces.

The author takes us from Laura Secord's girlhood, through her marriage and to her widowhood but the book remains primarily a presentation of historical facts. The pages are peppered with historical dates concerning the War of 1812 and data on the lean years that followed.

Laura Secord's determination to receive recognition for her historic act never diminished and has been well recorded in this slender volume. Letters and certificates verifying this were sent to the government at frequent intervals. Also, FitzGibbon wrote three formal accounts of the incident at Beaver Dams, at Laura's request, to support a petition for some appointment or other government favour.



There is one amusing incident that switches controversy from Laura's "walk" to the portrait of her that was hung in Ontario's hall of fame at Queen's Park in 1905. Each year the portrait appeared more masculine and there were those who vowed Laura was sporting a beard. In 1936 a team of art experts with the assistance of X-ray discovered that Laura's portrait had been painted over a likeness of Sir George Ross, Ontario Premier. The portrait was eventually removed from the gallery.

This is a good reference book on both the War of 1812 and the life of the early Niagara settlers for historians or those who are just curious about the "doubtful heroine." □

PAULINE RHIND lives in Toronto and is a freelance writer, editor, poet and playwright. A collection of her poems, *Barefoot In Leaves*, was published last September and a three-act play, *The New Steppe Land*, is being prepared for publication.

## PROMISES, PROMISES

### THE POEMS OF KENNETH LESLIE

KENNETH LESLIE  
Ladysmith Press  
cloth \$6.95, paper \$3.25: 182 pages

reviewed by *Fraser Sutherland*

THE DETAILS of Kenneth Leslie's past make a kind of poetry. A friend of Robert Frost, with whom the publisher compares him, and student of Josiah Royce, he was born in Pictou, Nova Scotia, the son of a ship-owner who was later drowned. Educated at Dalhousie, Nebraska and Harvard Universities he became, at one point, a taxi-driver in Halifax. A Baptist lay-preacher, he has been married four times. He once had a Gaelic radio show in New York; he's been a school-teacher, editor of a religious magazine, and an apple grower.

From this sea of experience one might expect a sizeable catch. Such is

not the case: if these *Poems* bear witness, he has written 20 poems since 1938, the year he won the Governor General's Award for *By Stubborn Stars*. These later poems are of little note, though they reflect Leslie's lyric charm and easy sense of rhyme.

Ladysmith's edition brings together four collections of poems, many of them sonnets, full of sea-imagery and full, too, of sexual metaphor, like the well-known "The silver herring throbbed thick in my seine":

*At length you stood on the landing  
and you cried,  
with quick low cries you timed me  
stroke on stroke  
as I steadily won my way with the  
falling tide  
and crossed the threshold where the  
last wave broke.*

Among praiseworthy things in the book is how he makes his w's work for him:

*Now we have time to tell the worth  
of waking  
through weary watches of the throat-  
black night,  
tell it together with the dawn-wind  
shaking  
new sails alive, proud wings of a bird  
in flight.*

which sets the reader up for the closing couplet:

*tell the tamed sky and the quiet blue,  
the canvas filled with air, I filled with  
you.*

At times his religious poems come alive, too. One cannot accept, though, the publisher's claim that Leslie "is clearly one of Canada's major poets." A.J.M. Smith's judgment seems just about right: he reprints three Leslie poems in his *Oxford Book of Canadian Verse*.

Leslie, so his publisher says, has had a "passionate relationship with life." After 1938, for reasons that aren't explained, this passion seems not to have been expended on poetry. This doesn't happen to a "major" poet, like Frost: "life may be his mistress, but poetry is his wedded wife." And there is no possibility of divorce. □

FRASER SUTHERLAND is publisher of the new magazine *Northern Journey*.

# SHORT NOTICE

## VD, THE PEOPLE TO PEOPLE DISEASES

DR. ANN KEYL

Anansi; paperback \$1.25; 113 pages

WHEN A DISEASE earns itself a cover story in *Newsweek*, it is obviously going places. The comeback of venereal diseases is of epidemic proportions in North America and it is sensible that everybody who is sexually active should know about them. Dr. Keyl plainly gives the facts, adds her commonsense advice, and for good measure adds, instead of the usual moral rebuke, a tone of reassuring humanity. □

## B.C. ACCESS CATALOGUE

Volume 1, No. 1 & 2

Published at 1729 McSpadden Ave.,  
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PAUL COPELAND

Anansi

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General Publishing Co.

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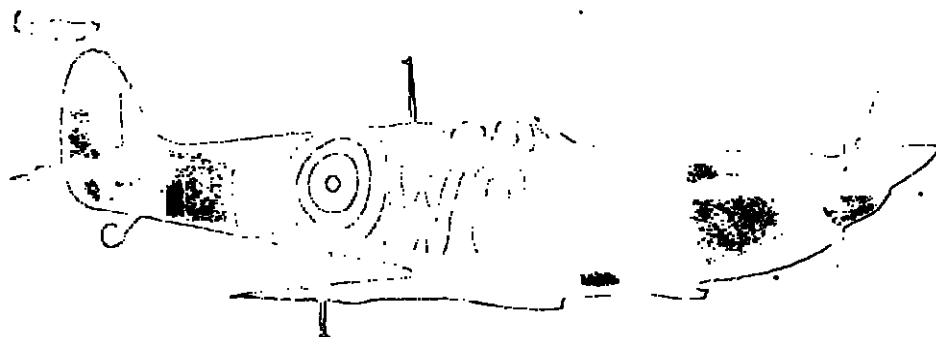
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