

BOOKS *in* CANADA

VOLUME 2, NO. 5

NOVEMBER, 1973

MAKING IT WITH AN OLD PRO

ONE DAMN THING
AFTER ANOTHER

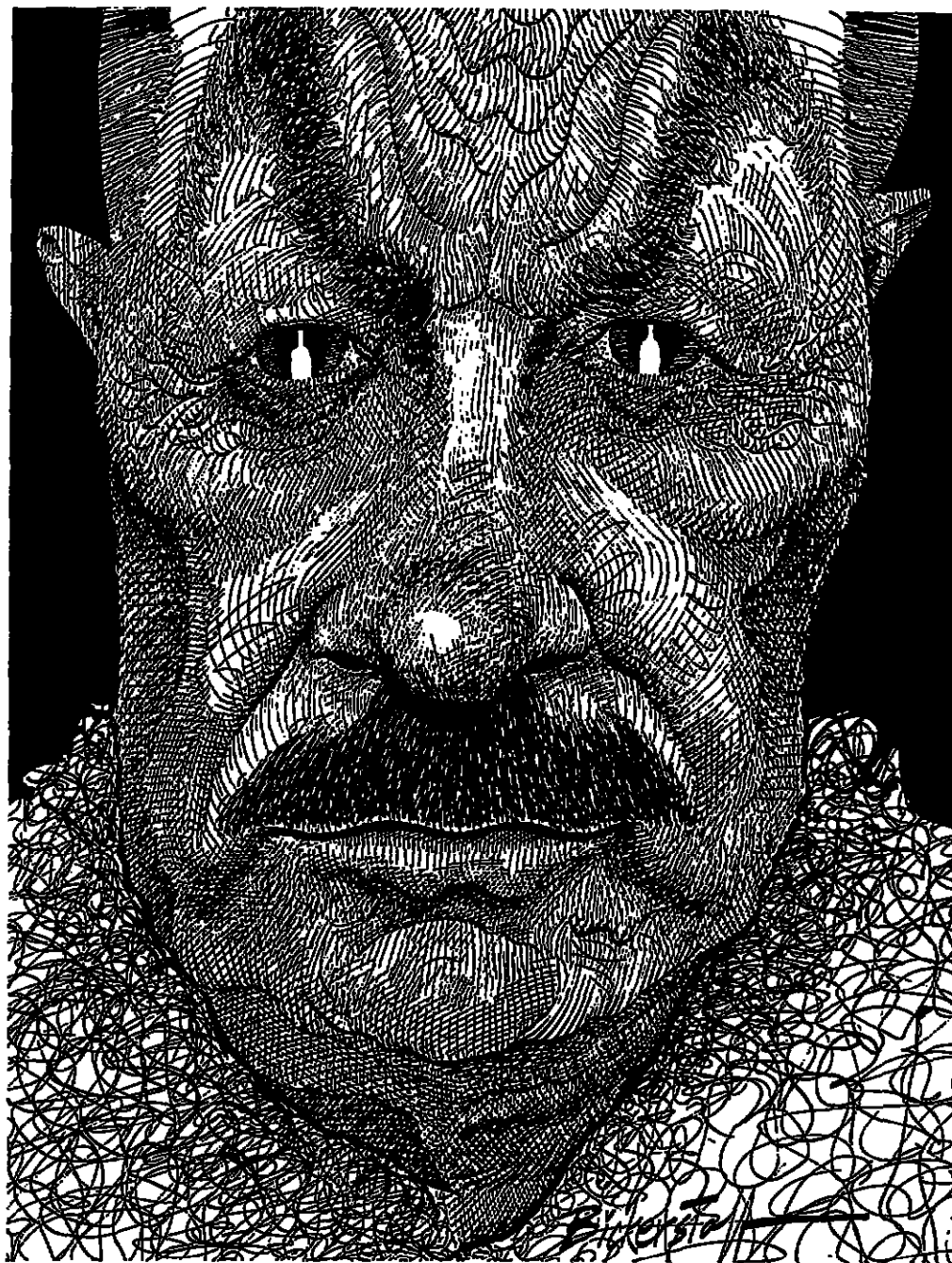
HUGH GARNER
McGraw-Hill/Ryerson
cloth \$6.95; 293 pages

reviewed by Howard Engel

HUGH GARNER IS an institution. You can't write about him with the same ink you use for others. He breathes an air of his own, and he drinks from a special bottle that is not stocked at my liquor store. The appearance of his autobiography presents an excellent excuse to crow about his career and to look closely at the elements that make it up.

First of all, it has to be said that the present book is in many ways unsatisfying. He has set the scene, sketched in the time and the place, and given us an inventory of his life: so many days, so many books, all important, all necessary and in order, but imperfect. The stage is set for the star to enter. We are titillated, expectant, and in the end disappointed because we will have to wait for another, more nearly perfect book. There is more to the trick than knowing how it is done.

The difficulty is in the book's origins. It began as notes to help the promotion department at McGraw-Hill set the record straight about the writer's tangled publishing history. Now incorporated into the autobiography, they give it an unsatisfying texture. The journalist's who, what, and



where are there, but the why is often missing. The facts, just the facts, ma'am, fail to illuminate the writer from within. Another part of the book, a more successful aspect, is the memoir of his Spanish War adventures recalled on a return visit 22 years later and written originally then for *Star Weekly*. This three-part section has a richer texture, more reflection, more insight than much of the rest, which is cobbled together with eight pages of pictures, a fine bibliography and no index. This is carping, perhaps, but Garner deserves better at Garner's hands. Let *One Damn Thing After Another* be treated as an approach to autobiography, to be followed by other, deeper memoirs, each coming closer to the real man. For 293 pages isn't enough to encompass a Garner. In all the varied characters he has created, from the corvette crew of *Storm Below* to the school-marm tourists in *Violation of the Virgins*, he hasn't hit upon as interesting or as reticent a character as Garner in the flesh.

In the autobiography we can find material for drawing our own picture of the writer. Certain things have to be said. He is a phenomenon, a professional in a sea of amateurs, one of the few Canadian writers of his generation to produce a body of work. At 60, he can look back on 15 published books, short stories in 75 anthologies, and 436 pieces of occasional journalism. There is hardly another writer in the country who can match that volume. As for quality, his best is very good indeed. *Silence on the Shore* and *Cabbagetown*, respectively his best and his best-selling books, have stood up over the years and are an important part of the country's finest fiction. In the realm of short-story writing, Garner has few peers. He is no Dostoevsky, much more of a Dos Passos. He is perhaps the least intellectual of Canadian writers of his generation but the most intuitive. His *forte* is not reflection but heightened observation. He is a master of the senses. He can put you anywhere and make you look at the sole of your shoe it's so real.

Behind every page of Garner lies the strict morality of the transplanted Yorkshire Protestant who grew up amid the rundown houses and rooming-house curtains of Cabbagetown,

the genteel ghetto, "the largest Anglo-Saxon slum in North America". In *Cabbagetown*, when the hero discovers that his old flame has become a prostitute, his disapproval comes from a moral not a socio-political base. A more blatant example occurs in *Present Reckoning*. The moment Carol jumps into bed with her lover, breaking her wedding vows for the first time, the baby, left unattended at home, suffocates in his crib. Moral values have changed, and it is well to remember that at the time this was written Hollywood's Hayes Office kept alive the myth that married Americans slept in twin beds.

While some aspects of *Present Reckonings* have dated, the book, which no one would argue was one of his best, still gives a picture of this country returning to civvy street after the war. *Storm Below* was the first novel about the Canadian navy, and stands along with *Turvey* and a small handful of books, including James Benson Nablo's unjustly neglected *The Long November*, which vividly showed Canada in World War II.

But it is not on his war novels that his reputation rests. Ask anyone and you will be told that Garner is the poet of the city, and the city is Toronto. There is a great deal of nonsense prattled about Garner, and this is typical of it. Garner may himself represent the Anglo-Saxon slums of Toronto grown articulate, but as subject matter, Callaghan got there first; and a fast look at Garner's bibliography shows that he gets around: *Storm Below* takes place in the North Atlantic and in St. John's; "The Magnet", one of those much-anthologized stories, is set in northern Alberta "One Mile of Ice" is laid in the Restigouche River country of New Brunswick, just as Vancouver Island is the setting of "The Moose and the Sparrow". The "Violation of the Virgins" occurred in Mexico, and there are Paris and Spanish stories too. That his greatest success has been in showing characters against a setting of Toronto streets is often made to look as though he never treated any subject outside Toronto's city limits. But the triumph of Garner's Cabbagetown stands. His genteel English slums rival Callaghan's dark Irish ghetto.

Garner's people tell something about the writer. They stand out from the background as individuals; he never as far as I can remember treats humanity in the abstract. He never speaks about "the masses", "society", or any other intellectual figment. He has a sentimental side. He likes bums, cops whores, desk clerks, waitresses, bartenders and drunks who come out of the woodwork when the sun goes down. He has always been partial to beat-up newspapermen, has-been writers trying to crawl out of a gin bottle. And if he didn't invent the whore with a heart of gold, he has given her rump a patronizing pat.

Every novelist is accused of being a character in his own books. So what else is new? Garner has done most of the things he writes about. He lost his innocence in the same place *Cabbagetown's* Ken Tilling did, a place now marked by a cement monument called the Don Valley Parkway. He writes about Acadians and is married to one. He knows what it is like to wake up in a strange jail with an empty wallet. He knows all about bottles in paper bags and lonely hotel rooms. Hugh Garner says that he gets names for his characters from the telephone book. But names like Garfield Mason and Morley Hadley (both from *Present Reckoning*) didn't come from Mother Bell. And Gordon Lightfoot, the sodden undertaker from *Silence on the Shore*, has his name changed to George in a later edition.

He always has been a professional. His knockabout life at odd jobs, his adventures in Spain and in the navy, all led to the chair in front of the typewriter. Being a writer has for Garner a special meaning that isn't defined in *One Damn Thing After Another*. In it there is something of the fascination slum kids have with hockey stars and prize fighters. If you're a leading contender, you don't have to punch a clock at the factory or live under a leaky roof with the stench of a hundred years of mouse dirt under the stairs. Garner, a Grade 10 dropout from an East End technical school, with a vanished father, saw his only way out, and he grabbed it. The proper placement of commas could be

continued on page 11

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WHEN WE WERE very young and a 50-cent allowance felt like a lot of money in our jeans, we devised all kinds of ways to cheat the system. On Saturday afternoons, for instance, when the latest Republic western was playing at the neighbourhood movie theatre, we would all chip in to pay for one admission. Then the rest of the gang would sneak in through a rear emergency exit unlatched for us by the inside man. If our conscience ever bothered us, we would rationalize that at least one pair of eyes had paid to see how Joel McRea didn't bite the dust again and that should have been enough to keep Republic from going broke.

Well, Republic eventually did go broke and most of us grew up to become reasonably honest adults who don't even cheat on our income-tax returns. We either cough up the four bucks to see *Last Tango* or we don't go at all. Why is it, then, that so few of us are willing to pay \$5.95 to buy a book?

If you have read this far, you are almost certainly among the one in four Canadians who Statistics Canada tells us reads more than eight hours a week. Furthermore, you have probably dropped in to your local public library within the last few weeks and borrowed - at no direct cost to you and at a slight indirect cost only if you are a ratepayer - some of the books that make up your weekly reading fare. A survey we conducted last December with funds provided by the Secretary of State as part International Book Year (the detailed results of which are still being pondered by an over-worked computer) shows that 71% of our readers visit a library at least once a month and 60% do so several times a month.

By borrowing those books, we are cheating authors out of part of their just monetary reward for their creative labours. Morally, we are still sneaking in the rear exit for our entertainment - albeit that in this case the inside man is a perfectly respectable municipal agency. Consciously or unconsciously, we are adopting the

puerile attitude that authors, unlike dentists or bassoonists, are all dilettantes who do what they do for the sheer artistic fun of it, that writers receive gratification simply by being read.

Today's writers, however, are not so easily gratified. Far from it. Even those who are comparatively well off are becoming incensed with the situation. They are beginning to see libraries as their mortal enemies. Here's what Robertson Davies had to say when we asked him what Canadian writers want:

What I want I'm not going to get. That is, more people who actually buy books in Canada. A while ago I met a woman at a party who was wearing what my wife told me was the most superb mink coat she had ever seen in her life. This woman said, "Oh, Mr. Davies, I'm so looking forward to reading your book but you know the list in my library is so long I don't know when I'm going to get it." We hear so much propoganda, an enormous amount of it from librarians, about the marvels of our library system. But nobody seems to face the fact that our library system *chokes* authors.

The answer, of course, is some form of royalty payments on books borrowed from public libraries. There are obvious administrative problems to be solved and librarians will clearly be required to do a little extra bookkeeping. In Britain, where Sir Alan Herbert spent the last 20 years of his life fighting for library royalties, a proposed scheme is still mired in controversy. But as Davies says, it is surely not beyond the wit of man to devise a fair and practical system. Indeed, Sweden and New Zealand have already done so. When the embryonic Canadian Writers' Union meets again this month, a plan for Canada is bound to be high on the agenda. We will discuss the details in a future issue.

Meanwhile, the writers' cause must be supported by all of us. If we can't be persuaded to pay our way by actually buying books, we should at least stop sneaking in the back door for free. Canadian literature has reached a healthy maturity. It's time Canadian readers grew up too.

DOUGLAS MARSHALL

*what the
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BOB, SHORTS AND ALL

STANFIELD
GEOFFREY STEVENS
McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$10; 279 pages

reviewed by *Terence Filgate*

IT WOULD REQUIRE the skill of a theologian counting angels on the head of a pin to write truthfully and with balance about a living politician — especially when the subject has his foot almost wedged in the doorway to power. Geoffrey Stevens struggles with the elusive form of Robert Lorne Stanfield. In 266 pages of text we get it all, ancestors of ancestors, early life, schooling, entry into politics, rise to power in Nova Scotia followed by all the scurrying in the woodwork to deliver him as national leader of the PCs in 1967. Thirteen pages of index include 72 references to Camp, Dalton Kingsley; 12 to his brother-in-law; 59 to Diefenbaker, John; 32 to a McDonald, Ernest Finlay; and 22 to MacDonald, Flora Isabel. The struggle to power — it is all there, laid out in great detail as to who phoned whom from where and what hotel at what time, the surface trivia of perhaps significant events.

But something is missing and in a way it is summed up by the only photograph in the book — the one on the cover. It's the one the media men from the Foster and Camp advertising agencies liked and used as a campaign poster. It's of Robert Stanfield but does not really look like him, a sort of "now you see the man, now you don't" image. The bones are there yet the spirit is absent. Stevens has interviewed everyone he could and yet it is inevitably calculated talk and there is no sense of perspective, no interpretation of events. The book tells you more than you might ever have wanted to know about Stanfield and the wheelings and dealings of the Tories in a chronology of events, and in some sections is almost a camp

hagiography. What does not come through is the true nature of politics and the political animals who surround a man on his way up, hoping to live off the avails — the "game" as it is called, where only victory and the sweet fruits of success matter. In this book, except for well-defined enemies, the characters are a band of happy brothers with hardly a shin kick or stumble on the road to power. Eulogies tempered with brave little riders are delivered; anecdotes proliferate. Yet Robert Stanfield remains elusive, lost in unnecessary padding.

Stanfield is a complex and complicated man, that rare thing in Canadian politics, an intellectual. But he is also a man trained in the provincial simplicities of a Nova Scotia with its well-established hierarchies, a province conditioned by mild xenophobia to the rest of the country and a tradition of forelock tugging. The projection with seeming reluctance onto the national stage must have been a swift crash through some sort of cultural sound barrier where the rules learned in the Maritimes no longer seemed to fit in the right sort of way. It was a party where Yahoos, quivering with lemming-like fantasies, rose to bite the hand elected to lead if not feed them; a party where the West was for the big C and some in the East for the P, even if only a small one. Only a man of Robert Stanfield's infinite patience and cunning could have lead this motley crew almost through the doorways of power.

And that is what is missing from Geoffrey Stevens' book, a critical and real sense of Stanfield the man — a man who could drive himself and yet in the beginning not demand first-class staff work from others, a man with a brilliant mind and intellectual capabilities who could surround himself with mildly second-class citizens, perhaps a hangover from Nova Scotian days and ways. Consider Stanfield's ability to learn, to examine every point of view, his doggedness in going about the country getting to know his turf with an indifferent or derisory press looking on. Allow for his contradictions, his apparent inability clearly and simply to state a position to an audience. Remember his tremendous patience with people, even knaves and fools,

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yet his ability to be ruthless if necessary. Add his very real sardonic wit and charm with people face-to-face, coupled with an innate reserve and shyness, and his lack of impetuosity. (It would be hard to imagine him initiating the War Measures Act and splitting the nation for immediate gain.) And what emerges is a portrait of a man with ingrained honesty and integrity, a sort of total anti-flashy personality.

All this the book misses in trying to hype things up into an exciting story. Robert Lorne Stanfield is not an exciting man — but he is a good and able man who would make a stable and confident Prime Minister, perhaps a much better one than we have a right to expect. □

Terence Macartney-Filigate is an award-winning film and CBC-TV producer who was educated at Oxford and now teaches part time at York University. From time to time he has had a worm's-eye view of various political campaigns.

RIPPLES AND WAVES

CLOUD NINE: Vancouver Island Poems

Edited by ROBERT SWARD
Soft Press, Vancouver
cloth \$7.00, paper \$3.95

THANKS FOR A DROWNED ISLAND

A.G. BAILEY
McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$5.95

reviewed by Hans Werner

THE REVIEWER HAS a problem: to give his own immediate reaction; or to attempt a judgment of the quality of the poem. The latter case is an attempt to second-guess time, an undertaking not only fruitless but also the easiest way of making an ass of oneself. In the former, the immediate reaction is prejudiced. These thoughts were inspired by *Cloud Nine*, a collection of poems from Vancouver Island.

They are mostly good poems of their sort; and for those who do not suffer from my prejudice, the book is probably well worth the investment. Me, however — I'm bored. I am weary of confessional trifles, unless exceptionally well-expressed. I keep wishing that the best of them were subsumed in a larger poem that would allow the poet to squeeze a deeper revelation and significance out of the poeticized event; I ask for a broader perspective and the detachment of contemplation. This is not necessarily a comment on the quality of the poems; my boredom is a result of the plethora of the stuff that we get nowadays: it doesn't go anywhere — and the way of getting there is not always so very interesting.

The best works for me, in this collection, are Earle Birney's "For My Nagoyan Love", Sean Virgo's "Fox Fire Dirge" and Gary Geddes' "Spring Ferry to Ward's Island". I am tempted to include Jeremy Boulton's "Going to the Station", were its stark simplicity not marred by some rather heavy-handed imagery. Most intriguing of all, however, is the strange incantatory quality of Susan Musgrave's work. This contradicts my admitted prejudice, but then only a dullard would be consistent.

While A.G. Bailey's *Thanks for a Drowned Island* does, to some extent, have a broader perspective and the detachment of contemplation, it is, unfortunately, a bit short on the poeticized event: the tension of reality. He is best when he works in a rigid form as in "Isobel" and "The Winter Mill", and he is even better when he submerges himself in his imagination as in "Miramachi Lightning" and "Algonkian Burial". The latter, incidentally, is a very fine poem indeed. It is stark, simple, and opens your eyes to a visceral knowledge of death.

At times I suspect Bailey's generous use of nautical jargon, as it intrudes into the more "elevated" tone of his work. However, this criticism does not apply to "Tatters", one of the finest poems in the book, in which a revelation is successfully externalized in the description of reality.

The imagery is permeated with the salt-spray of the Atlantic, and the themes are often historical. The Mari-

times are one of the few places in Canada where tradition and history are always and immediately present. For those who have never been there, Bailey's book should open some interesting doors of awareness. □

Hans Werner, a former actor, is now a poet, playwright and CBC script-writer working in Toronto.

PEOPLE TRAPS

WOMEN AND CHILDREN

BETH HARVOR

*Oberon Press
paper \$3; 164 pages*

BLOODFLOWERS

W.D. VALGARDSON

*Oberon Press
paper \$2.95; 122 pages*

reviewed by Nancy Naglin

SHORT STORIES may have lost their popularity but Oberon continues to publish short fiction by relatively unknown people. These first collections are modest editions with uneven quality.

Both Harvor and Valgardson have published stories in reviews and journals; each had a story in *The Best American Short Stories of 1971*. Surprisingly, both write from the same theme but with the different stresses of background and locale. Valgardson, in particular, draws heavily on the small Icelandic community of his Winnipeg youth.

For Valgardson entrapment is in the form of nature — the demands of land or water — that chain his workmen characters to the drudgery of their nets and tackles. His people are day labourers or immigrants, brooding in their inability to communicate their feelings, confined by circumstance and trapped in silence.

Valgardson's stories are direct. Writing of the desolation of the far North he has pared his style to the bare minimum. He writes from the outskirts. Middleton, Manitoba and god-forsaken fishing villages become suspicious, shadowy places, peopled by superstitious, meager Canadians who are not like the rest of us.

All of Valgardson's stories are filled with the ironic effects of survival. An arthritic pensioner in "Bloodflowers" (the title story and by far the best) can say, "Getting shot was the best thing has ever happened to me." But in less successful stories he shies away from involvement. Many of his stories, although manageable in their simplicity and unity, are incomplete.

Havor is basically the more complex writer of the two. Her people, *Women and Children*, are multi-layered, chatty, slightly neurotic women trapped in the roles of lovers, widows, mothers and daughters. Enclosed by family or husbands, they are busy looking for the way out. In the meantime they succumb to or scream at convention.

Many of her stories are hardly as much stories as they are finely drawn character sketches. Even in her short-comings, Havor shows she knows what good story-telling is. Her characters, obsessed with the small details of their lives, play out the pageantry of their minds, all the while trying to decide whether to throw out jewelry or vacuum rugs.

Havor may choose to write about women but her stories are about people. Intimately, effectively, she invades the minds of her characters and has them unwind their lives to us. Almost as an explanation for her interest in the quiet, hidden sides of people, one of her characters confesses:

I sometimes felt my world pushed to a point I could hardly bear, and then I had to paint a very great deal to relieve the burden I carried in my caged-in inner eye. I don't know where these people come from, these people that I paint.

Both Harvor and Valgardson have written some very fine stories. They have also written some they seemed compelled to finish. For Harvor they are poignant Sunday-afternoon stories that have lost their intensity and for Valgardson they are neat, streamlined ones with predictable reactions.

Whatever their shortcomings, these unpretentious books show there is still a place for the short-story writer. The stories are brief, incisive glimpses at other people's lives and our own. □

Nancy Naglin is a Toronto freelance writer who also reviews for the Toronto Star.

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LAUGHTER IN THE DARK

THE LAST BUTTERFLY

MICHAEL JACOT
McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$7.95; 221 pages

reviewed by Kay Burkman

WE HAVE ALL heard of the human horrors performed at Auschwitz during the Nazi regime; some of us have seen them. For those of you who lived it or for those who feel you may have missed something, Michael Jacot (English-born with a PhD from Toronto) has written a new book called *The Last Butterfly*. The title is adapted from the poem, "The Butterfly", written by a man who was gassed at Auschwitz during World War II.

*The last, the very last,
so richly, brightly, dazzlingly
yellow.*

*It went away I'm sure because
it wished to kiss the world
goodbye.*

*That butterfly was the last one.
Butterflies don't live in here, in
the ghetto.*

The novel's story takes place in Czechoslovakia and the main setting is a concentration camp called Terezin where thousands of Jews were persecuted by the Nazis. It is based on a true account of a clown who was forced to make children laugh on their way to the gas chambers.

"The trick was to keep their minds on tomorrow. To pretend that there would always be a tomorrow. A tomorrow many years ahead." This was the philosophy of Vera, a Jew and unofficial teacher to the children. Dr. Weinburg applied his medicine and his ability to organize the children for their maximum physical comfort.

Antonin, the clown, made them laugh and discovered a truth in the process.

I'm thinking how funny it is to be happy at a time like this.

The answer came:

What better time is there to be happy?

Lagerkommandant Bürger, a Nazi officer, supervised the concentration camp of Terezin; he received his orders from Berlin and carried them out ruthlessly. It fell to Bürger to organize a cover-up campaign for the Nazi crimes when a Red Cross delegation would make an inspection. Thousands of Jews were removed from the overcrowded camp and sent to the gas chambers; green grass, entertainment and candy for the children were brought in; actors portrayed free and happy citizens roaming the streets. After it was over, Bürger recognized it: "Who in hell do we think we're damn well deceiving?"

This is a story of self-discovery and will interest both the sentimental and the sophisticated or philosophical reader. I suggest that the latter, how-



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ever, await the possibility of the author's film version. Jacot's use of words is reasonably honest and economical, but certain visual descriptions tend to cloy on the narrative. For example:

There were some sparrows pecking away at the crumbs of bread which fell on the cobblestone road as the cooks broke bread for the old people's soup.

While such observations may be legitimate and even obligatory, they veer toward abstraction and cliché on the page ("sparrows pecking", "crumbs of bread", "cobblestone road", "bread for the old people's soup"); they are better left to the camera's more objective eye. □

Kay Burkman is a Saskatchewan-born writer who grew up in Edmonton and now lives in Toronto.

MEMORIES IN THE DAWN

DOBRYD
ANN CHARNEY
new press
cloth \$6.95; 170 pages

reviewed by *Richard Sparks*

ALL TOO MANY of the World War II novels I have read can be placed into one of two categories:

1. Those were the days. The camaraderie and heroism of that war are over-romanticized to the point that one begins to wish that she, or he, had lived back then (even if to live back then would mean to die back then). One is left with the slim hope that we might still be fortunate enough to have a similar war for our very own.

2. They were monsters and we were saints. This type drags you through the standard list of Nazi horrors. One is led to believe that the Germans (or the Japanese) of that day — but not of this — were a nation of unspeakable savages without the least recognizable trace of humanity. It was a classic case of the bad guys (them) against the good guys (us).

Certainly there was a great deal of camaraderie and innumerable acts of heroism, but on both sides. It is also true that there were acts of unspeakable horror, again on both sides. (Can we remember Auschwitz and forget Dresden?).

Of course, the tendency to draw the past in sharply delineated blacks and whites is quite common, but so are the books written in such a vein. Occasionally, however, a more realistic account comes along. Such an account is Ann Charney's *Dobryd*.

The story takes place in post-war Poland and is the journal of a Jewish family's struggle for survival at a time when the only question was where the food was coming from and there was only one side—your own.

After 2½ years of subsisting on a starvation diet in a loft that could barely hold the 20 persons hiding there, the willful prisoners are finally freed by the advancing Russian army. Their town is a rubble heap and many of their friends and relatives are dead. The war, which ends shortly thereafter, has obliterated every vestige of the lives these people had known. Among the refugees is the remainder of a family. Two sisters (one with a five-year-old daughter, the other with a teenage son) and their mother, who dies the night they are freed.

It is a time of readjustment for the once-rich women, reduced to stealing and trading on the black market in order to obtain their food. For the little girl, however, the only past she can recall is the time spent in the loft, and even this quickly melts away. As she herself says: "I began to think of my months in the loft as a story that had happened to someone else. Everything in me turned towards the new world, the real world, as a plant bends toward the sun."

She is strangely attracted by the past that her aunt recounts to her; one in which there was comfort and stability, things the child has never known and only half believes in. Her present is grim and constantly changing. She longs for the normal life she has only heard about.

Being a child, she adapts readily to each new circumstance, but her reactions are totally dominated by her own discernment of the consequences.

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this FALL

**Gage Publishing Ltd.
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Thus she is loathe to leave the ruins of Dobryd for the luxury of unscathed Bylau, for it means leaving the first friends of her own age and the first promise of the longed-for stability.

This story, which ends with the family's arrival in Canada, is Ann Charney's own story. She has recalled it so faithfully that one would think she had written it while it was taking place. The straightforwardness and acceptance of every experience, the absence of apology or moralizing, in short the honesty of this book, set it apart from the mainstream of war novels.

In time *Dobryd* will take its place along with such works as *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* and Jerry Kosinski's *The Painted Birds* as one of the truly significant insights into the effects of war on the people it touches. This is Ann Charney's first book. One hopes it is the first of many. □

Richard Sparks is a Viet Nam veteran now living in Toronto. He writes poems, short fiction and song lyrics.

MAKING IT WITH AN OLD PRO continued from page 2.

learned later. Always the self-styled professional proletarian, he writes:

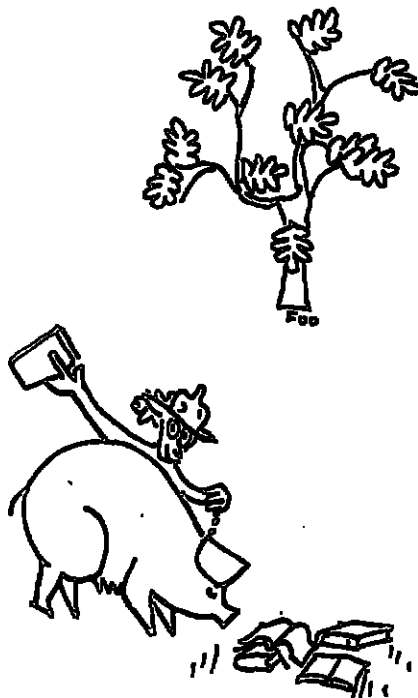
I was as poor as anyone I have ever written about, for the greater part of my life. I don't think though that I was ever downtrodden, for it was never in my nature to let myself be. Even when we were on home relief during the Depression I always fought for my rights.

While the writer has always been a leaner to the left politically, he has had his eyes opened to politics of all kinds. Spain did that. Still his sympathies are with the underdog. His fiction is not concerned with following money or power to its source. His feeling for the losers of society lends itself to Atwoodian dialectics: he likes victims. He is fascinated by the ways in which men defeat themselves. What makes the better story, the man who makes a million or the man who almost has it made but muffs it? To old moral Garner there is only one answer.

Today Hugh Garner is a busy man. Awards and honours of various kinds have done their best to turn him into a

talking writer, but he knows about that. He wrote two short stories the week this book came out. He has mellowed, perhaps. He has the appearance of one of the beat-up journalists in his stories and some of the sheepishness of a reformed character. He has brought it off, he seems to be saying to himself; against all the odds, he's done it. He didn't become a lathe operator and he didn't starve either. Throughout the years he has managed to put butter or at least marge on the table and keep a nickey in his trench-coat pocket. It was tough going. There were few professional writers when he started. Writing was for gentlemen of easy means. But he made it pay and it has toughened him in the process. He turned his hand to every form of writing possible and kept going. At times he had to send his family back to the Maritimes where his wife came from, things were so bad. At times he lived in a old trailer or in a rummy hotel room. Isn't it fine that it has all come right in the end? But along the way, a way paved with crazy adventures that Garner made grist for his hungry mill, it was one damned thing after another. □

Howard Engel, a poet and playwright, is executive producer of the CBC-Radio programs Sunday Supplement and Arts in Review.



what is the pretzel doing in the bathroom?

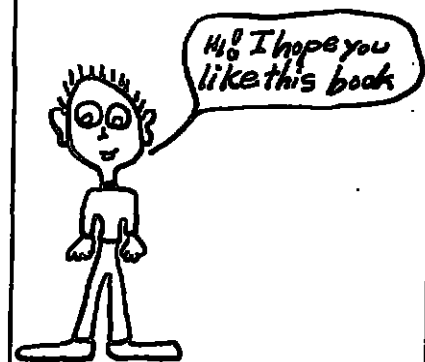
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le pretzel
dans
la salle de bain?

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McGraw-Hill Ryerson
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reviewed by Isaac Bickerstaff

THIS SERIES, projected as a quartet of articles approximately equal in modest substance and reasonable length, has, like a rutting moose, run amok. To the tune of some Malthusian rhumba, it has dodged the lassoes of symmetry and restraint, with the preposterous result that Part Four (please note) is no longer in conclusion.

Part Four does bring to 75 the number of NCL titles discussed, though, so that with merely 32 titles remaining, it may be that the end is almost in sight. It's to be hoped the final installment will appear in the Jan./Feb., 1974, issue of *Books in Canada*, after which, if there is any justice, the writer will be awarded the Mazo de la Roche Medal for Flatulence.

Poets Between the Wars,

Milton Wilson (ed.);

196 pages, \$1.95.

Poetry of Mid-Century,

Milton Wilson (ed.);

237 pages, \$2.35.

Poets of Contemporary Canada: 1960-1970,

Eli Mandel (ed.);

141 pages, \$2.95.

The Poems of Earle Birney,

Introduction: Earle Birney;

62 pages, \$1.50.

John Sutherland: Essays,

Controversies and Poems,

Editing and Introduction

by Miriam Waddington;

206 pages, \$2.95.

Poets Between the Wars contains the work of these five: E.J. Pratt, F.R. Scott, A.J.M. Smith, Dorothy Livesay and A.M. Klein. Almost 80 pages are reserved for Pratt, whose *Towards the Last Spike* treats the great Canadian theme with more skill than even Lightfoot or Berton can muster.

But neither men nor horses ganged like mules:

Wiser than both they learned to unionize.

Some instinct in their racial nether regions

Had taught them how to sniff the five-hour stretch

Down to the fine arithmetic of seconds.

They tired out their rivals and they knew it.

They'd stand for overwork, not overtime.

Faster than workmen could fling down their shovels,

They could unhinge their joints, unhitch their tendons

Jumping the foreman's call, they brayed "Unhook".

With a defiant, corporate instancy.

Poetry of Mid-Century: 1940-1960

presents five poets in depth: Earle Birney, Irving Layton, Margaret Avison, Raymond Souster, and James Reaney, as well as providing comparatively brief selections from five others: Leonard Cohen, Jay Macpherson, Alden Nowlan, Kenneth McRobbie and P.K. Page. *Poets of Contemporary Canada: 1960-1970* offers selections from Al Purdy, Milton Acorn, Margaret Atwood, George Bowering, Gwendolyn MacEwen, John Newlove, Joe Rosenblatt, Michael Ondaatje, bill bissett and Leonard Cohen. For my money (exactly \$3.95), the Oxford University Press anthology, *15 Canadian Poets*, with its larger type and format, better paper, substantial notes and photographs of the poets, is a much more satisfactory investment than the two NCL volumes.

In his introduction to *The Poems of Earle Birney*, the poet writes:

My hardcover collection is a handsomely illustrated, if badly proof-read, book; but it sells for six dollars. Though this is less than average for a book of its format today, it's apparently too much for the alleged booksellers in this country, who've consistently failed to stock it; and it's certainly too much for most Canadian students to buy. Since I

think Canadians under thirty are the main, and the most perceptive, readers of poetry, I'm very happy I've been able to bully my publishers into providing this inexpensive and, I hope, available "Selected Selected".

As for *John Sutherland: Essays, Controversies and Poems*, this is a mildly interesting collection of critical pieces and a few poems by the editor of the little magazine, *First Statement*, begun in Montreal in 1943. Sutherland, who died in 1956, was responsible for first publishing, among others, Irving Layton and Raymond Souster. "It also seems obvious," Sutherland once announced to his readership, "that Mr. Layton's talents lie in fiction rather than poetry."

* * *

Habitant Poems,

William Henry Drummond,
Introduction: Arthur L. Phelps;
110 pages, \$1.50.

Prochain Episode,

Hubert Aquin,
Introduction: Ronald Sutherland;
126 pages, \$1.75.

The Town Below,

Roger Lemelin,
Introduction: Glen Shortliffe;
285 pages, \$2.50.

Thirty Acres,

Ringuet
Introduction: Albert LeGrand;
250 pages, \$1.95.

Antoinette de Mirecourt,

Rosanna Leprohon,
Introduction: Carl Klinck;
200 pages, \$2.50.

According to Arthur L. Phelps, William Henry Drummond loved *de nice leetle Canadiennes* he mimicked in his rhymes, and wouldn't have ridiculed them for anything. I have it from a reliable source, though, that it was when *Habitant Poems* went into its sixth reprint that René Levesque took up the torch of revolution, muttering "Leefle Bateese" and "De Stove Pipe Hole" atop the barricades. *Prochain Episode*, first published in French in 1965, hymns the Quebec revolution within the framework of a spy story. The narrator, from his psychiatric prison cell, writes in order to urge the living revolution on: "With my words I place my lips on the burning flesh of my country." *Recommended.*

Samuel Putnam's translation of *The Town Below* may be responsible for the novel's sometimes awkward prose. Nor does it help matters that, as with so many Russian novels, the dozens of characters are difficult at first to sort out. So that, despite many profound and funny passages, you experience a sense of accomplishment once you have ploughed through to the end. *Thirty Acres* by Ringuet (Dr. Philippe Panneton) was published in French in 1938 and appeared in an English-language edition in 1940. It chronicles the life of a Quebecois farmer who, in old age, finds himself exiled in a New England industrial town, bewildered and beaten. Full of wisdom and compassion, *Thirty Acres* is a very fine novel. *Antoinette de Mirecourt: or, Secret Marrying and Secret Sorrowing* first appeared in 1864, introduced by its author with the wish that "it will, at least, be found to have that (merit) of being essentially Canadian". Fortunately, it is also both charming and entertaining, despite a plot that concerns itself with utter villainy and true romance in the Montreal of the post-Conquest 1760s.

The Stone Angel,

Margaret Laurence,
Introduction: William H. New;
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The Fire-Dwellers,

Margaret Laurence,
Introduction: Allan Bevan;
308 pages, \$2.95.

The Tomorrow-Tamer,

Margaret Laurence,
Introduction: Clara Thomas;
244 pages, \$1.95.

As For Me and My House,

Sinclair Ross,
Introduction: Roy Daniells;
166 pages, \$1.50.

The Bamp at Noon and Other Stories,

Sinclair Ross,
Introduction: Margaret Laurence;
135 pages, \$1.95.

Street of Riches,

Gabrielle Roy,
Introduction: Brandon Conron;
159 pages, \$1.75.

Then there's Margaret Laurence, whose novels and stories serve as texts
continued on page 31

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PERCY KNAUTH
Time-Life Books

cloth \$7.95; illustrated; 184 pages

reviewed by *Raphael Bendahan*

This anomalous land, this sprawling waste of timber and rock and water . . . This empty tract of primordial silences and winds and erosions and shifting colours.

— Hugh MacLennan, *Barometer Rising*

HIGH QUALITY printing of Canadian landscapes by American publishers, along with politely informed prose, is almost assured a place in the Canadian book market. The region dealt with in this addition to the American Wilderness series is the Shield area running

from the north shore of Lake Superior through to the MacKenzie Delta. This region maps out one of the essential trading routes established by the Hudson's Bay Company from Grand Portage on Lake Superior to Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca — a mere 2,000 miles of lakes and rivers paddled and portaged by the years of French-Canadian voyageurs.

Unfortunately Percy Knauth tends to write in the grand style of the uncommitted. He deals with glacial landscapes, forest fires, the industrious lives of beavers, snow, spring, lakes and canoes in a pleasant *Reader's Digest* voice. The only time the writing is inspired is when he writes of the voyageur as legend, using some of the paintings on the subject by Frances Anne Hopkins (a remarkable woman who travelled with and painted the voyageurs), and which prove to be more interesting than the written accounts.

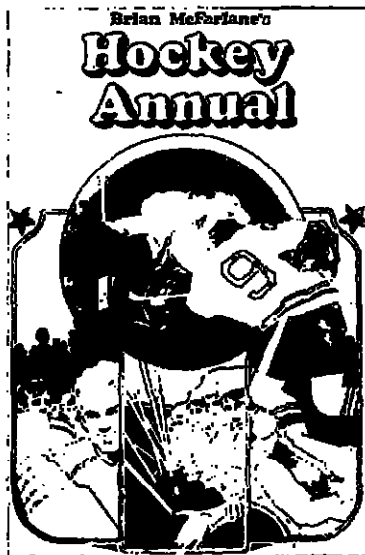
The tendency of such nature books is either to overlook the ability of photography to illustrate or to misuse

it for other ends. In this case the excellent reproduction of average photographs has been used in creating a dustcover effect for the somewhat lyrical text. There are 80 pages of photography in this 180-page book but astonishingly little consideration has been given to the placing of the photographs. Some excellent photographs are hidden away. The first 14 and the last 16 pages of the book are simply photographs slapped together for effect. Had the editors been able to see the woods for the trees, they would have based the book more directly on a core of excellent photographic work. But the literary tradition is more part of the publishing psyche than anything to do with photographic aesthetics. The consequence is books like *The North Woods* — too often works of literary pulp disguised by photographic gloss.

Raphael Bendahan, formerly editor of the Canadian periodical Impressions, is a photographer and writer who lives in Toronto.

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YOUNG CANADA'S BOOK WEEK NOV. 15—22

THE CANADIAN STAGE



THE CHANCE TO DREAM

PENETRATION

Five plays by
LAWRENCE RUSSELL
Sono Nis Press
cloth \$7.95; 109 pages

reviewed by *Nigel Spencer*

PERHAPS IT IS no longer quixotic in the extreme to foresee the passing of Canadian theatre from its infancy to a not-too-pimply adolescence. In some sectors, our writing and production now offer other choices than the pretentious mimicry of other cultures or the most banal of autobiography.

The staging at a precious handful of small theatres has progressed beyond the hit-or-miss of early experiments to fusions of techniques and visions that are at once original and Canadian. Similarly, the writing has matured and broadened by returning to essentials. This has been accomplished (as it was in other countries) by movements in two directions at once: outward to a universal imagery, resonant and suggestive; and inward to a blend of local temperaments, attitudes and speech-rhythms.

Lawrence Russell, a playwright and teacher from Victoria, has opted for the first approach. Beginning with basics (action sometimes occurs in near or total blackout), he uses words and images in place of characters and action as we usually know them. We

can be alarmed by the deep and consistently paranoid quality of the dreams that flow, Artaud-like, to reality and back again. But more often than not they prove more revealing than the everyday life they overwhelm.

The deliberate theatricality of most of these plays can be justified on the same grounds. The apparently helter-skelter juxtaposition of images rarely fails to be moving and widely suggestive, though Russell constantly walks the thin line between, on the one hand, the surface realism of his dialogues and situations and, on the other, his explicit images of sub-conscious life.

Thus in "Penetration" itself, the title piece, the cool and understated conflict between two brothers is jolted into a surreal fourth perspective by the arrival and later disappearance of a young woman-deus-ex-machina. Reminiscent of early Pinter, the play shows Russell's definite gift for dialogue as well as his penchant for fearless theatricality.

It may well be that in production these two elements hold together but in the other plays in this collection the bond is tenuous, perhaps because of emotional immaturity. "Foul Play" and "Time Warp", for example, are unsubtle enough to demand the sort of act of faith required in listening to acid-rock when not stoned. "Deep Sea", however, probably can be made to work because of the extravagance and practicality of its fantasies. □

Nigel Spencer works in Toronto as journalist, translator, actor and director and is a frequent contributor to 25-cent Review.



DENT

SEPTEMBER GALE:
A Study of Arthur Lismer
by Dr. John A.B. McLeish

When September Gale was first printed in 1955, the Vancouver Province called it "stimulating, at times even exciting..." The Toronto Globe & Mail hailed it as an "acute study of a truly gifted person".

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DRIFTING HOME

PIERRE BERTON
McClelland & Stewart
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reviewed by Kelly Wilde

THE THEME of *Drifting Home* is nothing short of Homeric: the son in search of his Father, a spiritual Odyssey with the Wanderer watching his vision through the eyes of his Father, the eyes of his own past, his eyes now in middle age and the eyes of his children.

It is Pierre Berton's most delightful and charming book to date. It is a mellow book, a well-written book, a book bursting with fact, mature reflection, warmth, good-natured humour and unabashed nostalgia. Berton's knowledge of Yukon history is quite intimidating; his ability to evoke a mood through his description of a scene is remarkable and enviable; and, as always, his reflections — wise, assured and calm — engage our attention and full respect. This is fine, polished writing, but seekers of the Quest, beware: Odysseys have no deadlines and this 12-day "journal",

delightful thought it may be, is very much a book in mind. As such it fails the fundamental test of all true Odysseys: the book was written by the author rather than the author by the book.

The journey is from Lake Bennett, B.C., to Dawson, the author's birthplace, via the Yukon River. The seekers (14, including guides) set out on three rubber rafts with 22 pieces of luggage and 19 boxes of provisions; they follow the same route that Berton's father followed, slightly less encumbered, in 1898, the year of the Klondike goldrush.

The father, F.G. Berton, comes across splendidly from the earliest pages. The first image is projected from one of his letters, wherein he records his impressions of a train ride through the mountains, himself standing on the platform in the cold, half-frozen and hungry yet captivated by

the beauty and mystery of the scenes. Berton reflects:

The bitterest cold could not have deterred that infinitely curious man from examining the wonders that he always saw around him. What was commonplace to his fellows was miraculous to him. He had to know how things worked and he was forever examining objects, natural or man-made, to see what made them tick and explaining them to others.

The images projected of his father register indelibly: F.G. explaining centrifugal force to his son while they ride the flying swings in the amusement park or F.G. unravelling the mysteries of the hot-air balloon and cartoon animation. Most poignant of all, in the midst of the Depression, when a cent was a useful sum and "a nickel was enormous", he discovered a new device, the Silex coffeemaker.

The principle of the vacuum, on which they operated, fascinated him and so did the beauty of the bubbles, reflecting the red of the elements, rising in the glass bowls. The following day he took me down to see the wonderful coffeemakers in action and I can remember standing outside in the cold, looking in the windows, waiting for the Silexes to empty so we could see the process from the beginning. We waited for a long time until my father said: "You know, boy, I think it's worthwhile going inside and buying a cup of coffee just to watch that thing."

The glimpses of Father are tantalizing, but as the deadline date, the 12th day, nears one grows impatient for the man who launched the Odyssey. The nostalgia is so unrelenting that Father remains throughout much more symbol than fact. This is doubly unfortunate in that F.G.'s end was painfully lingering and lonely. When he rises on his deathbed and looks at his ghost of a body he cries in agony, "Matchsticks!" But the realistic touch comes too late and the final effect is not "Jesus!" but "gee . . ."

Likewise, the unbalanced nostalgia cuts a powerful theme an inch or two short of fruition: the theme magnificently unfolded in *The Odyssey*, the search of father and son for themselves in each other. When Telemachus "finds" Ulysses the jolt is overwhelming; when Berton "finds" his father the effect is very nice. We know we are in the hands of an old pro, getting the red carpet treatment. Rarely do we forget the overriding impression this Odyssey was taken for the sake of the book.

LATTER-DAY HERO

BETHUNE

RODERICK STEWART

new press

cloth \$10; illustrated; 210 pages

reviewed by Bill Rockett

This impression is partly created by the constant use of the present tense, with day-by-day transcription of events providing the journal format. The style becomes mere technique all too soon, projecting a sense of detachment: Look, there I am, having fun, shooting the rapids, singing by the camp fire, etc. Aside from the 12-day deadline there are several general constrictions on the journal format. As Auden said, the problem with journals is that the Self normally expresses itself in clichés ("like a sheet of glass", "far out", "terrific"). Thus, one can either Pepys it (less possible these days, when writing without publishing or the thought of being discovered is nearly inconceivable); or, if one is artless and charming and candid enough, one can Boswellize. Though Berton can be charming he is anything but artless, and he is quite simply not candid enough, or willing enough, to travel the third and most perilous, route: the journal as a work of art, with thought of publication, yet giving the impression at least of being partly Pepys in spirit and partly Boswell in artlessness. Nothing seems to have been seen or felt that did not tie in with the *book in mind*. Every memory, vision and thought and feeling flows smoothly and stylishly from the Day of Departure to the Day of Destiny, without so much as a dangling participle preventing the Great Communion that occurs, exactly as planned, on the final day. Too much!

Anyway, the *book in mind* is still one hell of a buy. Berton does conjure compelling pictures of his childhood and the Yukon. Descriptions, such as those of the Northern Lights and the River itself, are often masterfully drawn. One of the most fully realized and successful effects of the book is the cumulative impact of a recurring image; travellers in a procession through time. As they travel they are constantly struck with signals, flags and ghosts of travellers before them: warnings, greetings, cries of despair, cries of discovery and joy, little sounds from the past to the present, while the River flows on to the end. □

Kelly Wilde is a Montreal poet and the author of Ruby Foo and Other Poems, a collection of local-colour verses.

LIKE LOUIS RIEL, Norman Bethune has only recently received public and political rehabilitation in his own country. On August 17th of last year; federal ministers Jean-Luc Pepin and Mitchell Sharp announced the government's formal designation of Bethune as a Canadian "of national historic significance".

Prime Minister Trudeau during his recent China visit described Canada as a truly middle power, one that stands geographically between the two great powers, that must rely on the good will of all other nations if it is to survive. Ironically, we waited rather long to grant recognition in this country to the man who has gained for Canada the affection of a quarter of the world's people — and that recognition came only after an even more political dance between the People's Republic

and the Dominion over the exchange of diplomatic missions.

The Scalpel, The Sword has been since 1952 the standard biography of Doctor Bethune. It has also been the single most successful book written by or about a Canadian. The work of Ted Allan and Sydney Gordon, this biography has been translated into 19 languages and has sold more than one million copies. Roderick Stewart found the book "interesting and well-written", but was disappointed by what he termed "its lack of supportive evidence". *Bethune* is his attempted corrective.

The chief weakness of the first book is its somewhat polemical style. It is a book about a Communist by men who knew him and who shared some of his ideological beliefs. The weakness of *Bethune* is one of over-



compensation: Stewart's four years of research have produced a coherent but rather skeletal outline of the life and work of Bethune.

The actual text is only 167 pages in length, while notes and index take up some 50 additional pages. Moreover while Stewart builds his narrative rather nicely through Bethune's early years, he offers us only some 45 pages on the culminating experience of the doctor's career, namely his China mission.

Bethune was an extraordinarily passionate man, and there are only glimpses of that passion in Stewart's rather dry tale. Bethune began as something of a playboy, blowing his money from home on a statue he admired and then gaily sauntering off with his wife to a Paris nightclub. He was, in the terminology of the day, a snappy dresser who lectured his classes on prescription writing wearing spats and gloves. He went to the United States, since that seemed a good place to make money, although his wife loathed living there, describing it as "the only country in the world to have

achieved decadence without civilization".

Tuberculosis and a stay at the Trudeau Sanitarium at Lake Saranac, New York, deeply affected Bethune. A promising practice as well as a marriage left behind him, he eventually turned to home and Montreal. He began to develop his own surgical instruments and to establish a brilliant reputation as a thoracic surgeon. He found new techniques of preventative care for the tubercular. And he began a very rapid process of politicisation.

Bethune established a working group of doctors, nurses, anaestheticians and other professionals to examine the health-care needs of Montreal's poor. After much research, they drew up a careful proposal involving a system of municipal medicine, compulsory health insurance, and care of the unemployed. The political parties rejected it out of hand; the vast majority of people were indifferent. Worse to Bethune was the hostility of his own colleagues. In 1936, ideas we accept as liberal were held to be extremely radical. Having

achieved a radical reputation, Bethune set out to learn Marxism and in the process became a Communist.

He was an internationalist who had fought in the World War I, had lived in the United States, Britain and France as well as in Canada. When war broke out in Spain, Bethune joined the struggle in the capacity he felt would be most useful. He went not with a gun, but with a mind that treated medicine as an art to be used skillfully, even beautifully. During the war and his service there he developed a portable blood-transfusion system, which was copied by both sides during the next great war. He was commissioned a major in the Loyalist Army, and soon became director of all blood transfusion services in the country.

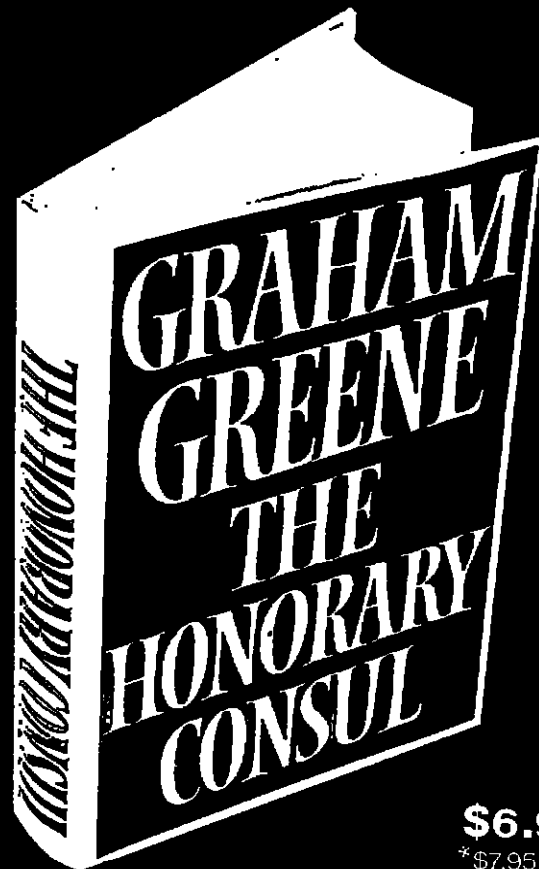
The Japanese invasion of China took place while Bethune was back in Canada attempting to raise money for his Spanish mission. Again the internationalist, he set out to create a way of getting himself there. Bethune created his own opportunities when there were no other obvious avenues.

Just as he seized upon the blood-

Charged with the exhausted passion, betrayal and absurd hope which he has explored so precisely in such novels as *The Power and the Glory* and *The Comedians*.



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transfusion concept in Spain as a way to practise his art beautifully, in China he developed a tactic of medical assistance directly related to guerilla warfare. He took aid to the soldier, rather than setting up rear-line establishments where the soldier might be brought. In a war of no real battle-lines, it was the perfect tactic.

Bethune has turned into a symbol of the left and of China today. He died through infection he could not control because the American agency that had sent him failed to follow up with needed medicines. He died in the battle fatigues of a soldier of the Eighth Route Army, among men and women he had trained in medicine, people who regarded him as Pai Chu En, White Seek Grace. As a student he had never been proficient in learning languages. In China, so absorbed was he in the people and in his work that he mastered not only the speaking but the writing of the Shansi dialect. One of the last things he wrote was in that dialect:

What do these enemies of the human race look like? Do they wear on their foreheads a sign so that they may be told, shunned and condemned as criminals. No. On the contrary, they are the respectable ones. They are honoured. They call themselves and are called gentlemen. There can be no permanent peace in the world while they live. Such an organization of human society as permits them to exist must be abolished. These men make the wounds.

That quotation is taken from *The Scalpel, The Sword*. Its absence from Stewart's *Bethune* indicates what is missing in the new biography. The passion for healing society as well as bodies is what greatly distinguished Norman Bethune, and only a little of that passion comes through in Stewart's work. Only by taking the new book as a compliment or supplement to the old (especially in terms of the photographs Stewart has published) can we begin to get any real sense of the man. □

Bill Rockett is a writer for CBC Ideas and has published two volumes of verse through Fiddlehead Poetry Books.



NITTY BUT NOT GRITTY

DIVIDE AND CON

WALTER STEWART

new press
cloth \$8.95; 250 pages

reviewed by Norman DePoe

IF PUBLISHERS chose subtitles for books by aping the names of television programs, Walter Stewart's latest effusion might be styled "Thesis Unoriginal, Writing Impossible." He admits — not too modestly — that other students of Canadian politics have been aware of his main theme, which is that our ineradicable regionalism is at the base of our political system, and that our parties tend to promise whatever will get votes in each region. At the same time, he keeps hinting that this is somehow a fresh insight.

His method is not totally without value. *Divide and Con*, unlike some of the academic texts that have proved the same thesis, so to speak, by remote control, with flesh and blood reduced to footnotes, and always with the smell of musty newspaper clippings on them, is not really dull. The book bristles with anecdotes, though many are second-hand, and some of dubious reliability. This version of the old, old thesis is soldily based on Stewart's own travels during the federal election campaign of 1972, and what he calls "reconstructions" of events and encounters at which he was not present.

The trouble with the approach is Stewart's writing. Much of the book reads as if it was pounded out at breakneck speed; at its worst, it conveys the impression that Stewart was dictating a newspaper story by long-distance telephone, with a bad connection, to a rewrite man who didn't understand the situation in the first place.

His attempts at humour and lively writing vary from heavy-fisted to coy, and have the flavour of bar-room wit picked up on the run from people more witty than he. It goes without saying that the writing is unremittingly journalistic, in the worst sense of that



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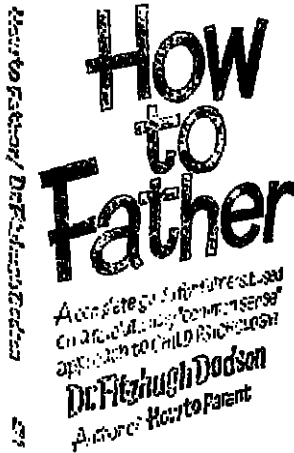
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word. Stewart conceives "socko" to be a satirical and vivid adjective in denigrating the efforts of political planners and speech-writers; not just a thing, but a person can be "a drug on the market"; he even believes that "thusly" is a valid English word.

At the outset, he trumpets that our political system is "seriously out of whack", and promises us his blueprint for its reform at the end. Well, after a lot of more or less interesting inside information about the way our four parties conducted the 1972 campaign — dirty deals, cynicism, the usual — he lays a little interpolated historical background, takes a deep breath, and comes up with his solution.

First, we should have full disclosure of all financial contributions to parties and candidates. Taxpayers' money should be used to help the poor parties buy as much TV time as the rich ones, and there should be a limit on spending. Then, he takes a chapter to tell us that opinion polling is accurate only within 4% and even then only 19 times out of 20. Especially Peter Regensreif. His final solution is proportional representation — using the creaking, obsolete division by provinces. But almost any form would do. Stewart would let the political scientists decide that.

He admits that PR didn't work too well in the Weimer Republic and in the Fourth French Republic; there's not a word about Canadian experiments that failed. He ignores the problems of the Fifth French Republic, those of Italy, and insists that Belgium and Sweden have done well. The many Belgian crises and the current hung-up parliament in Sweden seem to have escaped his notice.

Perhaps the best value in the book (somewhat vitiated by his posture of moral indignation) is his thorough-going analysis of so-called "transfer payments" — using the power of the federal treasury to spread our national wealth a little more equitably. Stewart sees it as in many ways a nefarious scheme to buy votes and power, and to some extent he's right.

Here, his personal political bias (which he owns up to) and especially his blind hatred of the Liberal party, with its present leader at the top of the blacklist, mar this book as much as

they did his first one (*Shrug: Trudeau In Power*). Despite some trenchantly valid criticism of Mr. Trudeau's performance and record, the book simply doesn't qualify as reliable analysis. He has at least the grace to be disappointed with his own chosen instrument, the NDP. To sum up: superficial, glib, lots of interesting inside information if you can get past the writing style. Or to put it differently, oh for another one by Peter C. Newman. □

Veteran CBC broadcaster Norman DePoe has long been an observer of Canada's political scene.

OTHER SOUNDS AND FURIES

WE, THE WILDERNESS

THOMAS YORK
McGraw Hill/Ryerson
cloth \$6.95; 171 pages

reviewed by David T. Groskind

INDIANS IN Canada who know of Margaret Atwood's thesis must find it strange that white Canadians could see themselves as victims for whom bare survival suffices as a triumph. To the Indians, white Canadians could reasonably appear as thriving conquerors and oppressors wholly unthreatened with extinction. Moreover, white Canadians who insist on feeling victimized might consider what they could learn about victimization from the Indians who, under Atwood's thesis, necessarily find themselves a sort of victim's victim.

In *We, the Wilderness*, Thomas York writes about a young white doctor named Roger Sharp who serves a present-day community of Indians on the coast of British Columbia. Dr. Sharp's father, as both Christian missionary and medical doctor, had wanted to infuse the Indian's culture with the benefits of Western religion and science, but the young Dr. Sharp seeks a higher understanding of his relation to the Indians. He says:

I love the Indian people and culture.
Misshapen maybe and axe-ringed a

hundred years ago as though it was a wolf-tree to be cleared, not fit for marketing, to make way for progress and for tree-farm saplings uniform in height, type, growth, mechanically planted, graded, harvested. But they endured. They endured by virtue of not being marketable, by dint of not competing, by receding and withdrawing — into older woods, or onto remote islands.

Frequent suicides scar the community, however, and Dr. Sharp suspects the cause lies in some "highly civilized technique for killing at a distance". While the Indian characters ignore him completely, Sharp reaches an inflated comprehension of his own importance to the Indians, a comprehension that puts him in the interface between two cultures rather than in one or the other. In such a position, with no place on either side, he resembles those Indians who, in various ways, destroy themselves after looking too closely at white society. One cynical Indian says of two youths who killed themselves: "Their problem was they expected too much from life."

Thomas York thus creates in his first novel a potentially stunning paradox of survival and self-destruction. Unfortunately, he has not allowed himself enough pages to develop adequately the characters and situations he explores. The novel reads like the outline of a Faulknerian epic and one can only wish he had told us more.

The novel's style and structure bear other notable similarities to Faulkner's works, particularly *The Sound and the Fury*. In both, several characters reveal the story in a stream-of-consciousness style. Both stories involve the relationship between two races, one ostensibly dominating the other. In both, the son of a socially prominent family commits suicide. Part of York's tale is even told by an idiot. One of the Indian youths who shoots himself exemplifies the Faulknerian ethos of exhaustion and defeat in saying before he dies: "The worst of it was I had killed the body first, whereas everybody I had ever known killed the mind and let others see to the disposing of their body . . ."

The statement, "They endured", Faulkner's cryptic description of Dilsey, the black maid who held the

Compson family together, is exactly duplicated in Dr. Sharp's evaluation of the Indians (quoted above) as well as by one of the important Indian characters in the final chapter. This identical conclusion invites a general comparison between Blacks in the U.S. and Indians in Canada: white men deprived both of their indigenous tribal culture; both subsequently suffered under special and inferior legal status; both are segregated from the larger society. However, in a conversation between an Indian son and father, York suggests a critical difference that renders the analogy ultimately unproductive:

"Why, aren't we part of history?" I asked him.

"No," he said, "we never have been. We are subject to it, but not part of it. We watch the other, that is all."

Although York presents the Indians sympathetically and without condescension, one wonders how accurately he has portrayed their lives and attitudes. The Indians in the novel seem defined primarily by the loss of Indian culture, but it is hard to see what if anything in their society they find still worth saving. When one of the Indian says, "Now the white man takes our drugs and goes fishing on weekends,

while we drink his booze and go to church. And who can say who got the worst of it, hmm; who can say?" the reader could easily reply, the Indians did.

York's use of the stream-of-consciousness style only occasionally rises above the level of bad grammar. Yet for all its weaknesses, *We, the Wilderness* makes a provocative comment on the encounter between the two cultures in suggesting that whites can as easily learn self-destruction as survival from the Indians. Properly handled, the idea could have made a better book. □

David Groskind, a former New York management consultant, is now a Toronto commercial photographer.



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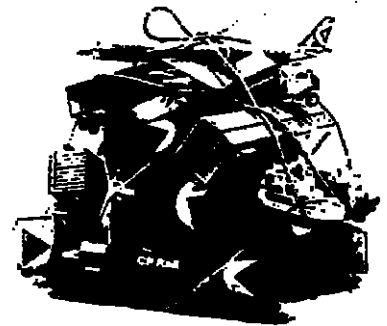
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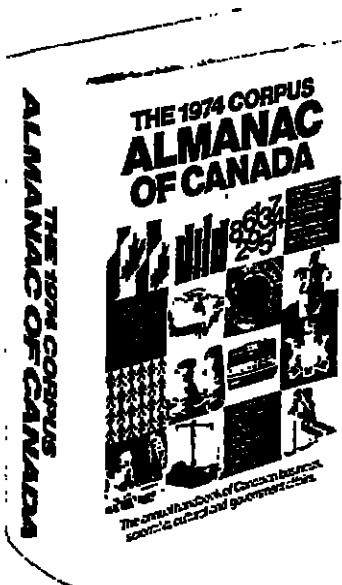
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briefly noted

FRANK LOWE is the editor of *Week-end*. And *I Beg to Differ* (Infocor, McGraw-Hill/Ryerson, cloth \$7.95, 224 pages) is a collection of the little opinion pieces he writes for that supplement and for the *Montreal Star* itself, which in turn syndicates them to the *Sudbury Star* and the *Victoria Times*. Although this is the breadth of their distribution, the columns harken back to the golden age of syndication when there were scores of writers like Low appearing regularly in hundreds of papers with sinecures of this kind in which they were nostalgic about nostalgia itself and confused by everything contemporary but wouldn't admit it. Thus for the old newspaper addict, nostalgia and confusion of other kinds run through these pages. The stuff is sprinkled, unconsciously I think, with Jim Bishop, Louis Sobel, saloon editor Earl Wilson and New York *Daily News* Dream Street conductor Bob Sylvester; sprinkled in fact with all those phony prophets of journalism who operated in what Seymour Krim has called the tradition of Shakespeare with an Ohio accent. That Lowe happens to be a Canadian (from his idealized Bible Hill, N.S.) is immaterial. He writes the hallowed kind of copy and he fits all the descriptions. He wears braces and cuff links simultaneously and probably would wear a fedora too had his last one likely not been misplaced in some bar or train station 32 years ago. He is the type of writer who likes to think of himself as a paragrapher or wordsmith or wordwright. The highest accolade for him would be to be called on an old upright telephone and told he is a veteran comma-hound. It's a tradition he lives and brings alive in his copy: in this collection at least he does not include a Grantland Rice column about how he was unable to write a column today, but he probably has done so at one time and cannot now remember, it was so long ago and his soul as a writer was in so much better repair then. Now he has been at it so

long that it's all mechanical. His opinions, to say nothing of his emotions, well up thrice weekly just in time for the *Montreal Star* deadlines. It's all so sad. Even when a real occasion for writing comes along, he no longer can be governed by anything higher than the desire to acquit himself modestly before going home to bed. When Lester Pearson was dead and Lowe was excerpting the late Prime Minister's memoirs for *Week-end*, he had an ideal opportunity in his allotted space to eulogize the fallen leader. (The attempt is included in this collection.) But all he could come up with was an anecdote about how, when Pearson was a rising diplomat, he once let Lowe remain in his hotel suite to take cover from a rainstorm. Every ounce of feeling and cleverness has been pounded at last from the ancient Underwood standard. This is not so much a book as a warning.

MONTREAL (wrappers \$2.00, 30 pages) is a new poem by the distinguished poet of that city, John Glassco, and one of the first titles of DC Press, which is what remained with founder Louis Dudek after the splintering of Delta Canada press. Significantly, the long poem (Glassco's energy seems to increase with his age) is noticeably Dudekean in its music and audio technique, making use of found quotations and historical anecdote and stating how sad it all is this great city is changing and going to hell with the rest of the modern world. One of its best sections is the one in which Glassco recounts a visit in his youth to Montreal's old lava beds, then being razed — something Dudek himself does in an old poem of his own. Yet visually and cerebrally it is very much a Glassco poem, a major one, and this means it should be read and put alongside the other work of the man who in the final sorting-out will stand much higher than for some reason he stands today.

DOUG FETHERLING

Doug Fetherling, who with this issue joins Books in Canada as an associate editor, is a Toronto poet and journalist who writes regularly for Saturday Night and the Toronto Star.

CHILDE RANULPH TO THE DARK VALLEY CAME

THE HEADLESS VALLEY

RANULPH FIENNES

Musson Book Co.

cloth \$8.95; illustrated; 222 pages

reviewed by Jean Melusky

RANULPH FIENNES (or Captain Sir Ranulph Twisleton-Wykeham-Fiennes, as the book jacket identifies him) is apparently a freelance adventurer, a rough occupation in days when the available monarchs lack both the financial resources and the greedy hopes of spices, gold, or land that launched the Magellans and the Columboes of history. Consequently Sir Ranulph must travel through some rough financial waters before his expedition even reaches the wild rivers of Canada's North. An account of that expedition is the subject of this book.

The British Museum will sponsor him if he brings back fossils. The Royal Zoological Society wants a Least Weasel. And the princes of commerce become intoxicated by the heady aroma of publicity when they hear that the London *Observer* is to report on the expedition and the BBC to film it. In fact, at least one of the purposes of the book is advertising. If we check the complete list of sponsors at the back of the book, as we are advised to do on page 22, we can find out whose blades kept Ben Usher's face so smoothly shave, whose coffee washed down welcome mouthfuls of whose meat paste and whose cheese, and so on.

If you are uncurious about such details, you can rush ahead into a fairly readable combination of adventure, history, anecdote. The expedition itself takes Sir Ranulph and his crew from Fort Nelson, B.C. to Virginia Falls in the North West Territories, and then down from the Yukon border along the Keeluka, Tochieka, and Finlay Rivers to the Fraser River, and ultimately to Vancouver. It is an ambitious journey, some 900 miles as the crow flies and rather longer as the

rivers flow. It is also a rough journey, through rapids and over cataracts and into massive log jams that might easily be expected to capsiz the three inflatable boats. In fact there are quite enough "nearlys" to give the story the proper tone for adventure, disaster just barely avoided. They decide to go through the Moran Canyon, which they cannot reconnoitre because the cliffs are angled too acutely to allow a look at the river. Nor can the locals give them any help. An Indian chief informed them that, not being crazy, he had never been in the canyon nor would ten thousand spirits drive him there. They do try it, and survive.

The book takes its title from the first leg of the journey, which takes Sir Ranulph into the remote region of the South Nahanni River (Nahanni is an Indian word meaning "somewhere over there and beyond") and through what has been variously called the Headless Valley, Deadmen Valley, and the Valley of the Vanishing Men. The valley acquired its name after the headless skeletons of three prospectors were found there shortly after 1900. And since that time, somewhere between 17 and 29 men have died or disappeared there under mysterious circumstances. Cynics ascribe all the deaths to natural causes, myth-makers to a curse on prospectors (one gentleman advised the crew not to prospect if they wanted to come out alive; they did, but panned only fools' gold, which presumably wasn't protected by the curse), or to the existence of some mystery animal of the Canadian north.

The author also attempts to people his narrative with the collection of "characters" obligatory to this genre. He has good material in Skook Davidson, an octogenarian white hunter of

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the Northwest who has become something of a legend in his own time. But Fiennes is not, like Gerald Durrell for example, a talented creator of character. The crew members are virtually indistinguishable. He has a talent for unmemorable quotes ("My God," exclaimed Bryn, "even a Welshman would go mad here if he were caught in the open for more than ten minutes with no repellent.").

Fiennes' skills are better exercised in recounting the actual progress down the rivers. There are things to be learned about "planing" an inflatable boat, about manoeuvring one's way through whirlpools, about slipping into the chute over a cataract. There are times when we must forgive Sir Ranulph for hearing the "thunder of doom", "entering hell", and facing a "wall of death" in a single paragraph, but he does manage to save these excesses until he meets the Fraser's most formidable stretch of rapids. The book is not the best example of its kind; but it is an interesting enough adventure for the sedentary traveller. □

LOOK DICK,
SEE JOE
RUN

QUARTERBACKING

JOE THEISMANN

Collier-Macmillan Canada Ltd.

paper \$3.95; illustrated; 108 pages

reviewed by Jack Hutchinson

THE STORY GOES that Joe Theismann literally made his name at Notre Dame. Or at least remade it. One of the South Bend football flacks is supposed to have persuaded the young quarterback from New Jersey that he should change the way he pronounced his name to make it rhyme with the name of the trophy awarded every year to the outstanding college football player in the United States. And so, in another triumph for mankind and the art of public relations, Tease-man became Thighs-man.

As most people know, young Joe What's-his-name went on to become an All-American with Ara Parseghian's Fighting Irish. But, sad to relate, his quarterbacking at Notre Dame did not win him the Heisman Trophy. Now, playing his third season for the Toronto Argonauts, he isn't likely to win any awards for his *Quarterbacking*, either.

The book appears to have been assembled, not really written, from the massive conventional wisdom accumulated in football play books. It abounds in such words as "dedication", "confidence", "communication" and "leadership", the debased common coinage of big-time sports and, one might add, the jargon of a particularly unpleasant lot of politicians.

I cannot rid myself of the suspicion that the book has also been assembled with a very cunning eye toward its future sales in the U.S. where Joe Theismann is likely to be playing his football next year, when his contract with the Argonauts will have run out. The suspicion began to nag because of the vagueness of the chapter on "How to Play Quarterback". Obviously, there are real tactical differences between the American game, with its four downs, and the Canadian game, with three, but Theismann simply glosses these over. And at one point he refers to the part of the field inside the 20-yard line as "the four-down area" — a clue, at least, that his mind was not entirely on Canadian football and a Canadian audience.

The point is that it would be relatively easy to replace the photos of Theismann in an Argonaut uniform with pictures of him doing his stuff for Notre Dame or the Miami Dolphins and — voila! — there you have your second, or American, edition. Clever. So full marks to the publishers for their commercial forethought, anyway.

The book is also well packaged. It's bright and attractive, with plenty of pictures and diagrams, lots of white open space, and very large print that brings children's books to mind. In fact, it's probably fair to say that the book is a kind of *Dick and Jane* for aspiring young quarterbacks, a primer or first reader for a highly specialized

trade. Looked at in this way, it's still not a very good book, and the trouble would seem to be with Theismann's uncertainty about the age, competitive level and sophistication of his potential buyers and readers. If a book of this kind is too complex — like a coaching book — the kids won't be able to grasp it and won't read it; on the other hand, if it's too simple, the fathers won't buy it. The result appears to be an attempt at something for everybody. Almost inevitably, nobody gets very much.

Let me be more specific, Theismann's 16-page chapter on "Exercise" and another eight pages on "Equipment" are obviously meant for the youngest beginner, the playground or early high school player, the kid who is turned on just by *the idea* of being a football player and, specifically, a quarterback so that he alone can get to wear one of those neat turtle-necks under his uniform. Is there really any boy who's past the ninth grade and doesn't know how to put on a jockstrap? Yes, that's pretty fundamental stuff alright. And so something

a little more esoteric is put into the package — another eight-page chapter on "The Triple-Option Quarterback". "Triple Option" is one of the TV commentators' favourite phrases these days, and that should hook the dads and maybe even a few young coaches. As I say, nobody gets very much.

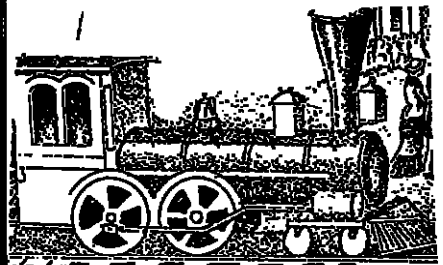
All of this stuff would be harmless enough, I suppose — after all, what's \$3.98 these days? — if it weren't for Theismann's apparent approach to the game, the way he seems to *think* about it. For instance, he maps out practice schedules that run from two to three hours a day. He recommends that quarterbacks should look at films *at least* an hour a day during the season. And he appears to endorse fully the late Vince Lombardi's much-quoted horseshit that "Winning isn't everything — it's the only thing." We have to ask whether football, a rough game for boys, is really important enough to monopolize three or four hours of a kid's life every day. We have to wonder how many parents, coaches and even players — at least in Canada — would want such long practices. Some of the best pro teams manage to get on and off the practice field in an hour and a half. Then there's the question of how many football teams in Canada below the level of the CFL and some of the colleges have the money necessary to film their games. And even at the level of the pros, I think that most people with any sensitivity at all recoil instinctively from the Lombardi "philosophy" Theismann seems to respect.

Besides its quota of jargon and unexamined premises, the book isn't even well written. Telling how to make a hand-off, Theismann writes, "Immediately, the ball carrier feels for a point of the ball with the webbing of his fingers"! In another place we read that "the ball is scrimmaged from the second-yard line after a touchdown." But my chief objection is to the spirit of the book. Theismann writes: "Developing a love for the game will make all the hard work seem more like fun." I'm sorry, but if my boy were playing football, I'd like it to *be* fun.

Jack Hutchinson is a Toronto freelance writer and producer who enjoyed football for 15 years, seven of them as a player and coach in the CFL.

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GIVING US THE FACTS

IN THE MIDDLE OF A LIFE

RICHARD B. WRIGHT
Macmillan of Canada
 cloth \$6.95; 305 pages

reviewed by *David Helwig*

"YOU COULD write the story of life in clichés and you would bear true witness." That thought passes through the mind of Freddy Landon, the hero of Richard B. Wright's second novel, and it indicates something of Wright's concern for the usual, the quotidian, what we often see but don't always recognize.

At 42, Freddy Landon is a failed writer, a failed husband, a failed salesman, but somehow not a failure. The novel covers a period of three days in his present and half a lifetime in his past. He confronts his daughter, his

divorced wife, his mistress, his father. He gets a job. Nothing changes dramatically, but as the novel goes on, we are drawn into Landon's experience and feel the weight of the facts of his life.

Wright's novels belong to that central modern tradition that offers portraits of people not unlike ourselves in places not unlike our own. His technique is the accumulation of detail. "She had bought a rather sporty looking jacket too, a hip-length coat of black-and-red-check wool fastened down the front by small wooden pegs." He notices these things or invents things for us to notice, paragraph after paragraph, until we are soaked with details and sink into his book. Like Hugh Hood or Brian Moore, he is less concerned to expose his own soul or dramatize his conflicts than to record or invent a lifelike world. His discipline arises from truth to fact. He is the kind of witness who always remembers what kind of car the man was driving.

Beyond this his knowledge of how people talk and behave is precise, and

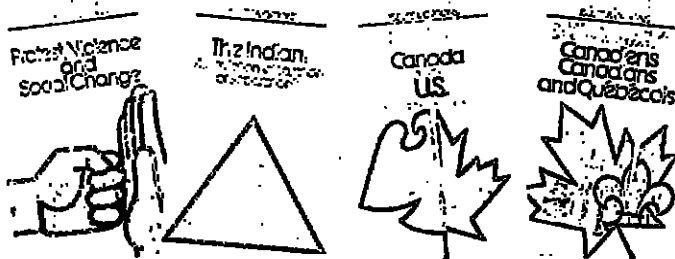
he has a fine sense of narrative pace. One of the most moving scenes in the book is one in which Freddy Landon, as an apprentice real-estate salesman watches his new boss make a desperate attempt to sell an unpromising house while the jets pass overhead toward the nearby airport. The salesman, the slatternly housewife, the old couple who consider the house and turn it down, all these characters are precisely defined and sympathetic. The whole scene is done with a loving despair. Or do I mean despairing love?

The quality of acceptance in the book arises partly from the character of Landon himself. He is a decent man who thinks of himself as a bumbler. He often accepts what he doesn't like, and he carries the reader with him.

The hero of Wright's first novel, *The Weekend Man*, Wes Wakeham, is another decent but inefficient man, but he is more ironic than Landon and his voice, telling the story in the first person, gives the whole book a lyric and comic quality that the new novel doesn't have. Here we are told the story from Landon's point of view in

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the third person. It is more stolid, like its hero. It starts slowly, and there are some characters, Landon's neurotic sister-in-law and her homosexual son in particular, that never came to life for me. Even Landon's daughter and her draft-resister boyfriend remained a bit inert. Wright's great strength is the ordinary, the office of a greeting card company, a small and seedy real-estate office on Eglinton Avenue. His best characters are middle-class, middle-income men and women, each with a voice, a shape, a history, a set of problems that are both familiar and significant.

As a second novel, *In The Middle of a Life* is encouraging because Wright has set aside one of his real strengths, the comic voice of *The Weekend Man*, but still created a solid and interesting book. It reminded me a little of Brian Moore's *I Am Mary Dunne* and doesn't suffer by the comparison. Richard B. Wright strikes me as the kind of writer who, with any luck, will move on from one solidly crafted book to another until he has created a gallery of characters and a portrait of the times. □

David Helwig is a poet and novelist who teaches English at Queen's University in Kingston, Ont.

COUNTRY ROADS

IF YOU HUM ME A FEW
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DON BAILEY
Oberon Press

cloth \$5.95, paper \$2.95, 154 pages

reviewed by Terence Roberts

THIS IS another book of first-person prose. There are so many around these days, they ought to be a dime a dozen. Every other person seems to have decided that his life, or someone's life he's invented, should be told like it is: "I hate people who smile about nothing." "I was scared, I guess," "I was a lousy milkman," and so on.

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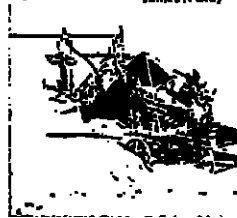
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If You Hum Me a Few Bars . . . is a collection of stories that fall indulgently into the first-person genre. They are not stories with individual titles or anything like that, but unpretentious, almost embarrassingly honest episodes in the life of a young Canadian around 30 called Gus Bailey is not a conspicuous stylist, so even though his language is often curt, with not one word wasted — “Someone is knocking at the door. A girl is standing in the hallway all covered with snow. I’d forgotten it’s just two weeks to Christmas” — it often leaves the effect of a robot or computer’s voice fed with pell-mell information concerning the nature of human behaviour. Conversely, when Gus succeeds in sounding naturally human, Bailey’s prose is wryly accurate and smooth. “The new band comes in shortly after 7. It isn’t hard to spot them. They’re old. From where I sit they seemed jammed in the doorway like four well-used snow-tires. Hardly any tread left. They move awkwardly across the floor dragging their instruments.” And some of the humour I’ll

admit made me fall off the chair. Sample this: “I’d gotten a ride with one man all the way from Calgary and he’d taken me through the mountains in his little Japanese car that he kept saying ‘holds the road tighter than your sister’s cunt’. What a sad awful man he’d been. When I mentioned all the rain he said it was good because up till then ‘everything’s been dryer than a nun’s tit’.”

Gus is a drifter, moving in and out of Canadian cities and jobs — car salesman, milkman, ad man. He is divorced with a small daughter whom he visits occasionally at his ex-wife’s home. He’s perpetually unsatisfied with his life, complaining doggedly of various forms of alienation yet finding himself in incidents with strange people and close friends that leave his morals hysterically aroused. There are fleeting love affairs naturally, and others that never began yet leave him feeling just as empty as if they had ended (you’ve heard this tune before, haven’t you?). Still, Gus is honestly struggling with his life (which is like a soul in search of a body and vice versa) not once ever

thinking of visiting a psychiatrist but sort of into self-therapy by being a stern realist when confronted with someone’s sad dreams. Gus is in such a confessional mood throughout these stories that any reader reluctant to join him in mushy self-analysis would either have to abandon this book or become the reader-as-psychiatrist as an act of sympathy until the final word.

However there is one episode in Gus’ life where all of Bailey’s writing talent finds its perfect situation. Gus is called home by his mother when his father is found to have lung cancer:

“Come,” she said.
 “All right. Tomorrow. I’ll drive up in the afternoon.”
 “In the morning,” she said. “Or tonight Gus. Come up tonight. I’m scared. When I’m alone with him I don’t know what to say.”
 “I’ll be up tomorrow.”
 “Early,” she said.
 “Yeah.” And I hung up. It was crazy, her being scared after all these years of being alone with him. But it scared me too in a way. It was like suddenly now that he was going to die we had to face the fact that he was alive.

One final thought. Throughout this book I kept remembering something



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MILITARY BREECH-LOADING RIFLES by V.D. Majandic & C. O. Browne. Here is the full story of the adoption in 1867 by the British Army of the famous Snider breech-loading rifle, and the subsequent search for a weapon of greater efficiency. “Military Breech-Loading Rifles” although not an official Army textbook, was published in 1870 with quasi-official approval. This and the fact that both authors were highly-qualified, technically-oriented soldiers, (having access to many official papers), makes this book a valuable legacy of the period; the most reliable contemporary record of the longarms of the British Army. Reprinted with 4 new photo plates added, and with all original illustrations. Hardcover. Available October 1, 1973. \$8.50.

BRITISH ORDERS, DECORATIONS AND MEDALS
 by Donald Hall, with a Foreword by Brigadier Rt. Hon. Sir John Smyth, Bt., V.C., M.C.

As with all militarism, the subject of British Orders Decorations and Medals has steadily become one of considerable popular appeal. This book, for the first time, makes available full colour illustrations of virtually every Order, Decoration and Medal awarded to men and women of the British Isles and, in many cases, of the Commonwealth.

While there have been several specialist books on the subject of British Orders, Decorations and Medals, this book provides for a need which has not previously been met. The use of full colour illustrations throughout makes it unique and the text has been written with authority.

The practice of collecting medals as a hobby is one of absorbing interest and has grown enormously in the past few years. The book will be of great interest to the general public, to the experienced specialist and also to the new collector. In the campaign Medals section there is set out in

very clear form a story of the achievements of British Arms over a period of nearly 200 years. Donald Hall is one of the greatest living experts in this field and he has made this text both interesting and informative. 96 pp., 9.25x7”, over 100 ill. Fully case bound. \$8.95.

GLENGARRY BADGES OF THE BRITISH LINE REGIMENTS TO 1881 by W.Y. Carman. Now, for the first time, an important aspect of badge collecting has been written up in detail as a comprehensive study. The first distinctive cap badges generally introduced for the rank and file of the British Army were those worn on the glengarry cap, which was gradually adopted from 1868 onwards. In 1881 territorial regiments of infantry were formed, resulting in many changes of title and the abolition of the old regimental numbers. In *Glengarry Badges* W.Y. Carman, Deputy Director of the National Army Museum, illustrates all the badges worn by the infantry of the line both before and after the 1881 reforms, and provides an erudite description of the badges, their battle honours, and dates of wear which will be an invaluable guide for collectors of badges and military uniform enthusiasts alike. 84 pages — Over 150 badges — illustrated — 8 3/4 in. x 5 1/2 in. — fully bound. \$5.95.

CAVALRY AND YEOMANRY BADGES OF THE BRITISH ARMY, 1914 by F. Wilkinson. In *Cavalry and Yeomanry Badges*, over 280 cap badges are described and illustrated. Both Regular and Yeomanry units are included, and full details of the metal type, method of wear and dates of issue are given. All mounted regiments appearing in the Army List for August 1914 are represented, but to assist collectors on identification many badges worn before and after the Great War have also been included. There is also a bibliography and an appendix providing relevant basic details of uniforms worn. 64 pages — Over 280 badges — illustrated — 8 3/4 in. x 5 1/2 in. — fully bound. \$5.95.

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Thoreau had written: "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." Perhaps Don Bailey had that thought in mind when giving us this book. Readers interested in the serious episodes of everyday living that have a tendency to add up to the agony and ecstasy of life, might find something to ponder in these pages. □

Toronto writer Terence Roberts is North American editor of the Guyanese periodical Expressionova.

heard & told

MORNING SMILE. The Toronto *Sun* ran an item recently about its monolithic rival, the Toronto *Star*, that is fast developing into a classic bit of newsroom humour. In its gossip column, the *Sun* reported that a *Star* summer student, hurrying to a story, flung open one of the windowless slab-like doors in the *Star's* new building and struck publisher Beland Honderich in the face, breaking his glasses — whereupon, in response to an Upstairs decree, peep-windows were fitted in *Star* doors. That's the story. The joke is that the same thing once happened at the *Sun's* progenitor paper, John W. H. Bassett's old Toronto *Telegram*. In this case, the offending door struck heir and vice-president Johnny F. Bassett in the mouth — "snapping," *Star* people say, "the silver spoon in half."

WHO FOO? *Books in Canada* has been asked the identity of "Foo", whose cartoons and sketches appear as filler in the magazine from time to time. Foo is writer and broadcaster Howard Engel, author of this month's lead review, on Hugh Garner's autobiography. The book, incidentally, has sold out quickly its 3,500-copy initial run and has gone into a second printing of equal size.

RYSORRYSORRYSOR. In our July/September issue, the review of *airie-prairieprairieprairie*, an anthology of poetry by Saskatoon poets, failed to

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mention the publisher. It wasn't really our fault, as anthology editor Caroline Heath writes: "It does not state explicitly in the book who published it. This was due to an extraordinary set of financial arrangements made prior to the book's publication. Now the repercussions occur. No one who reads the review will know where to order it." Well, now they do. The \$2.75 paperback is available from the Mendel Art Gallery, Box 569, Saskatoon, Sask. . . . And in that same issue, as several readers have pointed out, Alan Edmonds invented a splendid word to describe Don Marquis' inimitable archy. "Entymologically speaking," Alan mistyped, "schlepping is Yiddish for wearily dragging something from place." In other words, speaking as a word-rooted (etymology) insect (entomology). toujours gai, alan. □

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