

Why Audrey Thomas is one of Canada's most frequently discovered writers
 June Callwood defends the Writers' Union stand on censorship
 New fiction from Helwig and Such, more polemics from Richard Rohmer

BOOKS IN CANADA

Gift books galore



BOOKS IN CANADA

FEATURES

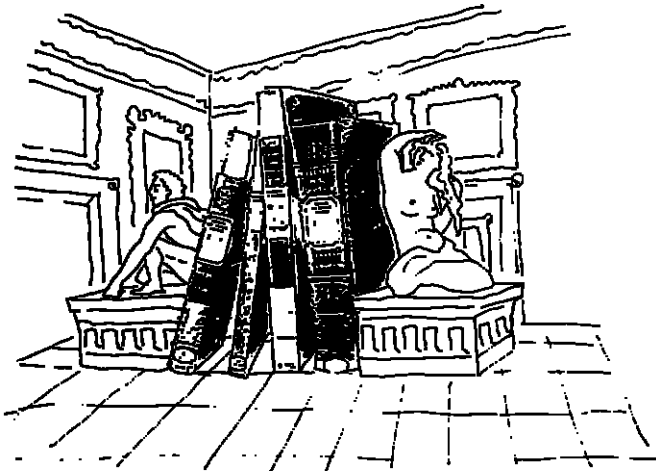
The Guts of Mrs. Blood.

Autobiographical novelist **Audrey Thomas** is fascinated by mirrors, reversals, distortions, and miscarriages. A visceral profile by **Eleanor Wachtel**

3

- Deep-Tap Tree, by **Alexander Hutchison: Lependu**, by **Don McKay: Baby Grand**, by **Guy Birchard** 14
- The Devil's Alternative, by **Frederick Forsyth** 14
- Only the Gods Speak, by **Harold Horwood** 15
- The Gold Diggers of 1929, by **Doug Fetherling** 1b

- Photograph of **William Deverell** by **Eleanor Wachtel** 29
- Drawing by **Gail Geltner** 8.9. 16.30
- Remaining drawings throughout the issue by **Joss MacLennan**



- Reason, Not Passion. **June Callwood** replies to a high-school teacher's criticism of an anti-censorship pamphlet published by the Writers' Union 6
- The Heavy Brigade. An extensive guide to this year's art, gift, and photography books, produced by **Da' Hiltz** 17

DEPARTMENTS

- The Browser, by **Michael Smith** 24
- Firs, Impressions, by **Douglas Hill** 26
- On the Racks, by **Paul Stuewe** 27
- On/Off/Set, by **Albert Moritz** 28
- Interview with **William Deverell**, by **Eleanor Wachtel** 29
- Notes and Comments 30
- Letters to the Editor 30
- CanWit No. 47 33
- The editors recommend 33
- Books received 34

REVIEWS

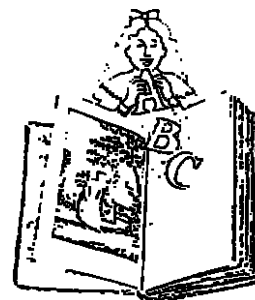
- Jennifer, by **David Helwig** 8
- Dolphin's Wake, by **Peter Such** 8
- Aurora, edited by **Morris Wolfe** 9
- The Hockey Sweater and **Other Stories**, by **Roch Carrier**; **Creatures of the Chase**, by **Jean-Yves Soucy** 10
- Balls!, by **Richard Rohmer** 12
- The Sorry Papers, by **Don Bailey**; **Shotgun and Other Stories**, by **Ken Thompson** 13

ILLUSTRATIONS

- Cover drawings by **Michael Solomon**
- Photograph of **Audrey Thomas** by **Eleanor Wachtel** 3

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THE GUTS OF MRS. BLOOD

How Audrey Thomas, haunted by an unhappy childhood and a lost child, found the intestinal fortitude to turn her reversible life into literary art

by Eleanor Wachtel

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S Muse told him, "Fool, look in thy heart and write." Women says Audrey Thomas, are stating to look a little lower down. A visceral imagination is coming to the fore. Blood — binh. menstruation. haemorrhage, miscarriage — the whole physiological side of women that was once taboo is being explored by a new generation of women writers. In the austere footsteps of Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Virginia Woolf trundle Margaret Laurence, Alice Munro, Margaret Atwood, and Audrey Thomas. The most intrepid of this vanguard is also the least known. Audrey Thomas, whose first book was published more than a dozen years ago, has since been "discovered" repeatedly.

Back in 1974 George Woodcock dubbed her "one of our first novelists." Margaret Atwood, in reviewing her latest collection of short stories for the Toronto Globe and Mail, wrote: "Page for page, she is one of the country's best titers... three novels, two novellas, and two books of stories. Despite her output and its ambition, range and quality, she has not yet received the kind of recognition such a body of work merits."

Last December Thomas gave a joint reading with American writer May Sarton. The Toronto audience flocked to hear the famous grande dame but came away bubbling with the discovery of a new Canadian writer. The short story they heard was published in the May issue of Saturday Night, the first appearance, editor Robert Fulford explained, of a writer "not nationally famous (yet)."

Is it because she's a transplanted American, published by Bobbs-Merrill and Knopf in the U.S. and small presses (Talonbooks and Oberon) in Canada? Larger Canadian publishers, active on the promotional hustings, have shied away. Or has it something to do with living for 20 years at the edge of the country, in British Columbia, whence like the moon-driven tide, she slips in and out of public notice?

My island is not round like the islands of my childhood imagination, but long rather and quite narrow, with a high ridge of rock running down the middle from north to south so that perhaps the best way to imagine it is to imagine some huge, petrified iguana on which trees and moss cling like barnacles.

— Prospero on the Island

TO THOMAS, islands are in themselves romantic and replete with exotic resonance. Galiano Island, part of what are known as the Gulf Islands, is only a 50-minute ferry ride from Vancouver, just far enough to reduce the city to a glow on the night-time horizon. Twenty miles along a road twisting gently beside the spine of the iguana, remote from the southern end inhabited by Jane Rule, Elizabeth Hopkins, a wintering Dorothy Livesay, or a summering Marian Engel, is a small, turn-of-the-century, white cabin half hidden behind shrubbery opposite the government wharf. After a year's teaching at the University of Victoria, Thomas is preparing, with her youngest daughter, 11-year-old Claire, to spend the com-

ing year there, subsisting on a Canada Council senior arts grant and finishing one, maybe two or three books.

In bulky wool sweater, slacks, and hiking boots, Thomas stands in the kitchen, stirring a soup over the chunky wood stove Elizabeth Hopkins gave her to keep — "unless then's a war, in which case she'll want it back." Thomas's rural persona is comfortable. At readings she usually wears something feminine, almost little-girlish: a black velvet pinafore over pale blue blouse, or an Indian print cotton dress with laced bodice. In whatever guise, she's equally engaging and often the raconteuse, apparently quite open but not ingenuous. While receptive and interested in people, she's conscious of being vulnerable to trespass and thus self-protective.

Underlying reserve is a natural quality in the autobiographical writer. One interviewer told Thomas: "One reads your books and one feels one knows .. far too much about you." Obviously, it's a mistake to take everything as fact. "Writers are terrible liars," she mocks in a conspicuously autobiographical story. She used to worry that using her own life as material indicated a lack of



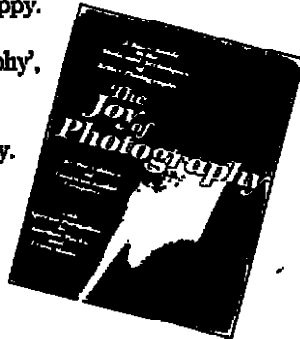
Audrey Thomas

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imagination. She was cheered to read that James Joyce bed the same concern. Now she's mote confident: it's simply a matter of disposition. "Everybody has a life but not everybody produces books. The novels aren't documentaries." She's a conscious craftsman and a selective stylist, not a mete confessor.

Transparency is en illusion. An incident may be related in one Way and reappear in another book, to take a different course. The willing is convoluted and anecdotal. Like an old person reminiscing, going beck end forth in time, her stories tend to be circular and they move with ease and naturalness.

Rewriting her own life is also occasion for revision and the heightened rewards of long-delayed gratification. In *Songs My Mother Taught Me*, she gave her persona a bathing suit she herself had always wanted bet never found, the colour of the setting sun. And cavalierly, she killed off an old boy-friend.

The three published novels, *Songs*, *Mrs. Blood*, end *Blown*

"One part of me is fearful and one part brave, curious about the world, and impatient with the other. . . You pick up settings, snatches of life, of conversations that you continue yourself."

Figures, together with several of the stories, portray the internally consistent life of a character usually named Isobel, a women who has much in common with her creator. The narrator of the novella *Prospero on the Island* is a woman living on a Gulf Island, writing a book. Thomas is fascinated by mirrors, their reflections and distortions. Her favourite books are *Alice Through the Looking Glass* and *Alice in Wonderland*. "It's a whole world there and it's reversed," she smiles. "We all have reversible lives."

She was born in Binghamton, N.Y., in 1935. Smell, with poor eyesight, she had an unhappy childhood. She was sent to school et age four, and always felt completely left out. She Feels she was bright in an em when brightness wasn't particularly en advantage. In some ways, though, she was privileged. She spent idyllic summers et her grandfather's estate in the Adirondacks, with its private beech on a beautiful lake. She felt less of a misfit, too, when she won scholarships first to a private boarding school in New Hampshire end then to Smith College. University reversed things; for the first time she was really encouraged to use her mind. The other side of that was the realization that there were many other bright girls.

For her junior year, eager to travel, she went to St. Andrews University in Scotland. Recollecting, Thomas grows expensive; she was back at St. Andrews two summers ego end the material now is being transformed into a story. The process is evident in the telling. As a writer sensitive to tensions below the surface, she has an eye for signs and details. She builds "pa college: the kind of cigarette boxes she sew when her boat pet in et Halifax en route to Liverpool; the boarding house et Number 10 Hopi Street; the rissoles served for Tuesday night dinners ("Terrible, like toilet paper tubes. Everyone would eat out on Tuesdays end the landlady's Feelings would be hen").

She was very innocent then, she emphasizes, 19 years old and extremely innocent. After graduating fmm Smith she returned to England and Found a teaching job in Birmingham et Bishop Ryder's Church of England Infant and Junior School. (She savours the sounds of the words end then mimics the voices of the 48 terribly naughty children in her class.) At 21, she married; her first child was born in Birmingham.

When Audrey and her English husband emigrated to Canada two years later, she entered graduate school at the University of British Columbia. She combined study with child-care (there were two daughters now), tutoring, and beginning to write fiction. Her M.A. thesis was on *Henry James*. It takes up a theme that is a leitmotiv in her work: the American abroad, the traveller, the person in flex whore-examines her life because she has become a

stranger. "Stories like *Daisy Miller* always interested me: innocence that is self-destructive in the end. And *The Voyage Our-I* wonder how much Virginia Woolf had been influenced by James — has a Daisy Miller type, another innocent who makes trouble for everybody." The expatriate is always on a search, going first to England or European centres, the sources of culture, the known. Then, for Audrey Thomas, to Africa to seek out the unconscious, unknowable; hence the thing most worth knowing.

Travelling is always a test for Thomas. Afraid of planes, fast cars, and elevators ("I belong in another century, of boats and trains") she pushed herself through East and West Africa, Greece, India, France, and so on. "One part of me is fearful and one part brave, curious about the world, and impatient with the other. Maugham travelled only for his stories. You pick up settings, snatches of life, of conversations that you continue yourself."

It was as a result of what occurred in Ghana, where she lived for two years, that Thomas's writing career began. Her husband got a job teaching at an art school and she and the children accompanied him. While there, she had a difficult pregnancy and then miscarried.

"Before that I was writing but not in a dedicated way. I wasn't ready to. I wasn't ready to reveal myself at all. They were really terrible stories. Then I reached a point of despair; it didn't matter any more. It was something I had to work out, and the only way I could do it was to organize the pain and turn it into art. I realized that it wasn't going to kill me. So I really began to write, to go down deeper. And then you can get a kind of distance. Start selecting words and phrases and decide how you're going to convey the intensity because you can step back."

The theme of the lost child was planted in her work. She wrote "If One Green Bottle," the genesis of her favourite novel, *Mrs. Blood*. It was her first published story. *The Atlantic* bought it in 1965; an editor at Bobbs-Merill read it and gave her a contract for two books.

Africa remained a metaphor for the unconscious — darkness, rhythms, drums, brilliant colours, the intensity of dream creatures. She had to return to exorcise the ghost of the unborn. In 1971 she went alone to West Africa for three months. It was a strange pleasure. She did the research for an enormous collage of a book, *Blown Figures*, in which Isobel, also on a search, goes mad. "Isobel is an exaggeration, me to the nth power."

Is that the end of Isobel forever? "I think so. I got bored with her. But I'm an autobiographical writer so whatever I call her... You see it all the time in African papers: 'I Kwezi Armah change my name to Joe Armah. All previous documents still valid.'" She repeats, laughing: "All previous documents still valid."

It was on the basis of these novels that Thomas got cast as a gloomy writer. This was a difficult time for her. However, there has always been at least a hint of humour in her work. With her excellent ear for dialogue, her sense of wordplay, and obvious enjoyment of nursery rhymes, she enriches the dark with light tones.

The original meanings of words and their inversion over time delight her. She studied Old Norse and Anglo-Saxon for a Ph.D. at UBC. Her dissertation was rejected as insufficiently academic — "I was writing a novel about Beowulf" — but was later purchased along with other manuscripts by the university for their "special collections." (An amusing irony, but not enough to offset her annoyance at the paltry sum she reckons they paid for her papers.)

Humour finds an increasing place in her exploration of "the terrible gap between men and women." She's growing optimistic about male-female relations. "As women get more confident, as they love themselves more, they'll hate men less." Separated since 1972 and recently divorced, she dissects relationships both in her last collection of stories, *Ladies and Escorts*, and a new collection to be called *Out in the Midday Sun*. Her new novel, *Latakia*, is due out this month. It is another "treatment" about the break-up of two lovers who are also writers, an entanglement of egos especially fraught with danger. Her lawyer was first in line with a blue pencil.

Thomas is not a feminist. But she is a woman's writer, and her audience is primarily women. "A lot of men are really afraid of what I write; they'll get over that. They don't want to know about

women's bodies. I don't blame them; it's frightening."

Claire enters the room in search of a needle. "My sewing basket gets smaller and smaller." Thomas laughs. "It's an objective correlative for women's role: now it's tiny with two needles and black and white thread."

"A lot of men are really afraid of what I write; they'll get over that. They don't want to know about women's bodies. I don't blame them; it's frightening."

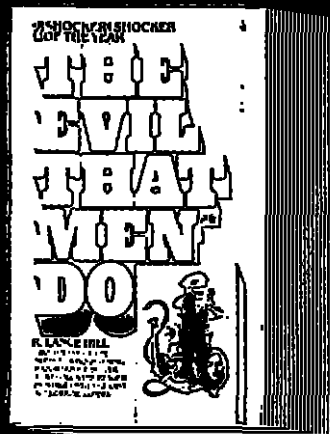
Women are neurotic, she feels, overcome by guilt if they want to be anything more than shadows. "That's still what our culture tells you to be. The great career women are always exceptions. My daughter mentioned that *Chatelaine* is full of recipes and food ads. That's where a woman's power is, in the kitchen, over food. The family is dependent on a mother who takes care of their physical needs. She decides what they'll eat, gets hurt if they don't finish their plate."

AUDREY THOMAS, who describes food — any food — with such enticing sensuousness that it makes the reader salivate, is bustling through the Vancouver produce market, reflecting on markets past, African and European. "She's not afraid of dealing at a touch level with people in the countries she travels in," observes an old friend, Bill Scherbrucker, editor of *The Capilano Review*. "I remember when she kept getting her hand slapped for trying to choose the tomatoes herself from a market stall." Now she buys a fresh cod for Bill's birthday; dates, bagels, and Russian vodka for a friend up the coast who has no fridge.

"Lady writer, natural hair colour, amiable, good cook, looking for rich man who is interested in the arts." Thomas composed an ad for the Personal Classified of the *New York Review of Books*. It

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was never sent. "Think about all the bizarre, creepy people who would answer," she says. Instead, she counts on the patronage of the public, putting in her day's work writing at the kitchen table. She's structured her schedule around the children's school hours: 9 a.m. to 3:30. She says it gives her discipline. The stories she regards as five-finger exercises, difficult but less taxing than revising her big novel, three years in the making, *Intertidal Life*. It's about women who adapt and survive — like the crabs, mussels, and clams in the intertidal zone, who really know how to hang on — and is set on a Gulf Island.

Everything is written longhand with black Staedler pens on yellow legal-size pads. "I didn't learn how to type on principle because my mother was a secretary and I vowed never to be one. Now I regret it. Have you ever seen a longhand novel? It's disgusting."

Excited by the prospect of a whole year in which to write.. Thomas is bursting to talk about a book she's about to start.

REBUTTAL

In reply to a high-school teacher, the Writers' Union argues that its fight with the censors is a matter of

REASON, NOT PASSION

by June Callwood

WE ARE PUZZLED by Barry Brewer's critical essay (October) on *Censorship*, a guide written and compiled by the Writers Union of Canada and distributed by the Book and Periodical Development Council (BPDC). His sensible comments about adult responsibility for children, however laudable, seem to spring from his perception that *Censorship* attacks parents and presents belligerently a view that children should be forced to read books that deeply offend their families.

That has never been the position of the Writers Union or of any of the allied organizations of librarians, book publishers, book sellers, poets, and distributors that make up the BPDC, nor does the guide anywhere reflect such a high-handed approach to a problem of enormous complexity.

On the August evening a year ago when representatives of the Writers' Union first faced parents who wanted three books withdrawn from Ontario's Huron County high schools (*The Diviners*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, and *Of Mice and Men*), William French of the *Toronto Globe and Mail* was in the audience of that Clinton auditorium. As he noted in his column, which subsequently won him a National Newspaper Award, the writers made "low-key remarks in defense of freedom generally and the three books specifically, trying not to offend or inflame."

That has been our posture ever since. Unless, as I strongly suspect, the *Censorship* Barry Brewer read is a changeling, he could look it up. William French's column is reprinted in our guide in order to circulate his perspective, which we share, that there is no confrontation between good and evil in the disputes about books in the schools, or the forces of darkness against the forces of light, but only deeply troubled adults trying to cross a gap in order to achieve what we all want for children, a safe place to grow.

The strategy proposed in the *Censorship* guidebook, which Barry Brewer terms "crude and transparent propaganda," consists of three parts:

1. *The criteria for choosing a book for a school reading list*

6 Books in Canada, November, 1979

Something a little different. In 1971 the mummified body of a child was discovered under a bridge in New Westminster, B.C. She had been dead for 50 years. Thomas wants to research the period, life on the Fraser River and the East Indian immigrants. She would use the double present again (1971 and 50 years earlier) and work through an historical event — like Michael Ondaatje, a writer she admires. "When I mentioned it all to a friend, she said 'Oh Audrey, it's the dead child again.' Here I thought I was onto something totally new: that really cut me down to size."

In writing and rewriting one's life, it becomes new; each time is different. Claire, idly picking up a copy of *Songs*, asks: "Does this relate to you, Mom?" The answer is unsatisfyingly accurate: "It does and it doesn't."

"The danger in knowing an autobiographical writer is you may become story material," Thomas says. "I think when I'm about 85 I'll have all my friends write a book about me to get their own back. It'll be called *Loyal Subjects*." Cl

must be sound. Gwen Mowbray, supervisor of curriculum and instruction (English) for the Board of Education in Hamilton, Ont., provided a breakdown of such criteria, the most significant for this discussion being that the books must be appropriate to "the age, ability, social and emotional maturity of the students."

2. *Adults who select books for schools should know why the books are suitable.* Barry Brewer alluded to the possibility that teachers toss trendy books into their reading lists without knowing or caring about their suitability. To the extent that this may occur, a slight one in our experience, it is unfair to the students and to the book. Peter Costello, English consultant for the Hamilton board, provided a sample of the thoughtful rationale a teacher should be able to present to a parent who justifiably wants to know why a certain book is included.

3. *Adults who want books removed from schools should know why the books are unsuitable.* In most cases, parents ask school boards to remove books that the parents have not read, on the basis of advice from such organizations as Renaissance International, whose leader, Ken Campbell, is proud to say he has not read a novel in more than 20 years. Writers feel, not unreasonably, that this isn't an adequate basis on which to judge a book. *Censorship* contains an application form to be completed by parents wishing to withdraw a book, which includes such questions as "For what age group would you recommend this book?" and "Nature of objection."

Those three proposals are the substance of the strategy for stopping the book banners, as the subtitle advertises. Barry Brewer describes them as "vociferous and intimidating"; our critics within the book industry found them timid. We must agree with the assessment of our peers; we are tentative, worried, confused. We know what our principles are, but we don't know how to proceed.

We want to protect children, support teachers, uphold parents' rights, and foster the development of wisdom and knowledge, and we won't accept that those aims are weak-headed or at cross-purposes.

As an example of our dilemma, there is the protracted anguish over whether to enter into "snippet warfare." Organizations such as Renaissance International distribute to parents pages of extracts culled from disapproved books. For instance, these are the sentences taken from J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* circulated to parents in Huron County:

□ Page 22: "He started cleaning his Goddam fingernails with the end of a match."

□ Page 32: "Jane said he was supposed to be a playwright or some Goddam thing, but all I ever saw him do was booze all the lime and listen to every Goddam mystery on the radio. run around the Goddam house. naked."

□ Page 192: " 'What the hellyya doing?' I said. 'Nothing. I'm simply sitting here.' 'What're ya doing anyway?' I said over again. I didn't know what the hell to say — I mean I was as embarrassed as hell. 'How bout keeping your voice down? I'm simply sitting here.' 'I have to go anyway.' I said. Boy, was I nervous. I started putting on my damn pants in the dark. I could hardly get them on I was so damn nervous."

The Writers' Union doesn't belie that those three passages give an insight into Salinger's masterpiece on the subject of adolescent agony. As last year's chairman of the Union's political committee, responsible for combating censorship, I proposed that we circulate another extract from that book, one on which the tide is based and presumably Salinger's own statement of what the book is about. It is (his):

□ Page 173: "Anyway, I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody's around — nobody bii. I mean — except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have M do. I have to catch everybody if they start m go over the cliff — I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd be the catcher in the rye and all. I know it's crazy, but that's the only thing I'd really lii to be."

Marian Hebb, the Writers' Union legal consultant, demolished that suggestion. She said, in essence, one snippet is as irresponsible to a book as another. She's right. The far-flung political committee — Trevor Ferguson, Janet Lunn, Keith Maillard, Pat Morley, Alice Munro, Leo Simpson, Bill Percy, Audrey Thomas, Kent Thompson, Jan Truss, David Watmough, Hope Morritt, and Norma West Linder — promptly informed me that the plan was sheer folly, and it was dropped.

Except for the *Censorship* guide and the Writers' Union's standing promise to come to the aid of school boards, librarians, and teachers when invited, we have formed no strategy to fit Barry Brewer's picture of us as a "well-financed pressure group."

The guide includes: Marian Hebb's outline of the legal case against snippet warfare; William French's column; the Law Reform Commission's Working Paper on Obscenity; an extract from a paper on censorship prepared by the National Council of Teachers of English in the United States; the statement of the BPDC's Committee of Freedom of Expression; the Canadian Library Association's statement on Intellectual Freedom; an incomplete list of books that have been banned in the past (Tom Sawyer, Alice in Wonderland, the Bible, I. Claudius, Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, Call of the Wild, J Accuse, and so on); a fine essay by a theologian, Carolyn Moulton, on parental responsibility for the moral development of children; a letter written to teachers by Margaret Laurence and a telegram sent to Huron County by Timothy Findley, both winners of Governor General's awards; and a philosophical examination of Milton's views on good and evil by David Williams, novelist and English professor.

Warner Troyer is this year's head of the Writers' Union political committee, which is hoping to devise tactics to cope with pervasive and silent self-censorship. In an age of education cutbacks and teacher anxiety, it is not surprising that most of the books opposed by Renaissance International are no longer being offered in Canadian high schools. □

CHRISTMAS CHECKLIST

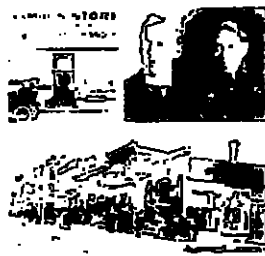
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Canada 1984 THE YEAR IN REVIEW

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Co-edited by
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All crisis and no centre

by Joan Barfoot

Jennifer, by David Helwig. Oberon Press. 179 pages. \$15.00 cloth (ISBN 0 88750 324 1) and \$6.95 paper (ISBN 0 58750 326 8).

IT'S A COURAGEOUS man who tackles the job of building a novel around a female character. Few women writers have attempted the feat of interpreting a male focal figure. And of modern men who have tried books about women, only Brian Moore comes immediately to mind as successful.

For all the ideals of cultural unisex, we are nor there yet. Boys and girls are still raised differently, and grow up to be men and women whose motivations have been formed in radically and subtly different ways. We may all grow up to hold the same jobs, receive the same wages, achieve the same status, but our roots and routes remain different. For a writer, who must understand and identify a character completely, crossing the sex line is a particularly formidable job.

It would be gratifying to be able to say that, with *Jennifer*, David Helwig has joined Moore in leaping that line, has traced a woman's particular history so that we know her. Unfortunately, he has not.

Jennifer is the now-common (in fact, virtually done-to-death) story of a middle-aged divorced woman dying to analyse her past and work out a future for herself. It's a very old tale, and one better left alone at this stage unless the writer has something unique and piercing to say about it, and the supreme craft to do it in dazzling fashion.

So from the outset, Helwig has lumbered himself with a couple of enormously difficult problems, — and he does not overcome them. *Jennifer* never really lives; Helwig does not have any great insights into her difficulties; and his style isn't strong enough to overwhelm those flaws. Still, it's a brave attempt, and it would be nice to see him try again, perhaps without taking on so many handicaps.

It's a short novel, just 179 pages, and one of its handicaps is that Helwig has loaded it with so many characters, all lurching in and out of *Jennifer*'s life with their own momentous crises, that *Jennifer* herself never has a chance to breathe. There is little space for introspection in a speedy volume that has *Jennifer* (not) dealing with:

□ A young psychiatric patient who adopts her as his friend and subsequently rapes a girl.

□ A friend who has attempted suicide in despair over a failed relationship with a married man.

□ The married man himself, with whom *Jennifer* begins an affair of her own.

□ Her dying mother.

□ Her unhappily married brother and his equally unhappy wife.

□ Her ex-husband, seriously ill in hospital.

□ Her two children, trying to adjust to separation and divorce.

□ A group of handicapped youngsters she is trying to teach to communicate.

The cast is simply too crowded. Too many things are going on, and *Jennifer* herself gets lost in the shuffle. At various points, most of the characters confide in *Jennifer* that they consider her strong, serene, knowing. *Jennifer* herself has doubts about this, and in fact appears instead to be remote, detached, and drifting.

The idea seems to be to portray the difference between who one is and how one is perceived by others, which is a fascinating theme, but with *Jennifer*, it doesn't make sense. She offers nothing to friends or family, and one sees them go to her with their problems only a couple of lines before wondering why they bother. If they're looking for empathy and perception, they'd do better calling a stranger at the nearest distress centre. It is not enough to be told repeatedly that *Jennifer* is strong, if there is



nothing to show that she is.

The novel is packed with missed opportunities for revelation, chances for *Jennifer* to show us who she is. Her mother is dying, but *Jennifer* skims past memories of her and

considers, instead, recollections of lovers and her ex-husband. We're told about the dramatic end of *Jennifer*'s marriage, which occurs when her husband goes to bed with a woman whose husband, in turn, commits a kind of rape of *Jennifer*. *Jennifer* reflects later that she lay awake all that night and the incident was pretty awful. But, she says, "she could never tell anyone about that night." Not even us?

Only in her work with the severely handicapped children, using a few symbols to teach them to communicate in the most fundamental ways, does *Jennifer* demonstrate the possibilities of passion. Perhaps that's because in her way, *Jennifer* is as mute, remote, and unconnected from her life as those children.

There are ways of making *Jennifer*'s sort of alienation interesting, at making us care about the person suffering it. But in the end, unfortunately, we're as remote from her as uninvolved with *Jennifer* as she is. □

Joyce is his beloved

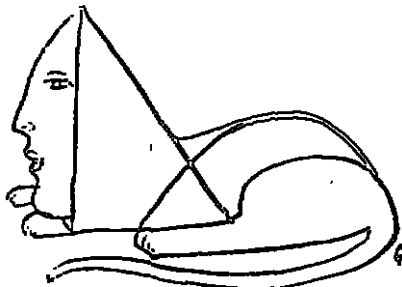
Dolphin's Wake, by Peter Such. Macmillan, 229 pages, \$2.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7705 1817 6).

By MICHAEL THOMPSON

READERS AND CRITICS who have been expecting *Dolphin's Wake* to be a "literary follow-up" to Peter Such's first novel, *Riverrun* (1974), will be disappointed. *Dolphin's Wake* isn't literary at all, though it flashes of pretending to be. It is a high-class thriller, "a novel of intrigue set in modern Greece" as the blurb puts it, clearly angling for the quick buck and maybe the movie contracts from a burgeoning Canadian film industry. And fair enough.

The question is whether *Dolphin's Wake* is a jackpot-grabbing specimen of the political-adventure thriller or not. Some of the ingredients are present. Such has set his book in the Athens of Papadopoulos and the Colonels' junta and in Crete, with flashbacks to the wartime resistance against the Germans, and to the Wales and England of Such's two main protagonists, Elizabeth (Liz) and Arthur. Greece isn't done particularly well, though there are moments when the landscape or seascape comes alive. And the political grasp is tenuous; not for a moment is there any sense that the anti-junta faction in Greece may not be the Good Guys. Furthermore, the personal reasons for Liz and Arthur are king involved with the Greeks are hopelessly unclear.

Liz and Arthur themselves are shadowy figures. This is all right in a potboiler, but Such doesn't quite content himself with potboiling. The main plot-concerning the



escape end rescue of an old comrade, Nikos, currently incarcerated by the Colonels -is slowly taken over by an account of the disintegration of Liz and Arthur's marriage, a union that seems to consist overwhelmingly in rather weird sex. As Nikos gains strength, what he represents — ruthless end stupid treachery, power-hunger, and lust for Liz-weans her from flakey, impotent, and doomed Arthur. It's hard to tell how old Liz is supposed to be (50 or 60 like Arthur? early 40s?), but unless she is 14 she thoroughly fails to act her age. Here she is with Nikos:

She danced with her belly brushing him and then suddenly slid onto him, came quickly and collapsed onto her knees. Her hair was floating away as she rolled in the water. The vault seemed crowded with their echoing laughter. Nikos threw the candles. They immediately exploded. The water exploded. The darkness exploded.

Nat that Arthur is much better:

His belly ached at the memory of how Elizabeth's mouth and bands smoothed out his passion for her, silk hair over his thighs, and she so ritualistic, loving to conquer and

constrain him, laughingly tying him like a gentle captive, sometimes, spreadeagled to the bedposts.

That's among the least gauche of the postures of the ubiquitous sexual encounters throughout *Dolphin's Wake*. They represent classic mule-chauvinistic sex, the woman reacting pornographically and instantly as male fantasy wishes her to. Peter Such-must know better; perhaps he is anticipating the movie and making things easier for the scriptwriter.

The writing is generally good, though spotty. The dialogue is mostly hopeless, reading for the most part like translated Beothuk. The trouble is, I think, Such's old bugbear, the worst a writer can have: one James Joyce. Such doesn't want to do dialogue et al; he wants to do sub-Leopold Bloomian stream-of-consciousness. *Anyone less than Joyce can't do it.* The maligned Joycean presence even lurks in the title, the Dolphin apparently being Nikos, though in one way or another we are invited to hold wakes for all the characters — end for poor, old, tortured Greece as well. And Such still has not shed the English awfulnesses of "onto" end "alright" instead of "on to": and "all tight." and retains that ghastly habit of indicating sincerity by frequently calling a woman "love."

Dolphin's Wake is a reasonable read, literary pretentiousness aside. I'll be surprised if it makes much money, ore movie. But it deserves itself a bit of a wake, and here's retsina. □

Prophets on the outhouse walls

Aurora: **New Canadian Writing 1919**, edited by Morris Wolfe, Doubleday. 256 pages, \$7.95 paper (ISBN 0 385 14610'8).

By LOUIS DUDEK

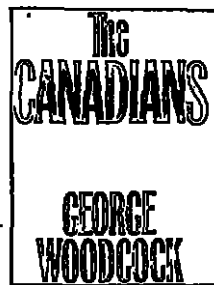
"BEAUTY is difficult" said Beardsley, when Yeats asked him why he painted horrors. It may be the answer some Canadians would give if they were asked the same question. And then it may not be. Beauty might never occur to them es hating anything to do with the question. As a nation aspiring to any kind of art we are pretty far gone.

Well, et least we've got rid of our puritanism. Three of the stories in this collection deal with sex at the *Deep Throat* level. This does not prevent one of them, by Anne Collins, from being an adolescent story, recording the shack of recoil et the brutality of the male. Another, Christine Webb's "Portraits", deals with middle-aged despair, when *Deep Throat* is no longer possible. Two other stories, those by Jim Christy and Guy Vanderhaeghe, are what I call "voices from the shit-house." except that in Christy's case the *Clockwork*

BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS



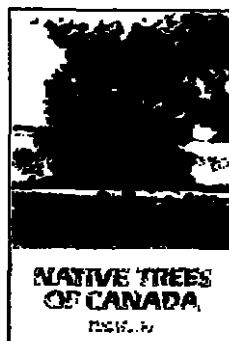
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Fitzhenry & Whiteside

Orange-type is a poet, a writer — as he must be in today's Canada.

Aurora 1979 is the second annual collection of new Canadian writing edited by Morris Wolfe. A kind of annual magazine, it consists of submitted material. This year there are 13 short stories, 43 poems, and two literary essays. Six of the writers have never been published before.

One might say that it is all highly-readable, "a good read" in the current jargon. The poems are not arty and solipsistic, as they often are in literary magazines, but communicative, direct-speech, free-verse pieces. (I used to publish scores of poems of this kind in *Delta* magazine in the 1960s, hoping for better things, so I know it as the Canadian mulch.) None of the poems has impressed me. For jolts there's Janice Shea:

*We just about the two goddam tightest lays
you ever gonna set those stoned cold eyes
on.*

Which just about keeps up with some of the prose. And there is Dian Orion's poem, which I take to be a lesbian erotic exercise. But more modest, and better as poetry, I would say, is one signed E.R. Sadubin, about Montreal winos. Nothing great, but then poetry is not a pretentious art.

The short stories hold your attention, and at least two of them are superb — Hubert de Santana's "The O'Carroll Archipelago" and David Blostein's "The Doulton Man." De Santana's novel-in-progress, from which this is extracted, is something to look forward to, real Irish shenanigans.

Othen, such as Anne Marriott's sentimental old-hat story (about the cat that died) and Gary Geddes's heavy-handed humour, may pass muster, but they only serve to set off a writer like De Santana.

What really gets me down in the book is the Canadian documentary drag of much of the material: the poems by Tom Marshall, W. D. Valgardson, George Amabile, Robert Currie, Stephen Scobie and Glen Sorestad; and the prose of Gary Geddes, Aritha van Herk, and even George Woodcock. No need to expand on this; it is the national sclerosis. But it brings me to a more central criticism.

Morris Wolfe, an intelligent reader, has selected the material according to his own personal taste, nothing more. "If I think a piece is good — if it moves me, if it stretches my mind or feelings in some way." So far so good. But if we're building a literature, or hoping for one, some more conscious awareness of directions, of the needs of the situation, and some critical analysis along these lines in the Introduction would seem to be desirable. In the past we've had such critics as A.J.M. Smith and Desmond Pacey to thrash out the issues — sometimes in a very partisan way — but now we seem to be falling back on mere personal taste. Canada used to have a great deal of writing based on these sorts of criteria before 1930, and most of it has perished. For the modern — or the post-modern — I do believe we need a more conscious and consistent criticism. □

10 Books in Canada, November, 1979

Budding breasts, brooding beasts

by Wayne Grady

The Hockey Sweater and Other Stories, by Roch Carrier, translated from the French by Sheila Fischman. House of Anansi, 160 pages, 56.93 paper (ISBN 0 88784078 7).

Creatures of the Chase, by Jean-Yves Soucy, translated from the French by John Glassco, McClelland & Stewart, 161 pages, \$12.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 8216 9).

LIKE MANY WRITERS caught early in a multiplicity of cultural influences, Roch Carrier has ended up writing like none of them. His work is neither typically Québécois nor mimetically English, has only distant echoes of France, and is decidedly un-American. Sheila Fischman quite rightly mentions Ingmar Bergman in a preface to her translation of Carrier's early novel, *Floralie, Where Are You?* And some of Carrier's early stories are reminiscent of such diverse internationalists as Borges and Jules Supervielle, the French writer who spent much of his time in Uruguay.

The timeless and placeless quality is superimposed quite deftly over a highly developed sense of time and place. The 20 stories in this collection (none of them longer than four pages) are set in the small village of Ste-Justine, about 60 miles south-east of Quebec City and a stone's throw from the Maine border. They concern the boyhood and adolescence of the narrator as well as the daily comings and goings of the other villagers. Many of them take place during the war (Carrier was born in 1937), but such irrelevant details as conscription, taxation, and Duplessis are mere asides to the more burning conversational fervour over the size of Pierette's budding breasts and the visit of a small, country circus. Homely stuff, to be sure, but Carrier weaves his stories into a sort of charmed circle, a garden of delights, using everything at his disposal — autobiography, history, folklore, local mythology (including Catholicism: every Good Friday the bells of Ste-Justine fly off to Rome and return on Sunday blessed by the Pope) — to create his own record, both personal and traditional, of life.

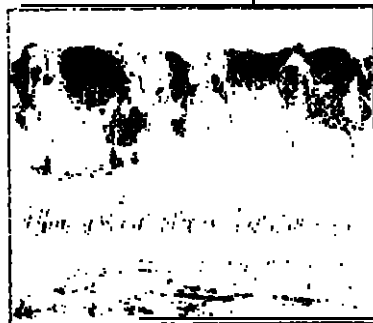
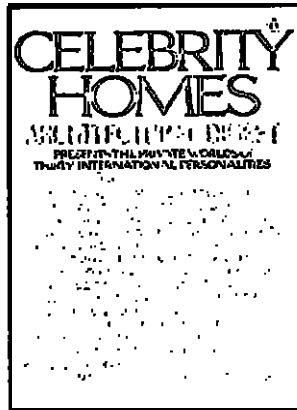
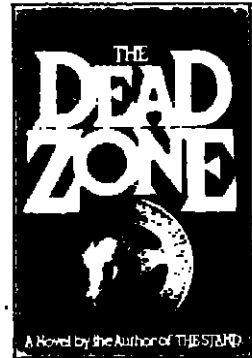
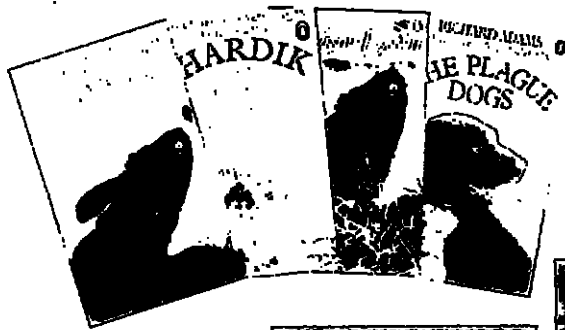
A word must be said about the form of these stories. There is no French equivalent of "short story." French writers write *récits*, *contes*, or *nouvelles*, the latter corresponding most closely to the English short story. Carrier writes *contes* — amusing, light-hearted fables that often end, and sometimes begin, with an explanatory

summation, in case any of his hearers miss the point. The *conte* is not a careful delineation of character or even of situation, but rather a graceful blend of parable and prose poem designed simply to make people smile and feel a little closer to one another. Its aim is social rather than individual. It's a difficult genre for the English ear to adapt to, which may explain why Carrier's first two collections of them — *Jolis deuil*, *petites tragédies pour adultes*, and *Contes pour mille oreilles* — remain untranslated.

Like Carrier's *contes*, Jean-Yves Soucy's first novel is out of the mainstream of contemporary Quebec literature, but it is hard to imagine anything being more on the opposite end of the spectrum. *Creatures of the Chase* (presumably John Glassco's title: the original, *Un dieu chasseur*, would be something like "The God-Hunter") is a novel of primeval violence (as distinct from power) and animal vitality (as distinct from life). It is about a French Canadian trapper named Mathieu Bouchard — the pun on *boucher* (butcher) is intentional — who stalks his territory like a god, granting and taking life, until he brings a woman there to share it with him. The woman is meant to represent society: she sweeps the cabin, plants vegetables, cuts down a few trees, and quickly forces Bouchard to spend days alone roaming in his doomed domain. Eventually, however, natural male supremacy dominates: after Marguerite is dealt with and disposed of, Mathieu hops into his trusty canoe and peddles north, leaving his territory to the ravages of a lumber company.

This is a thesis novel, and the characters never quite come off the page as anything more than opposing forces. Even at the novel's low point Bouchard remains untamed, undergoes no deepened consciousness, suffers no agonizing insights. Bouchard is Man, half god and half animal (although the ratio is probably closer to 30-70); Marguerite is Society (or possibly Art) — she plays the flute, was a school teacher, and finds a wall covered with rusty old traps and stretchers aesthetically unpleasing (she couldn't represent Toronto's restaurant decorators). The problem with the novel is that, as a study of social forces, its outcome is pre-ordained. Man must both win and lose, society must encroach, overtake, and allow Man to flee for a while. And as a study of Bouchard's psychological make-up the novel is equally ill-fated: Bouchard doesn't have one. □

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Nuts!

Balls!, by Richard Rohmer, General Publishing. 364 pages, \$12.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7736 0075 2).

By **PHIL SURGUY**

ANYONE WHO HAS been paying attention won't have to be told again what a crummy novelist Richard Rohmer is. His lack of talent is total but to upbraid him for this alone would be pointless. He has made it clear that all that counts is that people buy his books. In an interview on CBC-Radio's *Sunday Morning* not long ago, he said he would be dismayed if he ever wrote a novel that found favour with the critics. The only sensible tack, then, is to take him on his own terms, try to see if he is actually doing what he says he's doing.

The essential purpose of a Rohmer book is to convey a threefold message concerning the world's precarious energy supplies, various alarming political trends, and the implications these have for Canadian independence. The message is all, and any complaint that it is mired in the most dreadful fiction is irrelevant, because Rohmer is mainly writing for people who

have no use for fiction in the first place. Such people read non-fiction almost exclusively and, if they are going to waste their time on a story-book, it had damn well better be about an important "issue" or at least teach them something they already know.

The big issue in *Balls!* is the growing dependence of the United States on natural gas, which culminates in a disastrous mid-winter shortage in 1985. The title refers to the huge spherical tanks in which liquid natural gas is stored and, in some cases, transported. "*Balls!*" is also an ejaculation that, with Rohmer stretching his cleverness to its limits, springs from the lips of various characters, most notably during a cameo appearance by America's First Testicles.

The shortage of 1985 results in 20,000 people freezing to death in Buffalo. The rest of the book is about how a pair of cardboard figures labelled President and Vice-President of the United States carry out a plan to get the extra gas the U.S. needs from foreign sources. Rohmer really has nothing to say beyond pointing out that reliance on overseas natural gas will make the U.S. even more strategically vulnerable than it is now, and that in the final crunch the U.S. will insist on having Canada's reserves, regardless of any plans we may have for them. Perhaps we should be grateful for the warning. But Rohmer makes these points over and over again, each time more boringly than the last, and reading *Balls!* is about as edifying and entertaining as being

on a long bus ride, trapped in a seat next to some repetitious dink who takes the whole time to tell how he built and furnished his rec room.

People may indeed buy large numbers of this book, but it's doubtful whether anyone other than conscientious reviewers will read more than bits of it. The actual content of *Balls!* would take up no more than a few paragraphs of a magazine article, or a minute or so of TV documentary time. In other words, not even the author's primary audience will get its money's worth. Even on his own terms, then, he is a failure.

And it is not simply a matter of native ineptitude or ignorance of what good fiction is. At the end of that *Sunday Morning* interview, Rohmer said he hopes to do the screenplay for a movie version of *Balls!*, and this, he told us, will largely depend on whether he can find a way to tuck the job into his busy schedule. The same attitude pervades his fiction. It's obvious that he is simply too busy to bother trying to do a good job. In short, at the heart of Rohmer's failure is a thoroughgoing contempt for both fiction and the craft of writing. Maybe, if his movie ever gets made, the spectacle of actors being asphyxiated by the great clouds of unnatural gas that he passes off as dialogue, or (if the thing is ever shown in theatres for a few days) snores and shrieks of boredom from the dwindling audiences will help him appreciate that *Balls!* is a lot more than just a critical disaster. But that's really too much to hope for. □

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Mad dogs and Thompson guns

The Sorry Papers, by Don Bailey, Oberon Press, 144 pages, \$15.00 cloth (ISBN 0 88750 321 7) and \$6.95 paper (ISBN 0 887.50322 5).

Shotgun and Other Stories, by Kent Thompson, New Brunswick Chapbooks, 107 pages, \$3.00 paper (ISBN 0 920084 04 4).

By MICHAEL SMITH

DON BAILEY is a Former convict whose previous short stories and novel, if not totally autobiographical, certainly have stuck pretty close to his own experience. Truth is stranger than fiction, of course, but what marks a really fine story is the teller's knack of distilling the facts down to a few tightly focused details that rely more on nuance than the embellishments of straight reportage. As a character remarks in one of these stories: "Details are like the individual snowflakes that make up the blizzard."

Trouble is, in that particular story, "The Greta Script," the details strike the reader with all the subtlety of hailstones. The plot draws on the rule of thumb that any dog

introduced in the opening pages has to be torn to shreds by the end. The narrator's rather pitiful, cute little mutt is smeared by a marauding Malamute, and the reactions prompted among his neighbours are spectacular. By way of punishment, the mauler's owner blows its head off; his wife attempts suicide: another neighbour chooses the moment to confess his shameful past as a Soviet border guard. Needless to say, the narrator's wife also happens to be near the end of her pregnancy. In the face of such excess, it's ironic that the narrator, a scriptwriter, is accused by a producer of writing a story that is "just too fragile. . . h's too subtle."

Admittedly, "The Greta Script" is one of the more ambitious of these eight stories. Another, "On Our Way to the Plea-Market," is similar in the way it counterpoints present action against the past. Here, the alcoholic narrator's dog drowns, along with his toddler son, but the squalor is partly redeemed by Bailey's description of the flawed survivors who operate a rural sales barn near the narrator's home. More successful is "Eric the Red," in which a former social worker tickles out his analysis of power as he observes the occupants of a tourist campsite and his own behaviour with a willing teen-aged girl.

Then too, squalor is familiar turf to Bailey. The title piece, in which a convict realizes he's better off in stir than out on a Christmas pass, sets the keynote for the others, all of which perch on the brink of hopelessness. It's no surprise that suicide figures in several. Though "The Sony Papers" and "Ring Around the Rosie" are

the only prison stories, they demonstrate the bitter laughter that lies behind such lines (in "The Greta Script") as: "Beyond the city window snow falls like so much pigeon-shit." The remaining stories — "Rain on the Roof," "All Sales Final," and "Why Do You Lie?" — share elements of the outrage, humanism, and (in "All Sales Final") the penchant for tidy endings of the late Hugh Garner.

While Bailey's characters lead lives of gritty desperation, those of Kent Thompson, when they dilly their fingers, find it quite beastly. Nancy Batter's introduction to this collection suggests that in such stories as "Shotgun" and "Perhaps the Church Building Itself" the narrator's elevated diction shows how aware he is of his own loss of dignity, but this affectation so suffuses all 10 stories that the whole book sounds academic in tone. This happens even when, in "Because I Am Drunk," the narrator wallows in marital discord, sex, and boozy self-pity. It seems appropriate that the title story is narrated by a stuffy old man.

Unlike Bailey, whose narrators often resemble himself (he has been a social worker and scriptwriter in addition to sewing time in Kingston Penitentiary), Thompson frequently shifts guises. In "The Problems of a Truancy" he is a boy skipping school, while in "Two Photographs" he is a young girl facing the break-up of her parents; in "The Pilot" and "Among Women" he narrates as a young woman, the one very self-assured, the other pregnant by a departing soldier. His best-known stories, "Shotgun" and "Perhaps

EMILY CARR



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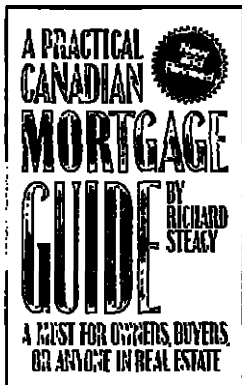
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the Church Building Itself," are told from the point of view of an old ma" who commits two unseemly, attention-drawing acts end, read together, seem somewhat redundant.

This is the first in a series of New Brunswick Prose Chapbooks, and the editing is rather shaggy. □

The world well limned

Deep-Tap Tree, by Alexander Hutchison, University of Massachusetts Press, 64 pages. \$7.00 cloth (ISBN CI 87023 2514) and \$4.00 paper (ISBN 0 87023 255 X).

Lependu, by Don McKay, Naim, 48 pages, \$3.50 paper (ISBN 0 91926 IO 6).

Baby Grand, by Guy Birchard, Naim, 26 pages. \$2.50 paper (ISBN '0 91926 12 2).

By AUGUST KLEINZAHLER

HERE ARE THREE books of poetry you're unlikely to buy your old auntie in Sudbury for Christmas. And that's a pity, because the old girl would have a winter of delight digging into these splendid and unlike collections. What they have in common, however, is rich, carefully orchestrated movement, sharp detail, and strength of vision -that is, a way of looking at and through the world that is hard-won, not manufactured or teased up in the hot house environment of creative-writing courses.

Alexander Hutchison's *Deep-Tap Tree* is the most polished and ambitious of the three books. A Canadian whose roots are in northern Scotland, Hutchison can give each word a Skaldic charge, so that not only do his lines move with grace and sureness into one another but also another level of tension is created by tingle words blending, enlivening the poem syllable by syllable:

*Laila languishes
and the stream runs clear; the pricket
tumbles to scent-spattered ground.*

*I'll sing at first for cunning
in the places where light
licks in*

*Chiming like the crab to take
some metal to my blood
and from stripped air devise
fresh weaponry*

*Now burned and buried
lair-earth around you
earth turned and dug under
watch let for a star-spread sky*

If one theme pervades Hutchison's book it is "the bum." He renders the particulars

and hazards of this hunt in such striking language and elliptical progressions of meaning, that in the moment of capture, figurative and literal, we are transformed for one flaming moment outside of time.

Lependu is Don McKay's third book and no easy matter to discuss in a few words. Let us say that it is about phrenology and London, Ont. Or perhaps better, Death in London, Ont.:

*le flu
is dicing my mind through the switchboard
at London Life is renting my nerves
for the first class fire prevention system
at the University of Western Ontario, I'll be
preternaturally alert, abstract
a veritable oignon pour*

le chef inconnu

le flu du pendu

The problem is saying what McKay's work is about is part of the pleasure in reading or listening to it. His work is constantly in motion: nothing is static. *Lependu* is, after all, about *Lependu* in London, and you will have no doubt about that after reading the book.

And speaking of jazz, if Guy Birchard played tenor sax he would go way out on the limb where only delicate-footed birds dare perch. He likes to let his syntax roam, and if you're accustomed to some sleepy combo you'll have one bloody time keeping up with Birchard. Speaking of birds:

*The owl sold. Stay
cool and neighbourly. No need
scared impatience, no need for warmth.
Love's away but alive. Too high
a profile and people will clip
your wings*

*the way they -
split the magpie's tongue to teach it
to speak. It flies away angry
spitting blood, saying nothing.*

Baby Grand, Birchard's first book, is a wee book indeed, only about 30 pages. On the other hand, if you read it properly, you will be spending more time with it in the end than with the collected works of James Michena.

And just think, these three guys are wandering around Canada tight now—alive, well, and with their books eminently for sale. □

IN BRIEF

The Devil's *Alternative*, by Frederick Forsyth, Nelson, Foster & Scott. 479 pages, \$14.95 cloth (ISBN 0 09 138870 8). For years now Frederick Forsyth has been a much-imitated generalissimo of his genre. "In the Forsyth tradition," promise the blurbs of lesser books. "Not since *The Day of the Jackal*..." Sad to report, the generalissimo has become a camp follower with his fourth big novel; he is reduced to picking up scraps of other writers' plots. *The Devil's Alternative*, although conceived on a grand scale, boils down to little more

than a conventional doomsday thriller. The ingredients include a hijacked supertanker, a band of Ukrainian freedom lighters (or terrorists, depending on one's point of view), a pair of star-crossed spies, the whole alphabet soup of modern espionage, and various stalwart heads of state all trying to prevent the outbreak of the Third World War. A great deal of the dialogue sounds as if it was written by a wooden romantic with an ear of pure tin. At one crucial point Forsyth's plot mechanics compel him to assert by implication that the United States controls Canada's wheat exports. Even Richard Rohmer wouldn't go that far.

— DOUGLAS MARSHALL

Between me and thou

Only the Gods Speak. by Harold Horwood, Breakwater, 130 pages, \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0 919948 42 1).

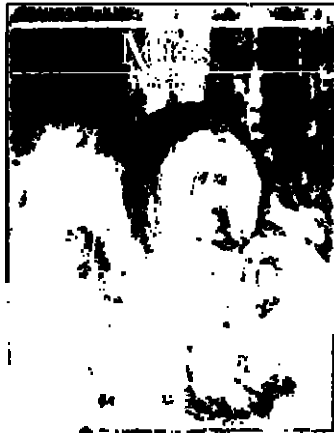
By JAMES P. CARLEY

THIS IS A somewhat confusing and (I think) uneven collection of 17 short stories. The first part of the book consists of "ten tales from the tropics." In this group there is a certain amount of continuity: characters from the first story reappear from time to time in the others and the group ends with the suicide of one of these characters. Some of the individual stories form attractive and evocative pieces. "Manuel's Shark," for example, gives a rich portrayal of the freedom and beauty of the life of native fisher boys. This attitude contrasts with the inhibited behaviour of the tourist protagonist in "The Shell Collector," for whom shells, nor human contact, are the only means of perceiving beauty.

Throughout the group the contrast between white and black, tourist and native, is constantly emphasized. Horwood does not portray the Caribbean as a blissful paradise but he does seem to suggest that our civilization is somehow much less in touch, much less attractive, than the native one. In many of the stories, moreover, he seems to link white civilization and its repressions with decadence and perversion. One character searches openly for young men with whips (as the headmaster does "consciously" in "Look Man. I Love You"); other characters experiment with drugs and end up stupefied, unfulfilled, and confused.

In the North, too, so-called white civilization destroys. In an attractive pair of stories we see the life of a young man in the far North, his love (and its consummation) for an imported white school teacher, and the destruction of this love by civilized authority.

Andy wants an orangutan for Christmas



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get a
Polar Bear
as well!



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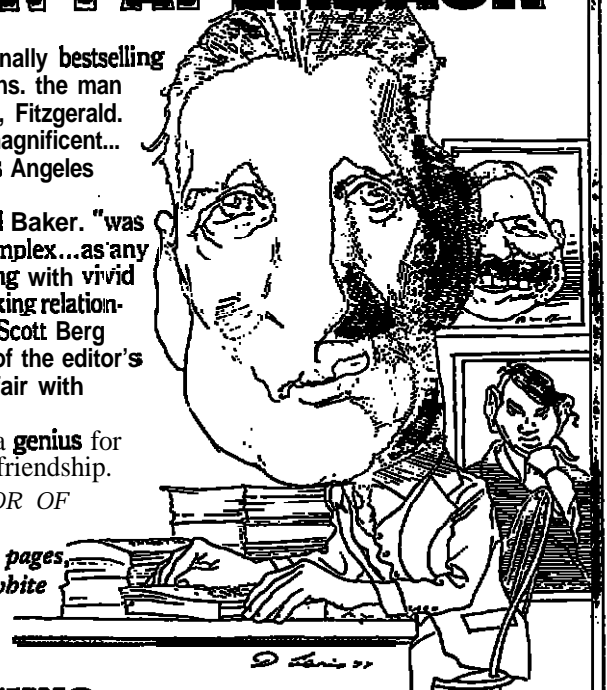
A. Scott Berg's nationally bestselling biography of Max Perkins, the man who edited Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Wolfe and others, is "magnificent... a pleasure to read." (Los Angeles Times Book Review)

"Perkins," said Russell Baker, "was as fascinating, dark, complex... as any of his golden boys." Along with vivid details of Perkins' working relationships with his authors, Scott Berg tells the touching story of the editor's twenty-five-year love affair with Elizabeth Lemmon.

Max Perkins: he had a genius for talent... and a talent for friendship.

MAX PERKINS EDITOR OF GENIUS

by A. Scott Berg. (656 pages, 16 pages of black and white photos) only \$3.50.

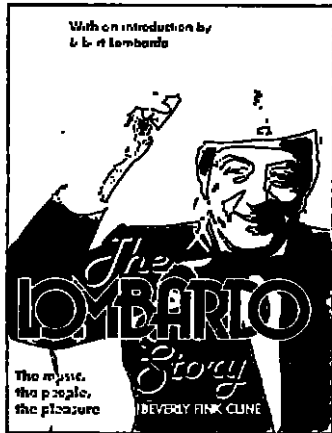


MAX PERKINS EDITOR OF GENIUS

PaperJacks

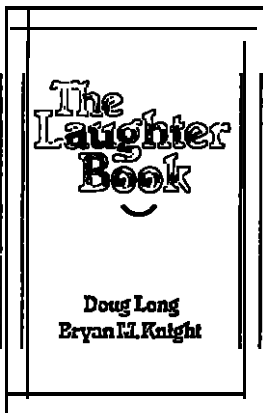
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November, 1979, Books In Canada 15



A heartwarming book for anyone who has ever danced to "the sweetest music this side of heaven". The story of the Lombardo brothers who emerged from London Ontario with their Royal Canadians band and captured rhythms of the world. The *Lombardo Story* is illustrated with photographs from personal collections, many previously unpublished, and includes a listing of Lombardo recordings.

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Do you ever wonder what makes you laugh and why? What you may be hiding or revealing about yourself or your attitudes when you chuckle? How to spot the hidden meanings of laughter? Why your friends, lovers, and enemies laugh as they do — and what it can mean for you? Find out in *The Laughter Book*, a book of self-discovery that is both informative and fun to read.

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Reading the whole group of stories suggests that neither traditional white civilization (based on Greek, Latin, canings, and in one case finding its culmination in reform schools) nor drug-produced liberation lead to any real values or means of communication. In his foreword Horwood says that "the Other as Thou" is central in them all." Most of us as reserved (or derelict) Canadians appear too enmeshed in a decaying civilization to make the step to Thou; in a few individual cases, however, the connection is made, and a peace and tranquillity achieved.

These stories are not major in their impact. At times the symbolism is so heavily loaded that it makes even a Conrad seem subtle. In the best, however, there is a compelling evocation of mood and place. In particular the title story, which is the final one, is almost a metaphysical prose poem, the power of which reverberates back over the other stories. □

The year the bulls bled and the bears danced

The Gold Diggers of 1929, by Doug Fetherling, Macmillan, illustrated, 176 pages, \$14.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7705 1824 9).

By J. A. S. EVANS

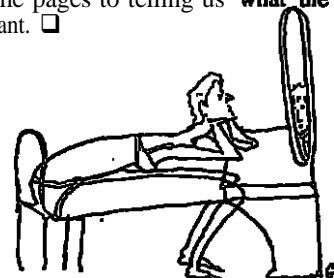
THE GREAT CRASH of 1929 might have been comfortably forgotten by now save for one factor: it was followed immediately by the Great Depression. The Depression lasted until the Second World War, although the worst was over by 1935, when the Conservative government of R. B. Bennett fell, just after it made a last desperate effort to institute a New Deal program in Canada, which the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council was to find largely unconstitutional. The Depression hit Canada as hard as any country; in its rock-bottom year, 1933, unemployment rose above 33 per cent for one month. To be sure, Canadian banks survived intact, whereas in the United States fully one third of them failed before Roosevelt's administration took over in 1933. But it is a moot point whether the Canadian economy can be deemed any the healthier for that reason. The Great Crash is generally taken as the cause of the Great Depression. Whether it was or not is also a moot point.

The year 1929 is the hem -or heroine, if the sex of years be feminine -of Doug Fetherling's *The Gold Diggers of 1929*. It began with the Roaring Twenties still in full-throated roar. Montreal still dominated the financial world of Canada, and the Montreal Stock Exchange, established in 1874, was the place where Old Money of

Canada did business. Toronto compared to Montreal much as Calgary compares with Toronto today. Toronto's Standard Stock and Mining Exchange — to be distinguished from the Toronto Stock Exchange with which it eventually merged — was a freewheeling place where the unwary got fingers burned. Riding herd on the *laissez-faire* atmosphere were two publications: *Saturday Night*, under a crusading editor, Charles Frederick Paul, and *The Financial Post*, under Floyd Chalmers, whose reminiscences provide some of the meat of Fetherling's book. Prices boomed to an all-time high the first week of September. Optimism continued into October. Then on Wednesday, Oct. 23, the New York market broke.

Next day was Black Thursday. During the night, brokers had been calling their customers, telling them to put up more margin or forfeit, and many had no choice. There was panic in Montreal, and in Toronto bids were almost impossible to obtain on such blue chips as Loblaws and Stelco, which were hard hit. On Wall Street, a broker acting for the firm of J. P. Morgan stemmed the panic for the moment, and by Oct. 25 the atmosphere was steadier. But next week, the slide continued. On Tuesday -Black Tuesday in the annals of the Crash -there was pandemonium in the exchanges. Even so, the Crash was not over. On Nov. 13, Black Tuesday repeated itself, and about the same time, a group of New York society luminaries held a "poverty party" on Park Avenue: the women came in last season's gowns, and the guests ate weiners and sauerkraut. The glitter of the 1920s turned suddenly dull. Just before the end of the year, the unemployed in Vancouver rioted and people spoke of a "red army." The Great Depression was underway.

The events that happened are clear enough, and Fetherling makes a good story of it. Why it happened is less clear, though one reason for the Crash must have been the lack of regulation in the marketplace. Speculators operating on tiny margins bid up stock prices to unrealistic levels, and when the market began to totter, they had to forfeit, and turned the decline into a panic. But another reason was the gold-rush fever of the year. Canada in 1929 was not that far removed from the days of the Klondike, or Barkerville, and for the first months of 1929, there appeared to be gold in the stock market. Even elevator operators were speculating. But the bubble bust, and the "gold-diggers" passed into history so thoroughly that Fetherling must devote some pages to telling us what the term meant. □



The Heavy Brigade

What's that rumble in the distance, that four-colour flash on the horizon, that jangle of big bucks and thump of cow-hide drums? Hush, my children, it's only the annual gift-book cavalcade bearing down on us again

produced by Den Hilts

AMONG PEOPLE who consider books primarily as a means of communication via the printed word, there is a certain disdain for coffee-table books; they're pretty but lacking in substance. However, the technology for printing high-quality colour reproductions is fairly recent and has given those without the money for a grand tour of the world's art galleries and museums access to great public and private collections. Even so, keeping abreast of the visual arts can be expensive. Some of the books available should probably be considered investments and may eventually, one expects, be traded on the stock exchange. A special edition of *The Art of Norval Morrisseau*, hand-bound

in cowhide, signed by the author, and encased in a wood and linen box with a portfolio of five original prints is selling for \$1,000. Fortunately, most gift books are more modestly priced and the selection is wide enough to satisfy most tastes. A well-illustrated, finely bound book, printed on good paper, has a special appeal that has lasted for centuries and the love affair seems far from over.

The books reviewed in this section are those received before press time. Forthcoming gift books of interest are checklisted and may be reviewed in the December issue.

Photography: from pink peaks to dead rabbits

By GARY MICHAEL DAULT

TO MAKE GOOD photographs is every bit as difficult as to make good paintings. The problems are different, and the entire process is complicated for the photographer by two has: first, it is diabolically easy, mechanically speaking, to take a photograph: second, it is easy to mistake a bad photograph's relentless flat-footed recording of whatever lies before it for the expressive re-visionings of the world that go on in the mind's eye of the genuine photographer.

The photographer himself ought to be as clear as he can about these delicately poised difficulties. If he manages to disregard them, he sends his photograph slouching off into the sort of sentimentality and pictorial bathos that is much worse for photography as a whole than, say, a bad painting is bad for art. A bad painting at least has something human about it, some texturing of surface, maybe, or some evidence within it of the physical touch of the artist. A bad

photograph is set free of the photographer and then drifts about until it collects where all clichés collect — in that part of your mind where your guard is down. This is the land wherein dwell photographs of Peggy's Cove in comely mist or snow-capped mountains dipped with pink reflected light. This is where our-of-focus grasses lean together across the nodding camera lens, and where mindless waves bear upon lumpy rocks under a heavily filtered sky.

One of the important new photography books for fall will, I am afraid, contribute to the photographic somnolence I have been describing more than it will head it off. I am referring to Freeman Patterson's frustrating new handbook *Photography and the Art of Seeing* (Van Nostrand Reinhold, \$24.95 cloth and \$12.95 paper), a companion to his best-selling *Photography for the Joy of It* (1977).

What is chiefly frustrating about Patterson is the heady way he approaches photographic intelligence again and again only to spoil it all in the end by an ongoing and weirdly consistent banality. This is a pity because Patterson has some ideas that, if they are not new — or even freshly revived — are at least potentially useful to the fledgling photographer. (It is another problem of the book, by the way, that it's impossible to imagine who the book is for: the professional photographer will already

know what Patterson is talking about and be bored; the amateur photographer — for whom I assume the book is slated — will probably find Patterson intellectually precious and technically beyond his means). Imbedded in the short chapters of prose that preface portfolios of Patterson's pictures (with accompanying prose-poem explanations for each photograph) are perfectly sensible bits of photographic behaviour. Indeed, even the chapter headings themselves are useful (that is, what they suggest is advice): "Thinking Sideways," "Relaxed Attention," "Learning to Imagine," and so forth.

What I find so upsetting about Patterson's way of being helpful is his effusive way of looking at the world. "I have always thought of spiders' webs covered with dewdrops as celestial jewellery," Patterson writes (as if butter wouldn't melt on his lens). "For me the quarry is a lonely and haunting place. It makes me feel as if I am far away from civilization, perhaps on the moon." And, accompanying an admittedly skilfully taken photograph of the light slanting down through dark clouds to fill on a silvery shoreline, he says (quite revealingly, I think): "When I saw this scene, I immediately thought of the Creation. The power of the light streaming from the sky divided the blackness into water and land, day and night, and suggested emergence."



McClure

Years of Challenge

Read about his life and work in Gaza, India, Sarawak, Peru, St. Vincent, Africa and his years as the first lay moderator of The United Church of Canada.

If you enjoyed McClure: *The China Years*, another treat is in store! Price: \$14.95.

Order from your book store.

The crux of what is the matter with the world according to F-n Patterson lies precisely in his feeling that light breaking through cloud and "streaming" down upon water is anything like "the Creation." What the picture is more like is the thousands of bad photographs that filled up everybody's childhood. You found them on calendars, on church programs, in the movies, in magazines. Somehow, over the years, we accumulated ideas (visual short-hands) about what metaphysical events looked like. Patterson himself sees the world in just as banal a way as any of us do. Indeed, I would say he is worse off. For he has the technical ability to pass off the ordinateness of his vision (and his thinking) as inordinate beauty.

Well, it is easy enough to find yourself lulled away by a certain kind of technically controlled beauty. R's a complex age and it's sometimes almost a pleasure to let pretty images wash over you without protest. That being the case, it's not difficult to understand the popularity of many of the photography books (or, better, books illustrated by photographs) that roll in on us each autumn. Here are a few of this year's bundle:

Atlantic Canada by Sherman Hines (Clarke Irwin, \$24.95) is big, lavish, and dull. It is nothing Hines has not done better in his earlier *Nova Scotia* (which was still dull, but less flamboyant) and his amusing *Outhouses of the East* (with Ray Guy). *Atlantic Canada* is made up of the sort of photographs you see by Hines in gift shops everywhere in the Maritimes — misty villages, farmers standing neck-high in golden oatfields, close-ups of wildflowers, wet stones by the shore, little white wooden churches at sunset. Every one of them a heavy, resounding cliché. Harry Bmcc has provided a two-page foreword. It doesn't help. The book is, however, handsomely made. The photographs, as depressing as they are, are well-reproduced. And, I suppose, they might jog your memory of the Maritimes if your memory of the Maritimes needed jogging.

Cape Breton (Oxford, \$9.95) is a selection of photographs by Owen Fitzgerald of that rugged thrust of northern Nova Scotia that its people have nearly turned (by sheer bravado) into a separate Maritime province. Compared with *Atlantic Canada*, the book is a big bargain. True, at one third the price of the other book, you can't expect the reproduction to be as good (it isn't). But the photographs are more intimate, more humanly scaled and less operatic than those of Hines. And they reveal more about the people of the land, within the landscape that has made them important. Fitzgerald's pictures of Louisbourg are a bit ordinary. But his miners at Glace Bay and his children having fun at the Cape Breton's Farmers Exhibition. North Sydney, are warm and attractive and sort of snapshot-modest.

Andy Russell's *Alpine Canada* (Hurtig, \$27.50) has photographs by J. A. Kraulis. Kraulis's photographs do for the West what

Sherman Hines's photographs do for the East — they sweep you into a technicolor bearhug and squeeze the breath out of you. Here there are no smashings of surf on shore. But there are misty rosy-topped mountains, nodding wildflowers in high-altitude fields, and autumn leaves reflected in still, cold, mountain lakes. Well, of course, what else could there be in such a book?

Alberta: A Celebration is Alberta's own *Between Friends*. It's another picture book from Hurtig (\$29.95) and it features stories by Rudy Wiebe, photographs by Harry Savage, and editing (now a title-page function) by Tom Radford. There are the usual shots of lonely grain elevators and skiers lost in the mountains. But then are also, mercifully, shots of kids getting down from the school bus on a snowy sideroad, a black bushy camel standing in the snow at the Alberta Game Farm, a little ramshackle ferryboat with one rusty car on it, and one dog-crossing a shallow river. It even has good, honest, informative photographs, like the one of an old vigorous farmer carrying two dead rabbits, with a caption that actually says something: "Seen here one par before his death at age ninety-two, Ben Moses had just walked four miles from his snares in the back country of north-eastern Alberta." What you get here is the energy that always and inevitably comes from detail, from the personal. This is so easy to achieve you would think every publisher of these atmospheric books would seek it out.

Tony Cashman's *A Picture History* of Alberta (Hurtig, \$15.95) is a photography book only in the sense that it is a collage of photographs from the province's past (all of them, needless to say, black-and-white), marshalled here as a sort of march-of-time through Alberta's last 100 years. Cashman, "a company historian with Alberta Government Telephones," knows what he's doing and he does it with some wit and panache:

The camera enjoys a reputation of shining incorruptibility quite undeserved, since it can cheat, distort, and deceive, though often in so good a cause as civic pride. Pioneer photographers liked to shoot street scenes on parade days to make their town seem like the bustling metropolis its boosters intended to make it. On the other hand the camera can often stab to the heart of a truth, as it did in the hands of Randolph Bruce in 1893 when it recorded the expression of a lone Indian standing outside a white man's fence, an outsider in his own country.

The photographs are not well reproduced (too greyed-out), but they are so rich and funny and poignant and grittily ordinary that the book is a pleasure to look at. My favourite photograph in it is on page 163, a picture of the Whiz-Bang-Zowie Orchestra playing dance music on the straw-strewn floor of a barn "around Byemooor").

Penguin has a nothing little book called *The Hidden Forest* (text by Sigurd F. Olson, photographs by Les Blacklock,

Batavia

a novel by Audrey Thomas

The story of a man and a woman who will never understand one another and who understand one another all too well.

Antonbooks

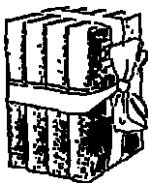
\$9.95) to offer this Christmas. A large-format paperback, it's a look at the forest through all of its seasonal shifts and evolutions. It proceeds by bad poetry ("A Drift of Pollen." "Time Flowers," "Banners Against the Sky") and humdrum pictures, badly reproduced (fuzzy and off-colour and, sometimes, out of focus). Maybe forest lovers won't mind. But I bet they will.

Terence J. Sheehy's *Ireland*, designed and produced by Ted Smart and David Gibbon (Collins, \$19.95), does for Ireland what Sherman Hines does for the Maritimes. There are no pictures of exploding automobiles in Belfast. Everything's green. It's much the same with Wynford Vaughan-Thomas's *The Countryside of Great Britain and Ireland* (Collins, \$19.95). The book is a readable enough and amiable perambulation throughout rural Britain, but the photos are picture post-cards.

Which is why Freeman Patterson is such a galling disappointment. It isn't often a book that purports to be serious about photography gets printed in this country in a handsome format and with considerable attention to detail. Patterson had a chance to drop the cute little-boyishness about beauty and say some important things about how photographs look. So what does he tell us? This: "We need both the stability of the traditional and the challenge of the new — in order to cultivate order and tension in our photography. That is the art of seeing." Order and tension, indeed.

Here is a selected checklist, arranged alphabetically by publisher, of forthcoming photographic gift books promised in Fall catalogues:

Academic Press: *American Griller*, \$16.95; *Photographing the Frontier*, \$12.95.
 Addison-Wesley: *The Joy of Photography*, \$23.95.
 Clarke Irwin: *Intimate Landscapes*, \$53.50.
 Collier Macmillan: *The Last American Convertibles*, \$12.95.
 Collins: *Masterpieces of Erotic Photography*, \$17.45.
 Fitzhenry & Whiteside: *Snowdon: A Photographic Autobiography*, \$38.95.
 Gage: *Women on Women*, \$29.50.
 General Publishing: *Style in Motion*, \$33.00; *Feiningcr*, \$8.00.
 Muzson: *Vogue Book of Fashion Photography 1979-1979*, \$39.95.
 Optimum: *Children of the North*, \$25.00.
 Oxford: *Newfoundland & Labrador*, \$12.95; *Cottage Country*, \$12.95; *Bruce Trail Country*, \$12.95; *Ottawa*, \$12.95.
 Penguin: *Recollection*, \$29.95.
 PMA Books: *Snow Seen*, \$17.95.
 Van Nostrand Reinhold: *Lisette Model*, \$50.00; *Sand Creatures*, \$12.95; *Callahan*, \$45.50; *SS-70 Art*, \$26.95.
 John Wiley & Sons: *The Banff Purchase*, \$19.95.



Nature: from avifauna to licorice ferns

By BRYAN NEWSON

PAINTING, DRAWING, and sketching remain — even in the face of expert colour photography — ideal methods of portraying flora and fauna. One reason has to do with the limitations of nature photography, where the camera is victimized by the literal exactness of its images. But more important is the complete control over a subject enjoyed by the traditional artist. It is the licence to select, summarize, and exaggerate that allows the artist to document in one image characteristics of the subject that may otherwise go unseen.

Several new art and wildlife books bear these generalities out. The first and perhaps the most impressive is Ross James's *Glen Loates/Birds of North America* (Cerebus publishing, \$24.95). Loates's birds are detailed, precisely drawn, and delicately coloured; beautiful, in fact, in themselves. But it is his placement of the birds in a limited context — his skill in arrangement — that raises these paintings from illustrations to art. His best portraits show an oriental mastery of composition and overall feeling for nature. This is evident in the delicacy of his colours and brush work, his love of spare line, and his obvious feeling for grasses and conifers. The book itself is well thought out, beautifully designed, and ought to have credited its designer. More information on Loates and his methods of painting, too, would have drawn readers even further into this lovely book.

Although markedly different from Loates's precise paintings, C. F. Tunnicliffe's colour sketches, *A Sketchbook of Birds* (Clarke Irwin, \$20.95), also affirm the painted over the photographic image in portraying wildlife. Tunnicliffe's sketches, made during a lifetime spent with birds on the coasts of England, are organ'd into standard classifications (shore birds, bird of prey, etc.) and indicate a thorough grounding in art as well as ornithology. He is fond of sketching birds in the middle distance, which gives room to paint whole flocks in a characteristic setting. The colour sketch is a perfect medium for achieving this perspective: muted colours emphasize the oneness of bird and environment; the sketch itself suggests something quick and fragile about bird life. The seemingly casual nature of these sketches and drawings indicates, too, the detached intimacy probably necessary for art and science to meet so easily in one mind.

Michael Everett's *The Birds of Paradise* (Academic Press, \$29.25) is set

The Complete SKIING HAND BOOK



Edited by
 Mark Heller &
 Doug Godlington

Foreword by
 'Jungle' Jim Hunter

A practical illustrated guide to:

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- o Cross-country skiing
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COLLINS PUBLISHERS



Mr Jackson's Mushrooms

Forty-two exquisite mushroom watercolours by Henry Jackson, elder brother of A. Y., are reproduced in full colour in this magnificent new art book. \$35.00 (hardcover)

The Bread Ovens of Quebec

Lise Boily and Jean-François Blanchette

This well-illustrated study of the role of the bread oven in rural Quebec society provides detailed instructions on how to construct a traditional outdoor oven. The book also describes the traditions associated with the preparation, cooking and eating of bread, as well as the songs, legends and popular beliefs relating to bread ovens. \$8.95 (softcover)

Canada's Guns: An Illustrated History

Leslie W.C.S. Barnes

This illustrated history of artillery traces its development from the earliest projectiles to the weaponry of the Second World War, with special emphasis on the role of the gun in Canada's history. \$9.95 (softcover)

NATIONAL MUSEUMS OF CANADA



a world away from the domain of the above books, and offers a startling contrast to the avifauna of North America and Western Europe. Its subjects are those two extraordinarily exotic groups of birds, Found only in New Guinea and coastal Australia, the birds of paradise and bower birds. Lacking the unearthly plumage of male birds of paradise, their cousins the male bower birds exhibit correspondingly exotic behaviour by building courtship arenas for use when mating. Owing to its restricted scope and exotic focus, this is a first-class introduction to ornithology, adaptation, and the whole field of animal evolution.

Closer to home, R. J. Childerhose and Marj Trim's *Pacific Salmon & Steelhead Trout* (Douglas & McIntyre, 525.95) combines the best of painted, drawn, and photographic images to illustrate this timely plea for the ecological plight of West Coast salmon, published in co-operation with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the book is a history, biology, and critical inquiry into these magnificent fish and their delicate relationship to an increasingly populated Pacific Rim. The book is in three sections interlaced with stunning photo-essays. A brief, disturbing history of the British Columbia fishery is followed by a clear biological account of the salmon cycle. The final section recounts successes and Failures of the Fisheries Department's Salmonid Enhancement Program — a n ill-spawned phrase that describes otherwise ad&able projects undertaken to preserve and increase fish runs. Descriptions of spawning channels at Fulton River and Pinkut Creek, two projects I worked on in 1966, are accurate if insufficiently informative. And in my view, insufficient acknowledgement is made of the many injustices done to salmon-dependent native peoples on just such inland waters as the Babine. Occasional repetitiveness and a lack of hard Facts suggest a slightly condescending attitude on the part of Fisheries officials. But the book's overall eloquence on the salmon's behalf and its many photographs of breath-taking beauty make it the best work on B.C. salmon since the writings of that great, largely unknown writer, Roderick Haig-Brown.

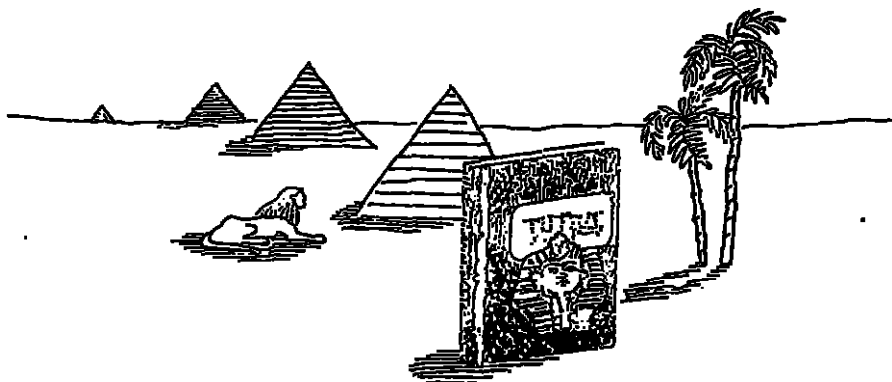
David and Jennifer George's *Marine Life* (Douglas & McIntyre, \$40.00) is an illustrated encyclopedia of sea inventeb-

rates. A book for the specialist, *Marine Life* will most interest scientists, scuba divers, and amateur biologists. The photographs, technical drawings, well-ordered classifications, as well as detailed biological and environmental information, are a clear guide to species discovery and identification. The 1,300 full-colour photos, particularly, make this an unusually attractive reference work.

Deirdre Griffiths's *Island Forest Year/Elk Island National Park* (University of Alberta Press, \$12.50) recounts a year the author spent as resident naturalist in Elk Island National Park, located just east of Edmonton. Most of the flora and fauna described may be found in pockets across Western Canada, which gives the book a reasonably broad basis of appeal. *Island Forest Year* is in effect a naturalist's journal, distinguished by its author's precise observations, sensitive wiring, and good black-and-white drawings. Maps, full checklists, a glossary, bibliography, and index provide the critical regalia necessary for a non-technical but serious examination of the natural world.

Another West Coast book, *Plantae Occidentalis/200 Years of Botanical Art in British Columbia* (The Botanical Garden, University of British Columbia, \$8.95) is the pleasing catalogue to a botanical art exhibition organized by the Botanical Society of B.C. It will be of most interest to viewers of the exhibition, but the number and quality of full-colour reproductions of common B.C. flora make this a charming and useful book in its own right. All of the art reproduced is good; some paintings, like the late, tragic Richard Ciccimara's licorice fern, seem to me inspired.

Ulli Steltzer and Catherine Kerr's *Coast of Many Faces* (Douglas & McIntyre, 525.95) is a black-and-white photo excursion into some of the smaller communities that pocket the rugged, isolated, and deeply indented coastline of B.C. The 224 duotone photos, most of them straightforward location shots, lend a documentary air to the book that is further developed by the text, made up of oral history-type commentaries given by the coastal inhabitants themselves. The book has an authentic flavour and offers an honest glimpse at the lives of people living largely in villages accessible only by sea □



Art: from alphacollages to Krieghoffs

By ALVIN HILTS

GIFT BOOKS and art books are practically synonymous and this year offers a good selection. It should be noted that finished copies of three Canadian art books, all regarded as major publishing events by their publishers, were not available for review in this issue. They are: *The Art of Norval Morriseau* (Methuen, \$50, special edition \$1,000); *The North Part of America* (Academic Press, \$500), a facsimile atlas of printed maps from the 16th to the 19th centuries; and *The Art of Emily Carr* (Clarke Irwin/Douglas & McIntyre, \$39.95).

The content of *Alphacollage* (The Porcupine's Quill, \$40.00) may well startle the casual reader; it's simply the letters of the alphabet, one to a page. However, these are no simple letters but surrealist collages cut from 19th-century anatomy and science manuals. The foreword in Spanish, English, and French is by the artist, Ludwig Zeller, who came to Canada from Chile in 1971. (For a profile of Zeller, see the October issue of *Books in Canada*.) The book, case bound in sailcloth, is published as a limited edition of 200 signed copies. It will be a delight to those who appreciate fine printing on good paper, superbly bound.

Cornelius Krieghoff is becoming a folk hero in a culture that has precious few. Can



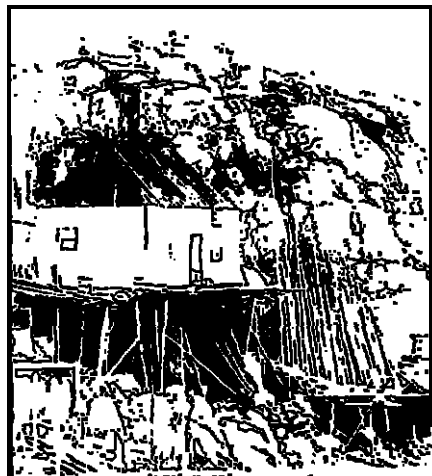
it be because of the inflated prices his pictures bring at auctions? *Krieghoff* (University of Toronto Press, \$29.95) is a thoroughly researched biography of the artist from his birth in Amsterdam in 1815 to his death in Chicago in 1872. There are few

details of his three years in the American army or his married life. He lived and worked in Rochester, Toronto, Montreal, and Quebec and his many friends and social contacts helped him obtain commissions for portraits. He found a ready market for pictures of Indians and habitants in his characteristic style, which derived from the genre painting popular in Düsseldorf when he was a student there. He was interested in painting what would sell and didn't hesitate to borrow and copy from other artists. As early as 1862 he had photographic reproductions made of some of his pictures and they sold like hot rums on a sleigh ride. With 53 colour plates and more than 100 in black and white, this is certainly the best book yet on Krieghoff. There is even a chapter entitled "Misattributions, Deceptions and Forgeries."

In the foreword to *The Moore Collection* in the Art Gallery of Ontario (An Gallery of Ontario, \$25.00), gallery director William Withrow describes in detail how the AGO acquired the Moon collection and expresses his gratitude for this magnificent gift. This is a comprehensive catalogue and arranges Henry Moore's drawings and sculpture more or less chronologically. The photographs of his work are excellent and are accompanied by a detailed description and a history of its conception. The sculpture has little opportunity to speak for itself but, after all, this is a catalogue and you aren't compelled to read the fine print. A short biography of the artist would help the casual reader and it could have done with a more durable binding. A fine reference work and of interest to Moore admirers everywhere.

Published to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of the artist, *The Work of E.H. Shepard* (McClelland & Stewart, \$24.95) is a well-illustrated book that should have a broad appeal. Shepard, born in 1879, was over 90 when he did his last work. For publication. This book includes more than 300 drawings and paintings, many in colour, and a text written by a number of associates. Shepard was a graduate of the Royal Academy and had illustrated a number of books by the time he joined the staff of *Punch* in 1914, where he stayed until 1953. He is best known for his colour drawings for A.A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh* but illustrated many other children's stories, including *The Wind in the Willows*. He was also famous for his sensitive drawings of children, many of which are reproduced in this volume.

J. W. M. Turner was an accomplished painter with a style and flair many years ahead of his time. In 1825 he agreed to supply watercolours to be reproduced as engravings. His so-called topographical style of painting was ideal for this medium and he agreed to produce 120 pictures collected here in *Turner's Picturesque Views in England and Wales* (Clarke Irwin/Chatto & Windus, \$16.95). By 1838 the publisher was in financial trouble and the plates were bought by Turner: the 90 watercolours had been sold to private col-



The Rock Observed

Studies in the Literature of Newfoundland
PATRICK O'FLAHERTY

A Newfoundlander looks at the conflicting impressions of his island left by writers over the centuries. Patrick O'Flaherty presents a sympathetic but unsentimental picture of the island and its people in this integrated survey of Newfoundland literature, culture, and history. \$15.00

University of Toronto Press

The Hockey Sweater and Other Stories

by Roch Carrier
translated by Sheila Fischman

A young Canadiens fan is sent a Toronto Maple Leafs sweater by mistake... An English-speaking animal trainer battles a French-only bear... The village strong man is afraid of Protestants.

These funny, nostalgic stories of growing up in a Quebec village enchanted audiences across Canada when Carier read them on CBC radio and TV. 20 stories in all: a rich, loving book, and the perfect holiday gift for anyone on your list, by the author of *La Guerre, Yes Sir!*

ANANSI \$6.95



lectors. This is the first time these magnificent landscapes and seascapes have been reproduced and bound. The book is a fine tribute to Turner's versatility and artistic ability.

The excellent drawings in *Montreal/Souvenirs (Tundra, \$19.95)* by Bruce Johnson are just a few of the Montreal scenes that have appeared once a week for the last 15 years in the *Montreal Star* (R.I.P.). Skilfully drawn, sensitive, often humorous, this collection will appeal to Montrealers and many others who appreciate good draftsmanship.

More than 100 photographs of hand-crafted articles such as weather-vanes, boxes, rugs, quilts, and woodcarvings have been collected in *'Twas Ever Thus* (M. F. Feheley Publishers, \$18.00). Folksy, but is it art?

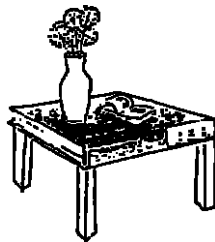
Donald Peacock in *Old Oakville* (Hounslow Press, \$16.95) has drawn 45 of the town's early houses. There are some rare old photographs and some contemporary ones showing interior detail. The text is well-researched and it's interesting to see how the owners of these houses have helped to mould the history of the city. Have the houses themselves influenced that history? Should be required reading for any budding author writing a local history.

A hard-cover edition of *Graphis: 4th International Survey of Children's Book Illustrations* (Hurtig/Graphis Press, \$27.50) celebrates the International Year of the Child. It will be of interest to professional illustrators and those concerned with children's books.

Here is a selected checklist, arranged alphabetically by publisher, of other art gift books promised for the Christmas season:

- Clarke Irwin: *The Collection of Alice M. Kaplan*, \$38.95; *Folk Painters of America*, \$32.50; *Monuments of Medieval Art*, \$25.95; *The Poster Art of A. M. Cassandre*, \$25.95.
 Collier Macmillan: *The National Portrait Gallery in Colour*, \$21.95.
 Collins: *A Visual History of Twentieth Century Architecture*, \$16.95.
 Doubleday: *An Encyclopedia of the Decorative Arts*, \$35.00; *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Medieval Civilisation*, \$30.00; *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Renaissance*, \$30.00; *Oriental Carpets*, \$19.95; *The Post-Impressionists*, \$25.00; *World Art Treasures*, \$30.00.
 Douglas C. McIntyre: *Kwakwaka'wakw Art*, \$35.00; *Robert Davidson: Haida Printmaker*, \$24.95.
 Fitzhenry C. Whiteside: *The Art of Audubon*, \$35.00.
 Gage: *Dali*, \$45.95.
 General Publishing: *Graphic Works of George Cruikshank*, \$9.25; *Erte's Theatrical Costumes in Full Color*, \$8.00.
 John Wiley: *The Inner Ocean*, \$27.95.
 Lester C. Orpen Denny: *Twenty/Twenty*, \$14.95.
 McGraw-Hill Ryerson: *Early Ontario Potters*, \$29.95; *English-Canadian Furniture of the Georgian Period*, \$9.95.
 Methuen: *The Great Book of Currier & Ives*, \$100.00; *The Canadian Poster Book: 100 Years of the Poster in Canada*, 912.9% Pictures by J. R. R. Tolkien, \$35.00.

- National Museums of Canada: *Mr. Jackson's Mushrooms*, \$35.00.
 Nelson, Foster & Scott: *Painters of Ireland*, \$47.95.
 Optimum: *Art History Museum/Vienna*, \$17.50; *National Museum/Tokyo*, \$17.50; *National Gallery (London)*, \$17.50; *Museum of Fine Arts/Boston*, \$17.50.
 Oxford: *Great Canadian Posters*, \$8.95.
 Penguin: *Van Gogh Drawings*, \$16.95; *Bulfinch's Mythology*, \$19.95; *Leonardo's Rules of Painting*, \$13.95.



- Prentice-Hall: *An American Bestiary*, \$44.00; *American Art Nouveau*, \$47.00; *Chagall by Chagall*, \$63.00; *French Painting from the Pushkin Museum*, \$47.00; *Islam and Muslim Art*, 9105.00.
 Random House: *Andy Warhol: Portraits of the Seventies*, \$15.00.
 Van Nostrand Reinhold: *The World of Bob Timberlake*, \$54.95.

Music: from Menuhin to Prokofiev

By GERALD LEVITCH

A TORONTO BOOKSELLER has observed that music-lovers rarely buy music books. And he is in a better position than most to know, since he keeps his music books next to a well-stocked record department. He then added that those who do buy them don't seem to buy them for themselves. This led him to two conclusions: that those music-lovers who buy music books tend to buy reference books that relate to their areas of record-collecting and everyone else who buys music books buys them as gifts for their music-loving (but non-book-buying) friends.

All of which may lead to another conclusion: that any music book that isn't a reference book (and, of course, many music dictionaries and encyclopedias that are references) end up as gift books, whether they like it or not. It's probably not a bad idea, since music-lovers also tend to be parsimonious souls who measure out their surplus cash in terms of the numbers of records it will purchase. And, unhappily, most music books worth having are much too expensive.

Some publishers presumably have learned this lesson, and they consequently

make the few music books they do publish into quite handsome objects, well worth considering as gifts. And that must be what Methuen has in mind, just in time for the Christmas season, with *The Music of Man* (\$19.95) by Yehudi Menuhin and Curtis W. Davis. The book ties in with the eight-part CBC-TV series, which is unabashedly in the tradition of *Civilisation* and *The Ascent of Man*. As a high-minded combination of pictures and text, this is truly a non-parallel gift book. It even appears to be aimed at those who don't know anything at all about music but think they ought to.

As a concept, both as a TV series and a book, the project is impossibly broad. It deals with the subject of music in the largest sense; and as co-author Davis says, it attempts to ask the questions: "What is music? Why did we invent it? What is it for?" Those are darn good questions, but its 320 pages aren't likely to replace the libraries already devoted to trying to answer them. What it does do well is use Menuhin himself as a kind of host, in the book as in the TV series. His approach is quirky and individual, but it is also certainly informed and knowledgeable. The distinguished musician is an insatiably curious man, and what he has learned is presented in a style that runs the gamut from the profound to the most fatuously geo-whizzical.

If *The Music of Man* is obviously geared to a popular audience, then *Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents* (Musson, \$46.75) aims for the well-heeled high-brows. It's also the latest product of a busy Stravinsky cottage industry that seems likely to occupy the rest of Robert Craft's career. Stravinsky's gifted amanuensis, along with co-author Vera Stravinsky, has assembled a splendid body of Stravinskiana. This large-format book collects letters to and from Stravinsky, contemporary reviews, interviews, diary entries, commentaries, and more than a hint of the staggering bulk of material that awaits Craft when he begins to undertake the definitive biography of Stravinsky. Meanwhile, the present volume also includes a fine selection (although not an excessive number) of photographs — both of Stravinsky, and more surprisingly, by Stravinsky, who was an enthusiastic amateur photographer and caught a number of remarkable shots of his teacher Rimsky-Korsakov, his friend Debussy, and his associates Diaghilev and Nijinsky. There are also numerous colour reproductions of Stravinsky drafts and manuscripts. Since almost everyone of importance in the 20th-century art, literature, and music crosses these pages, that may likewise broaden its appeal.

In the more conventional tradition, we come to this year's Chopin biography, called, not surprisingly, *Chopin: A Biography* (Collins, \$22.95), by Adam Zamojski. To coin a cliché, Chopin attracts biographers like flies. In the Past, these tend to fall into three basic categories: simplified picture-biographies (such as last year's *Chopin: His Life and Times*, by Ates Orga,

published in a large paperback format by Methuen); biographies by non-Polish-speaking biographers seeking to correct the errors of fiercely-chauvinistic Polish biographers but unfortunately lacking personal access to the requisite Polish-language documents (such as last year's *Chopin* by George Marek); and finally, Polish biographers, which deserves yet another sub-category to cover the present volume, which is written by a Polish author who writes excellent English and uncharacteristically sea out to debunk the usual Chopin myths. This is, in fact, quite a refreshing book; and even if the Chopin scholars find room to quibble, it definitely deserves a place on any Chopin buffs shelf.

Much less controversial is *Prokofiev by Prokofiev: A Composer's Memoir* (Doubleday, \$17.50). As an autobiography, it is somewhat incomplete, covering only the first 17 years of the composer's life. But fortunately, since Prokofiev, like many musicians, was amazingly precocious, there are plenty of personal anecdotes about his teacher, Rimsky-Korsakov and his friend Glazunov, as well as pointed observations about Scriabin, Gliere, and Miaskovsky, among others. Prokofiev kept closely detailed diaries, and he must have been gifted with powers of almost total recall. But best of all is the tone that he establishes, which is surprisingly modest, although not entirely self-effacing, amiable, and humorous. It is a picture of the composer as a young man growing up in a relatively privileged position in Czarist Russia, and the character of that young man as he writes about himself rounds remarkably compatible with the image of the composer that one could only guess at from his music. □

General: from luxury trains to log cabins

By DAN HILTS

TRANSPORTATION is always a popular gift-book theme. *Faces and Places Along the Railway* (Gage, \$17.95) is a collection of new and old photographs of Ontario's railways and train stations with an anecdotal text about the people who financed and built them. The influence of the railways on the development of rural Ontario and the large number of small railway lines constructed is interesting but the treatment is a bit light for the serious railway buff. Those enthusiasts will likely find *Luxury Trains of the World* (Everest House, \$14.95) more appealing. It is pecked with photographs and illustrations, many in colour. Such trains as

the Twentieth Century Limited and the Orient Express are included, as well as a lot of luxury rolling stock with lesser names. Even the CPR rates a couple of pages.

Readers who go down to the sea in books may prefer *The Seaway* (Clarke Irwin, \$15.95), published for the 20th anniversary of the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway and the 150th anniversary of the first Welland Canal. It has the tone of an official history but is a readable account of the canals and locks on the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes. Like a Weaver's Shuttle (Nimbus Publishing, \$19.95) is a detailed history of the ferries operating between Dartmouth and Halifax. The text includes old letters, charters, and excerpts from newspapers, as well as illustrations and photographs.

The combination of the International Year of the Child and Christmas has produced three children's books for adults. *The Child: Celebrated In Illustration* (Penguin Books, \$9.95) shows the treatment of children by illustrators from the Middle Ages to the present. Not as cute as the cover would suggest, it is well laid out and has a straightforward text. A more serious approach to the treatment of children is found in *Images of Childhood: An Illustrated History* (McGraw-Hill Ryerson, \$17.95) which covers attitudes to children, their feeding, relations to parents, education and working conditions from the Middle Ages to the end of the 19th century.

This ambitious study is not without shortcomings. Too often it has the pedantic sound of a grade-school teacher; generalizations are made with little in the way of supporting evidence and pest child-rearing practices are not treated with much sympathy or understanding. The captions for the pictures are often overwritten and tell the reader what he should see. These criticisms aside, the book contains a great deal of information about a subject that hasn't received much attention.

World Tales (Academic Press, \$25.95) is an anthology of 65 folk tales from different cultures and contains more than 100 striking colour illustrations by modern artists. Each story has an introduction that traces the story's origins and notes the similarities to other tales in other parts of the world.

There seems to be an inexhaustible market in this country for books on the monarchy. *Britain's Royal Family in the Twentieth Century* (General Publishing, \$19.95) is the latest. It is well-produced and contains enough colour reproductions, illustrations and old photographs, some in colour, to satisfy the most ardent royal groupie.

For fans of American royalty, *Hollywood: The Pioneers* (Collins, \$19.95) contains a good selection of excellently reproduced old photographs from the silent period of film-making. The text does not

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di-tract from the pictures and is restrained and informative.

A new scholarly translation of *The Ruba'iyat of Omar Khoyyrm* (Penguin, \$19.95) is illustrated in colour with examples of Persian painting. The authors have tried to capture the simplicity and directness of the original Persian and have succeeded in producing a clear, readable translation. A long introduction and several appendices will prove useful to those with a serious interest in the subject.

From the same part of the world, a few centuries later, comes *The Far Pavilions Picture Book* (Penguin Books, 98.95), a spin-off from the popular *Far Pavilions*, a romantic novel set in Victorian India. The photographs and the illustrations show a scattered cross-section of India. Each caption contains a relevant quote from the novel and a chatty description of the scene that often sounds like the narration for an amateur slide-show ("I have no idea where this particular picture was taken...").

The Complete Log House Book (McGraw-Hill Ryerson, \$9.95) combines photographs of log buildings with a clearly written text on construction techniques. This is one how-to book that will also appeal to all hurried city dwellers who can merely dream about retiring to a little parcel of land back in the woods.

As an antidote to the depression wrought by the relentless good cheer of the Christmas season, try *The World According to Roy Peterson* (Douglas & McIntyre,

\$8.95), a collection of caricatures of Canadian and international public figures by the celebrated Vancouver Sun cartoonist. It includes the cutting cover drawing of Pierre Trudeau that was to have launched *Maclean's* as a weekly but which was

pulled by the publisher as being unsuitable. Peterson's clarity, wit, and precision are made all the more obvious by the overblown prose of Allan Fotheringham's accompanying text. □

the browser

by Michael Smith

Immune to word-play? Then you wouldn't know your LQ from a Spanish pool hustler

THE SUSPICION LURKS that some authors whose books I've reviewed find me a trifle morose. According to *The Laughter Book* by Doug Long and Bryan M. Knight (Mussion, 224 pages, \$8.95 paper), they may be correct. The book's comprehensive test to determine my "Laughter Quotient" proclaimed my sense of humour hopelessly average. The test involves rating 60 jokes and cartoons on a four-point scale from "disgusting" to "very funny," and then analysing the results. I discovered I have a preference for jokes that are ethnic, anti-male (a tendency shared by men "who are uncomfortable in their masculine role"), and scatological which "to some extent... points to a cynical — perhaps even sado-masochistic — nature"). I also show a

preference for one-uppers which may confirm some authors' notion that reviewers are out to shoot them down), and an aversion to wit and word-play which could mean I'm in the wrong job.

This book tells me that my favourite television shows will likely include *All in the Family*, *King of Kensington*, *Three's Company*, and (so help me) *Mork and Mindy* — an astonishing revelation, which puts the validity of the whole test into question. Also, I'd heard many of the jokes before and, to be honest, found a lot of them funnier when told, with appropriate timing, instead of rather tediously written down. But my biggest complaint is that no special weight seems to be given to the quality of the jokes. The word-play items, for exam-

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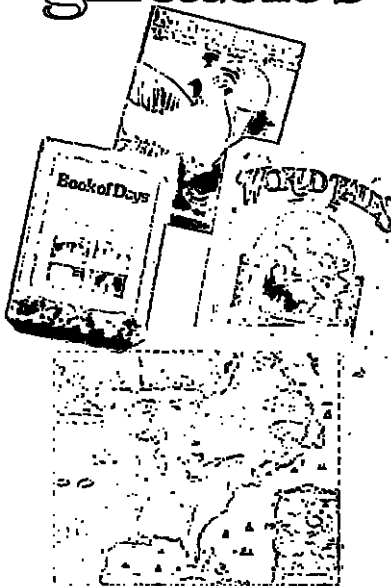
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Idries Shah

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Photographs by Sybille & Klaus Kalas

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ple. are pitched at a *Reader's Digest* level ("What did you think of the book. *Castles of Europe?*" "Fair to medieval"), apparently on the insulting assumption that anybody who lili word-play will laugh at all of the word-play jokes. I'm not so sure that a devotee of Dorothy Parker, Say. will also enjoy the mindless punning of Don Harron.

Excuse, excuses. The sad fact is, I failed to appreciate the word-play in Bill Sherk's *Brave New Words* (Doubleday, illustrated, 174 pages, \$6.95 paper), which gives the etymology of 100 words coined or collected by Sherk and his diipla, many of whom have taken his extension course in Word Power at Toronto's York University. The words range from the absurd *elephantophone*, a person who can imitate the trumpeting of an elephant) to the somewhat useful (*covivant*, an unmarried person who is living on intimate terms with a member of the opposite sex). A number, such as *threek* (a three-pronged fork) and *ugloon* (an ugly igloo) are glib contractions, while *sherkgnacious* (*speaking or writing with flamboyant words or phrases*) indicates the cutesy kind of conceit that runs throughout the book. As a follower of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, I like to think that words enter our language slowly, through long usage, except where some sudden change in society — usually through scientific development — requires a new, often bastardized term. Hence, *kluckage*.

the metric substitute For mileage, for which Sherk says the precedent is military slang in Indochina, *circa* 1970. On the other hand, the asexual pronoun *er*, which Sherk would use to replace he in such sentences as "Everyone said he (et) would bring bis (ets) own lunch" is a grammatical abomination.

I didn't show much preference for visual humour in another test in *The Laughter Book* (this one for my "Laughter Personality Profile"), but it didn't make a lot of difference to my reading of The 1980 Cornice Annual, edited by Ian Carr (Potlatch, 128 pages, 56.95 paper). Though the book contains some gag strips, notably Am Saba's refreshingly old-fashioned *Neil the Horse*, it's not terrifically comical. It's dominated by ritualistic science-fiction strips, which tend to draw their mythology from high technology, physical transformation, and the juxtaposition of the distant future with people, things, and situations borrowed from the distant past. Another comic book, of sorts, is *The Glory Boys* by Mickey and Keir Cutler (Tundra, unpaginated, \$3.95, paper). The running joke in these crudely-drawn cartoons about the Montreal Canadiens is that the players on the bench and Ken Dryden — in his familiar pose, chin propped on the butt of his goalie stick — spend most of their time dozing from the boredom of facing inferior opponents. (Yawn.) And speaking of crude drawings, there's *Foetus* by Roch Tremblay (Commoner's Publishing, 56 pages,

53.50 paper). Tremblay's foetuses, viewed through transparent, contorted mothers, do such neat things as holding up a miniature umbrella to fend off an intruding, sperm-spewing penis.

Two show-business biographies, both soon after the deaths of their subjects, offer about as much depth of character as a slightly erudite comic strip. Beverly Cline's *The Lombardo Story* (Mussion, illustrated, 158 pages, \$10.95 cloth) owes its origins to the popularity of Guy Lombardo's orchestra in Southwestern Ontario, where the Lombardo brothers made their start and for years returned to perform in such places as Port Stanley. Cline's parents were neighbours of the Lombardos in London, Ont., and her admiration for the family shows in her breathless, se-whiz prose. Sample:

Guy and his brothers have helped a lot of other musicians to get their start in show business. In fact, one summer Guy suggested a young bandleader whose style he respected and thought innovative to be the band's replacement at the Roosevelt Grille for a couple of months. The young man was Lawrence Welk!

Like Lombardo's "Royal Canadians," who shed their Canadian citizenship years ago, George Bishop, though born in Montreal, has lived in California since the early 1950s. His John Wayne: The Actor, the Man (Caroline House, illustrated, 254 pages, \$16.95 cloth) was being bound in



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"simulated saddle leather" when Wayne finally died of cancer. The book, which includes a filmography, traces Wayne's life through his movies rather than his private affairs which, the jacket blurb boasts, are treated "with taste and restraint." There is little examination of Wayne's celebrated right-wing politics — a chapter on "Communism in Hollywood" is only four pages long -but Bishop makes it clear where his own sympathia lie:

Other people may have differing opinions about human values, but that does not make spitting on the flag, cretinous social behavior, habitual lying, and Cro-Magnon sexual values (on the part of both sexes) right.

Compared to such cant, *The Home Children*, edited by Phyllis Harrison (Watson & Dwyer, illustrated, 271 pages,

\$14.95 cloth) is touchingly humane. Between 1870 and 1930, when the Depression ended the demand for child labour, nearly 100,000 orphaned or otherwise unwanted British children were shipped by such organizations as the Barnardo Homes to Canada, where most become indentured to farmers. While some were happily billeted with Canadian families, many lived little better than slaves — the girls lighting off older men's advances, and the boys doing back-breaking chores in return for beatings and abuse. Harrison's book comprises dozens of letters from surviving Home children and their relatives, some of whom have chosen to remain anonymous, partly because of their recollections of the past. As one wrote: "I thought we were long forgotten as we were only Home boys and it didn't matter much about what happened to us. We were of no importance." 3

first impressions

by Douglas Hill

Locks, stress, and bagels in the realms of espionage, terrorism, and matrimony

AUTUMN'S EARLY crop of first novels sustains the impression that this is a good year for fiction. This month we have two thrillers, one of them top-drawer, and Shirley Faessler's long-awaited contribution to the chronicles of modern marriage.

In *Troika* (McClelland & Stewart, 271 pages, \$12.95). David Gurr starts with a historic event -Khrushchev's state visit to England in 1956 -and builds a first-rate espionage story that occasionally rises to effects worthy of Deighton or Le Carré. If the book is ultimately weakened by some heavy-footed anti-communist moralizing and a love story that's no better than average, it's on balance a quite professional, consistently intriguing job.

The plot is easy to reduce: Russian-born British naval officer (recruited by Whitehall, of course) meets his Russian opposite number (Khrushchev's cousin, naturally) and each tries, for the next 20 years, to love the same woman and get the other to defect. The results may be predictable; the fun is scrambling through the woods to get there.

Gurr knows how to freshen all the clichés of the genre. He's clever with the densities of detail and sub-plot; he's adept at weaving the real — Commander Crabb, Kim Philby, defence technology — into the possible. And his prose is wonderful; characters speak a version of the portentous fragmented metaphorical jargon peculiar to spy novels that's so mannered and elliptical as to be regularly incomprehensible. One's head aches from the strain of translation, but comfortably. *Troika* will appeal to literary masochists: it should impress connoisseurs of the counterspy shelf.

RONALD RUSKIN's *The Last Panic* (Seal Books, 280 pages, 8.25 paper) is an intelligent, well-researched disaster-thriller with the essential ingredient -plausibility — carefully measured in at the start. It's not as accomplished as *Troika*, but it should capture more readers, it demands less and implies more.

The premise is fascinating (and, I'm informed, legitimate). Imagine an epidemic — a plague — of madness. Caused by a worldwide intensification of stress —overcrowding, poverty, alienation, fear — its earliest manifestation is a dramatic increase in acts of apparently mindless and random violence — murder, hostage-taking, riots. Sense-infectious (as with group hysteria, only on a grand scale), the disease has created an international terrorist conspiracy of paranoid psychotic killers. Assemble the good guys — a handful of medical and scientific types -and pit them against the terror, and you have a sort of thinking-man's *Night of the Living Dead* without the overt supernaturalism.

The novel is flawed. It's often pretentiously written, moves too slowly, especially at the start when the documentation is being laid down, and suffers from stereotyped characterization and stiff dialogue. And the clement of suspense is minimal, even though the conclusion is frenzied. Still, this is good commercial fiction, infused with some genuinely scary and suggestive theorizing.

* * *

SHIRLEY FAESSLER has built a reputation over the last decade on the basis of her short stories. Everything in the Window (McClelland & Stewart, 243 pages, \$12.95)

* * *

is her first full-length work, and it's pleasant reading.

The novel is located in Toronto, along the old Jewish streets west of Spadina, north of College; its time, as near as I can tell, is the late 1940s and early 1950s. Faessler's resilient young heroine, Sophie James, née Glicksman, has a touching eagerness for life that leads her into a premature adulthood — marriage, a child, love affairs — both poignant and hilarious.

Faessler knows her craft. She writes superb dialogue, pays attention to necessary detail, and handles point-of-view cleanly and unobtrusively. Even about halfway through when her narrative starts to move into reverie and flashback, and into the consciousness of Sophie's husband Billy, the shihr are natural and convincing. Above all, Faessler doesn't push: her low-key talents show nowhere better than in the scrupulously flat construction of some remarkable slapstick domestic scenes.

I think: the novel runs out of steam; certainly the last third or so seems relatively disorganized and perfunctory, and this makes the whole seem more conventional, less consequential, than it actually is. There are some sharp perceptions in the book; Faessler's treatment of the slow transmutation of first love and marriage into dull pain and adultery is clear-eyed. But the final impression is of uneventful, unmemorable life — life without the deeper resonances that a Richler or a Malamud or a Singer has given to similar materiel. □

on the racks

by Paul Stuewe

You can join in an avant-garde Communion but avoid picking up a former naked nun

ONE OF THE MORE encouraging aspects of indigenous soft-cover salesmanship is the competitive spirit of several of our smaller presses, which have begun to issue mass-market versions of their wares without waiting for the larger paperback publishers to become interested. Talonbooks, James Lorimer & Co., and House of Anansi have led the way in this area, and in the case of Anansi's recent release of Graeme Gibson's *Five Legs / Communion* (\$5.95) it's been done with both thoughtfulness and style.

It was certainly a good idea to package Gibson's two stylistically adventurous novels in one convenient volume, and the same can be said for whoever thought of asking Leon Edel to write the introduction. Edel, the American literary historian and Henry James scholar, offers an eminently reasonable and readable explanation of the aims of experimental modern fiction, and all in all it's hard to imagine a more sympathetic presentation of Gibson's work. Although I find his fiction extremely heavy going, more thought than felt and more technically

interesting than humanly engaging, it's good to have it available if only as an example of pioneer avant-garde work in the generally conservative world of Canadian fiction.

A contrasting example of shoddy craftsmanship somewhat masked by up-to-the-minute relevance is provided by Mary Shaver's *A Woman Alone* (Paperjacks, \$2.50), wherein *The Naked Nun* lady returns with a tedious novel of trendy Toronto. *A Woman Alone* possesses some sociological interest but is undone by excessively cute and unbelievable dialogue, as when one of the heroine's friends informs her that she is "a calming influence in my pressure-cooker life." And do such folk, when beginning a discourse upon marriage, really say things like, "I've been the wedlocked mute..."? Although Shaver may be trying to imitate the life she bows, one suspects that her book is actually a case of aping the art she doesn't.

The month's remaining fiction offerings are led by Patrick Watson's *Alter Ego*

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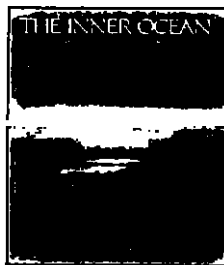
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Introduction by Joseph Papp*

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(Penguin, \$2.75), a stylish and engrossing thriller that shows a marked advance over his previous efforts in the genre. Aritha van Herk's *Judith* (Seal, \$2.50) manages to make a reasonably entertaining fable. If not a silk purse, out of sows' ears and sex-obsessed feats, while Judy La Marsh's *A Very Political Lady* (Signet, \$2.75) makes rather lumbering hash out of the seemingly more promising material of Canadian political life. Two novels with sports backgrounds are both disappointingly flat: John Gault's *Crossbar* (Seal, \$1.95) is an efficient but unexciting novelization of the CBC-TV drama about a one-legged high-jumper, and Clive Doucet's *Disneyland, Please* (Signet, \$2.25) fails to integrate big-time athletics and adolescent growing pains into anything resembling a coherent narrative. Less ambitious but more enjoyable is Claude Aubry's *Agouhanna* (PaperJacks, 95 cents), a straightforward story of an Iroquois brave's coming of age suitable for older children and young-at-heart adults.

In the non-fiction department, Pierre Berton's *My Country* (Seal, \$2.75) presents a series of vivid pen-portraits culled from Canadian history, the sort of thing he does very nicely indeed as well as an excellent antidote to tired textbook treatments of our by no means boring past. Our indisputably tumultuous present is less well served by the revised edition of Peter C. Newman's *The Canadian Establishment*

(Seal, \$3.95), which has been updated but not upgraded. All the additions and revisions, and there are a substantial number, can't disguise the fact that the book is still poorly organized and lacks a coherent point of view. It needs, in other words, a good

editor and a rewrite, and until it gets them, the book will remain a collection of more or less informative vignettes without the interpretive aspects so crucial to the success of Newman's previous books. □

on/off/set

by Albert Moritz

In a somer sesun, when softe was the sonne, the nation's small presses continued to run

SMALL PRESSES don't enjoy the same luxurious summer vacation that most little magazines and big publishers take. Their books come out only as the pressures of uncertain financing, small labour force, and a paucity of markets dictate. The opening of the fall season is marked, as always, by the appearance of several new titles produced over the summer.

The new books range from first offerings of new presses to continuations of long-established poetry series; they come in every format from well-produced chapbook to mimeographed sheets, and they present everything from the first books of unknown writers to the winner of a major Canadian poetry award.

Among the best of the new offerings is Robert Eady's *Succession and Other Poems* from Golden Dog Press (61 pages). Eady brings his home country, the Ottawa Valley, close to his readers with keenly observed and well-crafted vignettes. He shares both landscape and manner with Joun Finnegan; like her, he is one of the better practitioners of rustic and historical reportage.

In the same vein is the novelist-poet Robert Kroetsch's new *Ledger*, a beautifully produced 300 page book from Brick/Nairn. Kroetsch continues here the same collage technique that he used in his recent *Seed Catalogue*. The book is easy to read, but not so substantial or satisfying as Eady or Finnegan in its insights.

Despite the troubles English speakers have been having in Quebec recently, the small-press business there is growing. CrossCountry Press has announced an extensive line-up of publications for the fall from authors such as Michael Andre and Andre Farkas. So far the only one of these new books to come out is a chapbook edition of Dave McFadden's long poem, *A New Romance* (48 pages, \$3.00). The poem won the \$2,000 award in the 1979 CBC Poetry Competition; the longer format is a departure for McFadden, who says in the chapbook that he intends to continue working in this style.

Also from Montreal come two books from a new press, Guemica, in a rather pretentiously titled series of *Essential Poets*. The books are *Instants* by Marco Fraticelli (67 pages) and *Queror* by Antonio D'Alfonso (71 pages). Although the books look fine on the outside, the typesetting is not distinguished, and the poetry is rather slender. Still, it is an ambitious venture aimed at serious publishing.

Another indication that the regional press continues active is the work of Penumbra, an Ontario house that identifies itself especially with the North. Its books are interesting in format: they are real hip pocket books, unlike most paperbacks, because they are small enough to fit in a pocket easily. They are, moreover, elegantly produced, with fine typography and paper.

Three new Penumbra titles have come out: *Swimming at Twelve Mile* (\$3.95)

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by J.D. Carpenter; **Up Country Lines** (43 pages, \$3.95) by C. H. Gervais (editor of Windsor's Black Moss Press); and the first book of poems by novelist M. T. Kelly. **Country You Can't Walk In** (\$3.50).

Fred Cogswell's Fiddlehead Press, which had announced its demise about a year ago, is definitely alive and publishing. Fiddlehead's new offerings follow the press's standard policy: there are a lot of books, they are almost identical in format, and they are inexpensively produced.

A couple of younger poets have come on the scene with two hooks this season. Carolyn Zonailo appears in **Split Rock** (Caitlin Press, 38 pages) and **Zone 5** (blewointment, 80 pages). **Split Rock** is a sometimes interesting re-mining of the familiar feminist vein of women's mysteries; **Zone 5** is more of the same, although it is less ambitious in its attempt and much more handsome in format.

Dermot McCarthy has brought out North Shore (110 pages, \$10.95 cloth) from

Porcupine's Quill, and **Borrowed Ladies** (41 pages, \$1.50) from New Brunswick Chapbooks. McCarthy gives a sort of male equivalent to Zonailo, a poetry of domestic relationships and disappointments in love.

Other publications of note include Leroy Gorman's **Only Shadflies Have Come** (32 pages, \$2.00) from Swamp Press. Gorman, with illustrator Jon Vlakos, presents a witty celebration of the billboard, through pairs of drawings and haiku describing the girls in poster art.

Pat Lane, last year's winner of the Governor General's Award, has published a book interesting in that it is a collaborative collection of love poems coauthored by Lorna Uher. **No Longer Two Persons** (53 pages, 57.00 cloth and \$4.00 paper) is published by Turnstone Press, Winnipeg. □

Editor's note: Because of marketing policies practised by a number of small presses, prices of some of the above titles were not available at time of publication.

interview

by Eleanor Wachtel

How William Deverell made a lot more than pin money with a first novel about needles

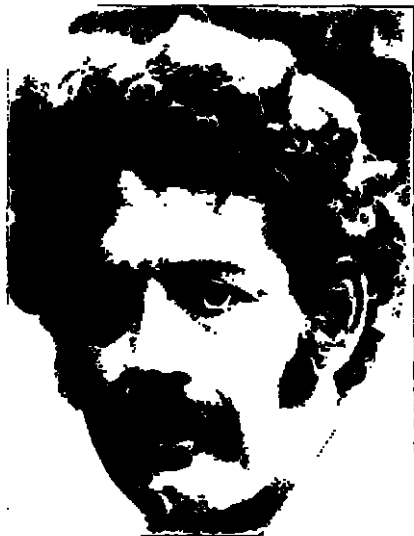
THIS YEAR'S winner of the Seal First Novel Award is William Deverell, a 42-year-old criminal trial lawyer and author of *Needles*, a psychological thriller about the heroin trade. Born in Regina and educated in Saskatoon, Deverell was a journalist with the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, Canadian Press, and the *Vancouver Sun* before opening a small law firm in Vancouver 15 years ago. He dabbled unsuccessfully in politics as an NDP candidate, but what he'd always wanted to do was be a writer. So, sated with best sellers he found flawed and inaccurate, he dusted off his old Remington and, in the

spkit of the West, went bounty-hunting. *Needles* is a popular cross between Perry Mason and Fu Manchu; it netted its author \$50,000 and undisclosed offers for film rights. Eleanor Wachtel met Deverell at his 10-acre Gulf Island retreat:

Books in Canada: How did you bring yourself to take the plunge, to interrupt a successful law practice and actually sit down and write?

Deverell: Putting pressure on myself is how I work best. I'd made many stabs at writing over the years but got bogged down after half a day of it. No discipline. So I took a year off from my practice, cut out law completely, with the idea that I might probably write a book. I spent the first six months fiddling and farting around, feeling frustrated about not writing. I got my typewriter over here and all sorts of reference books which just sat there with a kind of loathing. I let the pressure build up. Finally I gave in to its entreaties and sat down. I had a basic plot in my mind, but it wasn't the plot that I eventually developed into *Needles*; the bones of it were there. And I actually wrote a chapter. I thought it was fairly good. Then I wrote another chapter and junked them, and did them over and over again, building, and I got to the stage where I was feeling excited about what I was doing.

BIC: You did all your writing here, alone? [Deverell is married, with two teenage children. 1



William Deverell

Harvest

Points of Departure

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Deverell: Yes. I would wake up with or without a hangover somewhere between 7 and 11 a.m. I would make breakfast and do the usual sorts of things to avoid sitting down, but if I got "hot" I'd write around the clock: with time out for a bite to eat or to smoke cigars or a pipe. I write nervously. Ideas are coming. So there was no scheduling: one day might be three hours or 15 and more. I was writing like mad once I got into it. I imposed a deadline of December last year when I heard about the Seal prize. It seemed like a good way to finish it, a good target. I lit the qualifications and I knew they were looking for books of this kind. Books that would sell. Canada has good writers like Laurence, Atwood, and Davies, but they're not writing this kind of thing.

BIC: Last year's Seal Book winner Judith described the castration of pigs. Your book goes one further - it's quite grisly. Do you have any compunction about being explicitly sensationalist or is that purr of the genre?

Deverell: I think that's part of creating excitement. Grisly - well, I haven't pulled any punches. If someone is murdered in the course of a book I suppose there are two ways of handling it. You skip until the body is found, or you treat it as it happens. I simply preferred to treat it as it might occur. I've been involved in too many grisly trials, murders for hire where the bodies were found in particularly sordid condition. In a trial court, that's part of it, the grisly part is there so I don't see why in a book it shouldn't be so.

BIC: Your hero is a Vancouver criminal trial lawyer and ad hoc prosecutor, around your age, who, like you, is involved in big drug cases. Also, he gets mm of the good lines. How much did you identify with him?

Deverell: I guess a fair bit. I identified not just with him but with many of the characters, even the female lawyer. If what's in a character isn't in me, it's in some people I know. But I don't think there's much in the way of autobiography except that I know the courtroom, I know the locations where the book is set. I just centred on a few people I knew to create some of the characters in the book. It's not all that hard to find a few corrupt policemen around, especially in drug work, and I have one who figures centrally. And I know lawyers who are heroin addicts. So a lot of the characters were synthesized types, but it's no roman à clef.

BIC: How did you feel about the media hype, when last March the money was presented to you in bundles of \$10 bills?

Deverell: I'd never encountered that before and I wasn't all that comfortable surrounded by a group of publicity people from M & S and Seal books and a photographer. I felt weirded out. I felt like a product. I guess that's what happened. They were really happy though. They'd never met me and they were afraid I'd be toothless or have a stutter or be unappealing.

30 Books in Canada, November, 1979

BIC: What did you do with the \$50,000? Are we sitting on it?

Deverell: Part went into the house, yes. And part is paying for the second book, the time I'm going to spend *not* earning money in a courtroom. The next one deals with drug smuggling and I'll be researching some of it in South America this winter.

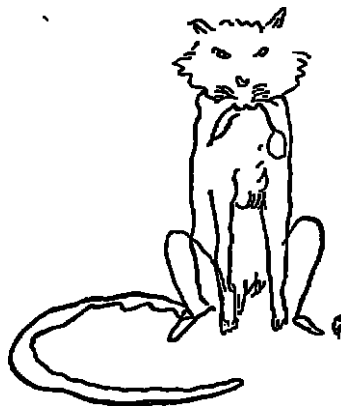
BIC: Are you starting to think of yourself more as a writer than as a lawyer?

Deverell: Do I have to do that? I don't know how I'd describe myself right now if I were asked what my occupation is. There are days when I think of myself as one or the other depending where I am, in court or at the typewriter. It's a schizoid sort of career stage that I'm into right now, part of each beast. I'd like to be able to find the right mix of courtroom law and writing. I want to get this second book out of my system and that, and the reception to the first, will determine my paths. □

Notes and comments

OUR HUMAN computers, all two of them, are hard at work analysing the data yielded by the questionnaire in the August-September issue of *Books in Canada*. More than 1,000 replies had been received by the end of September. We would like to thank those respondents for their generous co-operation and urge readers who have not yet filled out the form to do so now. It is essential that the readership profile be drawn from as wide a base as possible. The final results will be published in this column in a future issue.

Meanwhile the promised book prizes (kindly donated by Macmillan, McClelland & Stewart, and Methuen) are going out to the respondents on the first 100 forms received. Several readers from the east and west wings of this country complained bitterly that our offer put them at a geographical disadvantage. We hasten to reassure them. Our experience, abundantly confirmed in this instance, is that for all its other failings Canada Post maintains a rigorous equality of delivery speeds to, from, and within Toronto. Indeed.



Toronto-addressed letters posted in Kitimat or Comet Brook often seem to have an edge on those posted at Yonge and Bloor.

* * *

AS SUBEDITOR Dan Hilts notes in his introduction (page 17), this year's special section on gift books is not as comprehensive as we would have hoped. Because of endemic pre-Christmas production snags, many titles were simply not available for review to meet our deadline. And many of the titles that were available involved a pretty liberal interpretation of the term "gift book."

Or did they? After all, any book one buys to give to somebody else is in a sense a gift book. That raises a question. How many people buy books just for themselves these days? Not many, the book industry suspects. The guess is that as many as two thirds of all hard-cover trade books sold to individuals in any given year are bought as presents, although the buyer may well take time to digest the contents before getting out the wrapping paper.

Small wonder, then, that publishers scramble to bring out the bulk of their new titles in the pre-Christmas season. We have long lamented that practice as counter-productive: book stores can't cope with the annual fall avalanche and neither can the review media. But the fact is, no sane publisher can afford to ignore the realities of the marketplace. If we want more new books to be published all year round, we'll have to start buying them all year round. And not just for others but also for ourselves.

* * *

FINALLY, AN APB. we seem to have lost one of our contributing editors. Any person knowing the present whereabouts of Sean Virgo, late of Topsail, Nfld., should communicate with this office immediately. □

Letters to the Editor

SOME 'CENTRAL' CASTINGS

Sir:

Re Gary Geddes' piece on the virtues of the long poem (August-September), let me quote Edna St. Vincent Millay at him:

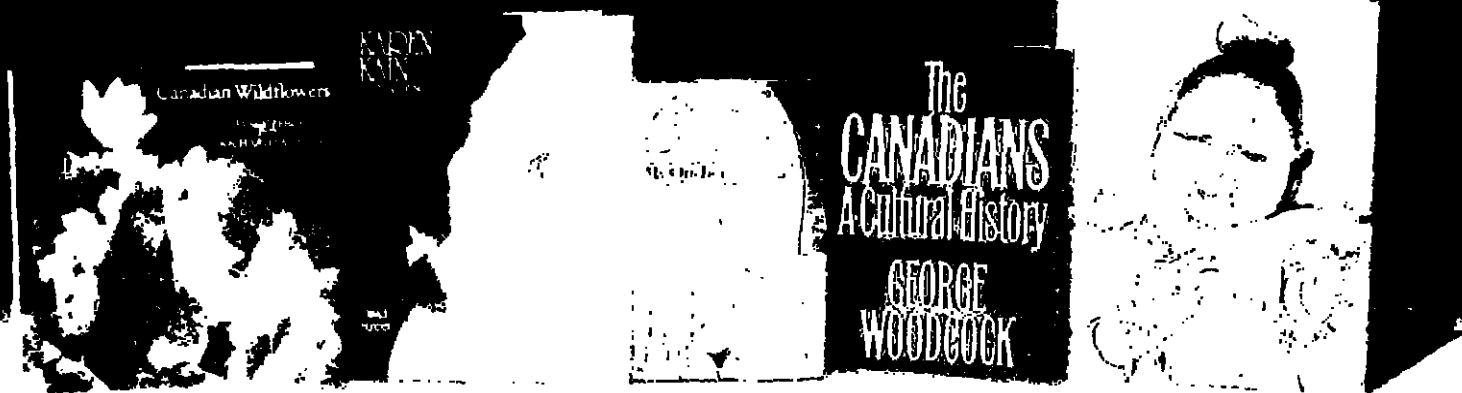
*My candle burns at both ends;
It will not last the night;
But, ah, my foes and, oh, my friends -
It gives a lovely light.*

And what a beautiful picture of Hugh Garner, who must have subscribed to my own rule of thumb: never trust anyone completely if they don't drink beer.

Re Stephen Scobie, who describes trying to classify "either 'the' or 'a' Canadian tradition" as "a fool's game". Why in the living hell shouldn't we try to describe a Canadian tradition? Every other country does it, including the U.S., Britain and the Soviet Union: why should Canada be deprived of one? In fact the Canadian tradition is going on all around Mr. Scobie if he cares to

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loo!: Or does an ex-Britisher see everything outside Britain as colonial?

But I do accept Mr. Scobie's view "that Glasco is as much a part of it [Canadian literature] as Wiebe; that McCaffery is as 'central' as Purdy". Listening to McCaffery's strange noises in Dryden, Ont., a while back, turning all the local mice into psychopaths and creating new lyric crooning standards for lovesick moose, I realized that the still centre of things was actually badlam.

And I do love Professor Scobie's comment about "resisting Marshall's argument" because "at best it is only a Canadian tradition"; or is this only an unfortunate choice of language from a professor of English?

Al Purdy
Ameliasburgh, Ont.

GET WITH IT, GEDDES

Sir:
I suspect that Mr. Geddes ("Make Ars Longer", August-September) wouldn't recognize a truly modern narrative poem.

In one place he seems to be urging poets to set modern sensibilities into an antique form; just words, words, and more words.

Yet he can also write: "[Poetry's] existence to the life of our society depends upon its ability to absorb and assimilate new materials (linguistic and otherwise) to take upon itself the widest possible range of information, Ides. event, theme."

By "new materials" does Mr. Geddes urge a synthesis of the printed word with other mediums? Painting? Xerography? Video? Happenings? A synthesis that will refurbish the narrative poem, thereby regenerating poetry?

If this is his stress then I urge him to analyse the pop artist's use of the word as well as the poetic

nuances of much video work. And has he heard of Barbara Astman?

As for the modern narrative poem, thoroughly vivified. I commend *Blown Figures* by Audrey Thomas (the 1974 Talonbooks edition).

Wed ya tink, Doktor Frankenstein?

George Young
Guelph, Ont.

BALDERDASH, BROWN

Sir:
Alan Brown's review of Marie-Claire Blais' novel *Nights in the Underground* (August-September) displays an unfortunate degree of stupidity.

Wondering why Blais bothers to write about anything so dull as a lesbian bar, Brown muses that "the explanation may lie in our en of single-issue politics and ever-narrowing identities, within which the simple consciousness of being human is felt to be increasingly inadequate." The often savage proscriptions of our culture have rigorously excluded lesbians and homosexuals from that "simple consciousness of being human" that Brown now so cosily recommends to us and chides us for rejecting; we did not asked to be consigned to our ghettos. Ms. Blais' humanity need not be argued.

Brown claims that Ms. Blais' characterization of homosexuals is unrealistic compared to Proust's. Homosexuals, he says, "take their place in [Proust's] art without distortion." What ever can be be thinking of? It was Gide who first wrote of Proust's "blam[ing] himself for that 'indecision' which made him . . . transpose all the attractive, affectionate and charming elements contained in his homosexual recollections, so that For *Sodome* he is left nothing but the grotesque and the abject." This, Gide cannily realized, would please both heterosexuals, whose prejudices it would confirm, and closeted homo-

sexuals, who could continue to avoid recognition because of the distortions.

I have not yet read *Nights in the Underground*, but Alan Brown's naivety about the facts of homosexual life — and of literary composition — leads one to question his competence to judge the work. His characterization of Vita Sackville-West's mild and perfectly sensible hope for tolerance as "propaganda," sod his odd notion that Sodom and Gomorrah hed something to do with lesbianism, nod to confirm one's doubts.

Ian Young
Toronto

LIVEN UP, LOTZ

Sir:
Jim Lotz says that the day a net price agreement for books comes to Canada, his "book buying will be done in Britain, the U.S., and the chains" (Letters, August-September).

Before he hops on that jet he ought to know that Britain *does* have a net price agreement for books.

Jim Lotz has written a few books. One of them, *Understanding Canada: Regional and Community Development in a New Nation* (NC Press, 1977), we have on our shelves. I wonder if the chains have it.

His other books we will special-order promptly; and any new books he writes we would definitely order. I wonder if the chains would.

Judith Mappin
Co-owner, The Double Hook
Montreal

Sir:
Besides overused pens, which aren't funny anyway, Jim Lotz's response to the interview with Bernard Rath shows a general lack of knowledge of the serious problems facing independent booksellers.

Bookselling in Canada has changed drastically in the six years since Lotz compiled his independent survey. I'm afraid that the old truisms don't hold together very well.

An independent cannot survive any longer just by offering service or by being helpful and courteous. All the warmth and humanity in the world will no, help es recover the tens of thousands of dollars in lost sales because of the chains' price coning last year. That is an economic reality that all booksellers, polite or not, must cop with.

A recent survey of book buyers has shown that many consumers perceive the chains to be less expensive place to buy books in general. That is a formidable problem to overcome, and is doubly frustrating because it is just not true.

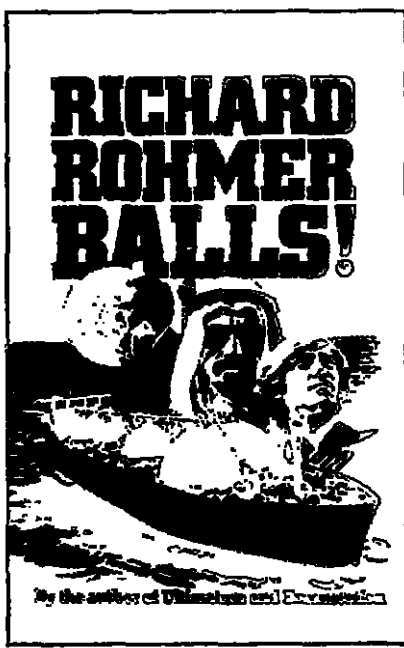
It seems that Mr. Lotz has overreacted to the possibility of a net book price agreement. In the fim place. Mr. Rath did not say that he was in favour of it. He merely said that it was one solution that deserved examining, with all the attendant problems and ramifications. If the net price agreement were the only possible way to protect the survival of independent booksellers, then I think it deserves serious consideration.

Finally, Mr. Lotz's ignorance of the situation is best borne out by his threat that IF such a law were passed in Canada, he would buy his books. among other places, in Great Britain. Mr. Lotz might be interested in knowing that Britain has had a net price agreement for more than 20 years.

John E. Richardson
A Different Drummer Books
Burlington, Ont.

PRICED FOR OBSCURITY

Sir:
I.M. Owen's review of *Reservoir Ravine* (August-September) missed we important point



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—the price. Who is prepared to pay \$17.50 for a 233-page novel by Hugh Hood?

I would guess that the publisher has only printed enough to satisfy libraries (who buy it because it is "Canadian") and a handful of rabid bibliophiles (who buy it because it is a limited pressing). The hardcover version of Volume II of this series is already out of print.

The average reader is faced with paying \$7.95 for the paperback version. Whatever the novel's merits, both author and publisher are ensuring the book's obscurity by pricing it out of the market.

Roger Perrault
Westmount, Que.

CanWit No. 47

WHAT ON EARTH is an "ugloo"? Neologist Bill Sherk of York University says it's an ugly igloo, and he should know because he coined it. That neologism, along with several down others, appears in Sherk's book *Brave New Words* (Doubleday), which is reviewed by The Browser on page 25. Neither we nor the Browser are much impressed by most of the new words coined by Sherk and his disciples (although we rather like his "covivant," the least-coy term we've seen so far for an unmarried mate), and we think the CanWit crew can do better. We'll pay \$25 for the best set of neologisms, together with definitions, received by Nov. 30. Address: CanWit No. 47. *Books in Canada*. 366 Adelaide Street East. Toronto M5A 1N4.

RESULTS OF CANWIT NO. 45

IT APPEARS THERE are still some loyalists around prepared to believe anything bad about William Lyon Mackenzie. Readers were asked to provide Canadian quotations that *didn't* make it into Colombo's dictionary. We thought we had made it pretty clear that we were after *invented* quotations with our models, one of which attributed the following apocryphal command to poor Mackenzie: "Don't run until you see the whites of their eyes." However, a number of contestants dug deep into history texts and newspaper files to find actual quotations that Colombo either missed or rejected. We'll pass them on to the Master Gatherer himself. The winner is Brian McCullough of Ottawa, who receives \$25 for these epigrammatical might-have-beens:

- "I can only rejoice that I had but one wife to lose for my country" (Pierre Elliott Trudeau, 1979).
- "Give me puberty or give me death!" (René Simard, 1979)
- "Remember the Eskimo!" (Farley Mowat, 1975).
- "Talk softly and carry a big stick" (Ken Dryden, 1977).
- "New have so many owed so much because of one man" (Jean Drapeau, 1976).
- "Duty is in the mind of the beholder" (Margaret Trudeau, 1979).
- "All provinces are equal, but some provinces are more equal than others" (René Lévesque, 1979).

Honourable Mentions:

- "In the country of the bland, the honoured man is King" (Arthur Meighen, 1926).
- "Next century in Jerusalem" (Joe Clark, 1979).
- "Latins are lousy customers" (Flora MacDonald, 1979).
- "You can't keep a good man down" (Louis Riel, 18%).
— Garvin Moody, Toronto
• • •
- "Corruption if necessary, but not necessarily corruption" (Phil Gaglardi, *passim*).
— Rod Manchee, Ottawa
• • •
- "I've been working on the railroad" (Sir John A. Macdonald, 1983).
— Mark Cornish, Wawa, Ont.
• • •
- "La Beurre, Yessir!" (Pierre Vallières, *circa* 1976).
— John Harris, Prince George, B.C.

The editors recommend

THE FOLLOWING Canadian books were reviewed in the previous issue of *Books in Canada*. Our recommendations don't necessarily reflect the reviews:

FICTION

From the Fifteenth District, by Mavis Gallant. Macmillan. Ignore the weak tide story in this otherwise fine collection. The remaining eight are told with such wit and grace that our reviewer wanted to weep and cheer, according to his mood or the particular story.

The Mangan Inheritance, by Brian Moore, McClelland & Stewart. Once again Moore explores the relation between the old world and the new, this time with a Celtic-Gothic tale in which mysticism and realism mat in an uneasy embrace.

Life Before Man, by Margaret Atwood, McClelland & Stewart. A satire of middle-class manners in Toronto concerning a messy marital crisis and a cast of unlikable characters who appear to have majored in sexual manipulation. Not vintage Atwood but highly readable nevertheless.

NON-FICTION

And No Birds Sang, by Farley Mowat, McClelland & Stewart. Although it ends abruptly in mid-battle, leading some critics to speculate that Mowat may be planning to siphon two memoirs out of one war, this account of the author's experiences in the Italian campaign captures the black humour and red horror of combat as vividly as anything yet written by a Canadian.

POETRY

Deathwatch on Skidegate Narrows and Other Poems, by Sean Virgo. Sono Nir Press. Despite its mock-shaman tendencies, this anthology is one of the most comprehensive and intelligent efforts in our recent poetry.

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The Forces Which Shaped Them
A History of the Education of Minority Group Children in British Columbia
by Mary Ashworth, with an Introduction by B.C. MLA Rosemary Brown

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by Richard G. Craig & Randy J. Noonan

A textbook which clarifies the major issues underlying the Quebec-Canada constitutional crisis. Historical, legal and political issues are treated in depth. Designed for grade 10-12 students, but useful at the college level as well.
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IN DUE SEASON
A Novel by Christine van der Mark, with a new Introduction by Dorothy Livesay.
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Books received

THE FOLLOWING Canadian books have been received by *Books in Canada* in recent weeks. Inclusion in this list does not preclude a review or notice in a future issue:

The Adventures of Mickey, Taggy, Puppo and Cica, and How They Discover Budapest, by Kati Rekal, illustrated by Elise Kane, Canadian Stage and Arts Publications.
The Adventures of Mickey, Taggy, Puppo and Cica, and How They Discover Kingston and the Thousand Islands, by Kati Rekal, illustrated by Elise Kane, Canadian Stage and Arts Publications.

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FISCHBACH ETC. A first book of poems by E. Mogridge (editor of "Reenbou"). Mostly in English, but some in French, German, Portuguese. Published in Luxembourg but available from Prospero Books. Billings Bridge, Ottawa. \$4 (\$4.50 if mailed).

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MOVEMENT PUBLICATIONS have hopped across the Pacific from Australia and now have slacks available in Canada. Watch for further details.

MR. DOUG HART, Managing Director of Leonard Fullerton Ltd., Publishers Representatives & Distributors, Auckland, New Zealand, will be visiting Toronto from Tuesday, November 20 through to Saturday, November 24 and will be staying at the Park Plaza Hotel (416) 9246471 — and from Wednesday, November 29 through to Saturday, December 1 in Vancouver at the Hotel Georgia (604) 682-5586. Canadian Publishers wishing to further their marketing arrangements for New Zealand are invited to contact Mr. Hart at these addresses.

OLD & RARE □ OOCS — Canadiana History & Literature. Catalogues. Heritage Books, 3438 - 6 St. S.W., Calgary, Alta., T2S 2M4.

OUT OF PRINT BOOKS. Canadian, Historical and Literary. Catalogues free on request. Huronia-Canadiana Books, Box 665, Alliston, Ont. L0M 1A0.

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The Adventures of Mickey, Taggy, Puppo and Cica and How They Discover Montreal, by Kati Rekal, illustrated by Elise Kane, Canadian Stage and Arts Publications.
The Adventures of Mickey, Taggy, Puppo and Cica, and How They Discover Toronto (Third Edition), by Kati Rekal, illustrated by Elise Kane, Canadian Stage and Arts Publications.
Ancestral Dances, by Glen Sorstad, ThisIsDown Press.
Another Mouth, by George Bowering, M & S.
Apple Butter, by James Reaney, Talonbooks.
Les Aventures de Mickey, Taggy, Puppo et Cica, a la decouverte d'Ottawa, by Kati Rekal, Canadian Stage and Arts Publications.
Before Romantic Words, by Arnie Gold, Vehicule Press.
Ben Wicks' Book of Losers, by Ben Wicks, M & S.
Between Two Revolutions: Islandmagee, County Antrim 1798-1920, by Donald Harman Akenson, P. D. Meaney Company.
Borrowed Black, by Ellen Bryan Obed, illustrated by Hope Yandell, Breakwater Books.
Braindances, by Lloyd Abbey, Oberon Press.
British Law and Arctic Men, by R. G. Moyles, Western Producer Prairie Books.
Canada as an International Actor, by Peyton V. Lyon and Brian W. Tomlin, Macmillan
Canadian Children's Annual 1990, edited by Robert F. Neilson, Potlatch.
Canadian Confederation: A Decision-Making Analysis, by W. L. White et al
The Canadian Crown, by Jacques Monet, Clarke Irwin.
The Canadian Establishment, by Peter C. Newman, Seal Books.
CDN SF & F: A Bibliography of Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy, by John Robert Colombo et al, Hounslow Press.
The Child in the City: Vols. I & II, edited by William Michelson et al., U of T Press.
Children of Lapland, by Bodil Hagbrink, translated by George Simpson, Tundra Books.
Contemporary Surrealist Prose: Vol. 1, edited by Dona Surmanis and Edwin Varney, Intermedia.
Corey, by Norma West Linder, Vesta Publications.
Crossbar, by John Gault, Seal Books
The Dangers of Nuclear War, edited by Franklyn Griffiths and John C. Polanyi, U of T Press.
The Dark, by Robert N. Munsch, illustrated by Sami Suomalainen, Annick Press.
Dark Times, by Wacław Iwaniuk, Hounslow Press.
Dassen the Penguin, by Judy Ross, D. C. Heath and the Metropolitan Toronto Zoo.
Days of Terror, by Barbara Claxson Smucker, Clarke Irwin.
Discovering the Pleasure Principle, by Jack Birnbaum, General Publishing.
Disneyland, Please, by Clive Doucet, Signet.
Divorced Kids, by Warner Troyer, Clarke Irwin.
Double Exposure, by Dorothy Grant, Consolidated Amethyst Communications.
Droppings from Heaven, by Irving Layton, M & S.
D'Sonoga: Vols. I and II, edited by Ingrid Klasen, Intermedia.
Dying for a Living: The Politics of Industrial Death, by Lloyd Tatar, Deneau & Greenberg.
Each for All: A History of the Co-operative Movement in English Canada, 1900-1945, by Ian MacPherson, Carleton Library (Macmillan).
Equal to Equal: Economic Association and the Canadian Common Market, by Peter Leslie, Institute of Inter-governmental Relations, P. D. Meaney.
Fulstaf the Hippopotamus, by Judy Ross, D. C. Heath and the Metropolitan Toronto Zoo.
From Tale to Tale, by Tibor Kovalik, Mosaic Press/Valley Editions.
Fun and Pheasants, by Olive Mount, Vesta Publications.
Geography Match, by James Reaney, Talonbooks.
The Gods, by Dennis Lee, M & S.
Grace, by Michael Harris, New Delta.
Great MacEwan: No Ordinary Man, by R. H. Macdonald, Western Producer Prairie Books.
Great Cities of Antiquity, by John Robert Colombo, Hounslow Press.
The Great Scot: A Biography of Donald Gordon, by Joseph Schull, McGill-Queen's University Press.
The Great Winnipeg Dream, by David C. Walker, Mosaic Press/Valley Editions.
Hazardous Renaissance, by John McAuley, CrossCountry Press.
In England Now That Spring, by Steve McCaffery and by Nichol, Aya Press.
Ignoramus, by James Reaney, Talonbooks.
Jaquiling Spirit, edited by Kathleen Coburn, U of T Press.
Is There Anybody There? by Jim Parr, Queico Press.
Judith, by Ariana Van Herk, Seal Books.
Khan the Camel, by Judy Ross, D. C. Heath and the Metropolitan Toronto Zoo.
The Lear World, by John Reibetanz, U of T Press.
Letters & Diaries of Lady Durham, edited by Patricia Gobel, Oberon Press.
Linger by the Sea, by Frances Itani, illustrated by Molly Lamb Bobak, Brunswick Press.
Live, Live, Live with Enthusiasm!, by Scheifele, Choice Publications.

Mandate for Canada, by John Crispo, General Publishing.
Mattress Testing, by John McAuley, CrossCountry Press.
McClure: Years of Challenge, by Munroe Scott, Canac Publishing
Miss the Orangutan, by Judy Ross, D. C. Heath and the Metropolitan Toronto Zoo.
A Moonbeam into Nowhere, by Sheila Martindale, Killaly Press.
Mud Puddle, by Robert N. Munsch, illustrated by Sami Suomalainen, Annick Press.
My Heritage, or, Jottings, by Violet Brownridge, Esqueing Historical Society.
The Naked Face, edited by Bernard Slatt and Lloyd Carlsen, General Publishing.
Names and Nicknames, by James Reaney, Talonbooks.
The Naming of the Beasts, by Francis Sparshott, Black Moss Press.
Nocturnal Rhythms, by Ken Staage, Penumbra Press.
A Not Unreasonable Claim, edited by Linda Kealey, Women's Press.
Novena to St. Jude Thaddeus, by M. Lakshmi Gill, Fiddlehead.
Other Canada: An Anthology of Science Fiction and Fantasy, edited by John Robert Colombo, McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
Outdoors West: Wildlife Adventure Stories, edited by Ian Bleikle, Western Producer Prairie Books.
Oyster Wine, by Michael Carmichael, Oolichan Books.
Painting During the Colonial Period in British Columbia 1845-1871, by Helen Bergen Peters, Sono Nis Press.
Paper Juggernaut: Big Government Gone Mad, by Walter Stewart, M & S.
The Path Through the Trees, by Christopher Milne, M & S.
Plen Delta: Medieval Cookery for Modern Cooks, by Constance B. Heintz and Sharon Butler, U of T Press.
Powerland Minds, by R. W. Fulford, Fiddlehead.
Public Relations for Small Business, by Ruth Hammond and W. Forbes LeClair, Financial Post/Macmillan.
Recyclers, by Frances Kilbourn, illustrated by Ann Powell, Women's Press.
Reflections of a Bird Watcher, by Ross H. Baker, Lancelot Press.
Remembering Saskatchewan, by Ted Regehr, University of Saskatchewan.
Roots of Western Culture, by Herman Dooyeweerd, translated by John Krazy, Wedge Publishing.
Safety on Ice, by Lois Kalchman, Totem.
Saltspring, by John Marshall, Oolichan Books.
Sam Steele, by Robert Stewart, Doubleday.
The Seasons of Children, edited by Paula S. Goepfert, Simon & Piere.
Seeds, Soil and Sunshine, by Mary Dauphinee, Lancelot Press.
Shelterbelt, by Mary Ann Seitz, Western Producer Prairie Books.
Silly Sally in the Tire and Mrs. Corrigan, by Frank M. Tierney, Borealis Press.
Six Fillious, translations by bpNichol et al of Robert Filliou's 14 Songs and 1 Riddle, Membrane Press.
Somatic Selection and Adaptive Evolution, by E. J. Steele, Williams and Wallace International.
The Spirit of Alberta Indian Treaties, edited by Richard Price, Institute for Research on Public Policy.
Standing Into Danger, by Cassie Brown, Doubleday.
Stallions, by Patrick White and Victoria P. Wannacott, Commover's Books.
Struggle and Fulfillment, by Donald Evans, Collins
Surface Structures, by Jim Smith, St. Lawrence College/Kingston Writers' Association.
Tales of Solitude, by Yvette Naubert, translated by Margaret Rose, Intermedia.
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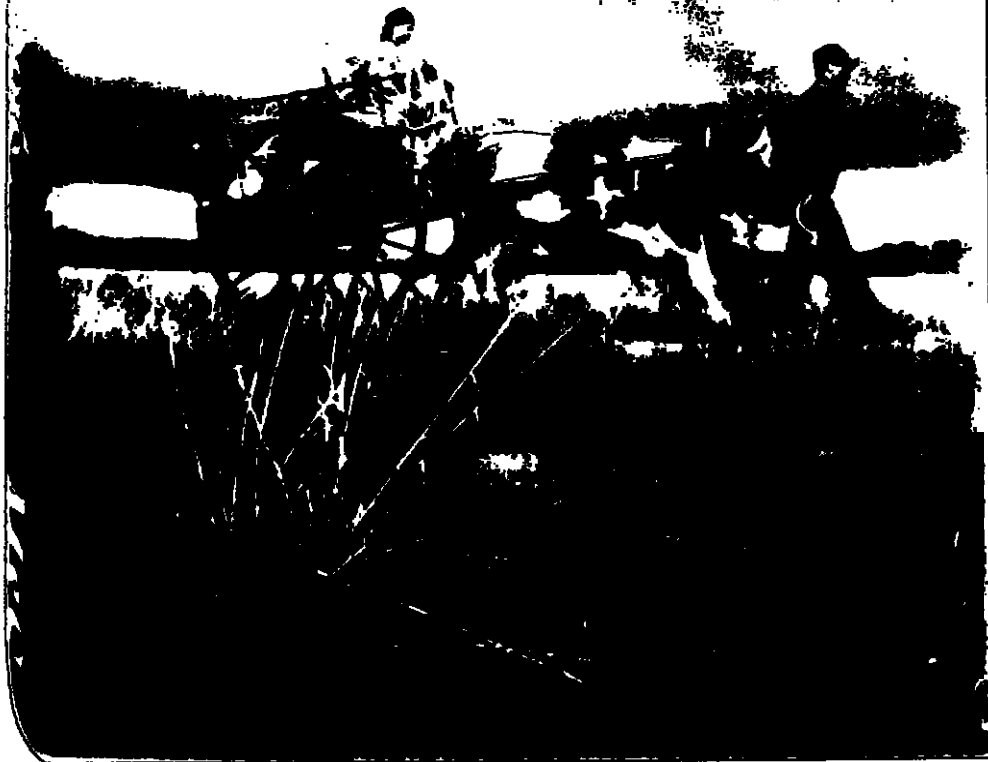


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