

# BOOK REVIEW

## The Education of "Silver" Donald Cameron

*The Education of Everett Richardson: The Nova Scotia Fishermen's Strike 1970-71* by Silver Donald Cameron, McClelland and Stewart, 1977, 239 Pages, Paper, \$4.95.

- "Branch of Canadian Fishermen's Union formed"
- "Companies agreeing to recognize union is cheering news"
- "Fish Companies May Leave"
- "Citizen's committee told that 'rather than deal with organized labour they would close plant up'"
- "Premier tells fishermen to form 'their own organization without outside influence—give it any name they wished to call it and the Department would be willing to co-operate with them'"
- "Union leaders urged to withdraw from the picture"
- "Mass meeting of Union men and sympathizers—500 attended."
- "Pickets halt shipment of fish . . . RCMP tried to get train through"
- "Peace! Plants Open"
- "Fishermen declare they will organize from one end of the province to the other".

If Silver Donald Cameron should read this review he might think for a moment that the above quotations are from his book. They aren't. All of them were written almost forty years ago and all referred to a strike (a lockout, really) at Lockeport, Shelburne County from October to December, 1939. The union was an affiliate of the Canadian Seamen's Union, a union as anathema to fish companies then as the United Fishermen and Allied Worker's Union was to Booth and Acadia in 1970. Its leaders too were radical and, if they didn't confess as readily to the fact in '39 as Homer Stevens did in '70, we must remember things were a bit different then. The Depression was still on, the Phoney War had just begun. The Canadian Seamen's Union was eventually destroyed and the gangster-ridden Seafarers' International Union was the gift given Canadian Seamen by a reactionary trade union movement and a cynical government. Cameron's book makes sad reading for many of us because it is clear that in some ways the situation has worsened for fishermen and fishworkers rather than improved over decades of time.

For more than one reason I approached Cameron's book with every critical nerve on edge. My father and brothers were on the Lockeport picket line in 1939. My father had been a fisherman since boyhood and a hard-working and conscientious father of ten he was too. A quiet man, slight of build, full of fun, but also full of principles, and as hard as it must have been for him after years of the Depression to earn nothing

for three months, he stuck it out along with many others. I can still remember my mother showing a company man the door and as he left she set him straight in no uncertain terms about the fishermen and their fight. I had known in 1970 that the Canso struggle was much like the one I had experienced long ago. If Cameron hadn't been wholeheartedly for the fishermen, or if he had shown even a trace of Upper Canadian condescension, I would have had his scalp. He passed both tests and a few others as well. I wish there had been someone like him around Lockeport in '39.

Cameron set himself a difficult task. He had lived through one of the most exciting periods in Nova Scotia labour history. He was dying to tell the story, one imagines, but he had a responsibility both to tell it right and to reach as large an audience as possible. As a former professor and therefore a person with academic training, he might have been tempted into a dissertation-like analysis. Gather the facts, organize them, present them, be objective. After all, if you're objective the truth will win through. Be precise and unemotional. Be fair and give lots of background. The trade union movement. The Nova Scotian economy. That sort of thing. The result: a handful of academics and your best friends will laud your efforts and that, very likely, will be that.

Cameron was much more daring. He's written a book that doesn't fit into any conventional category. At one point he suggests that what he's writing may read like a novel, but the events being real ones, they can't be manipulated by the author and it does have some of the qualities of a novel about it. One does get a feeling for character. The dialogue is convincing and the story moves in a way that sustains interest and creates suspense. At the same time, the necessary background to the struggle is provided in a journalistic style that is lucid enough to be effective. The decision to centre the story in Everett Richardson rather than, say, Lumsden who was a union organizer as well as a fisherman, achieves the purpose suggested by the title. Everett Richardson is the ordinary guy who, in a crisis, is encouraged by a native moral earnestness to do the right thing and, once having done it, comes to understand more and more clearly the nature of the choice he has made. He is "educated".

There can be few in Nova Scotia, who were around seven or eight years ago, who have forgotten the Nova Scotia fishermen's strike. It was a classic in many ways. Poor, hard working men and women bucked foreign-owned corporations enjoying a variety of loans and subsidies from taxes paid by fishermen among others. All the power of the law and church and state were ranged against them in battles that involved courts, their local priests, members of parliament and municipal councils. On their side many

workers and fellow unionists determined to help them win, and liberals and socialists in the middle-class, in student groups, in churches, in universities, tried to force those who had the power to use it on behalf of the fishermen. There were picket-line scuffles, there were marches, there were arrests, there was an injunction (Everett Richardson was sentenced to nine months in jail for not obeying it), there was the classic red-baiting, the classic allegation of outside influence, and the usual complaint from management that the workers were lazy and the union out to destroy the country. And in a way the ending was classical too. The workers agreed to go back to work with a contract of sorts, but no union. At this point Cameron writes: "The raids began almost at once." This was the time for renegade unionism to fight the companies' battles and destroy the union that fought the hard fight.

I don't think *Everett Richardson* is flawless, nor do I think this is the only or necessarily the best way to write about such a strike. I don't like the headings for the various divisions: Grade School, High School, Junior College, University, Graduate Study. The scheme strikes me as ponderous and arising from some uncertainty on Cameron's part, noticeable occasionally, about whom he is writing for. Academics might appreciate his point, but would anyone else? The claim that fishermen are peasants arises from the same uncertainty, perhaps. Categories are important to academics and to anyone they *can* be helpful. But I cannot see that anything has been achieved, except perhaps to make the reader realize how difficult it is to place people in categories. I think Cameron is right in recognizing that fishermen are workers who are different from urban industrial workers. But then there are so many kinds of urban industrial workers that nothing much has been achieved in making even a negative comparison. Probably this particular book didn't need to concern itself with the problem.

It's a remarkably fair book. Cameron makes no bones about which side he favours. As he says: "I am biased, but I hope I'm not unfair. In general I'm sympathetic to workers, not to multi-national corporations, and I think their account of the strike and its causes is a lot of horseshit. But I've given it to you as completely and as fairly as I can. You can judge it for yourself" (P. 119). There is nothing folksy or naive about his bias. Correctly, he says, "It is the political significance of the strike which made Nova Scotia's establishment so determined to break it as to risk a head-on challenge to the whole labour movement and its supporters" (P. 87). That's one of the things Everett Richardson and his fellow fishermen learned too.

Kathleen Tudor  
Saint Mary's University

## New Directions in Atlantic Canada Studies

*Banked Fires—The Ethnics of Nova Scotia*, edited by Douglas F. Campbell, The Scribblers' Press, 1978, 250 Pages, Paper, \$5.95.

*Argimou: A Legend of The Micmac* by "Eugene" (Douglas S. Huyghue), introduction by Gwendolyn Davies, Maritimes Literature Reprint Series, number one, Bell Library, Mount Allison University, 1977, 183 Pages, Paper, \$3.00.

*Exploring Island History: A Guide to The Historical Resources of Prince Edward Island*, edited by Harry Baglole, Ragweed Press, Belfast, P.E.I., 1977, 310 Pages, Paper, \$6.95.

*Banked Fires—The Ethnics of Nova Scotia* is the first production of "The Scribblers' Press", a venture apparently financed by the editor of the volume, University of Toronto Sociologist Douglas F. Campbell (late of Dalhousie and Saint Francis Xavier). Besides introductory and concluding essays by the editor, *Banked Fires* has five articles on the five largest ethnic groups of Nova Scotia: the "English", the Scots, the Irish, the French, and the Germans. There are pieces as

well on the Blacks and the Micmac. There is an eighth essay on "other" groups which treats mainly the Lebanese and, secondarily, the Chinese. The essays generally consist of terse, useful historical accounts and sometimes altogether too brief analyses of the groups' present situation. Because the histories are interpretations worked out by means of reference to the work of previous scholars, excellent bibliographies are provided in each section.

Some of the articles dwell too long on the early history of the province. This is understandable in the essay on the Loyalists. However, it is not so excusable in the case of the one on the Irish which traces that group only to the 1850's (as well, this essay ignores the non-Halifax Irish). If many of the essays tend to be mainly historical, most at least make some attempt however brief to assess a given group's potential for future survival. While in each case "survival" means something different, economic viability and access to the power structure are basic for the strength of any group. If the non-whites are

threatened by a poor economic and power base, the ethnicity of the whites is threatened by the fact that it was basically their assimilation which gave them what access they have to power. Some of the essays on the white groups fail to deal either perceptively or thoroughly with the ironies of assimilation. When we are given accounts of success-stories (of individuals like Lawrence O'Connor Doyle or Anthony Traboulee or of enterprises like National Sea Products), we move perilously close to the ethnocentricity so abundantly evident in many of the essays in the recent (1976) volume financed by the Secretary of State, *The Scottish Tradition in Canada*.

If (as Clairmont and Wien note) the analysis of race relations is absolutely crucial in understanding the history of the non-white population, analysis of relations between ethnic groups is essential for grasping the dynamics of the accommodations which the white or dominant ethnic groups made to one another in developing

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# The Elements of Newfoundland

*Highway to Valour* by Margaret Duley, Griffin House, 1977, 324 Pages, Paper, \$6.95.

When Margaret Duley died in 1968, few Canadians outside of Newfoundland were familiar with her fiction. She had published much of her work in Great Britain and the United States, and had lived in Newfoundland, away from the mainstream of Canadian literary activity. While critics in England, America, and Sweden had praised her powerful novels of Newfoundland life, few Canadian reviewers had noticed her work or drawn critical attention to it.

Canadian neglect of Duley's writing is now being rectified with the re-publication of three of her novels—*The Eyes of The Gull* (1936), *Cold Pastoral* (1939), and *Highway to Valour* (1941). While the first two are interesting works revealing Duley's affinity for mysticism and nature, it is *Highway to Valour* which most successfully articulates Duley's themes and illustrates her skill in integrating Newfoundland life and landscape into a narrative line.

As does much of Duley's fiction, *Highway to Valour* explores a feminine sensibility. Mageila Michelet is a sensitive, intelligent, and somewhat mysterious young woman. The "seventh daughter of a seventh daughter", she enjoys a Christian name from an ancestral Irish princess and a surname from St. Pierre-Miquelon. Endowed with hypnotic healing powers which have earned her the title of "little doctor" in the outport of Feather-the-Nest, she is in harmony with the natural elements and her people at the beginning of the novel.

Duley's approach to her protagonist is to establish her uniqueness and then to plunge her into the tragedy which will shape her development for the rest of the novel. The *deus ex machina* which satisfies this design is the great tidal wave of 1929, an historical event realistically worked into Mageila Michelet's story. As the village houses are pulled out to sea by the tidal wave, Mageila and her fellow survivors watch them float like well-lighted boats and then slowly sink to their graves. Mageila's entire family is lost in the wave, and her subsequent psychological collapse is well captured by Duley. The author employs images of blood, death, and rock to evoke Mageila's struggle with the horrible memories which threaten her sanity, but, most significantly, it is the sea with which Mageila must come to terms:

"Go?" she said thickly, staring with stony eyes tranced from thought beyond human expression.

They would expect her to set out; to feel a ship rising and falling, knowing it was sailing over a sea fuller now with the floating dead. Bodies would be swollen with water, buoyant enough to float by as she passed. She might see her sisters' night-dresses like white balloons, and their faces strange in their restless hair. She might catch a glimpse of her mother's dress or her father's familiar sweater. She might see his golden face all ...

"No," she protested, cowering against the wall with an arm up to ward off blows, "I can't sail!"

Mrs. Slater answered like the core of stark comprehension. "Yes, you can, my maid. You've got to go to the sea to get anywhere in this country."

Throughout Mageila's journey to strength, Duley explores as many aspects of Newfoundland life as she does of Mageila's personal situation. Cameo portraits of people like Mrs. Slater reveal Duley's positive associations with the outports. The Newfoundlanders shown here are hardy individuals who live close to the elements. Mageila's Grandfather Dilke is in this mode, and in Duley's sympathetic characterization of this grand old sea-captain and merchant, the author seems to be making a comment on the qualities which have made the Newfoundland heritage a proud one.

Yet Duley's portrait of Newfoundland is anything but sentimental. In her preface to the novel, Duley describes Newfoundland as "a country which the author loves and hates". The ambivalent note sounded here continues throughout the novel. Duley obviously loves the physical landscape of Newfoundland and the historical landscape represented by Captain Dilke. But she is unsparing in her picture of St. John's merchant society. It is shown to be preoccupied with appearance, social status, and the acquisition of wealth—Duley employs Mrs. Kirke, Sr. and Mrs. Langley as foils to emphasize Mageila's outport naturalness and sincerity. As well, she makes Mrs. Kirke, Jr., an acerbic commentator on the colonialism of her own society:

"Well, indeed! Everybody knows everyone in St. John's—at least, my sister would add, who's anyone and, of course, the anyone English, and your Trevor is included because he's got the right voice. England is convenient. You don't need a social register—just the book that reports their salaries in case they're marriageable. We all went to English schools." Mrs. Kirke paused on her way out, smiling to herself before she rushed on in acrid humour. "Many of us know England is a fen of stagnant waters, but we want to be born in the fen."

The colonial mentality of the St. John's merchant class is not the only feature of Newfoundland life which Duley exposes in *Highway to Valour*. The strong (and often destructive) influence of religious convention is also explored in the novel. While some like Mrs. Slater draw quiet sustenance from their church-going, others like the Dilke sisters use religious convention as a social weapon. There is a strong relationship between religious attitudes and social propriety in the novel, and the lives of many are affected by the Methodist voices that define the nature of social good. Religious and provincial prohibitions against divorce play a major role in the novel, for both Mageila and Mrs. Kirke have the course of their adult lives determined by prevailing attitudes to the sanctity of marriage. Part of the change which Mageila undergoes in the novel is to exchange her mother's Methodist attitude to divorce for her French father's more open attitude to life. But Mageila is one of the few characters in the novel to adopt new perspectives. On the eve of World War II, the Dilke sisters still buy their

dresses in London and Boston, arrange marriages that are socially suitable, and argue that Hitler can be saved by church work. Whatever changes World War II will bring to Newfoundland, there is no suggestion at the end of the novel that the insular world of church and privilege inhabited by the Dilke sisters will be touched.

Ironic as Duley's touch is in dealing with the St. John's merchant class, it does not detract from her main focus in the novel. The title of the book comes from Ovid's line: "A highway is made / To valour through disasters." It is this movement from disaster to strength which structures the novel and sustains the reader's focus on Mageila as the main character. To reinforce Mageila's sea journey which takes her protagonist from the claustrophobic atmosphere of the Dilke aunts to the uncontrolled landscape of Labrador. The voyage by sea becomes a metaphor for Mageila's psychological voyage. A child of Newfoundland, she realizes that she has internalized the rocks and sea of Newfoundland and has learned to live close to her bones. To her, Newfoundland is an Old Testament land where people have learned to adapt the rhythms of their lives to the sea and the church. Ultimately, Mageila's affinity for the elemental rhythms of life is a mystical one defying definition, but she sees her identification with the natural elements as inextricably related to her love for Trevor Morgan: "The ones who love will know they can walk through the waters and not feel drowned." The war has been begun by the end of the novel, and Trevor, unable to obtain a divorce from his wife, returns to England to fight. Yet Mageila seems to be outside these events at the conclusion to *Highway to Valour*. Fey and other-worldly at the beginning of the book, she is a deep and mysterious creature at the end who draws sustenance from her love for Trevor and from the rocks and sea of Newfoundland.

There are moments in *Highway to Valour* when the stilted dialogue and ethereal overtones of the Mageila-Trevor romance threaten to dissolve the novel in sentimentality. Fortunately, Duley saves the novel from this fate by her skilful integration of the tidal wave disaster into the narrative line and by her critical treatment of St. John's "society". Mrs. Kirke's acerbic comments counterpoint the self-conscious words of the lovers, while Duley's handling of reported consciousness allows her to present people like the Dilke sisters in an ironic light. With the realistic characterization of people like Captain Dilke, with the rebellion of Mageila against conventionality and cant, and with the portrayal of the sea in all its violence and grandeur, Duley is able to offset the romantic overtones in her book. *Highway to Valour* does have artistic flaws, but it brings history, place, folklore, and character together in a powerful and haunting novel too long ignored in Canada.

Gwendolyn Davies  
Mount Allison University

## Enjoyable First Novel

*Lightly* by Chipman Hall, McClelland and Stewart, 1977, 127 Pages, Cloth, \$8.95.

Chipman Hall's first novel, *Lightly*, describes the strange kinship between a young boy and his grandfather, a kinship which dramatically changes both their lives. Set in a small Nova Scotia fishing village, the story opens as the grandfather, after sixty years at sea, returns home to face retirement. Having been accountable for so long only to the ocean, and with his existence consequently narrowed by it, he now seems destined to pass his final days in brooding isolation.

The boy's prospects are no brighter. He lives with his "Mumsy", a woman to whom life is "as empty as the black holes in the universe." Behind her resignation are the traumas of an unhappy childhood: with her father forever at sea, and her mother resisting an enforced widowhood, Mumsy is eventually abandoned to be raised by a neighbour. Now, subconsciously afraid to be rejected once again, she is incapable of establishing a solid relationship of any kind—neither with a man (she entertains a variety of lovers), nor even with her own son. The effects of all this on the boy are telling indeed. He turns inward, substituting for the affection he yearns a world of dreams. His future seems as bleak and desperate as his mother's.

Although alienated from his peers, who avoid him, the boy does find some measure of solace in the sea ("the waves . . . want to save me," he imagines, "they love me."), and in this, he finds a common spiritual bond with his grandfather. Isolated on a side of the cove "where nobody lives except Grandad", the old man begins to sense their affinity, and soon, almost without noticing, he has taken the idolizing boy into his confidence. The transformation for both of them is remarkable.

For the first time the boy feels loved and appreciated; he begins to display a self-confidence which is reflected at once in his relationship with others. Even more striking is the change in the grandfather. Suddenly, life is exciting in a way it never was before, for never before did he allow himself to be "close enough to someone . . . to see the world through their eyes."

In coming to understand love, however, the old man is struck by a sense of guilt. Only now does he realize how his own daughter was neglected, and he seeks to make amends by providing her with a fresh start—away from the village, in Halifax. But on her way, Mumsy is killed in an automobile accident and the old man is shattered. He cannot accept the awful reality that, in his passion for the sea, he has sacrificed

his daughter's life. As though driven to expiate for this sin, he, in return, gives his own life to the sea.

In the book's final scene, as the boy pulls his grandfather from the water, there is a note of sadness, but sadness mixed with hope. For while the old man is gone, a symbolic figure of Christ, his spirit lives on in the boy. Through his grandfather's love, the boy now recognizes, his own life has been redeemed.

The theme is a worthy one and Chipman Hall handles it well. Not only are his characters psychologically real—even to a point where the action seems to flow inevitably from them—but his style is effectively subtle and restrained. By making the boy his sole narrator, Hall is able to maintain a pleasingly ironic distance between the vision of an eleven-year-old, and the reality he is describing. Only in the climactic final scene, when the boy realizes that "Grandad . . . taught me everything", does his vision, fittingly, come together with ours.

*Lightly* proves that Chipman Hall is no ordinary storyteller, and I, for one, look forward to his second novel.

Roger MacDonald  
Saint Mary's University



the province's culture and its present system of classes and elites. Where *Banked Fires* examines such relations (e.g., MacInnes on the relations between Scots-Irish Catholic and Acadian clergy or MacLean on the sectarian rivalries among the Scots and between the Scots and the Tory-Anglican elite), the book shows its essential strength. Where the writers lose a unifying focus on either the group's creation of its own elite, or the relation of a group to an elite identified as of another group, the book is weak. The editor tells us that while he selected the contributors he gave each a free hand. However, an editorial request that contributors try to unify analyses with some focus on the key problem of the relations of sub-groups to dominant groups might have been preferable. Free hands work better within guidelines. Dr. Campbell seems to have felt that it was his job in his own essays to unify the book. His interesting speculations and conclusions are tantalizingly tentative precisely because we might have had much more extended analyses and definition had some of the writers been more consistent and deliberate in focussing on key issues of power and class. This is not to deny that the groups must be seen in terms of their non-political or cultural identity. I raise the issue of the political basis of ethnic cultural survival on account of the fact that this volume was produced because "a baseline work was needed which would give a context and encourage research in ethnic Nova Scotia". It would therefore seem essential that this work would provide the basis from which studies less directly concerned with the relations between ethnicity and power could proceed.

The presence of an article on the Loyalists might seem inappropriate were its author not fully explicit about the ethnic complexity of that group. At the same time, the strength of this essay only serves to reveal the gap left by the failure to include an essay on the ethnic sense of those Nova Scotians who are descended from New Englanders. Notably absent is an essay on the ethnic composition of provincial elites. Nor is there an article which deals with the difficulty of using the word "English" to describe one-third of the populace, the largest "ethnic" group. Such failure is not Campbell's at all. It is the failure of ethnic and regional studies in our universities. And no one is doing more than Campbell to correct the situation. In spite of its limitations in content and format, the book is an extremely valuable contribution to the poorly-subsidized but strongly-developing field of Atlantic Canada Studies. The other books which, alas, are here

only under brief review testify as well both to the region's intellectual-cultural ferment and to the woeful publishing situation for those working on specialized Atlantic Canada topics.

Like *Banked Fires* (and the Atlantic Canada Institute's *Atlantic Provinces Literature Colloquium Papers*), the Mount Allison University Library's reprint edition of *Argimou: A Legend of the Micmac* is not well advertised and is difficult to purchase (write the Order Department, Bell Library, Mount Allison University). The same is true of Harry Baglole, ed., *Exploring Island History* (write Ragweed Press, Belfast, P.E.I.). For the *Colloquium Papers*, write the A.C.I. Secretary, 11 Armshore Drive, Halifax. *Banked Fires* is available at P.O. Box 278, Port Credit, Ontario.

*Argimou* is a reprint of Douglas Huyghue's interesting 1843 novel about a Micmac chief caught in the French-English struggle of the 1750's. In spite of its stylized language, the novel gives us an early but convincingly sympathetic dramatization of the cultural dilemma of the Micmac nation. While it is not a great work of literature, it is a significant document in Canadian literary and cultural history. As such, the novel should be more widely available in libraries and studied in universities. The introduction by Professor Gwendolyn Davies fully explains its importance.

Harry Baglole's "Guide to the Historical Resources of Prince Edward Island" does for the Island what W.B. Hamilton's *Local History in Atlantic Canada* (1974) did for the region as a whole. Do not be put off by the apparently narrow focus of *Exploring Island History*. It is most useful to anyone studying or teaching local history in any part of North America. The focus on P.E.I. as a field of study shows the usefulness of restricting cultural study to a given region. The use of 25 different authors from a wide variety of fields and origins circumvents narrowness of mind or approach and effectively makes a sound case for the need of disparate disciplines to work together. Even if this book is not yet so widely-known and influential as it ought to be, its creativity suggests that there are some truly innovative people working on curriculum development in Maritimes schools and colleges. The individual articles are well researched and illustrated and the book itself is easily the most professionally published of all the books reviewed here.

Kenneth MacKinnon  
Saint Mary's University

From the Island

*The Island Magazine*. Published semi-annually by the Prince Edward Island Heritage Foundation, P.O. Box 922, Charlottetown; single copies, \$1.50; yearly subscriptions, \$3.50.

Residents of Atlantic Canada traditionally have had a greater sense of their own history and identity than many of their compatriots across Canada; not surprisingly, Prince Edward Islanders share this tradition. Yet, for over seventy years the Island has had no indigenous outlet for the publication of research pertaining to its unique history and culture. The appearance in the fall of 1976 of the first number of *The Island Magazine* was thus both especially welcome and noteworthy. The three issues that have appeared to date have more than met the expectations of those who awaited them. Indeed, the high quality of the journal has already established it as one of the best of its kind in the nation.

What kind of magazine does *The Island* aim to be? A statement on the title page describes it as "a publication of Prince Edward Island history and folklore," but the inclusions of poetry and even a piece of short fiction has somewhat broadened the definition. While it is clearly aimed at the general reader, the merits of many of its articles commend it to academics as well. Few publications of this type manage to reconcile the needs of both groups; it is perhaps the greatest strength of *The Island* that it succeeds so admirably.

Doubtless there are two reasons for this success. First of all, good authors with something important to say are required. In this regard the magazine has been truly fortunate. Many of the contributions have dealt with subjects about which all too little is known. A good example is Robert A. Rankin's ground-breaking study of the fox-farming industry. The author has ably explained not only the rise and fall of this activity, but also demonstrated its importance to a still-evolving economic order. Similarly, Professor Alan Brokkes' article on the migration of Islanders to the "Boston States" in the latter half of the nineteenth century has filled a gap in our understanding of the demographic history of the Island. L.F.S. Upton's study of Thomas Irwin and the Micmacs, David Weale's lecture on the Reverend Donald McDonald, and Ian Robertson's superb piece on Sir Andrew Macphail have likewise been important contributions to the Island historiography.

*The Island Magazine* has also printed a number of previously unpublished documents. A good local journal performs a valuable service in this regard, particularly if care is taken in choosing the materials. Especially important have been Janet Dale's compilation of passenger lists giving detailed information on early immigrants to the Island. Such data not only assists genealogists, but also is of great utility to historians. Similarly, some of the unpublished diary accounts have proven valuable. Of critical importance, for example, is the diary of William Drummond, a clergyman who stopped off at the Island for a year in the early 1770's while on his way to New England.

Equal credit for the success of the magazine must go to its fine team of editors. They have assisted the authors in presenting their findings in consistently readable prose, which is no mean achievement. The layout of the journal is handsome and the photographs and art work which accompany the articles enhance the work. An editorial decision was made to omit most footnotes, but the practice of including a brief bibliographic essay at the conclusion of each article should suffice for most people interested in further research.

Despite the bouquets tossed at the journal, there are some areas which are in need of improvement. The usefulness of the primary documents, and especially the genealogical material, should be made more explicit. The review section remains woefully inadequate; it should be expanded to provide for fuller reviews of important publications. As well, the list of reviewers should be broadened to include more diverse viewpoints. An expansion of the folklore section would be welcome, as would the inclusion of more poetry and fiction.

Obviously, it will not be possible to do all this within the presently constituted format. Having established its viability, perhaps the editors should consider either more frequent or expanded publication. And the distribution system needs to be improved to make the magazine more obtainable, particularly off the Island. No doubt these suggestions will elicit groans from the editors, but they are really meant as high praise. Having whet our appetites, it would indeed be cruel not to satisfy the hunger.

Lewis R. Fischer  
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Maritime Writers Workshop

The MARITIME WRITERS WORKSHOP announces a one-week resident workshop in creative writing to be held on the Fredericton campus of the University of New Brunswick during the week of July 9 to July 15 inclusive.

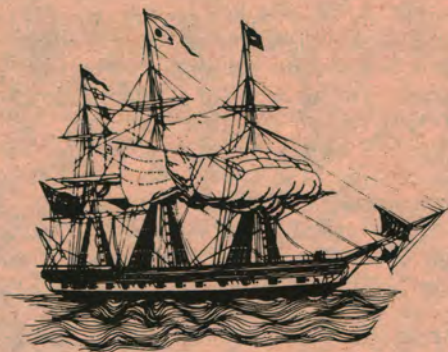
With a limited enrollment of 40 students, the workshop provides an intensive week of writing activities: morning lectures and discussion of student work, smaller interest groups, individual conferences with staff writers, writing time in the afternoons, and guest writers—such as Alden Nowlan, Ray Fraser, Robert Hawkes, and Jo Ann Claus—who will be at the workshop to lecture, to confer with students, or to read in the evenings.

Featured staff writers include the award-winning novelist Richard Wright—author of *The Weekend Man*, *In the Middle of a Life*, and *Farthing's Fortunes*—the distinguished poet, editor, and translator Fred Cogswell; the well-known poet Robert Gibbs, author of five collections of poetry and a collection of short stories; and Nancy Bauer, editor of the New Brunswick Chapbooks and a creative writing teacher in the UNB extension programme.

Tuition is \$65.00, and residence accommodation is \$35.00 / week for a single room and \$30.00 for a double. For registration forms and further information, write:

Maritime Writers Workshop  
c / o Department of Extension Services  
University of New Brunswick  
P.O. Box 4400  
Fredericton, N.B. E3B 5A3

1978 Atlantic Canada Institute Summer School



Week One (July 10-14) features Charles Foss (Kings Landing) on cabinetmakers of Eastern Canada. Also programmes on the classical tradition in Maritime architecture and furniture, Newfoundland literature, Maritime press and personalities, and P.E.I. art and architecture.

Week Two (July 17-21) features Margaret MacKay Gerrard (University of Edinburgh) on oral history, also programmes on genealogy, Folklore and medicine of native peoples, and exploring P.E.I. history.

Week Three (July 24-28) features Dr. Larry McCann (Mount Allison) on Halifax. Also programmes on Cape Breton, the Acadians of Nova Scotia, Quebec and Acadian Civilization, and the Loyalists.

One-Week Fees: \$45.00 (single) \$60.00 (family). Registration \$5.00. U.P.E.I. accommodation at moderate cost. Write:

The Director, Atlantic Canada Institute  
University of Prince Edward Island  
Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 4P3



# Fiddlehead Poetry

*The Self of Loss: New and Selected Poems* by Dorothy Roberts, Fiddlehead Poetry Books, 1976, 110 Pages, Paper.

*The Self of Loss* is a fine collection of poems by a mature and accomplished poet and Fiddlehead Poetry Books is to be commended for making Roberts' latest work available to us. Dorothy Roberts (the daughter of Theodore Goodridge Roberts) has been publishing poetry since the 1920's. Although her output over the years has not been extensive, it is of a quality that demands respect and affords pleasure. About half the one hundred and twenty or so poems in *The Self of Loss* are new, the rest having appeared earlier in *Twice to Flame* (Ryerson, 1961) and *Extended* (Fiddlehead, 1967).

Roberts tells us in the forward of the book, which she titles "Some Phases", that the poems are a response to a need caused by exile both from her native country (she moved from Canada to Connecticut as a young woman when she married) and from the past. The writing of poems is an exercise from which the poet derives strength as she moves toward "the closest death". The theme of the book is the sense of loss the poet feels as she reflects upon the past now that her family is grown and her day-to-day involvement in life has receded in importance. However, gradually, through the articulation of her sense of loss, of time and mutability, comes the paradoxical metamorphosis of the void (loss) into substance (self) in the poems and the redemption of the poet through the creative process. The collection has a satisfying overall design as it works toward this end.

It is divided into five sections which, while they have close affinities, do employ different perspectives. The first is "A Place in Time" in which Roberts recreates people, landscapes and artifacts from her past, particularly her youth in Fredericton and the surrounding countryside. She manages to capture the quality of life in a northern country in the second part of "Material Time" entitled "Virgin Rose":

The rose in the corner of the handkerchief  
as an outgrowth, surprisingly, of a land in  
the north,  
winters long, snow high, windows deep in  
frost,

the heart not finding anything else coming  
out in the rose

In "Within and Without" the interplay between the poet and the outside world is explored, as in this quotation from "Extended":

Extended fingers fixed, trees reached so long  
through winter for a light, like my slow mind  
that has not yet made leaves for living breath—  
O stretched at night it has been towards the  
pale  
blurred galaxies lost in light-years for a sun,  
knowing the assimilated must be life.

In the third section, "A Lease on Dislocation", the theme of movement which may lead to exile or rest is developed. In "Turnpike" the restrictive quality of this form of modern transportation is transcended as the poet makes a surprising leap at the end of the poem:

For we go with it; not since from revolution  
Like a lost wheel time struck among the fixed  
Have we been so released  
In such obedience; each strict injunction  
We follow, follow, till the ultimate wheel  
Turning in the infinite O turns to God.

The fourth section, "A Music in Space" reveals the possibility of unity and harmony among apparently disparate things as in the poem "Dazzle":

Light speaks and the morning answers,  
The surest answer from the tree,  
Up, up, up, up and all open,  
But the flight and the song breaking free  
Of the branch answer, answer also  
And the brightest answer is the eye.

In the final section, "Descent and Redemption", the poet at last comes to terms with her past, exemplified in "A Flight Back":

Yes, under me that river blazing my sight now,  
Stretched all at once before my startled look;  
It is my youth laid out in all its vagrancies,  
It is the veins that run through the whole  
history;  
I see in depth what riches I have grown from  
Becoming air from water and all gold.

She also gains consolation from the revelation of life as an ongoing process, as in "A Continuity":

Things outlast lives and what goes up on  
clouds

Combines with the heaven sent stridency of  
the great levels of early sunrise  
And the flame that precedes it  
And the great clouds of the countryside  
rising off it

that life passed at any point may not go to  
nowhere  
but become over and over, flower on flower  
your face  
your face and the return of grace in  
everything happening, everything occurring.

As Roberts explores and recreates her past her vision is revealed in an increasingly familiar and characteristic imaginative world collected, shaped and ordered in patterns of landscape and objects. Roberts calls this world her "country of time", her "inner life", a mental bridge between the present and the past. It is based on scenes and experiences from her past, but is transformed through the poet's mind into an expression of the poetic process. Some of the elements of this world are woods, in which impulse and release can be experienced (the creative spirit), a boat down to which there is no path (mental journey), a river in constant flux whose response to light suggests the possibility of words (reflection, metamorphosis), islands that are solid in the midst of change (the poems) and stars that are eternal and the source of light (inspiration, God). In this way the lost world of the past is recaptured, though on a higher level, and a note of affirmation, even celebration, is achieved.

In addition to a body of personal symbolism Roberts' poems are characterized by intense lyricism, the emotions of regret and love of what is past intensified by the use of rich sound achieved through alliteration and occasionally rhyme. In form the poems range from quite formal to free depending on the effect sought. Always the sensibility controlling the poems is true. Although Roberts has been a transient in Canada it is obvious that this country, and more specifically central New Brunswick, has been crucial in the shaping of her vision. *The Self of Loss* should confirm a place for her among Canadian poets.

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# Minorities and Universities

*Opinions from the Centre: The Position of Minorities in a Canadian University* by F.C. Wien, P.C. Buckley, H.T. Desmond, and K.E. Marshall, Institute of Public Affairs, Dalhousie University, 1976, Paper, \$4.00.

Here at last is a publication which reveals the unpleasant truth about ourselves and our present society. No longer can we go on complacently deluding ourselves in the belief that we are members of an "egalitarian non-racist democratic society." This book exposes the presence of racism in one of our most respected institutions, Dalhousie University, "just as similar investigations would reveal its presence, dimensions and effects in churches, neighbourhoods, schools, places of employment and other facets of community life."

Sociology professor Fred Wien has employed a refreshingly innovative and educationally sound method of conducting his course in Race and Ethnic Relations. Rather than have his students write research papers, he provided for them the opportunity of a practical learning experience by guiding them through a survey research project. A questionnaire was designed and administered to a random sample of University staff, both faculty and administration. The aims of the survey were to examine the employment opportunities within Dalhousie for minority groups, the difficulties encountered in their gaining the necessary credentials, the explanations offered for socio-economic inequality among racial groups in the larger society, and possible strategies respondents were willing to adopt in order to remedy these situations. The survey results have been recorded and analysed in this publication and yield some disturbing results.

Notable among the findings is the gross underrepresentation by Blacks and Canadian

Indians in both academic and administrative staff positions, as well as among the general student population. Those who are employed by the University are concentrated in the very lowest positions. The number of students permitted to enter the Transition Year Program, originally designed as a preferential program to counteract the problems of the built-in historical inequality, has been reduced from twenty to ten per year and the criteria for admission raised. Professor Wien and his students suggest that, to a large degree, university staff must be held responsible for the progress, or lack of progress, of minority groups, by virtue of the fact that they determine the criteria for admission to the University of both students and staff and hence the path of upward mobility.

Most respondents considered "the culture of poverty" or, somewhat surprisingly, "white institutional dominance" as the main reasons to account for the underemployment and inequality among the racial groups in Nova Scotia. However, a fairly high proportion cited "individual prejudice and discrimination" as being very significant and most disturbing of all was the fact that "racial inferiority" was cited as an important reason by almost a quarter of the respondents.

In their analysis of the replies with respect to suggested strategies for change, the authors cite education as the major means by which discriminatory behavior would be reduced and by which members of minority groups would obtain the necessary credentials to qualify for gainful employment. However, Wien points out that most of the literature on attitude change suggests that interracial attitudes will change "not in advance of racial integration, but as a consequence of interactions that are non-competitive and involve persons of the same status level." As our education system becomes more competitive when fewer jobs become available, it seems

unlikely that education will provide any effective change for some time. As the writers point out, the education system is geared to the needs and outlook of the dominant middle-class group, and only the exceptional Black or Canadian Indian student is likely to succeed. Wien and his class do suggest several useful strategies for change, however, and these, if implemented, could remedy present existing inequalities.

Many important questions are raised in this book and the clear, concise interpretations of the survey findings have serious implications for all members of our society. It is to be hoped that this well written report, the first published University survey on this issue in Canada, has not been purely an educational experience for those Dalhousie students involved, but that the findings outlined and the strategies suggested will be examined and implemented. It may be as well to heed the warning contained in a letter to the editor of the *4th Estate* (January 18th, 1975) by a group of Black students: "Don't force Blacks to resort to violence whenever they seek equality."

Jan Zann  
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