

BOOKS *in* CANADA

VOLUME 1, NO. 5

DECEMBER 1, 1971

A SPECIAL
ISSUE ON
ILLUSTRATED BOOKS

REVIEWS BY: *Robin Mathews; Una Abrahamson; Chris Homer; A. L. Karras; Marian Engel; Greg Curnoe; David Beard; Val Clery; Randall Ware; Douglas Marshall; Barbara Frum; Michael Ondaatje.*



CULTURAL STRIP-OFF

GREAT CANADIAN
COMIC BOOKS

Arranged by *MICHAEL HIRSH*
and *PATRICK LAUBERT*
Peter Martin Associates
cloth \$12.95; illustrated: 264 pages

reviewed by *Derek Carter*

LITTERED BEFORE me are several attempted beginnings of a critical essay on *The Great Canadian Comic Books*. Critic fights commercial artist and comic buff in an attempt to present an honest unbiased view of the collection. Phrases about nostalgia fads and sentences glorifying this as a history of Canadian wartime initiative and enterprise are strewn around in justification of the book's existence. Regrettably, one has to be honest — if these great Canadian comic books are the best that could be found, it would

continued on page 20

JOHNNY CANUCK

SAW CANADA FIRST

THE DISCOVERERS

An Illustrated History
LESLIE F. HANNON
McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$16.95 until Dec. 31: 260 pages

reviewed by Douglas Marshall

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN the book and the non-book lurks that hippogryph of publishing known as the half-book, often rather desperately subtitled "An Illustrated History." It is a disturbing beast. Faced with a pure-blooded book, a critic at least knows where he's at; the animal is subject to the broad commands of literature. Non-books are even less of a problem; it's merely a matter of determining whether, in the coarse values of the marketplace, the reader is given enough gloss and glitter for his gold. But when a publisher cunningly brings forth a hippogryph, the critic's terms of reference keep swinging dizzily from library shelf to boiler-room floor and back again.

The history illustrated by *The Discoverers* concerns "the seafaring men who first touched the coasts of Canada." I like that word "touched." The poetic compromise between "explored" and "invaded" is the hallmark of the work of a great hippogryph editor.

The Discoverers is not half bad as half-books go. Unfortunately, it's not half good either. (With hippogryphs, critics are constantly forced into litanies.) The main text is an entertaining popular survey of the opening up of Canada from the time-misted forays of almost legendary Vikings down to the scientific soundings of that humble humanist, Captain James Cook. Mr. Hannon, a native of New Zealand who admires Canada with a convert's passion, has been more than generous with detail and anecdote. We are treated to insights about everything from the miraculous *annedda* tree that cured Cartier's men of scurvy (it was probably

white cedar) to the sex life of Samuel Champlain (dull, except for an obvious predilection for very young girls). Above all, Hannon has the professional writer's ability to bring the scale of his story vividly into focus. Conquest of the northwest passage, he notes, was "still almost too tough a task for the 115,000-ton tanker *Manhattan*, which could have carried Cabot's *Mathew* at the davits."

And yet there is something disjointed and dissatisfying about the way this survey has been put together. Hannon remains a journalist rather than an historian. His 18 "chapters" are really competent magazine articles hung loosely on a chronological thread. With admirable skill, he has collected and collated prodigious stacks of known facts. Wisely, he has let the journals of the discoverers themselves carry the narrative forward as often as possible.



But, more researcher than scholar, he has failed in his attempt to bring a fresh perspective to the oft-told tale. He is too conscientiously objective for his reader's good. He slows the story down by weighing evidence in print when he should have made up his mind before hand. There is no sustaining pattern. Encrusted with excessive decorative data, top-heavy with multiple points of view, Hannon's splendid vessel capsizes into incoherence.

Admittedly, what structure the text did have has largely been sabotaged by the art editors. The book is at once a visual feast and a dog's breakfast. There are some superb four-colour photographs of our eastern approaches by John de Visser (presumably out-takes from the book he did with Farley Mowat) and Don Newlands. The museums, libraries and colleges of two continents have been plundered to

provide an opium-smoker's dream of prints and maps and diagrams and caricatures of kings. There is even, on page 131 of this paragon of half-books, a picture of something that looks very like a hippogryph.

Again, however, the lavish artwork dazzles and confuses where it should illuminate and inform. The eye is asked to wander, without apparent reason, from astrolabe to runic alphabet by way of the South Sea Isles. Portfolios of irrelevancies keep popping up at random (three pages of jolly Rowlandson drawings, for instance) and not even some ingenious cutline writing ("The England Captain Cook left behind is . . .") can convince us they belong in a book about Canadian exploration. And there is a perfectly dreadful picture — "one artist's conception" — of poor Henry Hudson being set adrift that can only have scuttled its way into the book during a last-minute crisis.

That lapse is noteworthy because, generally, this half-book maintains a very high stylistic standard. It is not in any way cheap; money and imagination have been expended on it in professional quantities. It is worth — and one feels this has been costed out down to the last comma — almost exactly the not-quite-exorbitant price (\$16.95 until Dec. 31) that is being asked for it. Even here, though, there has been a curious compromise: magazine-sized and 260 pages thick, the volume is heavy and bulky enough to be awkward to hold; yet, with these *demi-tasse* dimensions, it has none of the appeal to sheer ostentation that goes with a true coffee-table book.

All told, I can't help thinking both Hannon and the reader would have been better served if *The Discoverers* had either been more of a book or more of a non-book. Conceived as a \$5.95 book, the story would have had a coherent structure imposed on it and become an excellent buy for the average reader. Conceived as a \$25 non-book, it would have lured in those readers who purchase by the square yard. As it is, it will delight illiterate children with its pictures, be dipped into by a few stalwart book-club members, flicked through by subscribers to magazine promotions and then retreat like all hippogryphs into literary extinction. It seems a shame. □

ACCORDING TO a proclamation by UNESCO, 1972 will be *International Book Year*. Member states (of which Canada is one) are urged to "initiate programs which will promote the writing, publishing and distribution of books, and stimulate the reading of books." And that is, after all, what is desired by everyone with an active interest in the growth of a Canadian literature.

The time is very ripe. This year has proved to be a high point in Canadian publishing history. Few of our established writers, whether at home or in exile, have failed to produce books; two of the most notable, Pierre Berton and Mordecai Richler, have given us the finest writing of their careers. In their wake several new novelists, challenging the drift of public taste away from fiction, have revealed talent impressive in its inventiveness and self-assurance. Canadian poets maintain an output unique in the English-speaking world and command an commensurate readership. Our historians continue to make

ample amends for an earlier neglect of our past. The excitement and pride perceptible within our book industry is justified.

It would be foolhardy, however, to assume that stability and maturity have been found in one good publishing year. There's a price tag to so rich and varied a harvest and nobody knows for sure yet if enough Canadians are buying and reading Canadian books. Canadian publishers have a long way to go before they can dispense entirely with the helping hand of government. After all they must grow up in a market still straddled by voracious foreign giants.

Some worthwhile help has become available. In Ontario a Royal Commission on Book Publishing has shown exemplary persistence in exploring the structure of the province's coyest industry, several times moving from deliberation to action in easing some of the more oppressive problems. Similarly, in Quebec, the government has introduced legislation which should afford for publishers some protection against foreign capital and which may also reduce the hazards that have long restricted and threatened booksellers. What has remained puzzling, however, since these are matters of national concern, is the strange inertia of the federal government.

The Canada Council has been outstanding in its support of individual writers, publishing houses and publications; the federal Departments of Industry, Trade and Commerce and External Affairs have shown initiative and ingenuity in promoting Canadian books abroad. But what is missing, despite fulsome promises during the critical opening months of this year, is a comprehensive and realistic policy for furthering the growth of a Canadian book industry.

The handling of International Book Year is a case in point, one symptomatic of a federal paralysis of will. Last April, the Canadian Committee of UNESCO convened a meeting in Ottawa of interested people from publishing, libraries and education to discuss ways in which the book year might be celebrated in Canada. It was an ex-

citing meeting and many fascinating projects were suggested and recorded. Subsequently the Canadian Book Publishers' Council offered to help in the setting-up of a co-ordinating committee and teachers' and librarians' organizations pledged their support. An approach was made to the federal government and its response was a promise of the necessary funds for the project. With less than a month to go before the year begins that promise remains unkept and at latest report Canada will usher in International Book Year by doing exactly nothing.

Canadians have a right to know exactly why. □

SUPERGROUP

THERE IS NO FINALITY...

HARRY HUNKIN
Burns & MacEachern
paper \$6.95; 160 pages

reviewed by Robin Mathews

THIS BOOK is a delight. It is a surprise. It titillates and educates. The title which appears on the cover and the last page of the text is quoted from Lawren Harris. The book is about Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven, but it is so in a special way. It invites one to look, to really look at the phenomenon of those painters. To aid the reader, many of the oft-times misused resources of typography and layout are used with wit and with visual elegance. There are more than a hundred illustrations, fourteen of which are colour plates.

Much is being said about the Group these days, and they are being gathered together in impressive exhibitions. They are probably the most important painters to have appeared in North America between the years 1910 and 1935. Time may well show them to be more important even than that. They need

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to be looked at by Canadians because their work is awesome and stunning. But also because, as Lawren Harris said, they were "drawn by an irresistible urge to replace this 'foreign-begotten technique' by a way of painting dictated by Canada itself..." When they did it, the outside world praised them handily.

In their canvasses were planted the seeds of the next fifty years of Canadian art. But the seeds have never germinated. Canvasses that fairly leap at the viewer, full of ideas about possible development of visual statement, have been left isolated. Where have Canadian painters been, the Canadians who should really have been looking at the Group of Seven? They have been on a thirty-year vacation in New York. Rejecting the statement by Harris about "foreign begotten technique," they left Go Home Bay for Manhattan Island. Now, in Toronto, many galleries carry mostly U.S. painters. Why not? They paint New York School best, don't they?

In *There is no finality* . . . Harry Hunkin takes you face to face with the times (what they looked at), the history of their evolution, their sketchings, outings, ideas, friends, enemies, catalogues, and so on. They appear as people, and their genius is humanized as full-colour plates appear among sketches and comments about their aspirations and frustrations. The overwhelming effect of the book is that a very human, very dedicated group of men sank their roots into the land, and then flowered in genius. But another nagging presentiment haunts as a result of what the book does. That is the presentiment that the work was only a beginning, only a small beginning. . . As Harris said, "There is no finality, no final statement; everything remains to be re-created . . ."

The book is advertised on its cover "for the young student or the adult with an awakening interest in the Group of Seven." It is that. And quite clearly, Harry Hunkin has shaped the book to that end. But his skill has made it more than that. He juxtaposes, occasionally, a photograph of the subject and the painting or sketch. When he does it with a Fred Varley war painting, and quotes, also, a letter in which Varley describes the front, then the



A. Y. JACKSON

CANADIAN ARTLEGGERS

Arthur Lismer's sketch of A. Y. Jackson: a primary art lesson

reader is able to understand, in an important way, how the imagination of the painter went to work. The effect of that, also, is to humanize the painter. But it also whets the appetite of the reader to see more in the paintings, to understand more. And so the book is educational without being either "academic" or pedantic. When he places a photograph of A. Y. Jackson beside a sketch of A.Y. by Arthur Lismer, the *sketch* makes the photograph come alive. That is a primary art lesson, perhaps, for anyone in the photo-ridden twentieth century.

The easiest thing to miss in the book is the absence of Harry Hunkin. Except for his taste and the effect of his wit, he is beautifully absent. He even gives the introduction over to A. J. Casson who is tastefully low key. Photographs, illustrations and texts deftly selected from the painters themselves make the book happen. And it is a happening. But it is a happening created by someone who knows the pleasure there is in art and the pleasure there can be in learning. If this book is a sign of the way in which the Group of Seven is coming back, then it bodes well for the return. □

ROBIN MATHEWS, the well-known Canadian nationalist, is co-editor of *The Struggle For Canadian Universities*. He lectures at Carleton University in Ottawa.

OH, CANADA?

IN SEARCH OF CANADA

edited by *READER'S DIGEST*

Book Service
cloth \$14.95; 319 pages

reviewed by *Randall Ware*

WHEN I WAS a journalism student we used to have a class in propaganda analysis. The magazine we practised on most frequently was *Reader's Digest*. If you have a few dollars to blow and are interested in that field, pick up a copy of *In Search of Canada*. It is a compilation of articles written for the "Canadian Edition" of *Reader's Digest*, liberally sprinkled with photographs and designed to lend an air of that oh-so-fashionable nationalism to any coffee table.

The book gets off to a bad start with "My Own Dear Land," a poem by Robert Choquette; a poem so dull and hopelessly cliché-ridden that it sounds like the result of someone crossing Rod McKuen with a fourth-rate social scientist. The poem also manages to convey the impression that Montreal has no slums. Poetic licence indeed.

"The heart of the problem seems to be that Ottawa has not had a completely co-ordinated policy on education and employment of native people — or, if it has, the policy hasn't proved suitable to the rapidly shifting northern employment scene." This, from an article on the Eskimos, is typical of the obsequious criticism that permeates the book. Nowhere in the book is any attempt made to deal with the crucial questions that face us as a nation. But then, *Reader's Digest* isn't Canadian. Remember? A five-page story on the Great Lakes does not mention the pollution problem even once. Another five-page article, a hymn of praise to the snowmobile, carries a one-page essay on the dangers it represents. After suggesting possible legislation, the piece concludes on this note: "The alternative to such rigorous legislation would seem to be the passive acceptance of another forest pollutant and the continued erosion of man's fundamental right to peace and quiet." Obviously, the *Reader's Digest* does not believe that it should try to influence public opinion. If it's not law, it's not worth defending. That is what they seem to be saying. And therein lies both the key to *Reader's Digest's* success and the reason why it cannot be trusted to show us a true picture of our country. They may not appear to be shaping opinion and mirroring certain attitudes; but that's what they're doing, by virtue of the material they print and how they choose to present it. The act of editing is also the act of propagandizing. While we are grateful to the *Digest* for glimpses of some of the good things about Canada, we ask that we not be deceived about our problems.

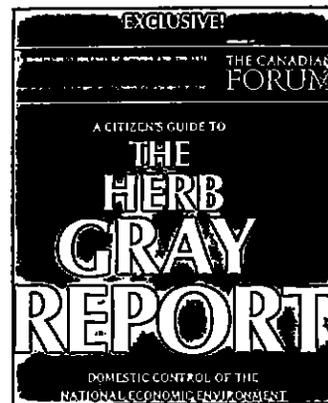
A romantic view of the country is nice. But we require romance laced with realism. Are we now so far from Nazi Germany that we forget what the results of pure Romanticism are?

In Search of Canada? Wrong way down a one-way street. □

"No white man of our generation knows the Arctic as well as Duncan Pryde. You have to go back to the early explorers to find his like."

Stuart Hodgson
Commissioner, NWT

Duncan Pryde: former Hudson's Bay Company fur trader, outspoken Northwest Territories councillor authority on Arctic sex, society and survival; spellbinding raconteur, captivating author of *NUNAGA: MY LAND, MY COUNTRY*. \$8.95, Hurtle Publishers



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ONE FOR THE ROAD

WHEELS

ARTHUR HAILEY
Doubleday
cloth \$8.75; 374 pages

reviewed by Ray Stapley

THOSE OF THE TV, movie, and reading public who look forward to anything by Arthur Hailey as another cliff-hanger may be disappointed by the lack of suspense in his latest novel dealing with the automobile industry. Not that it isn't a gripping book. *Wheels* gives some startling revelations (good and bad) about Detroit and its denizens, but the suspense will have to come later when we go to buy our next new car. Was it built on a Monday or Friday? On those days, says Hailey, "more hourly paid employees failed to report for work than on any other

normal weekday." Or will we get one of the cars with upside-down heater hose clamps — installed by some guy recruited from sweeping the floor to fill a gap in the assembly line left by an absentee regular?

Arthur Hailey is no mean craftsman himself. He builds his story as methodically as the Big Three build their cars (on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, that is). He structures his plot and characters so that every aspect of the car industry is explored. But as a car doctor, I found myself caring more about what was happening (and not happening) to the cars than to the people in this brilliant insight into what goes on in the car capital.

How to overcome the noise vibration in the almost-ready-to-be-unveiled Orion; decisions by the Product Planners and Design Stylists as to whether Farstar, the new compact in the planning stages, should be deliberately ugly to suit the needs and moods of the Age of Utility and thus become beautiful. These things interested me much more than whether Product Planner Adam Trenton would resume

sex relations with his beautiful young wife, and what psychological reasons lay behind the young wife's shoplifting.

Nothing is left out. Author Hailey runs off an auto race in which a driver gets killed quiet unexcitingly — for the obvious purpose of showing how the manufacturers, although not directly involved in car racing, are, nevertheless, swept up in it. Major races are mostly run on Sunday and if a car bearing a manufacturer's name wins, it reflects favourably on the maker. Hence the car men's dictum: Win on Sunday, sell on Monday.

The car-buying public should read *Wheels* for the detailed look at a new car dealership. They would find that model introduction time is "open season on customers;" that in January, because dealers are heavily stocked with cars and want to reduce inventory, "a shrewd car buyer might save several hundred dollars on a medium-priced car, compared with buying a month or so later."

The Big Three are conscientiously trying to do something about safety and pollution, we learn. The Product

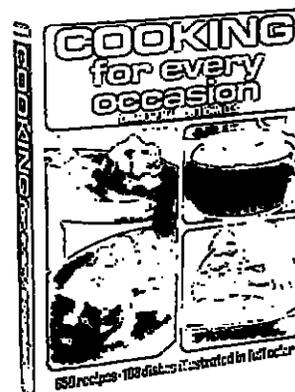
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Planner tells a Congressman that it's time the lawmakers did something positive instead of continually "parroted the critics." He emphasizes that there have been pollution-control kits available for older cars for more than two years, but almost nobody buys them.

Do I as an automobile consultant go along with what Arthur Hailey reveals about the auto industry? Why not? Unlike his character, Emerson Vale, referred to in *Wheels* as a successor to Ralph Nader, the author never offers "assertion, hearsay, unsupported evidence as fact." Arthur Hailey, as always, has done his research painstakingly and well.

But then, where does a grease monkey like me get off reviewing a novel by a world famous author whose books have been translated into about thirteen languages, anyway? □

RAY STAPLEY is the author of *The Car Owner's Handbook*.

FOR POT ADDICTS

EARLY CANADIAN POTTERY

DONALD WEBSTER
McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$12.95: 256 pages

reviewed by *Una Abrahamson*

DONALD WEBSTER, Curator of the Canadiana Gallery of the Royal Ontario Museum has written the first study of Canadian pottery from its beginnings to the early years of this century. It is as if Mr. Webster is playing a tantalizing game of veils — he lifts one, and we learn a few names and some geographic locations. But the mystery remains. The collecting of Canadian pottery is a relatively recent interest; it is also an orphan, having received little technological, cultural or historical research.

And while the book demolishes some myths, a great deal of spadework remains to be done.

The known documentary evidence of early Canadian potters is fragmentary and flimsy. It is believed that the earliest establishment was started in 1694 by Gabriel Lemieux in Quebec. The settlers declined to use Indian pottery (at no time has it had any influence on the mainstream of Canadian pottery) and what household items couldn't be supplied by the motherland for the handful of families was made locally. The Governors limited the potters to the making of bowls, plates and serving platters. The pattern was soon established: this was no way to make a living. And because the market was greater for tiles and bricks, housewares were secondary. There was little encouragement and, more important, little capital available to set up an indigenous industry. This attitude was repeated as different areas were settled. And always, those who managed to keep a small plant operating had to face up to the organized foreign industries which frequently held the market by dumping. Canadian pottery production was restricted to one-man or family establishments that opened and closed at an alarming rate. However, they produced two types of work: heavy and rather crude tableware and containers made by hand without mechanical aid, followed by mechanically formed household pieces that include picture frames, savings banks, bowls and teapots. In addition, the skilled potters found the time to make very collectible miniatures. These were scale models for salesmen's samples and whimsies for friendship tokens.

Early Canadian Pottery has 16 colour photographs, many black and whites, technical descriptions, a glossary and a first look at the manufacturing picture in the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario. It is the first book of its kind in the field and is important to collectors — but the involved sentence structure doesn't make it the easiest book to read. □

UNA ABRAHAMSON is Consumer Affairs Editor of *Chatelaine* and the author of the very successful book *God Bless Our Home*.

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ILLUSTRATED HISTORICAL ATLASES

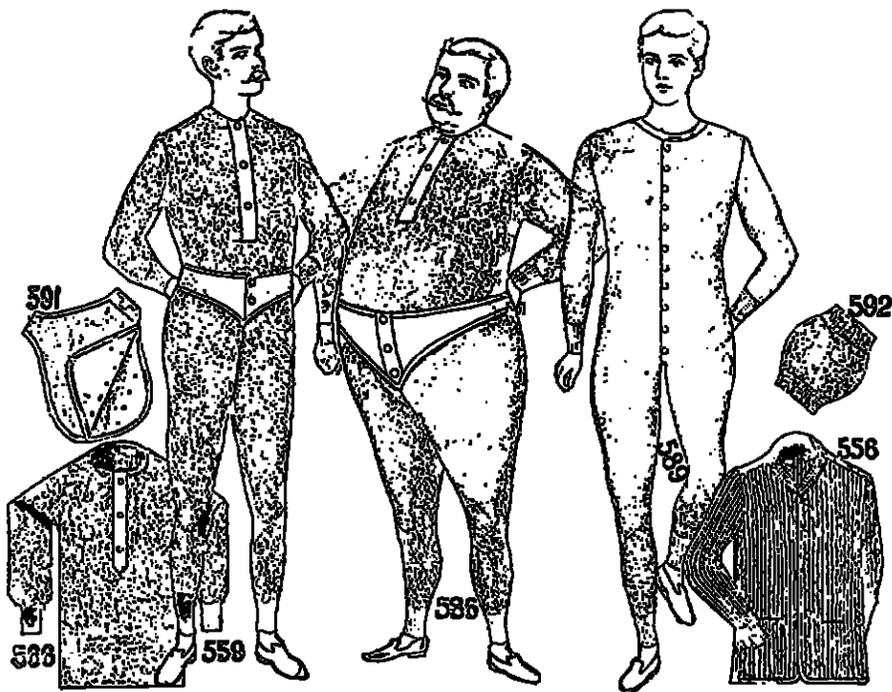
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EATON'S CATALOGUE 1901 *and* EATON'S CATALOGUE SPRING AND SUMMER 1927

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reviewed by Marian Engel

OF COURSE THE Eatons, now, they were proud people. They came from over Ballymena way and they were good Methodist stock, but when they came up in the world they had to build that big church in Toronto they called Timothy Eaton, think he was a saint, that had kneelers in it. The old church wasn't high enough for them. But they stood behind their goods, you could always send it back, not like the Masseys and the manure-spreader, haha.

The words: nainsook and cashmerette; steelclad galatea, dress duck, bloomerette, lumberjack flannel: Hudson Bay tradegoods under another name: The medicines: nervaline, tannac, castoria, Baby's Own, Pinex, Adler-I-Ka, Marmola, and Dr. Chase's Kidney and Liver catchall. Habutai silk, Fuji broadcloth; pongee; crepe de Chine chiffon, durbar shantung: Mrs. Red Satin and her maid Georgette. Charme-

line, tricotine, gymnasium serge.

And the pressed-tin beds cold against your back Sunday morning fighting over the catalogue under the quilted eiderdown. The vulgar furniture that assures the liberal the word vulgar will never die, even in overpriced antique shops. And the \$29.50 wicker doll prams to assure us we have always spoiled our children, even in '27.

The hats: sombreros, fedoras, clergyman's, silks, and beavers. Potash salts. Powders, Sulphurs, Syrups, Pills, Ointments, Lozenges, Lydia Pinkhams. Acids "sold by weight," capsules of castor oil. Rangoon oil at five cents an ounce and what was that? Trusses, corset covers, bust bodices, slitted and slotted nursing waists, and glorious dignified knitted underwear - for the stout gentleman.

Ah, the achievement of, the mystery of the thing: my own Seamstress

Vibrator sewing machine all gold scrolls and without having had its tension wrecked by any little kid; kindergarten chairs, the hired man's under a new Germanic name; kitchen cabinets with bins and drawers and new enamel tops; linoleum; felt-padded bookends. Mavis Toilet Water, Hinds Honey and Almond Cream; cans of lye with beavers on them, to make your own soap with, with the bacon grease, to take the skin off your hands with; mops, kettles, pumps, incubators, hog-fencing, hammocks: and next to a boy's velocipede, a Chrysler Speedster 1927 model car for 35 cents. Sixty-two fifty for a Samson roller-bearing windmill, \$17.50 for a barrel churn; \$7.50 for a twelve-volume Camberwell Browning - the poet, that is.

Nostalgia? You can get as sentimental as you want about it, glom over the bonnets and later the cloches, the beavers and later the motoring caps; if you think things were more beautiful then, 1927 is salutary: at the catalogue level most things are pretty awful. Time has turned them happily into camp and there's no regretting it.

What's left after the tears of reminiscence are gone is some feeling that mystery and richness are over. Photographs in colour make everything a little too clear, nobody bothers to name (Henshaw, Savoy, Atlas, Rainbow, L'Aiglon, Fielding, Nome, Sagamore, Dunbar, Eloise, Mafeking, Beatrice, Canada) the hats anymore, and, although braids and gimps are coming back, words are softer now: collar stiffeners, skirt protectors, umbrella frills, steel stays - they are gone with woolen summer underwear, they are gone with Humphrey's Homeopathic Specifics and Simples; with blurred print and bad engravings. My father, who was around to pore over both these catalogues, always says don't regret the past, live in the present. Looking at these pages, I can see why he thinks that life is better now. What's ticky-tacky now was the same then, only heavier.

And yet, at a distance, it's glorious fun. And shouldn't social history always be that? □

MARIAN ENGEL is the author of *The Honeyman Festival* and a regular contributor to *Books In Canada*.

OUR THINGS

HERITAGE

SCOTT SYMONS
and JOHN de VISSER
McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$22.50

reviewed by Greg Curnoe

HERITAGE IS A good-looking book. It was written after the author — Ontario novelist Scott Symons — had driven from Windsor, Ontario, to St. John's, Newfoundland, in a camper van — looking in at homes and museums on the way. The book contains 46 colour plates of Canadian furniture — full-page photos ranging from a piece of New Brunswick Amerino quillwork to an Ontario desk bench. Thirty-seven of the colour plates are of objects on display in museums, etc. The author says he travelled all over North America looking at furniture in order to put this book together. Does that mean that there are only ten pieces of significant Canadian furniture in private hands — being used — in this country? On alternate pages there are, however, black and white photos of objects and houses and scenes encountered on Symons' trip, and details of the coloured plates. Unfortunately there are no captions for the black and whites, which in many cases are more interesting than the colour plates. Symons' journey across southeastern Canada and his stories of tracking down various pieces, like the flame-birch corner cupboard (Plate 3) are also very interesting (it's too bad that more of the book isn't devoted to that), and of course there is always something boring about functional objects on display — no longer used — that even a sumptuous photo can't hide, and the photos are good.

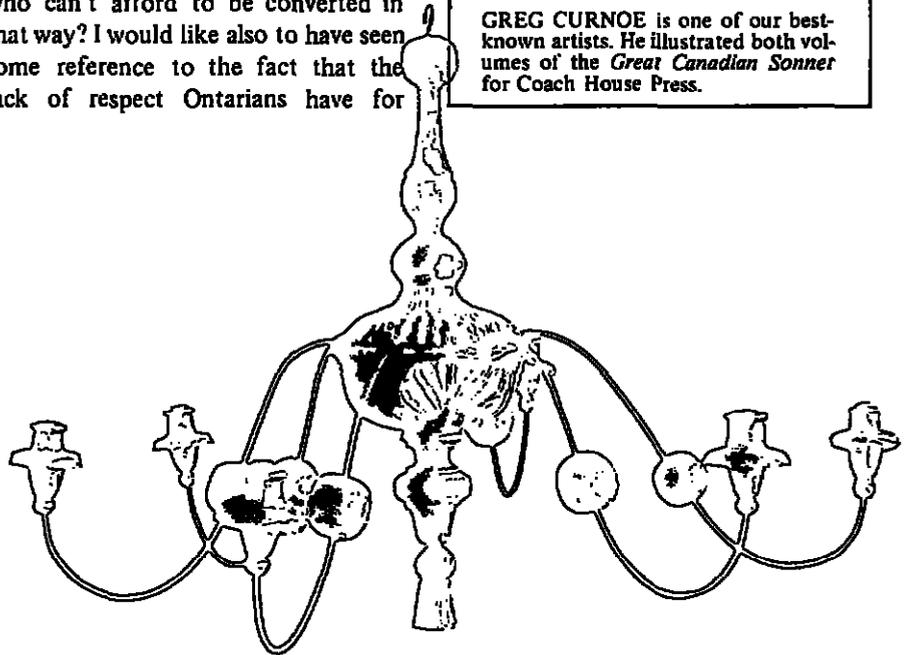
So in addition to the split between mind and spirit in English-Canadian furniture that Symons says distinguishes it from the wholeness of French-Canadian furniture, we also have a split between appearance and function appearing in *Heritage*; and given the tone of the text by Symons and the preface by George Grant, a further split occurs in that the tone and

the price of the book will effectively cut it off from the present-day equivalents of the ordinary people who made and used much of the furniture — although there are many objects from cathedrals, universities and mansions as well that do suit the text. You see what is really necessary at this time of resurgent cultural awareness in Canada is a cheap — under \$1 — paperback that would be sold in drugstores and supermarkets about the furniture of the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries in the various regions of Canada — something that would make more of us aware of just what is gradually being destroyed as urban renewal, for instance, becomes more widespread.

Books like *Heritage* reach the converted. Who is trying to reach those who can't afford to be converted in that way? I would like also to have seen some reference to the fact that the lack of respect Ontarians have for

their own culture is reflected in the many truckloads of Ontario pine furniture that are being shipped regularly down to the States — at least that is what many Ontario antique dealers have been telling me this past year. They say that soon there'll be none left in Canada. Finally I must thank Mr. Symons and John de Visser, the photographer, for showing me: the Newfoundland side chair, Plate 1 (some people in St. John's pronounce quidi vidi, quida vida); the habitant armoire, Plate 20, and the Quebec rustic rocking chair, Plate 28 — all fantastically beautiful pieces, and the chairs look very comfortable. Why no chicken coop or arrow back chairs and why only one Amerind plate? □

GREG CURNOE is one of our best-known artists. He illustrated both volumes of the *Great Canadian Sonnet* for Coach House Press.



TOUJOURS L'ARMOIRE

THE EARLY FURNITURE OF FRENCH CANADA

JEAN PALARDY

Macmillan

cloth \$12.50, paper \$7.50

reviewed by Una Abrahamson

AS THE NIGHTS lengthen we will return to the annual rite of debating Canadianism. Why do we doubt our identity when we have a cultural heritage that began almost as soon as the first homes were roofed, and a style that can be confused with no other? In

comparison with some, our social past is short but few realize the amazing flourishing of silver, textile and furniture making, to name but three crafts, from the beginnings of New France to the mid-19th century. But we have always preferred strangers to assure us

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that our arts are okay: we accept actors after they've made it in London, we like our painters to be known by New Yorkers and we look to Scandinavia to lead us in design. We're brain-washed into believing that the best has always been imported.

It never fails to amaze me how many of the devoted protectors and appreciators of our heritage were born elsewhere. No exception is Jean Palardy, who came here as a child and developed a passionate interest in the folklore, artifacts and furnishings of Quebec, taking great pleasure in tracking down the rare and beautiful as well as the homely and utilitarian.

This book is a new and attractive approach to social history, a subject sadly neglected because so many historians prefer to concentrate on eyeball to eyeball politics. The few attempts at social history are often unreadable, mainly I suspect, because we feel they must be verbose and serious to be acceptable. In addition, we desperately want our immediate ancestors to be saints without blemishes, but history is people and the way they lived affected the greater events. Jean Palardy makes no attempt to whitewash but gives an honest appraisal – the early workers had vision, unfortunately too many of their descendants lack taste. As a collateral to the furnishings he tells the story of our beginning: how people ate, worked, the social customs, the woods available so that we can understand better the how and whys of these furnishings that were in daily use. At the same time, Palardy points out the sad facts that during the long years when we forgot or spurned our past, so much was lost that can never be recovered. Many of the crafts are forgotten; prize examples are in collections outside of Canada and many pieces were burned when shiny chrome and over-stuffed suites replaced ancestral poster beds, armoires and buffets.

When *The Early Furniture of French Canada* was first published in 1963 many a doubter wondered who would be interested because few at that time understood or cared about this heritage. Today, the original edition is bootlegged at roughly the cost of a small artifact from New France. And the turn of the tide and growing interest can be credited to Jean Palardy and

his translator, Eric McLean. The new and cheaper edition should put the book in the hands of more who want to know about our past and it's soul food for those who care about the preservation of our way of life. There is no better refreshment than to browse in the book after a visit to any contemporary furniture mart. Not that I believe we should reproduce diamond-point armoires (although I once stumbled across a barn of fakes in the making) but rather hope it will encourage us – designers, craftsmen and would-be customers – because contemporary design evolves from the social past. Jean Palardy is emphatic about restoration, too. Where possible leave the piece alone. Would-be collectors, and dare I say, dealers, should make this chapter required reading. Then perhaps we could be spared the sight of chests scraped bald, the overabundance of shining yellow pine, bars inserted into tall-case clocks, planter cradles and other Philistinisms.

This is a book to be enjoyed and savoured even if you have no intention of owning a piece of antique furniture – although I defy anyone to read the book and not develop the itch. What we need now is someone to urge Jean Palardy to write a second book. □

DANCING IMAGES

TO BE A DANCER

PETER and GLORIA VARLEY

Peter Martin Associates

cloth \$7.50

THE NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA

AMLETO LORENZINI

Book Service
limited edition, boxed \$50.00

reviewed by Chris Homer

WALKING ON Toronto's Maitland Street wending your way round the tottering gentlemen on their crooked path to the local wine store, you pass a columned, neo-classical building. In the summer months, when the front door is left open, your ears may be assailed with the sound of impassioned piano music. Glimpses may be had from the street of the congregation of the faithful engaged in total immersion.

But this building is no longer the Baptist Church it was. It is now the

*Canadians now have a book
on their National Gallery
that can take its place
with the lavish volumes
on other national art collections
around the world*

The National Gallery of Canada

by Jean Sutherland Boggs

220 plates in colour and black and white

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OXFORD

main studios of the National Ballet School. Inside, the boys and girls sweat and strain to coerce their minds and bodies into the mould that reflects the classical tradition to which they are dedicated.

Gloria and Peter Varley, with the assistance of the Canada Council, have catalogued the endeavours of this unusual institution. *To Be A Dancer* consists of edited interviews with 18 people, ranging from the Chairman of the Board of Directors through administrative staff members to some of the past and present pupils. Interspersed with the text are photographs showing many of the expected and some unexpected aspects of a pupil's activities.

The National Ballet School was founded by Betty Oliphant, obviously a very remarkable woman, and combines training in the Cecchetti tradition with a full curriculum of academic subjects. In this way no student who finds the demands of ballet too great, or not great enough, is prevented from

carrying straight on from Grade 12 studies to gain entrance to a university. By editing more than 20 hours of recorded material, the Varleys have traced the steps that led to the founding of the school, its expansion and struggle to map the course it now takes. This book contains a wealth of information on both the lives of the pupils who pass the very rigorous auditions for the school (young girls and boys have to have written permission from their parents in order to date) and the trials, tribulations and joys of the teachers in charge of the classrooms and residences.

To Be A Dancer is dedicated to Betty Oliphant and Robert A. Laidlaw, "the school's benefactor, patron and friend." Throughout the slim volume, attractively designed and printed on enamelled paper, the vision, courage and tenacity of Betty Oliphant shine through. Some of her pupils now graduate into the National Ballet Company and this book is a fitting tribute

to her work and the important part her school plays in the cultural life of the country.

Since the National Ballet itself was founded in 1951, its growth has been prodigious. In its first season the company of 24 mounted 10 works with a total budget of \$20,000. Nowadays, the budget is well over \$1 million, the company is greatly enlarged, the supporting staff and workers legion.

In Centennial year (1967 if you've forgotten) a project to recognize this growth in the form of a portfolio of photographs was proposed. Some of the work towards this end was done; then the idea lapsed. The Musson Book Company, having recently heard of the work, took over the publishing and the portfolio has now been completed. Its format, 19 by 13½ inches, makes the black and white photos suitable for mounting and hanging. Amleto Lorenzini, who lives in Toronto, spent many hours photographing the company rehearsing in the St. Lawrence Hall for



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its centennial season. Lorenzini and Celia Franca, the one person most responsible for the size, reputation and growth of the company, then selected 32 shots for the portfolio. By carefully controlling the exposure of the photograph and the printing process, Lorenzini, in co-operation with Grafiche Trevisan of Venice, has achieved an Impressionist document of the dancers at work. The original shots have been printed on a thick rag paper which, with its rough matte surface gives the photographs the appearance of something resembling etchings. The almost pointilliste effect of the printing has worked to obscure exact detail, softening the image though not deadening the focus or depth-of-field. In the plates of the *corps de ballet*, the printing (probably due to the original shooting in available light) has sometimes been less than successful, resulting in a muddying of the image; while the cropping and framing of some plates is certainly open to discussion. Where the technique scores full marks is in the plates in which the information is minimized; for instance, the contemplative portrait of Miss Franca watching the result of her life's work, which is rightly the first in the portfolio. Other outstanding plates are those of Lois Smith, prima ballerina, caught at rest during rehearsal and Erik Bruhn, boldly regarding the camera as he instructs the company.

Hardly any of the dancers caught by Lorenzini are actually smiling and his photographic interpretation certainly reflects the serious business of achieving and maintaining the enviable standard of the National. This portfolio is also prefaced by a congratulatory dedication

from the late Igor Stravinski and although fifty dollars may seem a large price, the thirty-two plates, printed in a limited edition of one thousand copies, will probably become a collector's item. With shots of dancers

even now no longer in the company, a splendid moment in the National Ballet's history has been caught. □

CHRIS HOMER is a freelance film producer and director interested in ballet.

○ BRAVE NEW WORLD!

THE DISCOVERY OF NORTH AMERICA

W. P. CUMMING, R. A. SKELTON,
D. B. QUINN

McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$25.00; 304 pages

reviewed by *Glen Frankfurter*

NAME YOUR POISON. Old manuscripts, first-hand tales of adventure, jewel-like maps, sailing ships, old prints, historical narrative? If you have a mania for any or all of these things, as I confess I have, then you will find this book irresistible. Even if you merely want to impress your friends with the fact that you're *au fait* with the Canadiana-Americana thing, this volume is glorious enough and extravagant enough to grace the most vulgar of coffee tables.

It is nothing less than an historical "museum without walls" that displays a rich sampling of all the great maps, manuscripts, publications, paintings and drawings relating to the discovery of the North American mainland from the earliest mediaeval reports of the Irish monks to the first permanent settlements in Florida, Virginia, New England and Canada at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The ex-

hibits have been assembled by two Britons and one American, all famous modern scholars of the great age of exploration. They have linked together the sections with a narrative that carries the story quickly forward and knits it into a comprehensive whole.

For me the striking things are the dozens of paintings, drawings and maps, a great many in full colour, by Le Moyne de Morgues who accompanied the ill-fated French colonists to Florida and John White, who was Governor of the "lost" English colony at Roanoke, in the latter half of the sixteenth century. These two artists have left a vivid record of native life on the Atlantic seaboard before the white man came, even down to Le Moyne's botanical drawing of the tobacco plant with the oldest printed picture of a pipe.

But the book is not just to be looked at. It is to be read. For to do that is to see the wonder of it all

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through the eyes of the discoverers themselves; to see, for example, the Indians "fill their bodies full of smoke, till that cometh out of their mouths and nostrils, even as out of the Tonnel of a chimney," or to go on a deer hunt with Champlain during which "Twenty five Indians took ten days to build two fences of stakes nine or ten feet high extending about 1500 feet on each side. They then formed a line before daybreak, beating on sticks and howling like wolves to drive the deer toward the enclosure . . ."

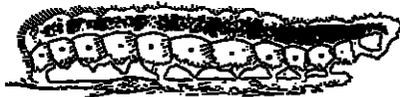
It is not just a record of courage, adventure, greed and brutality but also one of intense curiosity, intellectual vigor, keen observation and spiritual vitality. This inner excitement is printed on every page.

In short, the publishers seem to have done what they wanted to do: produce a spectacular gift package. And the editors have done what they set out to do: to "make up an interpretation, an America, the America of the first comers from the East to the West, the men whose descendants were to mould,

build and damage a large section of the earth's surface while creating a remarkable, a powerful, a frightening Republic." And creating, a Canadian might add, wistfully perhaps, a notable, though not frightening nor powerful, commonwealth called Canada.

As for poor Mexico, it appears to have been detached from its lost "American" provinces and exiled to a forthcoming volume on Central and South America. Except for this characteristic Anglo-American blind spot *The Discovery of North America* is a first class show and well worth any good, affluent North American's time and money. □

GLEN FRANKFURTER is the author of the recently published *Baneful Domination*. His novel, *A Stranger In My Own Country*, will be published in the spring.



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*JOAN FINNIGAN and
ERIC CHRISTENSEN*

*CBC Publications
cloth \$6.25*

reviewed by Douglas Barbour

THE NFB book is a collection of photographic pamphlets by 15 different artists. The photography ranges from the very ordinary to the extraordinarily

The London- Victoria Air Race

edited by Harry Traynor

In July, 1971, Canada staged one of the most important events in this year's international sports calendar - The London-Victoria Air Race. As part of British Columbia's Centennial celebrations, this 5,851-mile government-sponsored air race attracted fliers from nine countries who competed for prizes in excess of \$150,000. "The London-Victoria Air Race" is the story of that event - in text and photographs - as seen by the pilots, race officials, and newsmen who participated.

\$6.00

Copp Clark

artistic. The overall impression, and there is one despite the diversity of artists and materials, is perhaps more important in the long run than the individual good or bad work. Two points emerge clearly from a 'reading' of this exhibition. Many of these booklets engage us as a poem like *The Cantos* would: the juxtaposition of images creates new meanings, new effective double images. The other noticeable attribute of most of these photographic essays is their reflection, in myriad ways, of the nudism, naturalism, and eco-consciousness of the "counter-culture."

The best of these photographers are undeniably faithful unto themselves: each booklet stands out from every other one. Jack Dale's photographs of totems are his best, but in *totems et vous* he too seldom places them in dramatic juxtaposition with his weaker photos of people. Robertson Wood's *Snapshots 1969-1970* is a simple series of photos revealing life on a commune. Nothing fancy about the content or the technique: just some quiet revelations of simple beauty. Judith Lee Eglington's *I Am A Living Creature!* is an interesting attempt to use the text, or parts of it, in English, French and Hebrew, as a kind of concrete poetry juxtaposed to photos. She uses darkness and light very well, especially in her natural scenes, but people abound in her booklet. Taras Masciuch's *1970* is an aesthetic delight. He leaves plenty of white space around his beautifully composed photos. They contain great areas of darkness, further emphasized by the white frames. There is a haiku-like intensity to each separate photograph. Glen Lewis's "*Seashells in the*



A scene from *Loughborough Lake*

Forest at Storm Bay with Bedroom" reflects, not the poem, but the New Novel of Alain Robbe-Grillet. The photos of seashells are straightforward, but in the corner of each photo is a picture of a bedroom. Each bedroom photo is only slightly different from the one before, but the first and last ones are sharply differentiated. A fascinating essay on perception. As are Jone Pane's *Projections*, with its use of photo balloons as captions, and Michael Morris's *Alex and Rodger*, which uses two nude men, one in sunlight flashing a square of mirrored light on various parts of the other's shadowed body.

But the most complex and comprehensive booklet is Roy Kiyooka's

The Eye in the Landscape photographs retinal/images of The Point, Hornby Island, Aug. 1-31, 1970. It is a sequence of photos moving through the landscape to the people, in all their activities, who inhabit it for a while, back into the landscape again. Roy Kiyooka's eye picks up the small, apparently insignificant detail, highlighting it (like the stoned/gloves he saw in Japan). The message, if any, of this beautiful and moving pamphlet, is contained in Eugène Guillevic's lovely poem, translated by Denise Levertov, and used by Kiyooka as an epigraph to the sequence:

*Eternity
never was lost,
was how to translate it into days,
skies, landscapes,
into words for others,
authentic gestures.*

It is this that Kiyooka has done.

Another, more traditional use of photographs is as a background for words. CBC Learning Systems, in the lavish *In The Brown Cottage On Loughborough Lake*, has seen fit to experiment with this concept. Joan Finigan's traditional, and often quite moving, meditative poem on love and death is printed against the beautiful, and contextually appropriate, photographs of Eric Christensen. The resulting whole is far greater than the sum of its parts, a truly beautiful coffee-table book deserving a close reading. □

DOUGLAS BARBOUR teaches English at the University of Alberta and is one of the editors of the *Merry Devil Of Edmonton*. A Poem As Long As The Highway is his latest book.

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DOWN TOWN

SILENT STARS, SOUND STARS, FILM STARS

HAROLD TOWN
McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$16.95

reviewed by David Beard

WITH THE WHOLE world as its stage and with thousands upon thousands swelling its cast, here is movie nostalgia on a scale never dreamed of before. You will see one of the greatest stories ever told, or for that matter ever conceived.

You will see it as if it were happening to you. Never before in the annals of Canadian publishing has there been anything quite like the present production.

Across these pages are words, word magic, burning words and drawings that leap out of their very ink to live again before your amazed eyes.

Here is the story of a movie fan.

You, the movie fan, will share with the greatest of all movie fans – little Harold – his first experience.

You will accompany him to New York.

You will see through Harold's words the glimmering, glittering grandeur of the Roxy Theater.

Not since Marcel Proust dipped his madeline in his tea at Aunt Leone's has such a treasured moment of remembrance produced so much art.

You will share Harold's fight to leave the Saturday matinee at the St. Clair Theatre to become an usher at the Esquire Theatre. Witness the maturing Harold!

Manhood discovered under the celluloid tutelage of Bogart, Robinson, Cagney, Ladd, Wayne and Big Boy Williams.

And the women, Bette Davis, Joan Crawford, and many others who are now starring in the eternal production where the gods are omnipresent.

All are here drawn by the inescapable pen of the now mature Harold. The script is by Harold and all the maso-

chistic longing for the Golden Age of Hollywood is felt.

To remember things past, cries out through the viewer's own tears at remembering the unmemorable.

As Vincent Price, writing between horror movies, says, "Harold's text is as rewarding as his visualization. The boy he was and talks about has the candor of the man he is. He remembers us in the 'Industry' as we've forgotten to remember ourselves, with love and interest and curiosity and above all humour." The mature Harold remembers the butchery of the old films on TV and some of the "candor of the man he is" shows in these words. "Here was style, a touching greatness that contained the echo of the first laugh of a tree dweller as his hairy buddy lost his grip and crashed into a dinosaur's turd." It is good to be candid

In parts, Harold's text reads like character descriptions found in Plutarch's *Lives*. In describing Fred Astaire he says, "His mackerel eyes look as if they're being called home by his semaphore ears." In Elizabeth Taylor our Proust/Plutarch finds that, "Beneath the extraordinary but far from perfect exterior . . . there is a rush of spirit, a plateau of constant risk where she assembles her fragile beauty and consigns it to the fire." (Is this, we might ask, the face that launched a thousand MGM ships?)

Now a last taste of what you are in for from the burning text, a description of Henry Fonda's elbows: "Henry Fonda in the dramatic refinement of his declining years still has more elbows than the average adolescent."

If the Forward by Vincent and the Text by Harold seems a long prologue to the swelling scene, be patient. As the pages turn (deMille loved pages turning) the eyes are confronted by page after page of Harold's love affair with the gods and goddesses of Hollywood and the resulting torment of the past. Many of the scenes of the passing parade are prompted by stills from motion pictures.

These have served to aid Harold's memory. Such is the strange way of art when the artist is assisted by an image made by a machine of a scene that may have slipped the mind. (Proust also loved photographs, but Plutarch

lacked such an advantage – born too soon – alas.)

At times when the immortal faces and scenes pass in front of your eyes you might ask who?

You might ask what?

But the last question – one that will remain upon your lips as you become part of this production in giant 12½-inch-by-12-inch format with mauve end papers, the artist's signature pressed into the cloth, the yellow sunset ending coloured western dust jacket – is why? □

DAVID BEARD is the proprietor of Cine-Books, Canada's only bookstore exclusively devoted to film books and magazines.

Lon Chaney by Harold Town



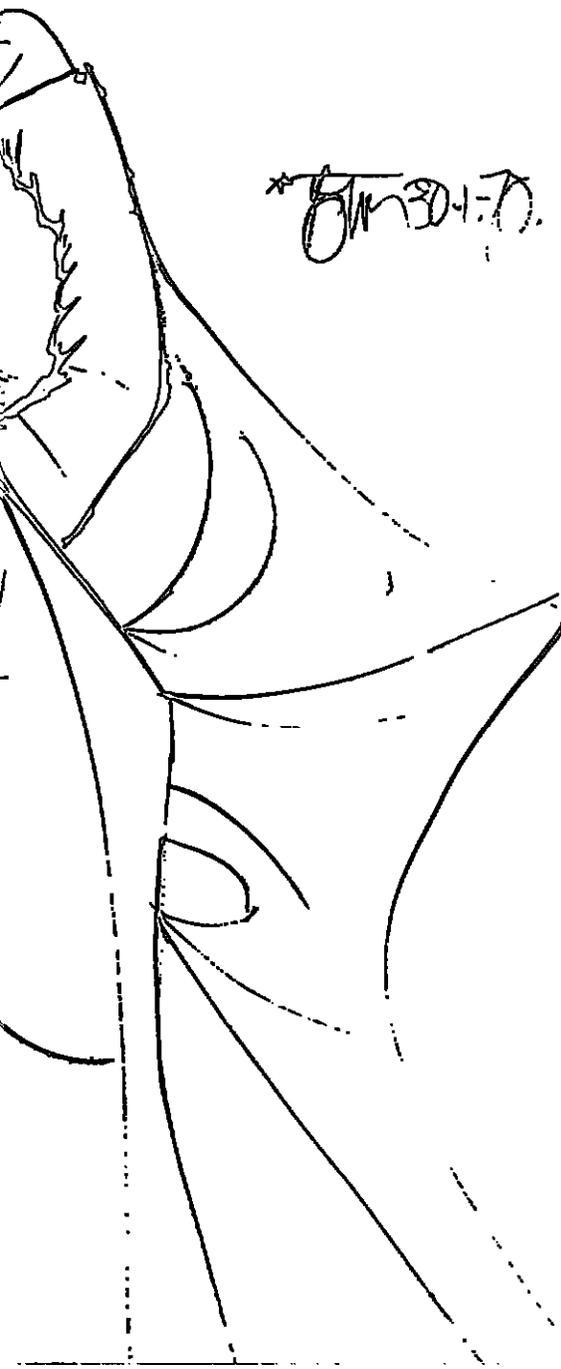
GAME OF THE NAME

FACES OF OUR TIME

YOUSUF KARSH
University of Toronto
cloth \$15.00

reviewed by *Barbara Frum*

YOUSUF KARSH'S boast is that with his camera he peels away the veneers that mask the great and famous and exposes the inner secrets of their souls and minds.



That would be quite an achievement – if only it were true. Or for that matter possible.

It takes a pretty naive hero worshipper to believe there is a simple, clarifying truth about a Nixon or Trudeau or Einstein or Kennedy waiting to be revealed in a portrait and an accompanying thumb nail sketch . . .

What Karsh does reveal though in his third collection of the names of our time, both in his choice of subject and his thumbnail sketches of them, is something about (I won't claim the essential) Yousuf Karsh. He is a man afflicted with that underchronicled neurosis – genius envy, obsessed with fame and with the famous.

Of course it's that affliction that makes Karsh the ideal court photographer. The great find his services congenial because they know he will portray them as they would hope to be remembered. Here's John F. Kennedy with his hands clasped and eyes to heaven, an angelic image of Sunday School piety; Trudeau as the tough, private, intense intellectual; a nearly smiling Nixon projecting the cool and confidence of a successful corporation executive; and Nikita Khrushchev a lovable, cuddly koala in furs.

Karsh, of course, doesn't see himself as court painter but as confidant, elevating into weighty dialogue the pleasantries exchanged while angles are computed and lights adjusted. And so we have a Karsh-Einstein dialogue about the future of mankind, a Karsh-Khrushchev deliberation about chaos and stability in the world, a Karsh-DeBakey exchange about the Golden Rule. At the White House alas, affairs of state deny history a Karsh-Nixon interchange but we do have a Karsh-Pat Nixon discussion about poverty and civil unrest as a substitute. With McLuhan dialogue wasn't possible, Karsh confesses, because he didn't understand the Master but then, Karsh ventures, perhaps McLuhan will not turn out to have been the genius he's now cracked up to be.

Of the forty-eight portraits reproduced in this new collection thirty-one are repeats from two earlier books. Among the new faces are Joan Baez, Christiaan Barnard, Ravi Shankar, Jean-Paul Riopelle, the crew of Apollo XI, Richard Nixon, Pierre-Elliott Trudeau and Marshall McLuhan.

But Karsh's best portraits are of the heroes of the past – the butter and bake images of Hemingway, Augustus John, Schweitzer and Maugham (though I don't buy his notion that the breadth of the pores says things about the depth of the soul), and still most striking of them all the painterly rendering of the American artist Georgia O'Keeffe.

For hero worshippers mostly. □

BARBARA FRUM is a freelance writer and a host of the radio show *As It Happens*.

EVERY PROSPECT PLEASES

ISLAND CEYLON

Designed & Photographed by
ROLOFF BENY
text by JOHN LINDSAY OPIE
McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$21.50; 224 pages

reviewed by *Michael Ondaatje*

I'VE ALWAYS suspected that books like this are only owned by libraries, embassies, expatriates and book reviewers. Having the dubious virtue of being a coffee-table book it will have its curses too: not many will get into the text by Opie which is an intelligent survey and anthology of writing about Ceylon. In any case, for the amount of information and artistic skill passed on, for its meticulous reproductions, colour plates, rich paper, the book is well worth the price. So much for the formal virtues of the book.

What I am obsessed with when going through all of Beny's books is whether his image of the photographer's role is right. If you aim to depict a country like Ceylon or Canada, as he has done, is it more revealing to go for the beauty rather than the truth? Obviously for Beny they are the same, but for me the ideal photographer is someone like Lartigue whose photographs ("snaps" really) never seem self-consciously beautiful. His are beautiful because they capture something true. I would

for instance turn to the Notman Collection or the recent BC Almanac (H) C-B for a truer picture of Canada before I turned once again to Beny's *To Everything There is a Season*. Beny as a photographer is a fine artist and technician — in fact he is still a painter — and so he overlooks many of the great virtues of the camera. He drains the landscape of people, seeming to use the human body only to "set off" a ruin or a vista. As a result, the dialogues we have with his pictures are formal rather than private, and there is little chance or accident in them.

OK. So it is unfair to demand of an artist with a distinct style something that is obviously alien to him. But one has to in this case. Shouldn't Beny have a responsibility to anything other than beauty and technical perfection when presenting us with "Ceylon" as he presented others with "Canada"? Don't we wish our own countries to be as complex as possible, not just reduced to absolute images? Beny is after the absolute image. He is drawn to the everlasting prairie or ruin. His artistic eye filters out the transient. He could

be right. If he had been dropped in Ceylon in 1850 with today's equipment he would have produced the same book — which you can take as a virtue. But if he had been dropped in India in 1857 he would have ignored the Indian Mutiny — which is no virtue.

In spite of this bitching, I like this book much more than his book on Canada. The black and white photographs of the ruins are superb and are made potent and human by the clear historical text. The high contrast technique used at times on statues brings out the textures brilliantly — such as the wooden figure of a Kandyan chieftain. And there is a magnificent double page spread of a forest scene that Henri Rousseau would have drooled over.

What Beny and Opie stress in this book then are the great religious and historical traditions that lie below the present world. They recreate the five elements — Aether, Air, Earth, Fire, Water — and they recreate very well the era from the sixth century B.C. to the Portuguese invasions in the 1500 s. I wish they had continued to include the remnants of the Dutch and British

invasions, but if they had done this they would have had to depict post-1948 history and the fight to win back the country by the true owners. (Last year the Ceylon government, aided by U.S. helicopters, hunted out rebels by sweeping in and out of the very ruins Beny has peacefully photographed for us.) However that isn't Beny's world. There will be no picture unless the scene is artful. But 20th century man cannot, must not, believe just the beautiful. We have for instance the book's ridiculous blurbs:

The surprising co-existence of the four major religions . . . creates a harmony which is felt by all visitors.

Or:

Much of its charm lies in the facility with which Ceylon is discreetly adapting itself to the realities of the 20th century . . .

To say this of a country where an army officer boasted last year during the revolt that "once we are convinced prisoners are insurgents, we take them to the cemetery and dispose of them . . . We have learned too many lessons from Vietnam and Malaysia. We must



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destroy them completely," is to represent a dangerously superficial portrait of a nation's presence in the modern age. Beny might not like the contemporary dream of power in all its hideous clichés of vengeance, racism and imperialism, but he surely cannot ignore it. Even for the coffee table or the embassies.

Indelible nature. Stone ruins. The historical, cultural, and religious bones. Always the bones for Beny. And he is right, for they will last longer. Yet we also want representation for the disintegrating flesh and the contemporary skin. □

MICHAEL ONDAATJE, a Toronto poet, was born in Ceylon. His latest book, *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid*, won the double distinction of a Governor-General's Award and an attack from John Diefenbaker.

LO, THE RICH INDIAN

TOUCH THE EARTH

T. C. McLuhan

new press
cloth \$8.95;

reviewed by Jim Christy

THIS IS A truly wonderful book. A beautiful and terribly eloquent self-portrait of a people. It is a collection of statements and writings by Indians complemented with extraordinary photographs by Edward S. Curtis and commentary by T. C. McLuhan. *Touch The*

Earth succeeds more than could any history or ethnography in penetrating to the root of Indian existence and revealing a way of life and a world view that not only has survived history but also offers hope for the future.

In her introduction T. C. McLuhan states that this future is only possible "through a re-discovery of our environment." It is imperative that we "establish a right relationship with the land and its resources"; otherwise our own destruction will follow that of Nature.

And, unfortunately, we cannot be patient for we haven't the time. It is not our gestures - like sporting "Stop Pollution" bumper stickers and fining industry \$100 for belching smoke stacks - which will bring about a balance with Nature. The only hope is in adopting an attitude of living with and not dominating Nature. The Indians have known this all along. They lived for centuries in North America in a state of balance with their environment. The point of *Touch The Earth* is to illustrate this attitude of the Indian people and hopefully convey the wisdom of it.

T. C. McLuhan has searched through a wealth of books, manuscripts, and papers to find the included passages, words spoken and written over the centuries by both well-known and obscure Indians living in tribes spread throughout the continent. What remains constant is the eloquent testimony they have given to this attitude, expressed as volubly by Wakunsonacock to Captain Smith in 1607, as by Chief Joseph in 1879, and Vine Deloria, Jr. in 1971.

One particularly important document which is reprinted in *Touch The*

Earth is the statement by the group of Indians who seized the island of Alcatraz in November of 1969. This proclamation - perhaps the most effective and original statement by a minority group to come out of a decade of struggle - is in the form of a treaty stating the Indian claim to the old prison site and ironically noting how it resembles an Indian reservation anyway. ". . . It is isolated from modern facilities . . . has inadequate sanitation facilities . . . the soil is rocky and unproductive . . . the population has always been held as prisoners and kept dependent upon others."

One can open *Touch The Earth* at random and every page will voice with poetic grandeur this love of the earth and all the things of the earth:

We love quiet, we suffer the mouse to play; when the woods are rustled by the wind, we fear not.

-Indian chief to the Governor of Pennsylvania, 1796

Crowfoot was a great hunter and warrior of the Blackfoot. In April 1890 as he lay dying his last words were of life:

What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the winter time. It is the shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset.

Each page of this book is quotable. Each page is a moving experience. The words of the Indian people provoke feelings of love, sadness, shame, anger, joy, and wonder; the faces which look out from the photographs testify to lives as rich and varied as nature itself. This self-portrait of a people is a mirror to the earth. □

JIM CHRISTY'S book, *The New Refugees*, is to be published this month by Peter Martin Associates.

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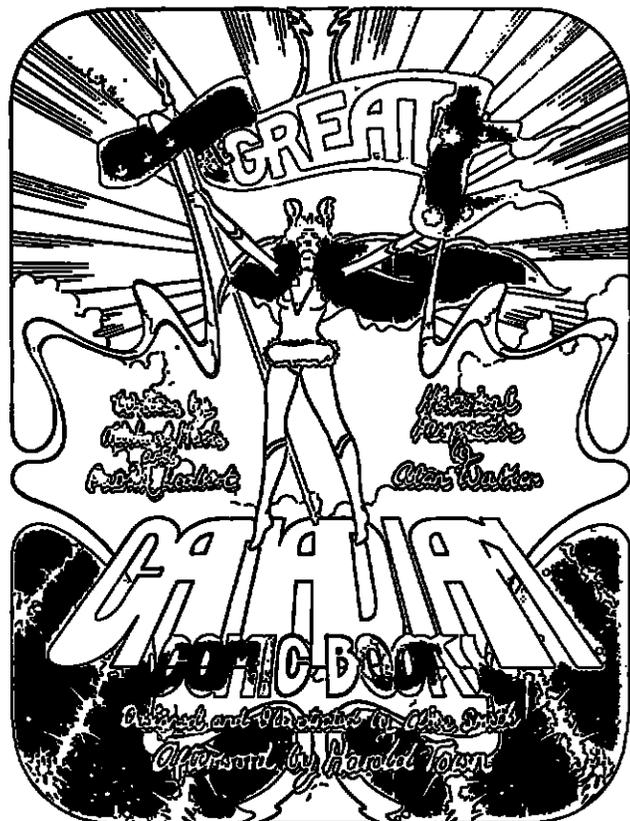


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CULTURAL STRIP-OFF *continued from page 1*

have been better to leave them in the crates in which they were stored.

Had there been more of Edmund Legault's work on "Whiz Wallace" and "Dart Daring," then the book might just have been worth doing. But many of the strips are only excerpts and one wonders, considering the brief period (1941-45), why the original pages were not reduced to allow the printing of complete books? What is offered is not enough.

One interesting section might have been inserted. Alan Walker, in his Introduction, talks of "swipes," whereby artists copied characters and actions from American strips, a practice still going on in the high-pressure comic-strip business. Tom Robe once hunted down the origins of a good many "swipes" in Canadian books: the number and their sources were quite staggering. A collector would find it reasonably easy to spot "Flash Gordon" and "Dale Arden" in a few of this book's samples. It's a pity that study of this facet of the business was not taken further: for example, into the relation between Leo Bachle's "Johnny Canuck" strip and his sources at Danforth Tech. It is in these source areas that the comic strip begins to live, and that case would have warranted closer study.

Clive Smith's chapter-head drawings and spot decorations are truly beautiful and seriously challenge the merit of similar work by Alan Aldridge in *The Penguin Book of the Comic*. The overall design, however, is somewhat out of tune with the comic, tending to distract rather than enhance: a pretentious gilding of the lily.

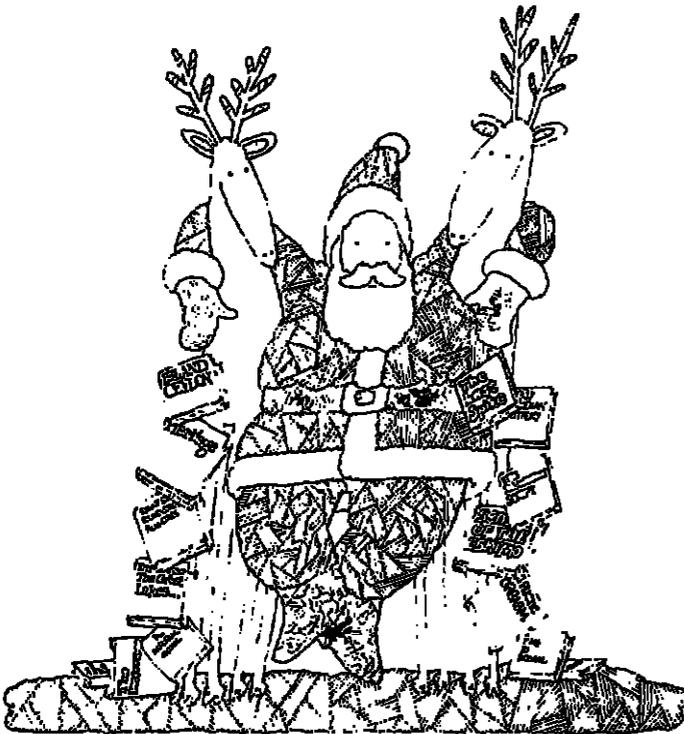
But the real crux of the matter is the book's *raison d'être*; just for whom was it produced? If, as a nostalgic Canadian, you yearn to re-live the youthful imperial days of World War Two, then you may find a passing interest in this volume. But despite the notes by Hirsh and Loubert, these largely-incomplete stories do not make very interesting reading. Even nostalgics tend to demand a little more substance in fulfilment of their yearnings.

If, on the other hand, you are a comics fan, will you find this book a valid addition to the literature of the comic? Compared with *A History of the Comic Strip* and *The Penguin Book of the Comic*, it lacks appeal both in content and in style, a sad disappointment to chauvinists and aesthetes. It is in a field where it must be measured against recent printings of *Flash Gordon*, *The Collected Works of Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*, *Krazy Kat*, and *Terry and the Pirates*. In light of the printed specimens given, comparisons between Adrian Dingle and Milton Caniff are just not credible and seem a sure way to lose readers.

This comic collection is by no means a total disaster. But the price asked seems too high for such brief examples of work by Lou Skouce, by Rene Kulbach and, most important, by Edmund Legault "whose work survives as some of the very best of all Canadian comic book art." And that for the publisher is very very sad. □

DEREK CARTER is a commercial artist, illustrator, comic buff, and a regular contributor to *Captain George's Whizzbang*.

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TO BEGIN WITH

Children's books may be written and illustrated by adults, but they are meant to be enjoyed by children. So our reviews for this selection of Canadian books are written by children who properly represent the intended readers. We hope their unedited opinions will help children (AND their parents) to choose.

MARY OF MILE 18

ANN BLADES

Tundra Books

cloth \$5.95; illustrated by author; unnumbered

MARY OF MILE 18 is a story of a family that lives in the North 18 miles off a dirt road. Mary has two sisters and two brothers. The story tells how hard it is to live in the small town. Everyone has to earn their life by doing chores. Mary's mother is expecting a baby. The children will have to help a lot more when the baby is born.

On the way back from school one day Mary's father went into a ditch trying to avoid an accident. The children get out to help and Mary sees something in the snow. "A puppy," she cries. She asks her father if she can keep it. Her father replies that it's a half-wolf puppy and no good to them. Mary sadly takes the pup back to the woods.

Before supper the puppy comes back. This time Mary takes the puppy to the nearest farm and leaves him there.

That night the puppy comes back and warns Mary's father of a coyote. I guess the puppy earned his stay.

The pictures in *Mary of Mile 18* are very creative. Not exactly a masterpiece but creative. The story is not my type, but I recommend it for ages 10 to 14. □ —TAMMY, 9

THOMASINA AND THE TROUT TREE

story by JOAN CLARK

pictures by INGEBORG HISCOX

Tundra Books

cloth \$5.95; illustrated: unnumbered

THIS STORY IS about a girl named Thomasina who lives outside the city. As the story begins she is looking for a Trout Tree. All she knows about the tree is that it is a work of art.

She goes to the park where she meets a strange man (and I think he looks rather like my father) who makes paintings and feeds them to his goat. Well today the goat got sick because he put too much black in his painting. So Thomasina had to make a painting. She did and the goat got better, and she goes on her way.

She gets in a lot more adventures but I don't have time to tell you now. The story ends out that she realizes that there is no such thing as a Trout Tree so she goes home to make one. She is thinking about how to make one, and "the possibilities are endless."

You are going to like *Thomasina and the Trout Tree*. The pictures are all very pretty. I think it would be enjoyed most by children who are eight and nine. Please read it. □

—LARISSA, 9

Mary of Mile 18



Story and pictures by Ann Bladus

THE BLUE ROAN

ADELAIDE LEITCH

McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$5.95, 160 pages

RIVER OF STARS is a book with a message for anyone who will read it. The plot takes place on the British Columbia coast. An Indian father and his son have rented a rickety old fishing boat for the summer. They hope to earn some money so that they can live decently on the reservation. Suddenly, before they even start, the father is badly injured when the stove on the boat explodes. He'll be OK but his hands will be useless for the season.

The son, Andy Hall, is only 15 and so is unable to fish alone. He is capable of fishing but "white man laws" say he is a minor and too young.

The story is about his struggle to fish legally and about the friends and enemies he makes while doing so. The book is aimed at the 11 and 12 age group but the tale is an eye-opener for adults, too. □

-DANIEL, 13

RIVER OF STARS

JEAN MACKENZIE

Macmillan
cloth \$5.95; 185 pages

THE BLUE ROAN is the story of a boy and his problems. Roddy Gamon is trying to get in with the gang at school and also wants his busy father to have time for him. When on his 13th birthday he receives a horse, he decides to train it for the Grand Championship so he can show everybody he's somebody. As the horse wins race after race, Roddy becomes very conceited, until he sees that Boots is an exceptional horse who could win races with any rider.

When the vet tells him that Boots is pregnant he is ashamed of the way he worked her. When Boots becomes really mean he knows he must sell her. But through the possession of this horse, Roddy has grown up.

Though this book is occasionally slow, I found it very readable along with good information about horses. I would recommend it to children 10-14. □

-SUSAN, 12



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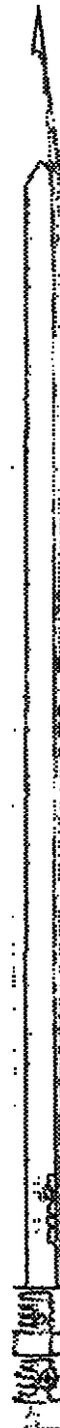
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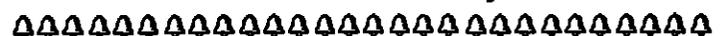
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SUMMERY SUMMARY

A TIME TO DREAM REVERIES EN COULEURS

NATIONAL FILM BOARD
McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$12.95; 144 pages

reviewed by Michel Lambeth

FOR THOSE WHO care about photography in colour or Canadian identity, *A Time to Dream / Réveries en Couleurs* is a picture book as comatose and droopy-eyed as its rocking-chair title suggests; somehow, the faint, repeated motif of a pretty, musing, garden-swing covergirl named Heidi in no way redeems the book's editorial naivety. That Canadians really need sleepy visions of short-sighted summers is doubtful but 167 living-colour photographs by amateurs and professionals prove that it can be attempted.

The English introduction by actor Bruno Gerussi is a panegyric about how nice it is to be a Canadian in the summer and comes off as an histrionic rehearsal staged on our winter's threshold. The French introduction is by Félix-Antoine Savard, a priest who is calm, cadenced, a geriatric writer with literary memories and heavenly hopes. It's a dreamy conjunction, really, of Gerussi, the poetaster, and Savard, the poet.

But away from the word-mongers and down at the camera club it's flowers

and sunsets, boats and beetles, toadstools and owls, kids and kites: "Sock it to 'em, Charlie, you, too, Minnie, with saturated, eye-shattering colour! Think of bank calendars or the National Geographic!"

Grouped in monotonous series, the images with a few exceptions are more catalogued signs of summer than the rarefied, visual symbols one would expect. Colour, here, doesn't help content one whit and the images by John de Visser, Freeman Patterson and Lutz Dille, well-known photographers, don't stand out with any special signature.

A Time to Dream, an honourable failure, indifferently designed by Carl Zahn, bound in nausea-yellow with questionable craftsmanship, may yet spark a return to former brilliant performances by the film board and prompt a new title and theme. Could it be, possibly, *A Time to Wake Up*? □

MICHEL LAMBETH comments periodically on photography for the Toronto *Star*. He was publisher of the much-missed magazine *Foto-Canada*.

WE STAND ON GUARD FOR THEE

A CHILD IN PRISON CAMP

SHIZUYE TAKASHIMA
Tundra Books
cloth \$7.95; unnumbered

reviewed by Val Clery

"WE HAVE all of us," said the French aphorist La Rochefoucauld, "enough fortitude to bear the misfortunes of others." Nothing quite illustrates our fortitude in this respect like our persistent interest in books about prisons and concentration camps. Since World War Two these have become a special category of literature. While they may appeal to the perverse, their popularity amongst normal men and women is very understandable. For the most part they combine proof of the iniquity and sadism of tyrants who have been our

enemies with evidence of the courage under suffering of our compatriots and allies. It would be a harmless indulgence if it did not produce so inevitably a smug sense of innocence to which we, as Canadians, seem peculiarly prone. And so it is very salutary to be reminded that any regime, given the appropriate circumstances, can find itself striding about in the jackboots of tyranny and injustice.

Shizuye Takashima's book is just such a reminder for us, all the sharper for being presented with a poignant

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subtlety. There was nothing subtle, however, about the actions that gave her cause to write it. In December 1941, shortly after Pearl Harbour, our government suddenly stripped of their rights and their property some 22,000 Canadians of Japanese origin, most of them living in British Columbia. No exceptions were made despite the facts that some of them had never seen Japan or that some had actually fought for Canada in World War One; and, although the book does not make the point, it should be remembered also that there are Canadians on the West Coast today whose prosperity arose from that arbitrary seizure and forced sale of the property of Japanese-Canadians. Few of the victims obtained restoration of their property or adequate compensation for its loss.

What is unique about this book, however, is the absence of any note of bitterness or recrimination. Despite its subject, it is a beautiful book which, through the eyes of a small and delicate child, retraces the simple fortitude with which her family survived transportation from their Vancouver home to a crudely established settlement near New Denver in the Rockies and a long detention there throughout the war.

Using the simplest of words and assembling them with the balance and economy which is so characteristic of Oriental art, Shizuye Takashima manages to recreate the wonder and excitement and objectivity which enables children to live unscathed through the ugliest of experiences and even to draw richness and joy from them. With an incomparable literary deftness she catches the wayward emotions of her father, torn between innate loyalty to his original homeland and its culture and the more immediate need to survive with some personal dignity; the warm pragmatism of her mother, obliged to hold the balance between traditional deference to her husband and instinctive determination to protect her children; and the interplay of character between other members of the segregated random community. Although the shadow of a faceless and often heartless authority weighed down on their existence, the adults lived out their subsistence less in hate than in exasperation; in counterpoint, the child-narrator, her sister Yuki and their friends managed somehow to act out

an idyll amongst the awesome seasons and scenery of the Rockies.

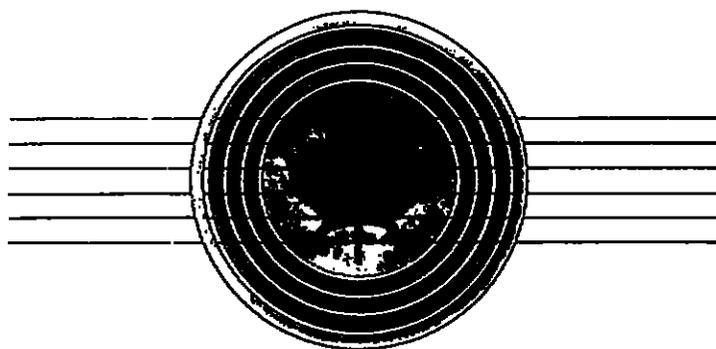
Shizuye Takashima and her family did survive the injustice and indifference and dislocation of those years and managed, with only grudging recompense from their fellow-Canadians, to re-establish themselves as a normal Canadian family in Ontario. She herself emerged from that childhood to find recognition throughout North America as a painter of exquisite talent. Her book, both in its text and in the haunting delicate watercolours which illustrate it, is a work of art. In an Afterword to the story, she admits that she exercised artistic license both in respect of her own age at the time and of the actual composition of her family: nevertheless, the result rings true.

My one adverse criticism of the book is semantic: the settlement to

which the family was deported was not strictly speaking a prison camp, but rather a ghetto. But we should not excuse ourselves with any afterthoughts that at least our ghettos did not lead on to the horrifying final solutions of Europe or Southeast Asia. We were fighting, we must remember, for justice and freedom and humanity, and in this instance we failed to uphold all three. As Canadians we should all feel obliged to read and reflect on this book, and to give it to our children to read, because we cannot be reminded too often that in itself being Canadian does not inoculate us against becoming as intolerant and unjust and heartless as any other people. Recognition of this is a proper demand upon our fortitude and Tundra Books, for all of being one of the smallest publishing houses in Canada, deserves our gratitude for the lesson. □

(THE THEME FROM)

AXES, CHOPS & HOT LICKS



BY

SOUNDS OF THE NORTH

BASED ON THE BOOK "AXES, CHOPS & HOT LICKS" by RITCHIE YORKE

Published by M.G. Hurtig Ltd.



Beyond Freedom and Dignity

by B. F. Skinner

The definitive statement about man and society by the author of the classic utopian novel, *Walden Two*. In this blueprint for the survival of natural man Dr. Skinner contends that our devotion to the anti-scientific concepts of liberal humanitarianism has prevented the realization of an ideal society perfected by behaviorist principles. A pioneer in the field of operant psychology, Dr. Skinner bases his challenging arguments on the results of research that led to the invention of his teaching machine, the Air Crib (a mechanical baby tender), and the famed Skinner Box (a research instrument designed to trace changes in animal behavior.)

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Our Gang

by Philip Roth

If, as some critics wrote, *Portnoy's Complaint* was the funniest book ever written on sex in America, then *Our Gang* may turn out to be the funniest book yet written on American politics. The hero - or villain - is Trick E. Dixon, self-pronounced legal whiz, peace-loving "Quaker," and somehow President of the United States. Though steeped in an atmosphere of farce and fantasy, *Our Gang* is plainly a work conceived in moral indignation. It is Philip Roth's stinging and uproarious vision of a national leadership speaking the sort of debased language that, according to George Orwell, is "designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind."

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JEAN D'ART

THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA

JEAN SUTHERLAND BOGGS

Oxford
cloth \$27.50

reviewed by Harry A. Malcolmson

OXFORD'S NEW Christmas book, *The National Gallery of Canada*, with text by the director, Jean Sutherland Boggs, is exactly the book the reader will imagine it to be. There are 68 pages of preliminary text by Miss Boggs on the history of the Gallery, followed by 32 individually mounted colour plates with commentary on the facing page; and finally 188 black and white plates.

This kind of art book format is as repetitive as Christmas itself. The collection of every national gallery in the world must by now have been given identical treatment. The format is vintage "coffee table," and by this date is more than overripe. The text facing the colour reproductions of these books tells us something, but not enough to be really useful, of: the artist, the painting, the circumstances under which the work was produced, and the style of the work. Especially in a collection so limited as that of the National Gallery of Canada, there are insufficient historical works to take the reader through the history of art in any organized way, and since there are only 32 colour plates in this volume, neither an artist nor even a style receives anything but the most episodic treatment. The black and white reproductions are even more episodically presented, and the sad conclusion of the reviewer is that there must be a more economical way of looking at 32 colour plates than the purchase of a \$27.50 book.

Since there is certainly nothing remarkable in the format of the National Gallery of Canada, and the paintings although well reproduced and an esthetically significant group have no great uniqueness, the merit of the book will stand or fall on the strength of its text. And since the text is outstanding, the book is a significant event in Canadian art-publishing history.

Miss Boggs applies to her labour the same talents that have made her probably the greatest director the National Gallery has ever had. Her prose is certainly not extravagant, but it is precise and coherent. Miss Boggs communicates information - rather an odd compliment I suppose, but something of a lost talent these days. She knows her subject and she has very clearly taken great pains in her research.

Quite apart from the virtues of scholarship and clarity, I found the most persuasive of Miss Boggs' talents is her ability to tell the gallery's story honestly. She neither hides the gallery's darker moments, nor understates its real achievements.

She speaks of the "particular poignancy and nobility of the survival" of the gallery, and says of the collection that "it is small, but it is also distinguished." Both fair comments.

Dealing with the struggles of recent years, Miss Boggs pays proper tribute to the great work of Allan Jarvis as director between 1955 and 1960. In fact, her three-word chapter title, "Euphoria and Martyrdom," is an excellent description of the Jarvis directorship. She properly says Jarvis' difficulties arose from his incompatibility with politicians: "He was clearly an alien if exotic figure in the Ottawa bureaucracy."

The next period of the gallery's life was the directorship of Charles Comfort - a period Miss Boggs generously refers to as "The Search for Stability." Tactfully she makes no mention of the debacle of the Chrysler Collection affair, or the several other deeply embarrassing incidents that marked Comfort's caretaker administration.

Upon Miss Boggs becoming director in 1966, the gallery, and indeed all of art in Canada took fresh heart, and five years later, in 1971, the promise of Miss Boggs' appointment has been richly fulfilled. The tremendous expansion and the standard of the collection, and the curatorial staff are the direct result of her efforts. All of this I say perhaps too extravagantly here, but after all Miss Boggs having written the chapter on her own tenure, was unable to say them herself. □

HARRY A. MALCOLMSON is a lawyer and former art critic for the *Toronto Telegram*.

PURE CAMPS

YUKON TROPHY TRAILS

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Grays Publishing
cloth \$7.50; 213 pages

BLACKWATER RIVER

WILLIAM HILLEN
McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$6.95; 169 pages

reviewed by A. L. Karras

THERE ARE ONLY a few unusual people in whom stirs a strange force to chuck all that easy living civilization has to offer and trek into Canada's Northland. These folk come as greenhorns, quickly adapt to their new environment, and become forever hooked on it. By a combination of grit and endurance, they become part of this land, and finally share in its great rewards. It is more unusual when such a person is a woman.

Dolores Cline Brown has written the story of her life as the wife of an outfitter for big game hunters and working out of Mayo, Yukon Territory. It is a story of a big country, big mountains, big bears, moose and Dall Rams, of big grizzlies and big wolf packs.

To those in whom there is a growing resentment against the sports hunting of our endangered species, the hunting and tales of killing will not be attractive. On the other hand, the lady is recording an experience that can never be lived by all those, who for one reason or another, wish to hunt but cannot go hunting. There is good coverage on camp cooking, pack horses, and native guides. There is pathos in her account of an American doctor who died in camp of a heart attack.

One chapter gives a most interesting commentary of local medicinal plants. As some of us have suspected all along, there are healing properties in native herbs. She does much to convince her readers that this is a fact.

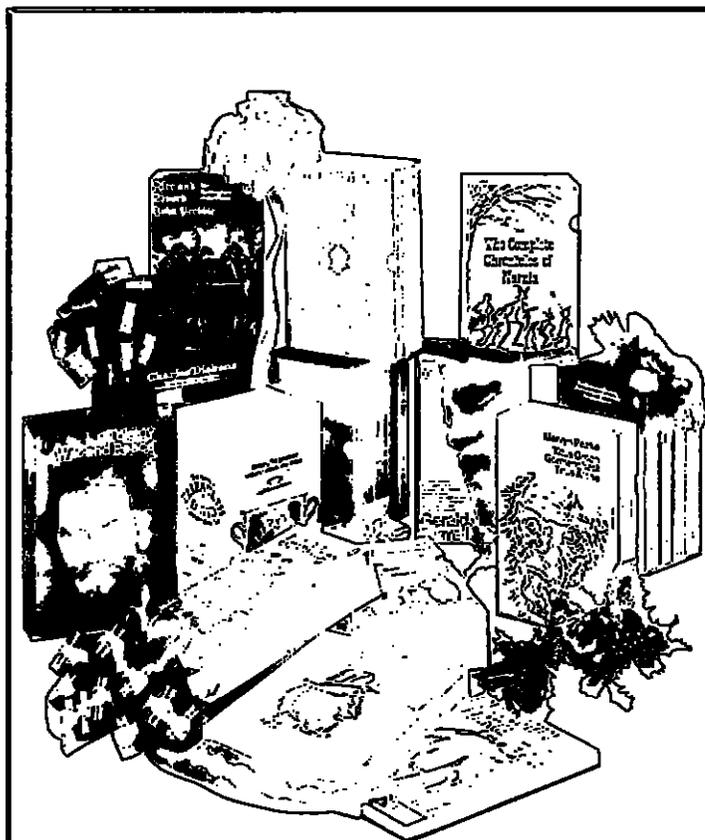
As the camp cook, Mrs. Brown had so many brushes with thieving grizzly bears that she makes such incidents sound commonplace. There are some

unusual sidelights on the behavior of large wolf packs.

William Hillen, on the other hand, writes about wildlife from the point of view of an experienced conservation officer. He is able to demonstrate vividly that controlled killing is sometimes necessary to ensure the welfare of that same species — a fact still unrecognized by pseudo-conservationists who protest all killing. After reading *Blackwater River*, it is certain that readers will be more knowledgeable of the true meaning of wildlife conservation.

For dog lovers, the account of his cougar hound, Sadsack, and a stray malamute which he teamed up for a particular cougar hunt will render misty-eyed any reader who has ever owned a very fine working dog. It is obvious that he knows dogs with the same authority that he knows wildlife in the area about which he writes.

Very calmly he writes of charging grizzly bears and cougars that stalk him, the hunter. One gets the feeling that this is the kind of man one would like as a partner on the hunt. We are not encouraged to look upon him as a hero.



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by Fred Carlisle
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A successful Toronto businessman, Fred Carlisle, gave it all up, bought a sailing boat — a trimaran — and with his wife and two daughters spent the next five years on a journey which took them to Bermuda, the Azores, England, North Africa, Spain and the West Indies. For prospective adventurers the author has included plenty of practical advice.

ARCTIC FEVER: THE SEARCH FOR THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE

by Doug Wilkinson
illustrated/\$5.95

This vividly written book deals with four major Arctic explorers: Martin Frobisher, Samuel Hearne, William Parry and John Franklin. The author, who lived for a year in an Eskimo community, writes of the Arctic's awesome bleakness and grandeur, and brings the explorers to life through their journals and letters.

Fishermen will be taken with his many accounts of casting into hundreds of choice locations in creeks, rivers, and lakes which are drained by the Blackwater River from remote areas northwestward of Quesnel, B.C. They will also drool at his recipes for the preparation of newly-caught trout.

Hillen's descriptions of Indians are straightforward, seasoned with humour, and bring out the best in the native people and recognize their special abilities for living in this, their ancestral hunting grounds.

Some critics may say that Hillen's frequent reference to long Indian place names will tend to distract the reader. This is, in fact, a loyalty to detail about the woods and waters, the animals, fish, and birds, the woodcraft and the lore of central British Columbia, which is the essence of the book.

A. L. KARRAS is a school administrator in Saskatchewan. His best-selling book, *North To Cree Lake*, is a result of the seven years he spent as a trapper.

DRINK TANKS

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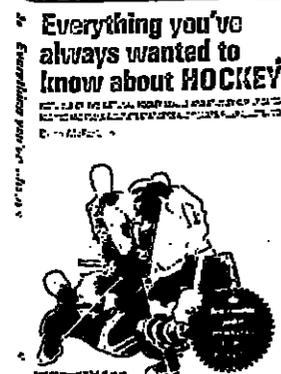
reviewed by *Una Abrahamson*

EVERYONE TO HER taste, but there's no denying that collecting North American glass has devotees who will gumshoe across counties if there's so much as a tinkle from a Beaver or a Dolphin goblet. Actually glass collecting is more than a hobby. It's a mania. Once started, almost impossible to control. After all, you can collect just goblets and be up to your armpits with several thousand patterns before repetition sets in. Or, you can decide after capturing your first piece of Westward Ho! that you must now round up the most definitive collection of this tableware in captivity. (With the way the local collecting scene is shaping up and up, your capital gains should please Ottawa.)

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Collectors are strange people. They will splurge dollars on objects but often can resist buying reference books, although truthfully in the area of glass collecting there hasn't been much choice. However, *American and Canadian Goblets* should remedy this situation and at the same time clarify some of the murky folklore. This much-needed guide has been produced by that astute husband/wife team, Peter and Doris Unitt, and is the latest of their popular series of collecting guides. It is their best, and should be a winner.

The Unitts have a formula, and a good one. They give the facts. Minimum words with maximum illustration because they understand that the average collector wants to be told where, what and how much. The authors also know that the glass collecting mob, who range from covered-comport fanciers to hydro-insulator buffs (would you believe!), want more than hand-lettered price-upping tags that mention "rare" or "Canadian." More than the dubious reminiscences of an old codger dealer who implies he found the obviously Woolco tumbler in the attic of a departed genuine Loyalist great-aunt. So the Unitts got down to the basics while the glass establishment (read curators, dealers, authorities, etc.) in the main continue to write gobbledygook papers on digs where minute shards hopefully establish elusive *Canadian* patterns (our own, very own culture) and in general keep the information pretty cosy, to the extent that some authoritarian glass books are without an index! But the Unitts have written and illustrated a down-to-earth catalogue: you see it, measure it, name it, pay the price and it is yours. In addition, they had the good sense to treat the continent as a whole. Surely it has been chauvinistic to separate geographically glass factories and patterns into "ours" and "theirs" when the workers were migratory and so were the patterns. The book has the bonus of a bibliography and price list as well as cautions on the mass of reproductions. In fact, *American and Canadian Goblets* has everything a collector needs and this cataloguing could activate a new wave of collectors — if they can stand the prices.

In general, the photography is excellent although the coloured and opal-

new for fall

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escent types don't come off quite as well as the clear goblets. However, be prepared for a five-foot shelf of glass collecting books! This is the first of a projected three-volume set. If glass is your cuppa, you'll say, "Right on, Doris and Peter!" □

LEARNING PROCESS

THE PROFESSOR'S DAUGHTER

PIERS PAUL READ
new press
cloth \$7.95: 241 pages

reviewed by Stephen Chesley

THE TWENTIETH century has seen the rise of a cosmopolitan literature; no longer is the entire world to be found in London, and even Emily Dickinson would be considered despicably provincial. Furthermore, for writers and filmmakers, it is to the U.S. that one must travel for literary inspiration. Piers Paul Read, Oxbridge born and bred, has done exactly that in his fourth novel, *The Professor's Daughter*, and thereby proven that, no matter how promising the talent, clichés are deadening in any country.

The book is about the professor as much as about his daughter. It is about their relationship as family and as representatives of Americans of certain categories in the Sixties. The plot concerns the way they change as they are affected by contemporary ideas.

Unfortunately every character in the book is cardboard. The professor is the Kennedy liberal who senses a new beginning. He has devoted himself to political thinking, and, being independently wealthy, resides comfortably in Boston where he teaches at Harvard. He "wanted to do something for his country." As radicalism grows during the decade he becomes more and more unsure of every belief.

Therefore he must have a daughter who becomes a hippie. And Louisa goes to California and psychedelics, drops

out of college, lives with an identity crisis-seized hippie, talks sarcastically to Dad, and eventually becomes involved with a group planning to assassinate a right-wing senator.

The group is from Dad's seminar: the Roman Catholic priest who comes to believe in violence, the Jewish intellectual who comes to believe in violence, and the Mexican who apparently comes to believe in violence. The females in the seminar, although chosen for their brilliance, are portrayed as too dense to understand anything, let alone post-Marxian political philosophy.

When he makes his caricatures talk Read is even less successful. They speak English, but not American. Read spent a year in 1967-68 in the U.S., but his literary ability at this point seems very doubtful, especially since he has won prizes for earlier novels.

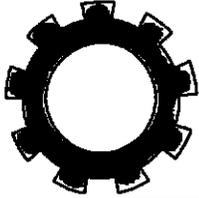
The interesting facet of the book is that the potential is there. Towards the end Read begins to present ideas worth discussing and offering freshness: the difference between social and religious ethics, the relationship between father and daughter (on a trip to Calcutta some depth is implied. Her reaction to beggars and his incestuous desire, and the subsequent change in their persons is intriguing, but never followed through) and the question of the consequences of our sexual liberation in religious versus moral terms (Louisa is visited by uncontrollable urges "to find a buck").

Read seems to be operating in a religious universe, but the depth is so shallow, and the narrative so hackneyed, that the reader can never be sure. It is possible that the better book begins at the end, when the professor starts a political-religious treatise. Unfortunately, having become involved in his students' political adventures, he is accidentally killed by the priest. There the book also dies. As a novelist, Read has given evidence of an original mind, both in form and content. Perhaps he will arise from the trap he has fallen into; he could be consoled by the fact that he is not the only one to plunge. □

STEPHEN CHESLEY is the editor of the new film magazine, *Impact*, which makes its first appearance this month.

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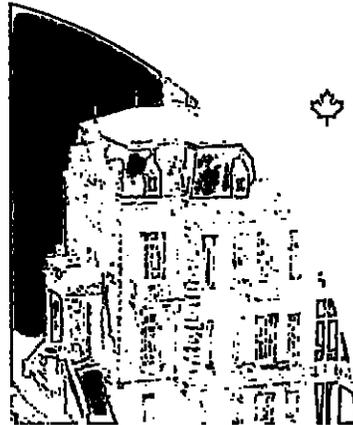
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