

Eccentric Lowry's BC past

Malcolm Lowry: Vancouver Days
Sheryl Salloum
Harbour Publishing

review by Pat Mandin

In 1957, when the novelist Malcolm Lowry died of a probable combination of gin, barbituates, and inhalation of stomach contents, the coroner's jury reported the incident as a "death by misadventure." There would have been little indication at the time that this impoverished and pathetic psychiatric patient would within a decade acquire a reputation, established by many literary critics, as the best English language novelist of the twentieth century.

Lowry died in his British homeland, but had spent his happiest and most productive years on the coast of British Columbia. A disgraced English "remittance man" (one given an allowance from his family to live elsewhere), Lowry initially despised of his exile in the provincial hinterland. Soon, however, he developed a deep and profound affection for the coastal landscape and the unpretentious people who lived there. He ended up spending fifteen years in the areas of Vancouver and Vancouver Island. His posthumously published work is largely a description of the distinctive coastal life of the time. These works can quite appropriately be described as Canadian literature.

Lowry's most recent biographer, Sheryl Salloum, shares with Lowry a profound love for the coast and the unusual ways of life that have developed there.

Lowry is best known as the author of the novels *Ulamarine* (1933) and *Under the Volcano* (1947). He was posthumously awarded the Governor General's Award in 1961 for a collection of short stories *Hear us O Lord from heaven thy dwelling place*, which included the novella "The Forest Path

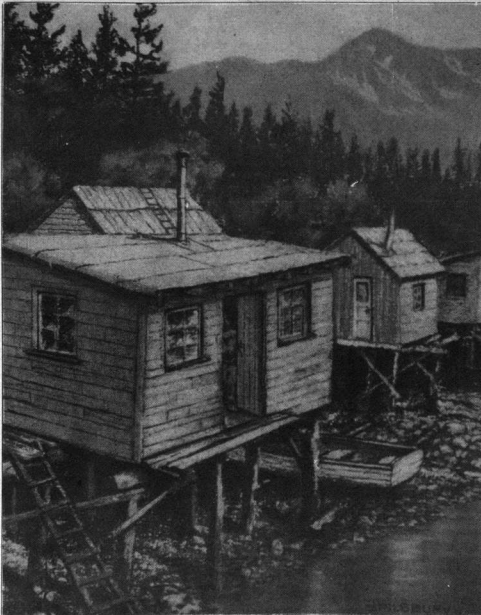
to the Spring."

Salloum's book is an attempt to counter-balance the earlier biographical works on Lowry. Outstanding as these books have been, particularly Douglas Day's *Malcolm Lowry: A Biography*, they have tended to focus primarily on the extremely pathological and self-destructive alcoholism that thoroughly controlled Lowry's life. Salloum's book is an attempt to appreciate the creative prowess of Malcolm Lowry by examining more closely his happier times and his more redeeming qualities.

These redeeming features that Salloum's work reveals include Lowry's sense of humour and the loyalty and affection he gave his friends. The chronicling of personal reminiscences regarding Lowry becomes an enjoyable montage for the reader. One can appreciate how Lowry's charismatic presence allowed for his personal and artistic survival through circumstances of perpetual chaos and economic insecurity.

Still, the dark and sinister compulsion of Lowry's inner contradictions is portrayed well. An example is the writer Ben Maartman's first meeting with Lowry. Lowry, under the influence of his alcoholic paranoid delusions, was hiding in a tree much like a cat. Though amiable and pleasant in welcoming Maartman, Lowry refused to come down.

Malcolm Lowry: Vancouver Days is neither a book of literary criticism nor an attempt to analyze literary genius. Rather, it is a fascinating cultural history that allows us to understand the cultural milieu that not only tolerated but indulged an eccentric like Lowry. It describes the environment that provided Lowry's inspiration. If Sheryl Salloum, like Malcolm Lowry, at times seems to be carried away by descriptive details, anyone who has experienced the enchantment of Canada's Pacific coast will understand.



Author of *Under the Volcano* spent happiest years in B.C.

LITERARY CONTEST INFO:

Deadline for all entries: 4 pm Feb. 12

Submit entries with self-addressed stamped envelope to: Elaine Ostry
Rm 282 SUB (Gateway Office) U of A T6C 2G7

All entries must be typewritten & doublespaced, with name, address and ID number on a separate page

Maximum Lengths:
Short poem: 25 words
Long poem: 200 words
Short story: 3000 words



Managing Editor Needed

The Managing Editor shall be responsible for:

- 1) Editing letters to *The Gateway*.
- 2) Assisting the Editor-in-Chief.
- 3) Active involvement in the origination of copy for *The Gateway*.
- 4) Assisting layout of the managing pages in each issue of *The Gateway*.

Term of office: January 25th, 1988 to April 13, 1988.

Salary: \$790.00/month

Application deadline is January 20th, 1988 at 12 noon. Election to be held January 21st, 1988 during *The Gateway* weekly staff meeting —Rm 282, S.U.B. 4 p.m.

For more information regarding the hiring process and job duties contact Roddy Campbell (Editor-in-Chief) at 432-5178.

Send application to:

Roddy Campbell, Editor-in-Chief
The Gateway, Rm. 282 S.U.B.
University of Alberta
T6G 2G7

SPORTS EQUIPMENT NEW & USED

HOCKEY
SKIING
RACQUETS
SKATES
BUY, TRADE, CONSIGN
SPORTIN'
POST

FAST SERVICE on
SKIS • SKATES • RACQUETS.

433-1502
8239 - 104 ST.
OLD STRATHCONA

Office of the Dean of Student Services Mature Students' Program

A seminar **WRITING & ESSAY SKILLS** has been set up. Mature students having been away from studies for a time have expressed a need for this type of seminar. Continuing students also want to increase their skills and techniques in these very important areas.

TIME MANAGEMENT & STUDY SKILLS

Tuesday January 12, 1988
7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Ed. N. 2-115

WRITING & ESSAY SKILLS

Thursday January 21, 1988
7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Ed. N. 2-115

There will be a \$3.00 charge to cover the cost of hand-outs. You do not need to register in advance.

THE GLOBE & HAIR STUDIO

New Image Computer Is a One of a Kind in Edmonton with Thousands of Styles to Choose From. See Yourself in Long, Short or Curly Hair.

1. HAIR CUT, WASH & STYLE
2. PROFESSIONAL HAIR CONSULTATION
3. INTENSIVE CONDITIONING TREATMENT
4. WASH, STYLE, BLOW DRY WITH HAIR ANALYSIS
5. SCALP TREATMENT WITH SCALP MASSAGE
6. FREE JOICO PRODUCTS:
 1. CONDITIONER, 1 SHAMPOO
7. NEW IMAGE COMPUTER
- 30 MINUTE PROFESSIONAL CONSULTATION

THIS IS A LIMITED
TIME OFFER
SPECIALLY PRICED
AT \$39.99

10% OFF
Perms, Colours
& Highlights
Bonus
10 Tanning Sessions
For \$39.95

10243 - JASPER AVE.
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

421-8009

REDEEM THIS AD TO USE "\$39.99" SPECIAL.

EXP. MAR. 31 88