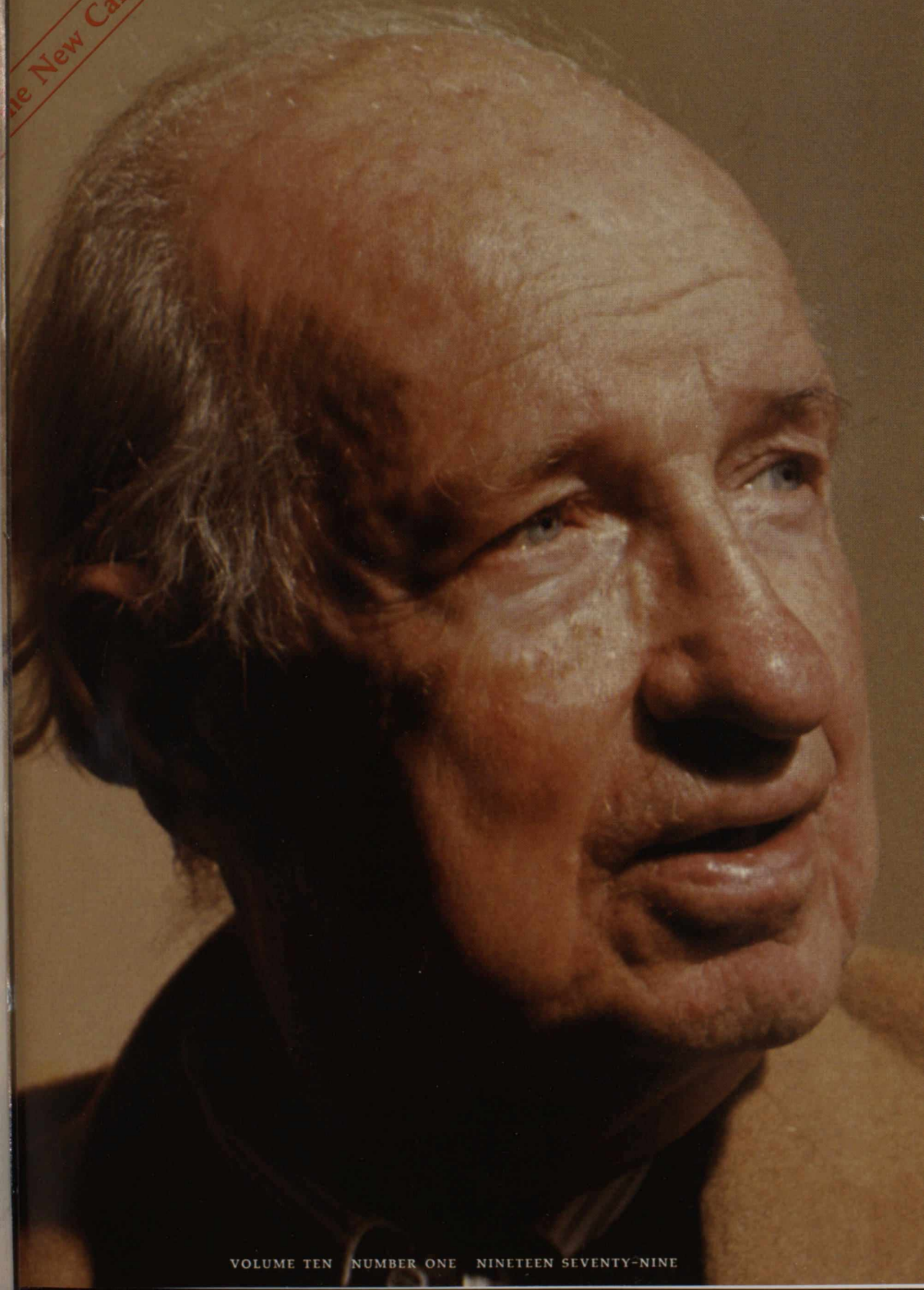


The New Canadian Hero

# CANADA

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The new Canadian hero, if indeed he exists at all, is fictitious; Morley Callaghan, the man on the cover, is real. He was writing Canadian Literature long before the words were capitalized, and he is still peaking at 75. His latest novel is reviewed herein. When John Reeves, who took the cover picture, suggested that perhaps Mr. Callaghan might pose with the books of old friends, Hemingway and Fitzgerald, Mr. Callaghan declined. He does not live in the past.

Ms. Margaret Atwood's halo was given to her by Yousuf Karsh, not by God, but she achieved preternatural status as a literary critic when she defined the Canadian hero as basically a survivor. The picture is from the master's latest impressive collection, *Karsh Canadians* (University of Toronto Press, 1978).

# THE NEW CANADIAN HERO

Canadian literature has a new hero. His birth is announced in **The New Hero: Essays in Comparative Quebec/Canadian Literature** by Ronald Sutherland (Macmillan of Canada, 1977). The old one, Sutherland tells us, was a nonconformist who felt his losses were his own fault. He was not only a loser but a determined loser. The new hero is a nonconformist who wins. Sutherland first found him emerging four or five years ago in the works of Sinclair Ross, Adele Wiseman and André Langevin.

The Ross example is persuasive. In Ross's first novel, *As for Me and My House*, published in 1941, Philip Bentley, a clergyman who did not believe in his ministry, was presented by his wife, the narrator, as a man frozen by irresolution. Finally, he seduced a foolish virgin, became a father, brooded awhile and then left for a new, dreary life as a shopkeeper. Ross's hero in *Sawbones Memorial*, published in 1974, is the new breed, a country doctor named Hunter who defies small-town strictures through a long and industrious life—drinking and womanizing, performing euthanasia where needed, shielding a man who has committed a semi-justified homicide, and triumphantly contributing to the support, education and career of the son no one else (except the charwoman mother) knows is his. As Sutherland points out, there have always been Doctor Hunters in Canadian fiction, but they have always been outcasts. This one is a winner.

Margaret Atwood defined the Canadian hero as a survivor; but as Sutherland points out, survivors are found all over the literary map—Huck Finn, Jane Eyre, Leopold Bloom and almost everybody in *War and Peace*. Sutherland defends his definitions persuasively. He says the hero/loser was fashioned by both the Calvinistic puritanism of the English-speaking Protestants and the equally dour Jansenism of the French-speaking (and Irish) Catholics. In both literary traditions, the nonconformist was like the unrepentant thief who turned his face away from salvation. Jansenism has lost its grip on Quebec, and Calvinism has faded, somewhat less dramatically, in the English-speaking provinces. So, Sutherland proposes, Canadians are free to have a new hero, the happy, successful rebel.

Sutherland may have spotted a trend, but it is not yet a revolution. New heroes lurk in the hills, no doubt, making occasional dashes into print, but there is hardback evidence that the old determined losers are with us still.

**The Common Touch** by T. A. Keenleyside (Doubleday Canada, 1977) is about Canadian diplomats in the Third World; and the hero is essentially a loser, though this may not have been the author's intent. Mr. Keenleyside used to be a member of the external affairs department himself, and the novel, as he notes in the introduction, reflects his own discouraging experiences.

The setting is a composite country in Southeast Asia called Bukara, and the protagonist is a composite foreign service officer named Rutherford. Rutherford is a careful nonconformist (he sends the ambassador a memo everytime he bends a rule) who wishes to do good rather than well. He is defeated at almost every turn by his conforming peers and superiors and even betrayed by his wife. But—and this may be the first crude, impulsive rush of a new hero coming out of the bush—in the last chapter he publicly browbeats the Canadian prime minister who happens to be passing through Bukara, quits his job and joins the mildly radical new Bukarian government as a special advisor. The last line of the novel has a carefully heroic quality all its own: "He drove out of the embassy parking lot, stopping momentarily to hand a coin to a beggar near the gate."

The hero of **Shrewsbury** by Jamie Brown (Clarke, Irwin, 1977) is a cup of stronger tea. Gould Moncrieff is a nonconformist and a fairly persistent loser. Mr. Brown is a better writer than Mr. Keenleyside; and Gould, the last of a once powerful clan, is much more human, though no more endearing. He is oppressed through most of the narrative by irresistible, alien, mindless, soulless institutions: labour unions that could destroy his family's factories, colleges staffed by cynics and attended by aimless young rebels, politicians without coherent purpose and American fast-food chains without good burgers. He is supported, though that is too strong a word, by a foolish father, an autocratic grandmother, a narrow-minded uncle and a beautiful girl cousin who has troubles similar to his own.

Gould is an unbeautiful loser for the first 212 pages of the 228-page book. And then, by an executive decision of the author, he becomes a winner. His sudden triumphs are fortuitous (he discovers that the thirty-two walnut trees on his father's burnt-out farm are each worth \$4,000) and skimmed over without details: ". . . months of study followed. Seasons of utterly fanatical dedication to a single idea. Weeks of early morn-



The Canadian Pacific Railway still holds Canada together with a belt of steel. The picture, by Gregory Keen, is from *Together We Stand* (Gage, 1978). The 124 pages of pictures and appropriate quotes were gathered by Donald G. Swinburne.

ings with black coffee in the kitchen with the snow lying thick and silent and trackless outside my windows as I pored over the columns of figures in the *Globe & Mail*, the *Financial Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*. Finally I began to discover a number of shares on the Toronto and New York stock exchanges that had well below average price-earning ratios, but in spite of that had good records of increased earnings." By page 217 he has his own booming investment advisory business. By page 224 he is saying to his cousin, "Listen, I'm rich now. . . ." By page 227 he has reduced money making to a painless chore: "I work now in the Toronto Dominion Centre and I issue crisp commands to my small staff, and I stare philosophically out my window." By the last page the grandmother is dead, having fallen down the stairs, and Gould and his cousin-bride are free to live happily ever after.

But wait! There is one last, vague hint of disaster to come. He is about to be interviewed by a *Toronto Star* reporter. "And I sit down once more for an interview feeling tired, and chastened, and more than a little afraid."

*Shrewsbury* is the climactic book of a trilogy that began with *Stepping Stones* and moved on with *So Free We Seem*. Since each is no thicker than a man's thumb, they might well have been combined into one not too massive volume.

Morley Callaghan, in and out of Toronto since 1903, is a grand old writer. His heroes of the past have been in the Canadian tradition, but the hero of his new novel, **Close to the Sun Again** (Macmillan of Canada, 1977), is cast in a different mold, though not exactly the one described by Sutherland. Ira Groome might almost be considered a gentle joke Callaghan has played on the categorizing critics. Morley gives us not a nonconforming loser nor a nonconforming winner but a conforming winner/loser. Ira, a naval commander and bemedalled hero in World War II, is the most expensive of grey flannel men: the flawless chief executive in a multinational corporation, the perfect corporate man, and as essential a contributor to the whole as the original die from which the interchangeable parts are cast. His sad and drunken wife dies; his son departs forever; and he returns from his command post in Sao Paulo to Toronto to become the commissioner of police and a figure of impressive façade. He acquires a noble house and a splendid mistress and begins drinking gin in great, discreet quantities. He never shows obvious signs of intoxication, and every now and then he checks into a luxurious nursing home to dry out. He is fatally injured in a wish-fulfilling auto crash. As he lies dying, he remembers in total detail a World War II adventure when he, a strange, rich girl and her lover-manqué/bodyguard were torpedoed in the North

Atlantic. Ira is the protagonist but not the real hero. The hero, or anti-hero, is Jethroe Chone, the bodyguard, a semi-gangster from New York, polished to a kind of superficial respectability. *Close to the Sun Again* suggests *The Great Gatsby* retold, with the focus on Daisy's cousin. Ira Groome is not so much a new hero as an old man who wishes his life had been a very different novel.

The most complex of new Canadian heroes or heroines we keep to last. Marian Engel, who last produced a work of extraordinary craft called *Bear*, has now published *The Glassy Sea* (McClelland and Stewart, 1978). The heroine is a non-conformist, but it is absurd to say she is a winner—or a loser. Classifications are the tools of critics, not authors. Still they are useful. One can say, for example, that there are two kinds of writers,

those who deal in first person emotions and those who do not. The first are seldom distinguished by their control of their material. Ms. Engel is the dazzling exception. On this occasion, she is a writer of pure emotion, and she is wonderfully in control. A soul is laid bare—complex, tortured, female, triumphant. *The Glassy Sea* is as well crafted as the Sistine Chapel ceiling. The story is about Rita Heber, a young woman raised in an Irish Protestant home in Ontario. She joins a tiny Episcopal convent, leaves it, marries a community pillar, has a hydrocephalic son who dies, is divorced, becomes a promiscuous, hard-drinking wanderer, sobers up in a cottage by the sea, and returns to the convent. That could easily be the plot of the soapiest novel of the year. It is instead the raw outline of a work of pure art.

## N O N F I C T I O N

In his autobiography, *No Man Alone: A Neurosurgeon's Life* (Little, Brown, 1977), the late Wilder Penfield, the masterful neurosurgeon of Montreal, told how, among other things, he found epilepsy might be cured by surgery, mapped the cells of the brain, found where memories are stored, and persuaded the medical world that neurologists, neurophysiologists, neurosurgeons, neuropathologists and neurochemists should work in concert. U. S. Grant, Lester Pearson, Winston Churchill and Benvenuto Cellini were four dedicated, great men who wrote lucid, fascinating accounts of their own productive lives. Penfield was another.

Wilder Penfield, microscope in hand, dominating a conference at the Montreal Neurological Institute in the early fifties.



John English's *Borden: His Life and World* (McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1977) crisply outlines the life of Sir Robert Borden and illustrates his world with some marvelously evocative photographs, posters and advertisements. Sir Robert was prime minister of Canada during World War I. If you start with the assumption that Canadians are cautious, conscientious and conservatively dressed, he was a very Canadian hero; but as the present prime minister, who wears a boutonniere, has pointed out, there is no such thing as an All Canadian Boy.

Borden—a calm, kind, sensible imperialist—presided over a country swept by an intense and arbitrary Anglo-nationalism. He knew that not all Canadians shared the simple-minded sympathies of Sir Sam Hughes, minister of militia and defence, but was not able to prevail against such opinions.

"The war had bred not one nationalism but two," John English writes; and he notes that French Canadians bitterly resented Sam Hughes's jingoism and the appointment of a Methodist minister to recruit in Catholic Quebec. Their major grievance however was the decision by the Conservative government of Ontario to end instruction in French in the provincial schools. Sir Wilfrid Laurier bluntly asked how the Conservatives could persuade French Canadians to fight for a nation that did not respect the fundamental right of French Canadians to use their language. *Le Droit*, an Ottawa newspaper, was more candid: "Of what use is it for us to fight against Prussianism and barbarity [in Europe] when the same conditions exist at home?"



Borden, with hat and cane, reviews the troops in France.

By the third year of the war Canada had become, in Hugh MacLennan's phrase, two solitudes. Borden's Unionist coalition survived the war, but barely, and his own Conservative party would in the future have extreme difficulties in Quebec.

Michael Bliss's *A Canadian Millionaire: The Life and Business Times of Sir Joseph Flavelle, Bart., 1858-1939* (Macmillan of Canada, 1978) is a first-rate picture of a well-intentioned man.

Joseph Wesley Flavelle symbolized the pure spirit of capitalism—he was Canada's prime meat-Flavelle, chairman of the Imperial Munitions Board.

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Who Started This Peace Talk, Anyway?  
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Read Ships and Trade-Grabbing, by Britton B. Cooke

COURIER PRESS, Limited, TORONTO

packer, president of National Trust, chairman of the Bank of Commerce and the principal owner of Simpson's Department Store. With only a grade-nine education, he became one of the most articulate spokesmen for private enterprise and social conservatism. He was, as the man in charge of munitions production, the first Canadian industrial hero of World War I. But in a few weeks in the summer of 1917 he became the symbol of the greedy profiteer.

Sir Joseph was the son of Protestant Irish immigrants—a weak, drinking father and a strong, teetotaling mother. He grew up surrounded by the self-righteous who were sure that God had blessed the profit maker. His world consisted of home, church and counting house, and the folks he met in the first and second were the ones he preferred to deal with in the last. In 1915 he was appointed head of the Imperial Munitions Board, and he refashioned the munitions industry into a smooth, efficient machine. He enjoyed the total confidence of Sir Robert Borden and the enmity of General Sam Hughes, who wished the munitions business to remain in the hands of his own cronies. Sir Joseph could not resist preaching, and one day he called on munitions makers to put aside their urge to make safe profits, to be willing in time of war to take risks. The message captured the nation's fancy. Word spread that he had told the munitions makers that wartime profits should go to hell. (This was an exaggeration. Sir Joseph still believed that profits were part of God's plan.) A short time later the public learned about the wartime profits of Sir Joseph's own meat-packing enterprises.

The first misinformation indicated that Sir Joseph was making five cents from every pound of bacon sold to his fellow Canadians and their beleaguered British allies. Actually he was mak-

ing two-fifths of a cent; but he had a seller's market (the desperate British would buy all the bacon he could ship), and his firm's overall profits had boomed. Profits equalled 43.32 per cent of the company's invested capital in 1915, 80.02 per cent in 1916, and 57.48 per cent in 1917. Canadian soldiers were paid \$1.10 a day; Sir Joseph was making \$3,000 a week from bacon alone. His reputation would never recover, and he would never understand where he had gone wrong. The Macmillan Company proclaims on the dust jacket that this is one of the finest biographies of a Canadian businessman ever written. It is too modest a claim. It is first rate by any standard.

Let us move on to greater superlatives. **By Persons Unknown: The Strange Death of Christine Demeter** (Macmillan of Canada, 1977) by George Jonas and Barbara Amiel may be the best true-murder book since *In Cold Blood*. It is clearly superior to the best selling *Blood and Money*, Thomas Thompson's epic about domestic relations in Texas, and it has an added dimension that *Crime of the Century*, Hal Higdon's classic account of Leopold and Loeb, does not.

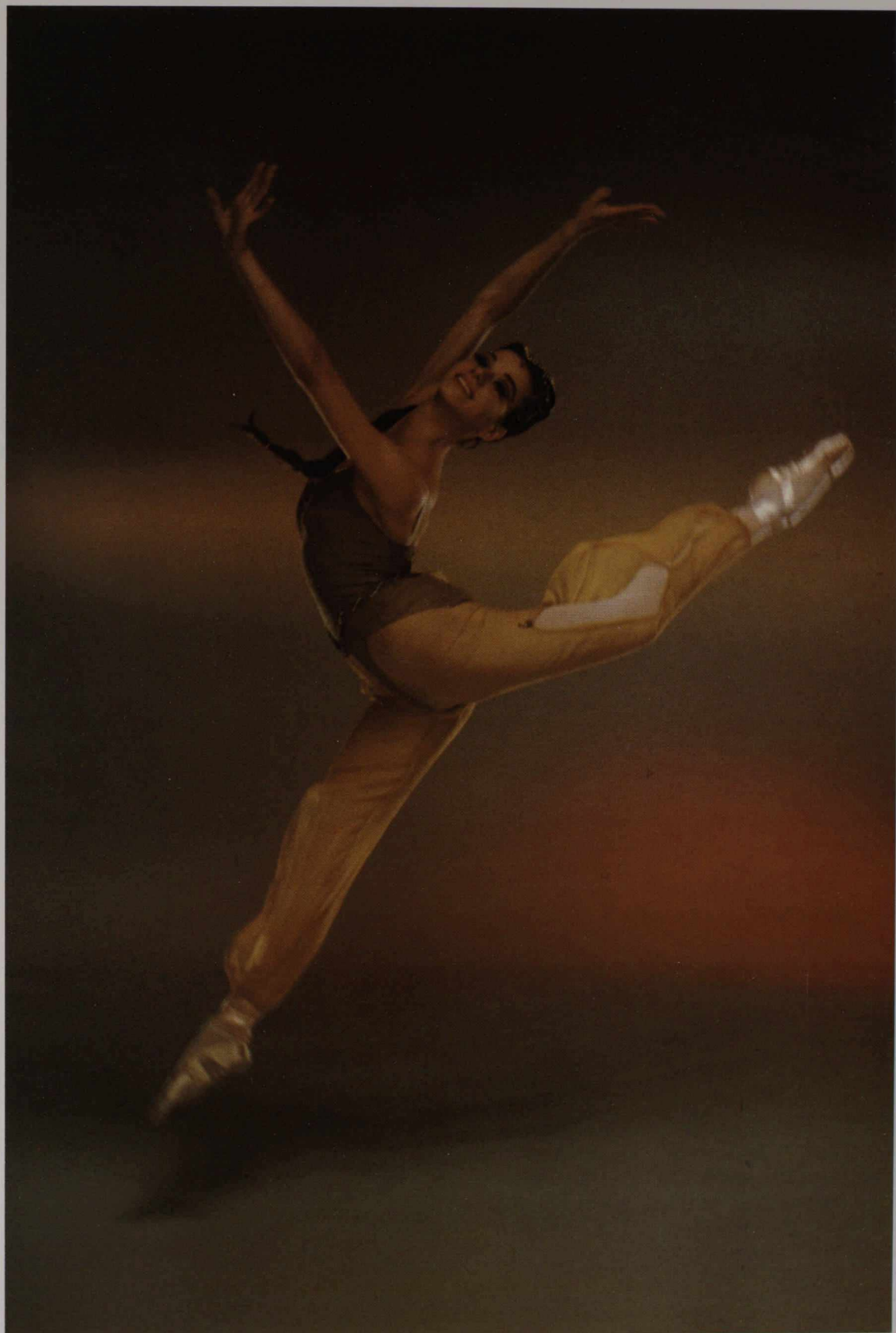
Christine, an Austrian beauty married to a handsome and fairly rich Hungarian immigrant, was found with the back of her head bashed in, in the garage, beside the family Cadillac, on the night of July 18, 1973. She was good-looking (and an occasional fashion model) but was not, apparently, bright. Her husband, Peter, was well born with family connections to Admiral Horty, Hungary's last Fascist dictator. He had escaped to Austria during the 1956 Hungarian uprising and made his way in time to Toronto. He was probably a white-collar thief and may have acquired his initial investment capital by misappropriating money orders sent home by other immigrant Hungarians. He believed that he and his cousin Csaba were very clever, wild and crazy guys. The cousin, who lacked daring, remained poor, but Peter became a builder and developer and acquired a handsome home in Mississauga on the outskirts of Toronto, a swimming pool, the Cadillac, a Mercedes, a mistress (Austrian like his wife) and after the murder, a police tap on his phone.

The police were Mississauga's finest, and though not perfect, they were a lot smarter than Peter thought. They were also somewhat more aggressive than Canadian police are usually imagined to be. Since Peter had a mistress, a \$1 million insurance policy on his wife, and an oddly unsympathetic manner ("Who would have thought she had that much brains?" he said, after seeing them spilled on the floor), they picked him as their prime suspect. After Cousin Csaba told them that Peter had been suggesting for years

that they get together and knock off Christine, they enlisted him as an agent provocateur. Csaba began meeting with Peter while wearing a microphone and "body pack" electronic system. The police soon had some highly suggestive but not quite conclusive conversations. The theory was that Peter had hired one or more underworld fellows to kill Christine. As time went by, the police gathered together a dazzling group of thugs who obviously had been up to something with Peter and/or Christine. The key thug was a lad called The Duck who went back to Hungary before the cops could get their hands on him. Peter was indicted and brought to trial, and the trial went on and on, changing directions as the police got hold of new evidence. Defence lawyers shifted frantically to accommodate developments and wound up suggesting that Christine had been plotting Peter's murder while he was plotting hers and had probably been done in by her own henchmen. It was possible. The jury, however, concluded that Peter, who was certainly up to something nefarious, had commissioned the killing.

The story is told wonderfully well. The authors also examine in detail the process of justice as practiced in Canada and contrast it with the procedures and limitations of police and courts in the United States. They are not advocates, but probing reporters who raise interesting points. The evidence gathered when the police tapped Peter's phone, including conversations he had with his lawyers, would most certainly not have been admitted in a US court, and those conversations may have been crucial in persuading the jury that Peter was guilty. The authors note:

*In the last quarter-century the law in Canada has taken a direction that has alarmed many thoughtful people. . . . While in the United States due process has been elevated to the point where strict observation of the accused's rights seems to have superseded most other considerations of justice, in Canada other considerations of justice—or even utility—seem to have increasingly superseded the basic rights of people accused of criminal acts. While in the United States the cases of some of the most obviously guilty and reprehensible criminals—ferret-like little crooks with records a mile long, like Miranda or Escobedo—have served to establish the highest principles of due process. . . . Canadian courts during the same period tended to put general principles second to the urge of not letting the guilty escape punishment. This resulted in the curious situation where, while many civil-liberties-minded Canadian lawyers . . . were looking to due process in the United States for an enlightened social model, some Americans—faced with an ever-increasing crime rate . . . started looking to Canada for a*



The group on the right are from Erik Bruhn's *Swan Lake*. The dancer in the billowing yellow pants is Martine van Hamel in *Le Corsair*. The pictures are from *The National Ballet of Canada* (University of Toronto, 1978) by Celia Franca and photographer Ken Bell.



solution. This was true especially of those American sociologists and legal thinkers who had begun to question environment and economics as the sole causes of crime, and felt that if crime rates were rising in the United States in spite of a notable increase in general prosperity and social justice, this had to have something to do with the law itself.

**Canada Has a Future** (McClelland and Stewart, 1978), prepared for the Hudson Institute of Canada by Marie-Josée Drouin and B. Bruce-Briggs, is an interesting book, prepared the way an actuary shapes up a pension program. The pension experts do the basic groundwork that applies to practically everybody and then sell it over and over to individual customers. *Canada Has a Future* has some 282 pages, but many of them are jammed with broad-view information about Western Europe, the United States and things in general. Still a pension plan can be a good buy, and this compilation should make everyone in

North America feel at least a little secure. The word from the Hudson Institute—which remains essentially the voice of ebullient Herman Kahn, its founder—is that the status quo is not going to be drastically changed, that the energy crisis has been greatly exaggerated, and that the patterns and rates of growth that now prevail will continue in recognizable form. Life, Kahn suggests, will go on without drastic upheaval. He believes, for example, that should Quebec actually separate, Montreal will continue to be a great and pleasant city. It will simply not grow as rapidly as Toronto.

Chaika Waisman makes evocative, charming, startling dolls and pictures from scraps—buttons, cloth, fish bones, medicine bottles, onion bags. Her daughter, Adele Wiseman, has woven conversations about the dolls, memories of Russia and Winnipeg, and her own experience into an essay on creativity. **Old Woman at Play** (Clarke, Irwin, 1978) is a very good book—poignant, positive and witty.

## M O V I E S & P L A Y S

**In This Is Where We Came in: The Career and Character of Canadian Film** (McClelland and Stewart, 1977), Martin Knelman gives us a thor-

ough and intelligent review of practically all Canadian directors and their significant films. He concludes, reasonably, that Claude Jutra is the





Uncle Antoine, a drink or two away from a small rebellion.

country's best director, and *Mon Oncle Antoine*, its best movie.

Knelman says Jutra's work "isn't political in . . . narrow, didactic terms . . . yet maybe Jutra is political in a deeper way. *Mon Oncle Antoine* and *Kamouraska* are his tender embraces for the traditions of French culture in North America. He shows you the malevolent restraints and denials at work. . . . Yet he can't help being buoyantly entertaining at the same time, as if he can see so much that he's constantly on the verge of breaking into a little song to express what he knows. He's in love with even the worst secrets of life in Quebec."

Knelman also offers an interesting view of old and new heroes and the self-consciousness critics provoke in artists: "A few years ago it became fashionable to complain that Canadian movies were always about losers. . . . It is easy to see, in retrospect, how this sort of talk must have affected our most talented film-makers. They began to feel they had a disease they'd better get rid of. One of the most bizarre events of late on television was a one-hour drama on the CBC Performance series called *Kathy Karuks Is a Grizzly Bear*. . . . It was based on an incident that occurred in the summer of 1975, when a

teenage girl tried to swim Lake Ontario, prodded by a coach whose main concern seemed to be the prizes various merchants were offering. Probably the girl should never have been allowed to try the swim, and, after a horrifying ordeal, she had to be pulled out. But the director of the TV version, Peter Pearson, changed the script so the audience could watch the heroine finish her swim and collect all those prizes. It didn't seem to matter that this ending negated the whole point; what mattered was the new insistence that in this country we like to see winners."

As Knelman makes clear, *Mon Oncle Antoine* fits into Sutherland's theory as a kind of transitional hero. Antoine, a mild, small-town shop-keeper/undertaker begins as the essential non-rebellious French-Canadian family man of the 1950s. The movie revolves around a tragic/comic incident: Antoine and his nephew lose a coffin and a corpse in a snow storm. "Jean Duceppe as Uncle Antoine has an unforgettable sequence when he stumbles out into the snow in a French-Canadian equivalent of Lear's storm scene. Wrapped in a great fur coat and too drunk to help Benoît lift the coffin back on the sled, this mild, unimposing man who has spent a lifetime quietly doing dull, depressing jobs suddenly howls furiously against the fierce, chilling element, as if this vast, bleak landscape and its bone-rattling weather has conspired to defeat him alone."

The Canadian hero, old or new is found in plays as well as books and films. James Reaney's three plays (or his one play for three evenings), **The Donnellys: Parts I, II and III** (Porcépic, 1975-77), are about a whole tribe of rambunctious losers based, up to a point, on a real and tumultuous nineteenth century family who were slaughtered by their vigilante Ontario neighbours. If Ira Groome is a winner/loser then the Donnellys, as portrayed by James Reaney, are something like loser/winners. They are brought down, but not until they've had six full hours to strut upon the stage; and they are unconquered and unconquerable to the end. They are, though dead, much more triumphant than Rutherford, the diplomat, or Gould Moncrieff or Ira Groome. The plays, in Mr. Reaney's own quicksilver style, are a sensual delight.

## SIX LIVRES EN FRANÇAIS

La vie littéraire est vigoureuse au Québec. Ses écrivains, tant dans le domaine du réel que de l'imaginaire, jouent un rôle marquant dans l'évolution de la pensée et de l'action depuis le

début de la révolution tranquille. Les récents ouvrages qui font l'objet de nos critiques ont été sélectionnés par Jonathan Weiss de Colby College (Maine) comme étant les plus significatifs de la

littérature québécoise actuelle. Les titres cités ci-dessous présentent des critiques de nouvelles parutions:

1. *Lettres québécoises*: quatre éditions par an; Editions Jumonville, C.P. 1840, Succursale B, Montréal, Québec H3B 3L4.
2. *Livres et auteurs québécois*: publication annuelle; consiste en une revue détaillée de la critique de récents ouvrages de fiction, de poésie et de théâtre; Presses de l'Université Laval, C.P. 2447, Québec, P.Q., G1K 7R4.
3. *Voix et images*: trois éditions par an; consiste en un nombre limité de critiques dans chaque numéro; Presses de l'Université du Québec, C.P. 250, Succursale N, Montréal, Québec H2X 3M4.
4. *Etudes françaises*: deux éditions par an; publie de temps en temps une édition spéciale intitulée "L'année littéraire québécoise"; Presses de l'Université de Montréal, C.P. 6128, Succursale A, Montréal, Québec H3C 3J7.

**Le Développement des idéologies au Québec**, Denis Monière, Editions Québec-Amérique, 1977.

Out of Quebec's Quiet Revolution of the 1960s has come a continuing re-evaluation of the past. A number of studies have been published dealing with specific periods in the history of French-Canadian ideas, but this is the first comprehensive history. Denis Monière, who teaches political science at Laval University, analyzes ideologies, from those that prevailed in New France to those that prevail today.

His analysis is clear, precise and understandable. His hypothesis is that Quebec's dominant ideologies have reflected the views, not of the English-Canadian economic elite, but of the economically powerless French-Canadian professionals who determined both the course of Quebec's internal politics and its relations with the federal government. Monière is dissatisfied with current ideologies and challenges the Parti Québécois's pursuit of political and cultural autonomy within a principally capitalist framework. His study should be required reading for anyone concerned with modern Quebec.

**Claude Gauvreau: Oeuvres créatrices complètes**, edited by Gérald Godin, Editions Parti-Pris, 1977.

In 1948 Claude Gauvreau and painter Paul-Emile Borduas signed the manifesto *Refus global*, preparing the way for surrealist revolutions in art and literature in Quebec. Gauvreau also wrote a play called *Les Oranges sont vertes*, produced in 1971, which is as close as Quebec drama has come to the theatre of the absurd.

In 1969 Gauvreau signed a contract with Editions Parti-Pris for the publication of his complete creative work; in 1971, following numerous peri-

ods in psychiatric hospitals, he committed suicide. The complete works have now appeared, in over 1,500 pages that display an extraordinary range of rich imagination. To read Gauvreau's poetry, his theatre, his radio plays is to be plunged into the labyrinths of the unconscious. They are sometimes lyrical ("*l'eau silencieuse me parle en cadence*"), sometimes incomprehensible ("*touchô galalumo tepagayac*"), but always revolutionary.

**Surréalisme et littérature québécoise**, André-C. Bourassa, Editions l'Étincelle, 1978.

André-C. Bourassa presents a clear overall picture of the surrealist movement in Quebec, and of Gauvreau's role. His book is, despite its title, a history of surrealism in art (with abundant illustrations) as well as in literature, including Borduas, Paul-Marie Lapointe and Roland Giguère, as well as Gauvreau. Bourassa sees surrealism as a state of mind, rather than an aesthetic doctrine, which can be found in Quebec literature as far back as 1837. The movement itself began in the 1940s and rapidly became part of the established order. Borduas, the prime mover, was rejected by Quebec and died in exile in 1960. Today, he is immortalized in one of Quebec's more coveted prizes, the Prix Borduas.

Agnes Macphail was the first woman member of the House of Commons. She is included in *Faces from History: Canadian Profiles & Portraits* by George Woodcock (Hurtig, 1978). The collection of nine-by-twelve-inch portraits with enlightening texts ranges from Allan MacNab (the nemesis of William Lyon Mackenzie) to James Shaver Woodsworth (the pacifist of the 1930s).





John Buchan, once Governor General of Canada, said it is "essentially a country of the larger air." The picture, by Shin Sugino, is from *Together We Stand* (Gage, 1978).

**Ces Enfants de ma vie**, Gabrielle Roy, Editions Internationales Alain Stanké, 1977.

Narrowly speaking, Gabrielle Roy is not a Quebec novelist. She was born in Saint Boniface, Manitoba, and was over thirty when she moved to Quebec. But her well-known first novel, *Bonheur d'occasion* (*The Tin Flute*), published in 1945, established her as a keen observer of life in the Montreal slums.

In *Ces Enfants de ma vie* she takes us back to the time, between 1919 and 1937, when she was a schoolteacher in Manitoba. It is the story of a teacher's love for her young schoolboys, many of them immigrants struggling with a new language in a new land. She is a surrogate mother who is permitted neither to embrace nor caress. The situation is just as delicate for the boys: their teacher must be conquered, and the young men quickly realize what this implies.

Gabrielle Roy's clear, precise, instinctive writing sensitively expresses the hopes and fears of young people. It should soon be translated into English.

**Les Anthropoïdes**, Gérard Bessette, Editions La Presse, 1977.

*Les Anthropoïdes* is the work of the author of *Le Libraire* (*Not For Every Eye*), an ironic novel of censorship in a small Quebec town during the 1950s. (As if to prove the point, Quebec editors refused it, and it was published in Paris in 1960.)

Bessette's new novel is far away from contemporary Quebec: it is the story of prehistoric tribes moving from Asia to North America during the later Paleolithic period. Bessette calls it a "*roman d'aventure(s)*," and it recounts the adventures of an adolescent named Guito in the midst of violent tribal combats.

*Les Anthropoïdes* is also an attempt to define a new approach to the art of the novel. Episodes are told and retold, often with conflicting details, as Guito develops into both the hero and the narrator of his own literary creation. This makes for some difficult reading, but the determined reader may find that Bessette's imagination makes it all worthwhile.

**Hubert Aquin romancier**, Françoise Maccabée Iqbal, Presses de l'Université Laval, 1978.

Hubert Aquin, one of the most outspoken of *indépendantiste* authors, committed suicide in March 1977. His novels are not easy to understand. He often tried to trick the reader, leading him into blind alleys, giving him quotes that never existed. Françoise Iqbal's work deciphers the true from the false and helps to resolve some of the contradictions in Aquin's novels. She suggests that Aquin saw suicide not as oblivion but as a rebirth into a world in which man would be free to determine his own existence.

# F O R C H I L D R E N



Ann Blades, cover for *Magook* #1

Reviewed by Marguerite Lelong Kelly, co-author of *The Mother's Almanac*.

Some children read books, some read magazines, and some lucky ones read **Magook**. This year-old creation—half-book, half-magazine—is a brilliant display of what is right in the publishing world. Produced by Magook Publishers in Toronto, an offshoot of McClelland and Stewart, it is designed for children six to ten, and a ten-issue subscription costs \$22.00.

The four-colour, 48-page, six-by-eight-inch publication has a sturdy, glossy binding, with a comic-strip fold-out on its back cover. Inside there are a few games, a craft, a short action story or a play, perhaps a poem and for a *pièce de résistance*, a real book.

*Magook's* outstanding feature, however, is its quality. The writers, such as Ann Blades and Dennis Lee, are internationally known. They obviously respect children as witty, smart, curious, inventive people, and the publication is as witty, smart, curious and inventive as its readers.

**Sleighs: The Gentle Transportation**, Carlo Italiano, Tundra, (1974) 1978.

Most children's historical books fall flat on their

Carlo Italiano in  
*Sleighs: The Gentle Transportation*  
(Tundra/Charles Scribner's Sons)



typeface. Not this one. First published in English and in French in 1974 and now released in paperback, this prize-winning book graphically explains what happens when a city is governed by snow six months of the year.

Montreal was the sleigh centre of the world until the 1940s, when there were finally enough trucks to keep the city moving. Italiano uses words, paints and love to describe the score of different sleighs he knew, each adapted to a special use and many graded for the ease with which small children could catch free rides.

A plain sleigh brought the farmer to town, and another delivered groceries. Bread, milk and even spices had their own vehicles. A poor, high-sided sleigh carried fruits and vegetables—a heater inside kept the produce from freezing.

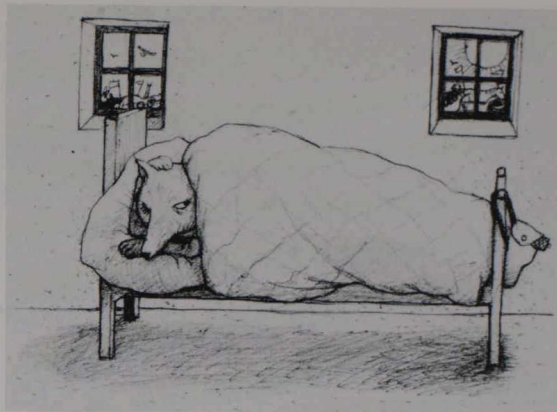
There were sleighs to put out fires and to take away snow (the best of all, we are assured, to ride on). There were separate sleighs for baked beans, popcorn, hot dogs and chips. There was a battered sleigh for the ragman and a fancy one to bring the rich man his gourmet foods. A low, sleek sleigh delivered the mail. The inspector of the streets rode in a trim little cutter, while a plain black sleigh with tiny windows carried the nuns about town at Christmas. At Easter, all the sleighs and all the horses were festooned with paper flowers.

Today only the sightseeing sleigh is left. It has brass rails and no free rides. But then, it probably never did.

**Paulino**, Traute Simons, illustrated by Susi Bohdal, English translation by Ebbitt Cutler, Tundra, 1978.

Children work out their frustrations in their play and in their dreams, recasting scenes again and again until they come out right. That's why this story will make sense to a child, although it may at first baffle his parents.

Splendid, primitive people and animals march  
Rita Briansky in *Grandmother Came From Dworitz* (Tundra/Charles Scribner's Sons)



William Kurelek in *Fox Mykyta* (Tundra/Charles Scribner's Sons)

through a pageant of soft greens, blues and reds, while Paulino orders the world around as he never could by day. With his dog he searches for his missing cat (without permission of course, for there is a notable absence of parents in this story). He assures a policeman that he knows how to stop for red lights (and, of course, is allowed to proceed). Then he tells the moon to toss him a star to light his way in the dark, a demand the moon quickly fulfills. Finally, Paulino sees the the cat and orders it down from a high building. The cat, of course, obeys, making him the only cat who ever obeyed anybody. And that's when even the most obtuse adult knows this book is one sweet dream.

**Hold Fast**, Kevin Major, Clarke, Irwin, 1978.

*Hold Fast* may not be quite the "landmark in Canadian writing" that one critic has found it, but it has a fine insight into the character of a fourteen-year-old boy and into Newfoundland.

It is a poignant account of a boy, angry and orphaned by a car wreck, and how he takes on the world. It is a good yarn with many vivid words, some of four letters. It should entertain the child from twelve to fifteen, and also help him appreciate the complexities of life.

**Grandmother Came from Dworitz**, Ethel Vineberg, illustrated by Rita Briansky, Tundra, (1969) 1978.

A grandmother traces her roots from Poland to Nova Scotia. It is a charming, intimate account of life between 1820 and 1909 best savoured by a ten-year-old with the score of *Fiddler on the Roof* playing in the background.

**Fox Mykyta**, Ivan Franko, translated by Bohdan Melnyk and illustrated by William Kurelek, Tundra, 1978.

This direct descendant of Reynard the Fox is a charmer. An adept translation of a classic Ukrainian tale, it was illustrated by Kurelek (the

celebrated son of a Ukrainian immigrant) who died in 1977. Here the peculiarities—and indeed the sins—of man are wrapped in the furry coats of a dozen animals, not the least of which is the clever fox. He is the con artist everyone wants to be conned by. The 148-page book, designed for ten- to twelve-year-olds, has been listed as a "Best of the Best" by the International Youth Library. Indeed it should be.

**Bienvenue Chez Nous/Welcome to Our Town**, written and illustrated by Guy Bailey, Tundra, 1978.

This bilingual recollection of Montreal at the turn of this century brings ethnicity to life, although it has no story line.

## I N D E X

Researchers and librarians may be interested in the following references:

**The Canadian Newspaper Index:** monthly, annual cumulation; subject and biographical indexes of the *Calgary Herald*, the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald*, the *Montreal Star*, the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, the *Toronto Star*, the *Vancouver Sun* and the *Winnipeg Free Press*; published since 1977; Information Access, 144 Front Street West, 5th Floor, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5J 1G2.

**Index de l'actualité: vue à travers la presse écrite:** monthly, annual cumulation; subject and chrono-

logical indexes of *Le Devoir* and the editorial and arts sections of *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*; published since 1966; Microfor, Inc., 914, avenue des Erables, bureau n°3, Québec, P.Q., Canada G1R 2M5.

**Canadian Periodical Index/Index de périodiques canadiens:** monthly, annual cumulation; author and subject index of 113 periodicals; published since 1948; Canadian Library Association, 151 Sparks Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1P 5E3.

Some of the books reviewed in this issue are available in the US. New American Library carries *Close to the Sun Again* and the paperback edition of *By Persons Unknown* (Grove Press has the hardback). All of Tundra's books are distributed by Charles Scribner's Sons. Doubleday has *The Common Touch*; and New York University Press, *The New Hero*. André Pacquette Associates (Box 186, Lakeport, New Hampshire 03246) distributes *Ces Enfants de ma vie* and many other French-language books for classroom use. Harper Row will soon have *Canada Has a Future*.

We suggest you write the appropriate publishers for books available only in Canada.

Clarke, Irwin & Company Ltd.  
791 St. Clair Avenue, West  
Toronto, Ontario M6C 1B8

Gage Publishing Ltd.  
164 Commander Boulevard  
Agincourt, Ontario M1S 3C7

Magook Publishers Ltd.  
254 Bartley Drive  
Toronto, Ontario M4A 1G1

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Montréal, Québec H3H 2N4

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University of Toronto Press  
5201 Dufferin Street  
Downsview, Ontario M3H 5T8



J. E.H. MacDonald, one of the Group of Seven, painted "The Tangled Garden" in 1916. *The Tangled Garden* by Paul Duval (Cerebrus/Prentice-Hall, 1978) is a splendidly produced collection of his major works.

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