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A country is defined by its books. A serious writer reflects his country and helps the world, including his compatriots, see what it's all about. What is Canada all about? In this issue *Canada Today / D'Aujourd'hui* hopefully presents a part of the answer in its annual review of Canadian books. Two — *A Vision of Canada* and *Four Decades* — are visual histories of the art epoch which began with The Group of Seven shows in 1920. By sad coincidence the epoch ended as the reviews were being written — A. Y. Jackson, the last surviving member of the original 1920 group, died in Ontario at the age of ninety-one. Extensive displays of Group of Seven painters, with accompanying biographical sketches, are on pages 4 through 10. We planned them even before we heard of Mr. Jackson's death. We also take note of two other remarkable artists. Cornelius Krieghoff, whose masterwork, *After the Ball Chez Jolifou*, is reproduced below, was, perhaps, Canada's most distinguished artist of the nineteenth century. David Blackwood, whose emotive wedding in Newfoundland is on page 2, is one of the newest. A country is defined by its pictures as well as its books.



Take a Look at the Books

[FICTION]

Canada has some excellent contemporary novelists — Brian Moore, Robertson Davies, Mordecai Richler, Marie Claire Blais, and everyone (well, almost everyone) knows them.

It is the purpose of Canada Today/D'Aujourd'hui to tell its readers, at least occasionally, some things they do not know. Each spring it presents a list of current books and writers worthy, perhaps, of wider recognition. In the past we have focused on such as Margaret Atwood. This year we begin with Jacques Godbout, Richard B. Wright and Leo Simpson.

Hail Galarneau!, by Jacques Godbout, Longman Canada, Ltd., \$6.95. Almost a third of all Canadians speak French as their native tongue and Montreal is one of the great cities of the world. There is a cultural explosion going on in Québec; French Canadians express themselves in distinctive styles — in painting, in filmmaking, in writing and in living. Their vitality is veiled from most North Americans by the long reaches of geography and the mists of language. *Hail Galarneau!* is a fortuitous bridge, an excellent French Canadian novel rendered into English by Alan Brown, preserving the clarity of M. Godbout's style.

DAVID BLACKWOOD, *Wedding on Braggs Island*, 1972, 32 x 20. Page one: CORNELIUS KRIEGHOFF, *After the Ball Chez Jolifou*, 1855, 36 x 24, Mrs. W. C. Pitfield Collection

Let us begin at M. Godbout's beginning: "This really isn't the afternoon to start trying to write a book, believe me. I mean, how can a person concentrate with an endless string of customers sniffing their way to the counter? Today they're mostly Americans on vacation. They've come here to experience la belle province, the big difference, 'the hospitalité spoken here.' They've driven through Ontario. I must be their first Québécois, their first native. Some of them even try out their French on me. It's really quite touching! I let them make idiots of themselves. I don't encourage them, but I don't do the other thing either. I mean if Americans learn French in school and come here in the month of August to try it out, they have a perfect right. It's always a good idea to put your education to the test. Take my own case now, the education they inflicted on me wasn't even worth the buggy-ride. That much I've proved, whether I was looking for work or just looking around — or simply trying to be happy."

The narrator is Francois Galarneau, whose roadside stand bears the neon sign, "Au Roi Du Hot Dog", brother of Jacques, successful writer of TV scripts, lover of Marise Doucet, whose bottom is round as a pair of apples, son of his father who spent his days and years fishing and drinking beer aboard his boat, *Wagner III*. ("He hadn't built the boat himself, whatever he said, he could



never have built it. But he did paint it blue and added the brown rose-window figures that adorned the interior. And he himself had hung the flowered plastic curtains and chosen the dozen coloured kapok cushions strewn on the cabin floor.") Father spent his days fishing, his nights sleeping; Mother slept days and spent the nights reading Italian film fan magazines. "My God but Mother was gentle and beautiful, when she rose at dusk, in time to make our supper and put us to bed."

M. Godbout's fancy is full of pain. It has the poignant comedy of *Catcher in the Rye*. It is a short book, 131 narrow pages, in two sections, the first a triumph, the second not quite. It is a book of the young human under the stress of an indifferent world, a youthful, French Canadian cry in the night.

"I wonder if anybody will ever ask me, 'Galarneau, what were things like in your time?' In my time!

"It's raining harder than ever. I can hear the water from the rainpipe running into the barrel. It must be the weather that has me down at the mouth. In my time! In my time there was still one horse on his feet, name of Martyr, and he couldn't pull a load any more, but no one had the courage to finish him off. He died of old age at fifteen, when I was twenty-five. In my time, in my America, you had to be rich, very rich, to be happy; or educated, very well educated. Or else you went to pieces, or blew bubbles, or dreams, or 'ifs' to pieces."

In the Middle of a Life, by Richard B. Wright, Macmillan of Canada, Ltd., \$7.95. Mr. Wright is not so much a good, grey novelist, as the novelist of the good, grey man. After his success last year with *The Weekend Man*, he was called a poet of quiet desperation (by Christopher Wordsworth), which is close but not quite precise. His heroes are more gently persevering than quietly desperate.

In this reincarnation, the hero is Freddy Landon, forty-two, an unemployed greeting card salesman, divorced from a rasping wife; living (occasionally) with a shy but earthy, middle-aged schoolteacher; he is a man without guile in a world where guile is the leading commodity in the market place. But he survives intact, a complete man without money or power or respect, surrounded by fragmented people who have money or power or respect.

The Peacock Papers, by Leo Simpson, Macmillan of Canada, Ltd., \$6.95. Mr. Simpson is a funny, happy man who bites off more than almost anyone could chew. This is a satire of the way people, things, marriage, literacy, hair and happiness are this very minute. At its heart it involves,

more or less, an effort to convert the library of Bradfarrow, Ontario, from books to electronic tapes. Jeffrey Anchyr, a feed merchant with an ulcer, defends the thin black and white line of linear thought with, among other things, a moose rifle. He is assisted by Thomas Love Peacock, a nineteenth-century novelist who also serves as a second to a contestant in the annual Bradfarrow Baby Contest.

[NON-FICTION]

Wake of the Great Sealers, by Farley Mowat, with prints and drawings by David Blackwood, McClelland & Stewart, Ltd., costs and is worth \$16.95. Beyond Québec and the Maritime Provinces, to the seaward, there is another land, Newfoundland, part of Canada since only 1949 and still very much itself. Blackwood is an artist of startling and sombre originality; he offers Newfoundland in grey and white and blue and dark rose — black-cloaked men standing in black boats like the members of a funeral, high ships against the piercing arctic sky, grim people in a grim and beautiful land. If you see one Blackwood print, you will, whenever you see another, know whose work it is. Blackwood is a Newfoundland, the descendant of fishermen and seal hunters. Mowat tells the history of sealing from firsthand sources:

"... the first wooden wall as ever I shipped aboard was the *S. S. Esquimaux*. She was a little thing, only about a hundred feet overall, and had been a whaler for thirty year before being bought up for the sealing. She was soaked through and through with whale and seal oil and the stink of her was enough to make a goat lose his dinner. She was built with accommodation for maybe twenty men, but she carried a hundred and sixty the spring I went in her and we was out ten weeks, most of it in the ice with northerly gales and the coldest kind of weather. I don't suppose I was dry half the time, for there was no place to dry out your clothes, in them from the beginning to the end, and them soaked in seal fat and blood and dirt till they was so stiff they'd crackle. We slept in them too, for there was no such thing to be had as any sort of bedding. The only time I wasn't chilled half to death was when we was on the ice working seals and then you was on the go so hard you had to get warm. . . ."

Anyone who would like to buy Canadian books without going to Canada may obtain information from:

Books Canada
35 East 67 Street
New York, New York 10021

[POLITICS]

Mike, Volume Two, the Memoirs of the Rt. Hon. Lester B. Pearson, The University of Toronto Press, \$12.50. Volume Two is, inevitably, less of a triumph than Volume One. As *The New Yorker* said, Volume One could be read "purely for pleasure." Mr. Pearson died before Volume Two was published; as he saw death approaching, he devoted his dwindling time to Volume Three which would cover his years as Prime Minister and which will be published in due time. Volume Two is, then, a patchwork. Mr. Pearson had written the first drafts of the first four chapters and one for most of Chapter Six. The rest of the book was compiled by his editors from his personal records and previously published papers. The first chapters have much of Volume One's charm; he remembers, for example, an occasion on which, despite misgivings, he was persuaded by a political leader named Leo Gauthier to open the baseball season in an Ontario riding called Nickle Belt:

"I had surprised him . . . by saying I did not think much of the idea . . . 'This is a wonderful idea, so what's worrying you?' asked Leo. 'Well, you know people don't like to have a baseball game held up by expectant politicians, especially during an election.' 'Nonsense,' he replied, 'it will be just fine. I know my people.' I thought we had a pretty cool reception and said so on the way to our seats: 'Leo, that wasn't very successful.' A round, fat man and a jovial extrovert, he gave me a wide smile. 'Don't be silly, that was a triumph, not a single boo.' Everything in politics is relative. To him, if three politicians in an election campaign, two of them candidates, could delay a ball game for ten minutes without a boo from the bleachers, that was most encouraging — silence spelt success."

For students of politics and history, *Mike Two* is fascinating throughout. For more casual readers the first half alone is worth the price of admission.

Gentle Patriot, a Political Biography of Walter Gordon, by Denis Smith, Hurtig Publishers, \$12.50. This is a more closely knit work. Gordon is, in a sense, a tragic hero. After a full career as a most successful man of business, he joined his friend Lester Pearson in politics in 1958. He soon established a deserved reputation for unconventionality. He was, among other distinctions, an early advocate of nationalism in the modern sense. In 1963 he proposed a budget which would levy a 30 per cent tax on "certain sales by Canadian residents to non-residents and non-resident controlled companies on shares in

Canadian companies listed on the Canadian stock exchange. . . ." The proposal brought swift and powerful opposition and was the beginning of Gordon's political downfall. A decade later Parliament would pass with little opposition a law to limit foreign investments. Gordon would leave party politics behind and become more of a prophet than a politician. This book is remarkable in its clear and detailed depiction of what might be termed the politics of politics. It is a proper text for those who wish to know more about the art, rather than the science, of politics.

Home Country: People, Places, and Power Politics, by Peter C. Newman, McClelland & Stewart, Ltd. \$7.95. Mr. Newman, editor of *Maclean's Magazine*, is that fairly rare man, an accomplished twentieth-century essayist. His essays here are mostly political but he also has a few things to say about places, music, Expo and *Maclean's*. He is both an artful and an accurate reporter. For example: "Moshe Dayan slouches through the open vestibule of the Yarden Hotel at Tel Aviv and conversation stops. He is dressed in army fatigues with no insignia and has just flown in by helicopter from the market place at Deir el Kalah, where terrorist hand grenades killed two farmers. Involuntarily, I turn to look at the eyepatch which has become his symbol. But it is Dayan's good eye that reaches out and grips you, fascinates you, holds you in its unblinking stare, demanding: 'What have you done for Israel lately?'"

[ART AND ARTISTS]

Cornelius Krieghoff, by Hugues de Jouvancourt, Musson Book Company, \$29.95. It is best to let an artist's work speak for itself, but Cornelius Krieghoff also deserves a word or two of explanation. Hugues de Jouvancourt offers that plus 45 hand-tipped full colour and 121 black and white reproductions. Krieghoff was born in Holland in 1815 and came to Canada in 1836. He painted a wide variety of subjects — kitchens, cabins, card players, landscapes, riverscapes, horses and soldiers — but what he painted best were the homely scenes of life among the Habitants, the country people of Québec. He did it with a Flemish love of colourful detail on small canvases. He died in 1872, leaving behind an extraordinary body of work and a unique pictorial history of life as it was in Lower Canada long, long ago.

Caricature History of Canadian Politics, by J. W. Bengough, Peter Martin Associates, Ltd., \$10.00. The history was first published in 1886; it is a history, then, of the nineteenth century and the

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... And the Pictures, Too



ARTHUR LISMER, *Bright Land*, 1938, 32 x 40, The McMichael Canadian Collection

A. Y. JACKSON died this spring in Kleinburg, Ontario, at the age of ninety-one. He was the last surviving member of the original Group of Seven, the landscape painters who in 1920 suddenly made a magnificent and, more or less, simultaneous leap forward. Jackson studied in Montreal under William Brymner and settled in Toronto in 1913. In his last years he was the artist-in-residence at the Kleinburg gallery which houses the McMichael Collection. More than 150 of his works are on display there. He had a particularly productive life, painting and growing as a painter for more than half a century, from his delicate watercolour, *Elms and Wildflowers*, which he did in 1902, to the Newfoundland drawings executed in the 1950's. He was a most



A. Y. JACKSON, *Nellie Lake*, 1933, 31½ x 29½, The McMichael Canadian Collection

engaging man and, in the words of his friend and fellow artist, Barker Fairley, particularly Canadian — "a strong character, like a piece of the Precambrian Shield with legs connected underneath."

J. E. H. MACDONALD, the oldest member of *The Group*, was born in 1873 and died in 1932. His forte was colour and pigment, his orchestrations of varying hues. He was a major influence on Tom Thomson, whom he met in Toronto. He was probably the least traveled of *The Group*, sticking close to the Algoma area of Northern Ontario, and he was also an accomplished teacher and a lyric poet.



TOM THOMSON, *Tea Lake Dam*, 1916
10½ x 8½, The McMichael Canadian Collection

TOM THOMSON, *Autumn Birches*, 1916
8½ x 10½, The McMichael Canadian Collection

FRANK JOHNSTON, *Patterned Hillside*, 1918
13 x 10, The McMichael Canadian Collection

ARTHUR LISMER, *Canadian Jungle*, 1946
22 x 17½, The McMichael Canadian Collection

LAWREN HARRIS, who died in 1970 at the age of eighty-five, may have been The Group's greatest. He was the prime leader of Canadian art in his time and he was the prime mover of The Group and later of its successor, The Canadian Group of Painters. Harris was always restlessly young, moving from one technique of expression to another; his career encompassed at least five major periods, from the impressionistic depiction of Toronto houses in the early 1900's to his last, brilliant, blue and white crystal pictures of the Arctic and the Rockies.

ARTHUR LISMER, who died in 1969 at the age of eighty-four, was the great teacher of The Group—lecturing at the Ontario College of Art, the Nova Scotia College of Art, the Mon-



LAWREN HARRIS, *Mt. Lefroy*, 1930, 60³/₈ x 52¹/₄, The McMichael Canadian Collection

trear Museum of Fine Arts and McGill University. He founded the children's classes at the Art Gallery of Toronto. He produced the richest landscape drawings of The Group.

FREDERICK VARLEY was another Group member who enjoyed a long full life; he was born in 1881 and died in 1969. He was the romantic of The Group — for the most part he shunned the hard, clear afternoon light, which the others found entrancing, and expressed himself in what he called the mystic colours: blue, gold, violet and green. He also was apart in his preference for humans to landscapes — he was Canada's finest portrayer of people. Tom Thomson took him to Algonquin Park and there, and later on the Pacific Coast, he found the landscapes



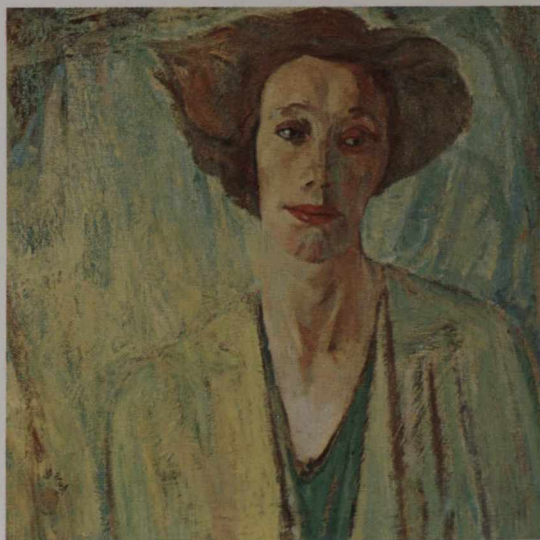
LAWREN HARRIS, *Abstract*, 1942
30 x 42, Hart House, University of Toronto



LAWREN HARRIS, *Chevrons*, 1970
34 x 64, Winnipeg Art Gallery

entrancing too. His most memorable portrait is *Girl in Red*; his landscape masterpiece, *Stormy Weather*, Georgian Bay.

FRANKLIN CARMICHAEL, who died at the age of fifty-five in 1945, painted the stores, barns, houses and forests of rural Ontario with a rich paint impasto and glowing colour. Always pressed for time he did few large canvases and, finally, turned to water colour. He was a superb designer and a master of wood engravings.



FRANKLIN CARMICHAEL, *A Northern Silver Mine*, 1930, 48 x 40, The McMichael Canadian Collection

A. Y. JACKSON, *Houses, St. Urbain*, 1934
10½ x 8½, The McMichael Canadian Collection

FREDERIC VARLEY, *Night Ferry, Vancouver*, 1937
40 x 32, C. S. Band Collection

FREDERIC VARLEY, *Woman in Green*, 1949
20 x 20, C. S. Band Collection

A. J. CASSON, who was born in 1898, lives on — it was he who designed *A Vision of Canada*. He was invited to join *The Group of Seven* in 1926. He was a pictorial biographer of the small communities of Ontario — his style was perfectly suited to their tidy, rustic architecture and, like the towns themselves, he was basically a conservative with a keen sense of what was worth preserving, on canvas as in life. Among a plethora of other distinctions, he was a President of the Royal Canadian Academy. He was also one of Canada's finest watercolourists.

TOM THOMSON died in 1917 at the age of forty, drowning in Canoe Lake in Ontario's Algonquin Park. Had he lived, *The Group of Seven* would have been *The Group of Eight* and he its



F. H. VARLEY, *Stormy Weather, Georgian Bay*, 1920, 10½ x 8½, The McMichael Canadian Collection

most influential member. Thomson was a singular artist and a singular man. He evolved slowly; when he was well into his thirties he was still producing imitative work of not great consequence, but then he went to live in the wilderness of Algonquin Park and became, suddenly, the brilliant, original landscape painter who was to influence generations of painters and delight generations of other people. His best work was crowded into three years, 1914 to 1917, and it consisted almost entirely of hundreds of small oil panels.

FRANK JOHNSTON died in 1949 at the age of sixty-one. He was a member of The Group briefly, withdrawing to become the Principal of the Winnipeg School of Art. Though he taught for



J. E. H. MACDONALD, *Snow in the Mountains*, 1932, 26 x 21, C. S. Band Collection

twenty years, he became one of Canada's most popular and most financially successful artists. He had technical brilliance and the best of his sketches are consummately designed and richly painted. His 1918 paintings of Algoma are associated with The Group and these tangles of branches, evergreens and foliage, are, in the words of Paul Duval, "as compelling as anything done at that time."

EDWIN HOLGATE joined The Group of Seven in 1931, when he had already established a fine reputation. He, like Varley, was as interested in people as in landscapes and he is best known



EDWIN HOLGATE, *Nude*, 1930
29 x 26, Art Gallery of Ontario

A. J. CASSON, *Kleinburg*, 1921
12 x 10, The McMichael Canadian Collection

J. E. H. MACDONALD, *Algoma Waterfall*, 1920
35 x 30, The McMichael Canadian Collection

LEMOINE FITZGERALD, *The Little Plant*, 1947
18¼ x 24, The McMichael Canadian Collection

for his full-bodied nudes. His landscapes are mostly of the Laurentians, where he has lived much of his life.

LEMOINE FITZGERALD, who died in 1956 at the age of sixty-six, was in effect an honorary member of The Group, joining in 1932, too late to take part in any of its shows. FitzGerald, the most painstaking of painters, produced a small body of brilliant work. He was far removed from the other Group painters in style and interests — his pointillist canvases concentrate on the homely: a plant, some fruit, a backyard.



A. J. CASSON, *Winter Sun*, 1961, 40 x 30, Toronto-Dominion Bank Collection

Women's Days Are Never Done

"These tender-hearted and chivalrous gentlemen who tell you of their adoration for women cannot bear to think of women occupying public positions. Their tender hearts shrink from the idea of women lawyers or women policemen, or even women preachers; these positions would 'rub the bloom off the peach' to use their own eloquent words. They cannot bear, they say, to see women leaving the sacred precincts of home — yet their offices are scrubbed by women who do their work while other people sleep — poor women who leave the sacred precincts of home to earn enough to keep the breath of life in them, who carry their scrub pails home, through the deserted streets, long after the cars have stopped running. They are exposed to cold, to hunger, to insult — poor souls — is there pity left for them? Not that we have heard of. The tender-hearted ones can bear this with equanimity. It is the thought of women getting into comfortable and well-paid positions which wrings their manly hearts. . . ."
Nellie McClung, In Times Like These.

Ms. McClung wrote that in 1915.

Now five women of Saskatoon — June Bantjes,
Nellie McClung,

Beth Foster, Gwen Gray, Colleen Pollreis and Erin Shoemaker — have commemorated her and other Canadian women achievers in "HER-STORY", a Canadian women's calendar, published by Women's Press Publications.

The calendar is full of lively quotes from Ms. McClung and others and photographs of pioneers of the Women's Movement — from Lucille Mulhall, Champion Lady Steer Roper of the World (Winnipeg Stampede, 1913), to Emily Howard Stowe, who applied to the University of Toronto for admission to their Medical College in the 1860's and was turned down because medical schools were closed to women. "Then I will make it the business of my life to see that they will be opened," she said, and did. She graduated from New York Medical College for Women and became Canada's first practicing woman physician.

Here are a few photos from the calendar. It also marks the days of the year with the anniversaries of notable actions and the births and deaths of notable women. It can be purchased for \$3 from The Women's Press, 280 Bloor St., W. Ste. 305, Toronto, Ont.



continued from page four

cartoons make up in historical detail what they lack in linear brevity. John Macdonald, Canada's first Prime Minister, appears in many, with an inevitable emphasis on his nose.

A Vision of Canada, Clarke, Irwin & Co. Ltd., \$13.50. Canada's first and most famous collection of modern artists presented a united front to the world shortly after World War I. They were known as The Group of Seven. They appeared at a joint show at the Art Gallery of Toronto in May, 1920. They were Franklin Carmichael, Lawren Harris, A. Y. Jackson, Frank Johnston, Arthur Lismer, J. E. H. MacDonald and Frederick H. Varley. Frank Johnston soon resigned and was replaced by A. J. Casson in 1926. Edwin Holgate became the eighth member of the "Seven" in 1930 and LeMoine FitzGerald became a kind of ex post facto member in 1932, a year after the last Group show. The ticking off of the members is further confused since Tom Thomson, closely associated with the founding Seven, died before The Group was formally begun and was not therefore a charter member. Artists need not be particularly precise in addition and subtraction, and The Group within all its boundaries brought new and vivid reality to the grandeur of Canada's air and space, lakes and forests.

Robert and Signe McMichael grew up separately admiring the work of Tom Thomson and The Group, and in 1953 they acquired Thomson's Pine Island and began their magnificent collec-

tion of Canadian works. A year later they began construction of their rambling gallery on the outskirts of Kleinburg, Ontario. The McMichael Canadian Collection is the source of this book, which has an illuminating text by Paul Duval and which was designed by A. J. Casson, the youngest member of The Group.

Four Decades, The Canadian Group of Painters and Their Contemporaries, 1930-1970, by Paul Duval, Clarke, Irwin & Co., Ltd., \$24.95. Inertia is the death of art, even organizational inertia. The Group of Seven held its last show in 1931 and soon disbanded. In 1933 the surviving members (J. E. H. MacDonald had died in 1932) came together again in a more broadly-based society called The Canadian Group of Painters. The twenty-eight founding members held their first show in Atlantic City in the summer of 1933 and their first Canadian show in Toronto in November of the same year. The new Group would move away from the first Group's emphasis on landscape and it would prove longer-lived, lasting more than thirty-six years. In addition to the founding and other members of the defunct Group of Seven, the new Group included Bertram Brooker, Emily Carr, Charles Comfort, Prudence Heward, Randolph Hewton, Bess Housser, J. W. G. Macdonald, Thoreau MacDonald, Mabel May, Yvonne McKague, Isabel McLaughlin, Liliias Newton, Will Ogilvie, George Pepper, Sarah Robertson, Albert Robinson, Anne Savage, Charles Scott, William Weston and W. J. Wood.

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