

# The Working Class in Recent Canadian Historical Writing

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### The Working Class in Recent Canadian Historical Writing

In the late 1960s Canadian historical writing appeared to be at an impasse. Two of our most prominent historians, and incidentally two of our most perceptive commentators on the state of the discipline, both called for a turn away from nation and politics. In its place they called for a new focus on region, ethnicity and class.<sup>1</sup> Approximately ten years later one of these historians has described the intervening years as "The Golden Age of Canadian Historical Writing".<sup>2</sup> While any self-respecting Maritime historian will of course be suspicious of references to a "Golden Age", it is clear that there have been remarkable shifts in professional historical interests in the last decade. One of the major new areas of study has been in the field of working class history. Stanley Mealing's assertion in his important 1965 article that Canadian historians had virtually ignored the concept of social class is no longer tenable.<sup>3</sup> Yet it is not so clear that most Canadian historians would yet reject his overall conclusion that class was not a significant factor in Canadian history. Historians still appear to regard the findings of the new historical study of class — and of sex, ethnicity, and region as well — as little more than interesting additional facts about which we previously knew nothing. Thus the new history is regarded as "more history" which has only a cumulative, not a qualitative, effect on our understanding of the Canadian past. But the new history is well on its way to transforming our understanding of the entire course and structure of Canadian development.

There can be little doubt that the field of working class history has grown quickly. Perhaps a few examples will suffice. The Committee on Canadian Labour History (CCLH) established in 1971 is a prospering, vibrant organization as is its Quebec equivalent, the Regroupement de Chercheurs en Histoire des Travailleurs Québécois (RCHTQ). The former publishes a bi-annual *Bulletin* and the new journal *Labour/Le Travailleur* and sponsors sessions at the annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association.<sup>4</sup> The latter group publishes the *Histoire des Travailleurs Québécois: Bulletin RCHTQ*, the series "Collection Histoire des Travailleurs Québécois" which has now

- 1 Ramsay Cook, "Canadian Centennial Celebrations", *International Journal*, 31 (1967), pp. 659 - 63; J. M. S. Careless, "Limited Identities in Canada", *Canadian Historical Review*, 50 (1969), pp. 1 - 10.
- 2 Ramsay Cook, "The Golden Age of Canadian Historical Writing", *Historical Reflections*, 4 (1977), pp. 137 - 49.
- 3 Stanley Mealing, "The Concept of Social Class and the Interpretation of Canadian History", *Canadian Historical Review*, 46 (1965), pp. 201 - 18.
- 4 Subscriptions are available from Committee on Canadian Labour History, History Department, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

reached six volumes, and document collections,<sup>5</sup> and co-sponsored the 1977 annual meeting of the *Institut d'Histoire de l'Amérique Française* on the 150th anniversary of trade unionism in Canada. Other useful indicators of activity in working class history are the extensive bibliographies that have been compiled recently and the now keen interest of Canadian archivists in collection in this field.<sup>6</sup> A good example of the latter is the fine special issue of *Archivaria* on working class studies.<sup>7</sup>

How are we to account for the growth in working class studies? Like most new intellectual interests, its roots lie in a conjuncture of historiographical, sociological, and political developments. By the late 1960s Canadian historiography was in sorry shape as the old paradigms failed before the onslaught of Quebec nationalism, the re-invigoration of regional loyalties, and the breakdown of political consensus. The old national history could no longer suffice. The call for attention to "limited identities" was the death-knell of Laurentianism, which W. L. Morton's "Clio in Canada" should have laid to rest as early as 1946.<sup>8</sup> This historiographic crisis, however, was only part of a very general development in the English-speaking world where a new social history inspired by Marxism and by *Annales* school approaches emerged as the dominant trend in historical research. The works of English scholars such as Edward Thompson and Eric Hobsbawm, and later of Americans such as Herbert Gutman and David Montgomery, had their effects in Canada on a new generation of graduate students.<sup>9</sup>

5 The six volumes to date are André LeBlanc et James Thwaites, *Le Monde Ouvrier au Québec: bibliographie rétrospective* (Montréal, 1973); Noël Bélanger, et al., *Les Travailleurs Québécois, 1851 - 1896* (Montréal, 1973); Jacques Rouillard, *Les Travailleurs du Coton au Québec 1900 - 1915* (Montréal, 1974); Robert Comeau, et al., *L'Action Politique des Ouvriers Québécois fin du xixe siècle à 1919: Recueil de Documents* (Montréal, 1976); Jean-Pierre Hardy et David-Thiery Ruddel, *Les Apprentis Artisans à Québec 1660 - 1815* (Montréal, 1977); and Francine Barry, *Le Travail de la Femme au Québec: l'évolution de 1940 à 1970* (Montréal, 1977). The document collection is Robert Comeau, et al., *Chronologie des Mouvements Politiques Ouvriers au Québec de la Fin du 19e Siècle Jusqu'à 1919* (n.p., 1976). Subscriptions to the Bulletin are available from R.C.H.T.Q., Université du Québec à Rimouski, Rimouski, Québec.

6 LeBlanc and Thwaites, *Le Monde Ouvrier*; R. G. Hann, et al., *Primary Sources in Canadian Working Class History, 1860 - 1930* (Kitchener, 1973); and Rolf Knight, *Work Camps and Company Towns in Canada and the U.S. An Annotated Bibliography* (Vancouver, 1975).

7 "The Working Class Record", *Archivaria*, 4 (1977), pp. 70 - 185.

8 W. L. Morton, "Clio in Canada: The Interpretation of Canadian History", *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 15 (1945 - 1946), pp. 227 - 34.

9 For a sampling of E. P. Thompson, see *The Making of the English Working Class* (London, 1968); *Whigs and Hunters* (New York, 1975); and *William Morris: Romantic to Revolution-*

This new generation was the product of the new mass university of the 1960s. The rapid expansion of higher education in Canada transformed the institutions which produced historians. Gone was the cozy, elitist university so well described in Carl Berger's recent study of Canadian historical writing.<sup>10</sup> The worlds of a George Wrong, desperately trying to produce a little Oxford complete with class attitudes, or later of a more mature Toronto Department focussed on producing scholar-civil servants with principles and ideals, were a far cry from the university experience of the 1960s. The dismantling of the old Toronto Honours programmes in History was only one indicator of these vast changes. The new generation of students was also drawn from wider ethnic and class backgrounds than the generations that preceded them.

Perhaps even more significant than the historiographical and sociological factors were political influences. Eric Hobsbawm has described extremely well the reorientation of the social sciences in the 1950s and 1960s. The successful revolutions in Algeria, Cuba, Viet Nam, and latterly in Southern Africa led to a renewed interest in history on the part of social scientists and a convergence of various disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, and history.<sup>11</sup> Closer to home, Marxism re-emerged among a new generation of leftists spawned by the struggles of the New Left throughout the western, industrialized world. This renewed interest in European intellectual traditions led to the rediscovery and translation of important twentieth-century Marxist scholars such as Antonio Gramsci, Georg Lukacs, Karl Korsch, and various Frankfurt school members such as Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, and Max Horkheimer.<sup>12</sup> While the disintegration of the New Left in the early 1970s led to a re-emergence of Leninist parties, for many it provoked a renewal of interest in the working class which refused to fall back on old, stale formulas.<sup>13</sup> There was also a significant increase in working class activity in

*ary* (London, 1977). For Hobsbawm, see *Labouring Men* (New York, 1964); *Primitive Rebels* (Manchester, 1969); *The Age of Capital* (New York, 1975); and *Captain Swing* (London, 1969). For Gutman, see *Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America* (New York, 1976) and *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom* (New York, 1976). For Montgomery, see *Beyond Equality* (New York, 1967).

10 Carl Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History* (Toronto, 1976).

11 E. J. Hobsbawm, "From Social History to the History of Society", *Daedalus*, 100 (1971), pp. 20 - 45.

12 Journals which played an important role in these developments were *New Left Review* (London) and *Telos* (Buffalo, St. Louis).

13 Journals whose internal history displays some of these developments are *Radical America* (Madison, Cambridge) and *Socialist Revolution* (San Francisco), recently renamed *Socialist Review*. For an interesting critique of the new Leninist options, see Jim O'Brien, "American Leninism in the 1970s", *Radical America*, 12, 1 (1977 - 1978), pp. 27 - 62.

the late 1960s and in the 1970s. The easy assumptions of the 1950s that the North American working class was either moribund or "bourgeoisified" were irrevocably dashed on the shoals of intensified class conflict. The deepening crisis of capitalism led to rapid increases in strike activity in Canada and ultimately to the imposition of wage controls under the Anti-Inflation Board, which in turn created the conditions for the first national general strike in Canadian history in October 1976. As usual, labour and the concerns of the working class draw most attention when workers are most active in their own behalf.

In this review essay I do not intend to cover the entire corpus of recent Canadian working class history. I will not discuss works that have already established their importance such as Irving Abella's *Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour*, David Bercuson's *Confrontation at Winnipeg*, or Robert Babcock's *Gompers in Canada*. They have all been extensively reviewed elsewhere and are considered in Michael Cross's review essay on labour studies in Canada up to 1976.<sup>14</sup> I will focus primarily on books published since 1976 and even then my coverage will be incomplete. The bias of the essay will be towards books and pamphlets that normally might not come to the professional historian's attention. Thus I will be especially concerned with the publications of Canadian small presses,<sup>15</sup> of the labour movement itself, of radical groups, and of scholarly works in related disciplines which have particular interest to Canadian working class studies because of their subject matter or technique.

Perhaps the best place to begin is with the recent attempts to produce a general overview of working class history in Canada. The standard account, Harold Logan's sadly dated, *Trade Unions in Canada* (Toronto, Macmillan, 1948), finally has some challengers. Three of these are popular attempts which stem from the labour movement's increased interest in its own history. While all three authors predictably display pro-labour and social democratic biases and all three books are flawed by egregious errors too frequent to enumerate here, each has slightly different strengths. Edward E. Seymour, *An Illustrated History of Canadian Labour, 1800 - 1974* (Ottawa, Canadian

14 Michael S. Cross, "To the Dartmouth Station: A Worker's Eye View of Labour History". *Labour/Le Travailleur*, 1 (1976), pp. 193 - 208.

15 The importance of nationalist publishing houses such as Anansi, Porcupine and Oberon in the area of Canadian literature has often been noted. Less attention has been paid to the flowering of small radical presses which have produced excellent materials in the realm of working class and women's studies. Examples are Canadian Women's Educational Press, New Hogtown Press, Steel Rail Press, NC Press (all of Toronto), New Star Books (Vancouver), and Black Rose Books (Montreal).

Labour Congress, 1976), although rather disappointing on the whole, does contain numerous photographs and a particularly good discussion of the 1958 Newfoundland Loggers Strike. The book would have been vastly more successful if the author had combed the archives more thoroughly for pictorial evidence and left the narrative aside. If one had to choose between Morden Lazarus, *Years of Hard Labour* (Don Mills, Ontario Federation of Labour, 1974) and Jack Williams, *The Story of Unions in Canada* (Toronto, Dent, 1975), one would weigh Lazarus' rather more balanced political discussion and his inclusion of biographical sketches of major Canadian labour leaders against Williams' extremely readable style and greater coverage of the nineteenth century. Both accounts, however, are "official" trade union history which displays a narrow definition of labour history and refuses to deal critically with contentious issues. Williams, especially, displays an unrepentant Cold War anti-communism. For these reasons they do not displace Charles Lipton, *The Trade Union Movement in Canada* (Toronto, NC Press, third edition, 1967) as the best single volume overview of Canadian labour history, although Lipton's account, especially after 1902, is badly biased by his rigid nationalist interpretation. Actually the best book to introduce students to the issues of working class history is still Stuart Jamieson, *Times of Trouble: Labour Unrest and Industrial Conflict in Canada, 1900 - 1966* (Ottawa, Information Canada, 1968), despite its narrow focus on twentieth-century strike activity.

These comments on general works underline the need for a good, professional single volume history of Canadian labour and for a more popular pictorial history of Canadian labour. Morden Lazarus has recently expanded his biographical work on Canadian labour leaders with *Up From the Ranks* (Toronto, Co-operative Press Associates, 1977), a useful collection of 115 biographies of prominent Canadian labour leaders. Unfortunately there is considerable unevenness in the information provided and the noticeable bias towards approved labour leaders almost entirely eliminates communists and nationalists from the book. There remains a long-range need for serious biographical work equivalent to Gary Fink, *Biographical Dictionary of American Labour Leaders* (Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 1974) or the on-going *British Dictionary of Labour Biography* (London, Macmillan, 1972 - ) under the joint editorship of Joyce Bellamy and John Saville. Two other general works might be mentioned, especially for teachers looking for brief ways of introducing working class history to their students. Eugene A. Forsey, *The Canadian Labour Movement, 1812 - 1902* (Ottawa, 1974), a Canadian Historical Association Booklet, is a short synthesis of the Senator's long awaited work on nineteenth-century trade unionism. It covers the ground but is severely limited by its narrow focus on trade unions as an institutional form. Another C.H.A. Booklet, Irving Abella's *The Canadian Labour Movement 1902 - 1960* (Ottawa, 1975), manages to avoid that pitfall to some

degree and is a lively account of twentieth-century developments which refreshingly does not hide the labour movement's failings.

One of the most interesting of the new techniques now being employed in working class studies is oral history, which has already developed a number of different approaches. First, there is the "life history" approach adopted from anthropology. In Canada this has been utilized with telling effects by Rolf Knight, who has followed his *A Very Ordinary Life* (Vancouver, New Star, 1974), the story of his immigrant German mother's experiences in Canada, with *A Man of Our Times: The Life History of a Japanese-Canadian Fisherman* (Vancouver, New Star, 1976) and *Stump Ranch Chronicles and Other Narratives* (Vancouver, New Star, 1977). Knight's technique is to provide the reader with a carefully edited transcript of his subject's life garnered through oral interviews. He adds to these critical introductions, excellent explanatory notes, and useful bibliographic aids. *A Man of Our Times* is the life of Japanese fisherman and union leader Ryuichi Yoshida. *Stump Ranch Chronicles* contains the life histories of Arnt Arntzen, a Norwegian immigrant to Canada in 1912, and Ebe Koeppen, a German who emigrated to the Peace River area in 1928. All three accounts are vivid descriptions of immigrant working class experience in the Canadian west which do much to puncture the myths of ethnic success, social mobility, and the Canadian mosaic. Instead we receive detailed descriptions of daily life and, perhaps even more telling, we are able to view the entire lives of some courageous but ordinary Canadian immigrants. The extraordinary geographic and occupational mobility, the strength and common humanity of these men and their wives, families and friends, their tentative steps toward radical politics as ways of explaining their experience, all these and much more are powerfully presented to the reader. We can only hope that Knight will continue to compile these sensitive and important life histories and that scholars in other Canadian regions will start to do the same. One also hopes that at some point Knight will pull this material together and write an analytical account of life on the resource frontiers of western Canadian society in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Jane Synge, a McMaster sociologist, has been attempting a more integrated approach to her study of family and work in early twentieth-century Hamilton. Synge has attempted to sample carefully and to collect interviews from a representative group of Hamiltonians. The results of her research are still very preliminary, but essays on British and Continental European immigrant experience before World War I and on the work and family lives of young working class women are very promising and avoid the problems of representativeness often used to criticize work such as Knight's.<sup>16</sup> A study based

16 Jane Synge, "Immigrant Communities — British and Continental European — in Early Twentieth Century Hamilton", *Oral History*, 4 (1976), pp. 38-51 and "Young Working Class Women

representative sample is the very exciting *The Great War and Canadian Society* (Toronto, New Hogtown Press, 1977), edited by Daphne Read and with an excellent introduction by Russell Hann. The interviews were compiled by university history students, not by professional historians, and Hann's introduction contains some of the most interesting reflections on the oral history method yet written in Canada. His concern for accent and other nuances of speech represents a sensitivity to the actual oral method not usually displayed by historians. Series of excerpts organized thematically constitute the main part of the book. The descriptions of how the war experience influenced the subjects' own lives are among the strongest parts of the book. Equally striking, however, are the reflections on class experiences in the Army and reminiscences about obscure events like the overseas riots of troops awaiting their return to Canada.

A final interesting variant of oral history is "*Man Along the Shore!*" *The Story of the Vancouver Waterfront*, compiled by the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen Union Local 500 Pensioners Association. These reminiscences of the Vancouver waterfront, of strikes and union organization, of working conditions and mechanization, and of leisure pursuits are a gold mine for the historian of the working class. They also represent a fascinating example for other trade unionists to replicate. Unlike the officially sanctioned labour movement histories described earlier, this volume transcends the sanitized record and goes far beyond trade unionism and social democratic politics in its discussion of life on the docks.

Closely related to oral history, especially of the life history variety, are recent volumes of working class memoirs and documents. Perhaps the closest to life history is Sydney Hutcheson, *Depression Stories* (Vancouver, New Star, 1976). Again, one is graphically introduced to the world of rural workers and their struggle to survive during the 1930s. With remarkable ingenuity Hutcheson managed at various times to live off the land. His will and ability to survive are very moving; equally notable are the human costs of the experience — his inability to support his wife, the consequent break up of his family for periods of time, and his broken health. Also notable is his political heritage; descended from British immigrants who were active in the Socialist Party of Canada, Hutcheson was naturally drawn to the SPC and to the Industrial Workers of the World. As with Knight's subjects, there is a refreshing non-dogmatism about his socialism. One has a clear sense that for many BC workers in the early part of the century, socialism flowed directly



from their experience. From the other side of the country comes a similar volume. Dawn Fraser, *Echoes from Labor's War* (Toronto, New Hogtown Press, 1976) is a powerful verse description of the Cape Breton miners' and steelworkers' struggles in the 1920s against the combined power of the British Empire Steel Corporation, the Nova Scotia government, and the Canadian army. Unlike Hutcheson's memoir, this account is not mediated by time, for Fraser's verse was actively used in these struggles. The volume's value is greatly enhanced by an excellent introduction by David Frank and Donald Macgillivray which situates the poetry of Fraser deep in the working class culture of industrial Cape Breton. Written in that simplest of poetic styles, the rhyming couplet, the poems passionately convey the intensity of the class conflict of that decade in Cape Breton.

We return to Central Canada for a series of memoirs, biographies, and documents relating to the experiences of the Communist Party of Canada. Although one Canadian labour historian has recently suggested that "the Communist Party because of its preoccupation with the Soviet Union, its ethnic composition, and its ideology was never more than an inconsequential sect", the CP undoubtedly played an important role in this country's working class history.<sup>17</sup> Sometimes, however, it is not clear whether the party itself or its historian critics do its historical reputation more damage. The party certainly does itself no favours by publishing the clinging eulogies which Progress Books seems increasingly to specialize in. The most recent of these is Louise Watson, *She never was afraid: The biography of Annie Buller* (Toronto, Progress, 1976), which fails to do its subject justice in any sense. The title unfortunately actually conveys the content and the volume never moves beyond sanctification of this important woman Communist leader. Like its earlier equivalent, Catherine Vance, *Not by gods but by people: The story of Bella Hall Gauld* (Toronto, Progress, 1968), Watson's study gives us absolutely no insights into important questions such as the role of women in the party. Perhaps the most useful segment of the book is the fairly complete discussion of Buller's role in the Estevan miners' strike and her subsequent prosecution and conviction. The few excerpts from Buller's own writings appended to the volume make it only too clear that she was far too intelligent never to have been afraid. They also make the historian wish that she had written an autobiography before her death.

This is especially the case because the recent autobiographical accounts of party activists have been far more useful for the historian. For example,

17 Ross McCormack, *Reformers, Rebels, and Revolutionaries: The Western Canadian Radical Movement, 1899-1919* (Toronto, 1977), pp. 170, 209. This book will be discussed more fully below.

Tom McEwen, *The Forge Glows Red: From Blacksmith to Revolutionary* (Toronto, Progress, 1974) contains much interesting material. It is especially good on his early years and his rough-edged auto-didacticism rings far truer than the supposedly smoother accounts written by party literateurs. This also holds true to some degree for the recently republished A. E. Smith, *All My Life: an Autobiography* (Toronto, Progress, 1977 [1949]). Smith, the renegade Methodist minister who devoted his life to party defense work through the Canadian Labour Defense League, provides an interesting, if uncritical, account of his path to Marxism. But the clear line between eulogy and critical reflection is best seen in the stark contrast between Oscar Ryan, *Tim Buck — A Conscience for Canada* (Toronto, Progress, 1975) and *Yours in the Struggle: Reminiscences of Tim Buck* (Toronto, NC Press, 1977). The latter volume, edited by Phillis Clarke and William Beeching, is a partial transcript of interviews Buck did with John (Mac) Reynolds for the CBC in 1965. It has had a peculiar history already, since the CP rejected its publication in favour of the Ryan treatment. Only through the efforts of Buck's relatives and friends, and the support of some elements in the party, has the document appeared in print at all. And an extremely valuable document it is. As an edited transcript, it displays considerable unevenness, backtracking, and a few inconsistencies, but compared to the Ryan volume, it is a breath of fresh air. Instead of a simple defence of party orthodoxy, Buck provides his reader with a sometimes critical view of the CP and with some sense of the extremely complex relationship that existed between it and the Comintern.

Buck's memoir is divided into six major sections. For the social historian of the working class Buck's vivid memories of his life as a machinist in England, Toronto, and on a tramp through the United States in the depression year of 1913 are perhaps of most interest. He describes and compares work process, management techniques, workers' shop floor power, and trade union strength in the various places he worked. This section also provides us with a first hand account of socialist politics in Toronto before the First World War. For all those who think that Canadian radicalism started west of Superior, his detailed account of the SPC, SDP and SPNA in central Canada should be illuminating and he gives us one militant machinist's view of the labour revolt of 1918 and 1919. Equally valuable are his memories of the independent Labour party successes and the growing disillusionment with the United Farmers of Ontario government. A valuable description of the early reactions of Canadian socialists to the Russian Revolution opens the second section. While his vivid account of the founding of the Communist Party of Canada is useful, the remainder of this section adds little to our knowledge of party problems in the 1920s. For example, Buck merely endorses previous party accounts of the expulsion of Maurice Spector for Trotskyism and of Jack MacDonald for flirting with Jay Lovestone and

American exceptionalism.

The third and longest section deals with the depression years. Here one wishes that Buck had not been the victim of Bennett repression because we end up with an overly detailed description of his arrest, trial, incarceration, and of his attempted assassination during the Kingston Penitentiary Riot of 1932. Missing is the much needed reflection on the party's prominent role in worker and unemployed struggles. Party international ties and campaigns are reviewed in section four which graphically describes the terrible confusion that reigned in the Canadian party on the question of the Comintern's reversals from anti-Fascism to the Nazi-Soviet Pact and then to full support for the war effort after Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union. Buck admits in perhaps the most candid statement contained in Canadian party literature to date that "We took positions and repeated arguments which we received from the CI, rather than analyzing them strictly on the basis of Canadian conditions. We made some mistakes as a result" (p. 292). He goes on to point out, and this is the critical point that Ivan Avakumovic, *The Communist Party in Canada* (Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1975) never confronts:

This was not a matter of dictation. They were in no position to impose their will on us. It is the logic of close unity and working together and thinking along the same lines, which very easily gets to the point where you accept the majority positions (p. 292).

During the war the party enjoyed its greatest success and Buck estimates party membership at 23,000 in June 1946. Buck proudly describes this short period of national prominence, stressing the party's co-operation with the war effort, both in supplying ethnics to be dropped behind lines to support the Yugoslavian partisans and later in semi-formal meetings with the Liberal government (pp. 335 - 8). He is less loquacious on the debate within the party on the question of "Browderism" after the war. Browder, the leader of the CPUSA, was bitterly condemned by the American party for revisionist tactics which, not surprisingly, closely resembled the Canadian party's line during the war. Buck in a very brief three pages notes only that Browder had been extremely influential on Canadian party leaders and that Buck thus came under considerable attack within the party. Contemporary struggles for left hegemony have led Canadian Maoists recently to republish the major polemic of the internal party struggle against Browderism, BC party leader Fergus McKean's *Communism Versus Opportunism* (Montreal, In Struggle, 1977 [1945]). Of considerable interest, this volume sheds more light than Buck does on this critical phase in party history.

Buck's reminiscences tend to fall apart after the war. Parts five and six, the least successful in the book, were perhaps still in progress when he died. Nevertheless, they do contain some nuggets of valuable information. For example, Buck's claim that the party was very active in opposition to US imperialism's penetration of Canada — both economic and cultural — de-

serves to be remembered. His account of the party's shock at the Gouzenko revelations and especially of the indictment and conviction of LPP/MP Fred Rose ring true. Equally his personal doubts about events in the Soviet Union under Stalin, particularly after his attendance at the 1937 Bukharin show trial, demonstrate that even the party leadership was not oblivious to Stalinism's degenerating effects. Not to Buck's credit, of course, was his suppression of his own doubts after his return to Canada. Finally, his version of the bizarre events of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU is extremely noteworthy. Buck, like other foreign delegates, missed Krushchev's condemnation of Stalin when he was sent on a mission to address Russian factory workers outside Moscow. He first heard of the revelations when he arrived at English CP leader Harry Pollitt's office in London while returning to Canada. Then to make things worse, all foreign parties were dependent on the US State Department's leaked version of the text published in the *New York Times*. Meanwhile, the CPSU issued semi-denials further mystifying all foreign communists. Buck articulates his own confused response to those events but tells us nothing of the ensuing fight in the Canadian party which culminated in the departure of important former leaders and countless others in what was probably the most damaging split in Canadian party history.

This is an important book and comes closest to the quality of some recent American writings which constitute a new genre of radical writing — the critical but not anti-communist reflections of former party members.<sup>18</sup> Buck stood at the centre of Canadian party life except for the period of his incarceration in Kingston and during his underground stay in the US at the beginning of World War Two. His other writings are available for further study through the excellent *Select Bibliography of Tim Buck* (Toronto, Progress, 1974), compiled by Peter H. Weinrich. This bibliography could well be used as a model due to its high quality and extremely detailed entries, although the inclusion of locations would have been very helpful to researchers.

A vibrant area of party life which has received relatively little attention in Canada until recently lay in the cultural sphere. The welcome publication of *Eight Men Speak and other plays from the Canadian workers' theatre* (Toronto, New Hogtown Press, 1976), edited by Richard Wright and Robin Endres, commences the process of rediscovery. These plays, all taken from the pages of communist cultural magazines of the 1930s, were dramatic agit-prop vehicles in the campaigns to fight unemployment, to free Tim Buck,

18 See Al Richmond, *A Long View from the Left: Memoirs of an American Revolutionary* (Boston, 1973); George Charney, *A Long Journey* (Chicago, 1968); and Peggy Dennis, *The Autobiography of an American Communist* (Westport, Conn., 1978). For a valuable British account of 1956 see the articles by John Saville, Malcolm MacEwan and Margot Heinemann in *Socialist Register 1976* (London, 1976).

and to build support for socialism. One of the dramatists represented in the collection is prominent Canadian poetess, Dorothy Livesay, who recently published a collection of materials reflecting her political activities in the 1930s. *Right Hand Left Hand, A true life of the thirties* (Erin, Press Porcepic, 1977) provides us with considerable insight into the radicalization of one Canadian artist. Unfortunately it is a bit of a hodge-podge which would have benefitted from a tighter editorial hand. Nevertheless, with *Eight Men Speak*, it directs our attention to an important tradition in Canadian literature which only Frank Watt has previously studied.<sup>19</sup>

Despite its rather grand title, Mary V. Jordan, *Survival: Labour's Trials and Tribulations in Canada* (Toronto, McDonald House, 1975) is a memoir of the Winnipeg Strike and OBU leader Bob Russell written by his former secretary. Although it cannot be trusted on historical fact, it does provide readers with interesting material drawn from Russell's own early writings in the *Machinists' Bulletin*. One is again struck both by Russell's origins in the British Isles and by his socialism. Equally important, however, is his deep involvement with his trade. We need to know much more about Canadian machinists who took the radical lead in most Canadian cities in the period culminating in 1919. The book also has some useful material on the OBU's football pools — surely the most ingenious device for financing a trade union centre yet devised in Canada. Nevertheless, it is a book to be read only by those sufficiently familiar with the material to separate fact from opinion.

Norman Penner's *The Canadian Left: A Critical Analysis* (Scarborough, Prentice-Hall, 1977) stands at the cross-roads between memoir and historical writing. Penner, now a political scientist at York's Glendon College, was a long time activist in the Canadian CP. He played a very important role in trying to find a compromise position between the party hierarchy's orthodoxy in 1956 and the revisionist tendencies led by Joe Salsberg. When this attempt failed, Penner left the party. This rewritten version of his University of Toronto doctoral dissertation sets out to trace the development of socialist ideas in Canada. Among his most important arguments are the assertion of an indigenous and now permanent Canadian socialist tradition, the convincing demonstration of Marxian hegemony over that movement until 1919, and the indication of the dominance of workers, not intellectuals, in the development of left wing thought in this country. Chapters four and five on the Communist party have the advantage of being written "from inside" and are the strongest in the book. The treatment of the social democratic tradition is less satisfactory and his final chapter on the re-emergence of socialism in the 1960s

19 See Frank Watt, "Radicalism in English Canadian Literature Since Confederation" (Ph.D., University of Toronto, 1957).

and 1970s is far more successful in its treatment of the Quebec left than in its analysis of English Canadian trends. In the latter case the entire “new left” tradition disappears and is replaced totally by a focus on left nationalism. Equally the women’s movement is passed over almost without mention. Finally, the discussion seems coloured by a far fairer analysis of Trotskyism than the rather easy dismissal of Maoist groups. In many ways the book will probably annoy historians. It is intellectual history in the old style. One has a feeling that not only the ideas, but even the intellectuals mentioned are floating around suspended in space. This is perhaps somewhat unfair given the vastness of Penner’s undertaking and, despite this criticism, the book serves as a very useful introduction to Canadian left thought.

More to the liking of the historian will be A. Ross McCormack, *Reformers, Rebels, and Revolutionaries: The Western Canadian Radical Movement 1899 - 1919* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1977), an excellent book which represents the best of the new labour studies in Canada. The questions that I want to raise about it flow from its very stimulating arguments. First is McCormack’s categorization of three distinct radical traditions: reformism along the lines of the British Labour Party; rebellion along the lines of the Industrial Workers of the World or other dual unionist, syndicalist elements; and finally the revolutionism of the Socialist Party of Canada and the Social Democratic Party. These schematic distinctions tend to obscure as much as they clarify. For example, what line separates the unskilled wobbly from his militantly syndicalist, but craft unionist, skilled machinist brothers? Or even more difficult, what line separates the militant advocates of the general strike from the rank and file membership of the Socialist Party of Canada? Were the lines that divided western radicals from each other — and there were definitely many such divisions — as precisely drawn as McCormack’s schema suggests? And were they constant throughout the period 1899 - 1919 or did they shift as militancy and discontent spread? One concrete example of the difficulty of these divisions comes in an early chapter on the “First Western Revolt” where the line between the “rebel” dual unionists of the Western Federation of Miners and the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees and the “revolutionary” cadres of the Socialist Party of British Columbia cannot be sustained.

A second problem area with this fine study lies in McCormack’s depiction of the Socialist Party of Canada. His analysis of their successes in British Columbia and in the mine fields of Alberta is brilliantly drawn. One senses at times, however, that the emphasis on “impossiblism” in their ranks was much more a rhetorical stance than a reflection of their day to day political work. Only careful local study of the kind that McCormack provides for BC will answer this question definitively. An additional problem that stems from the structure of the book is the fact that we do not see the SPC change over time and thus find their prominence in the events of 1918 - 1919 surprising,

especially since the impossibilists seem to have lost control of the party. The process by which this takes place is not explored by McCormack.

Two related themes are highlighted in this study and in almost every other work on radicalism in Canada — regionalism and ethnicity. There is an unspoken assumption throughout this volume that the west was in the lead. This assumption must be explored. Recent research on the Nova Scotia industrial scene, for example, suggests that there was considerably more activity in the east than either western radicals or western historians have cared to recognize. Equally we know relatively little about central Canadian labour. The dramatic events of 1918 - 1919 were certainly not localized in the west and the generalization that eastern labour was conservative demands to be pursued far more rigorously than it has been to date. McCormack, of course, in writing about the west cannot be expected to take on this task, but easy assumptions about other unstudied regions should always be taken with great care. The second theme that flows through this book is the importance of ethnicity. Unfortunately, it is never pursued at length. Until Canadian historians get inside the radical ethnic press and inside the various ethnic socialist organizations, we are not going to understand fully the events of the remarkable labour upsurge of these eventful years.

Finally one can only express surprise that McCormack chooses to conclude his book with what is, at best, an anachronistic interpretation of Canadian working class history. The victory of "labourism" (his "reformers") is attributed to the fact that their "tactics and ideology were not incompatible with the nation's orderly and moderate political culture" (p. 171). The rest of the volume totally contradicts the existence of "an orderly and moderate political culture" in Canada. A popularly written piece of history, which explores some of the same territory that McCormack covers, further undermines any notion of moderation. Jack Scott, *Plunderbund and Proletariat: A History of the IWW in BC* (Vancouver, New Star, 1975) provides a short and accessible work on the militant IWW and on the appalling conditions in BC rail camps before the First World War. Another popular work which helps question notions of eastern labour passivity is Paul MacEwan, *Miners and Steelworkers: Labour in Cape Breton* (Toronto, Hakkert, 1976). MacEwan is at his best on the virulent struggles of the 1920s which were most available in oral tradition and in written sources. Far less satisfactory are his accounts of the earlier history of coal and steel unionism in Nova Scotia and of the modern period which suffers from the political partisanship that one might expect from the NDP MLA for Cape Breton Nova. Nevertheless, this is a good read.

Beginnings are being made at the type of research into Canadian ethnic traditions that will greatly illuminate the study of the Canadian working class. Until recently ethnic history in this country was a tale of unmitigated success. Middle class ethnics who generally sponsored such works were not interested

in the more general working class experience of their fellow immigrants. Recent work by Don Avery should remind us all that immigration was constantly in the service of the capitalist labour market in this country and that the historical record contains far more than the unmitigated success stories than have been written until recently.<sup>20</sup> A work which gives us some of this flavour for one group is Helen Potrebenko, *No Streets of Gold: A Social History of Ukrainians in Alberta* (Vancouver, New Star, 1977). Although somewhat flawed by errors of fact and by insufficient research, this book manages to convey more of the reality of the Ukrainian experience in Canada than many of its more exalted predecessors. Best are Potrebenko's moving memories of her own family and her translations of first person narratives of Ukrainian pioneers. The tales of their suffering as resource proletarians and as early farmers are quite reminiscent of the oral life histories collected by Rolf Knight. This suggests a structure of shared experience which may transcend ethnic boundaries. In addition, lest anyone think that Canadian racism has been limited to blacks and orientals, the internment experience of Ukrainians during the First World War should be quite instructive.

Some shorter recent small press titles which make significant contributions to working class studies include Terry Copp, ed., *Industrial Unionism in Kitchener, 1937 - 1947* (Elora, Cumnock Press, 1976); Pat Schulz, *The East York Workers' Association: A Response to the Great Depression* (Toronto, New Hogtown Press, 1976); and Wayne Roberts, *Honest Womanhood: Feminism, Femininity, and Class Consciousness among Toronto Working Women, 1893 - 1914* (Toronto, New Hogtown Press, 1977). The Copp volume, a collection of student essays on the arrival of CIO unionism in Kitchener's rubber and meat packing industries, points out that the CIO drive did not achieve its final successes in the 1930s but had to be consolidated with great difficulties in the 1940s. Schulz's work, which is based on interviews and intensive local research, depicts in loving detail the organizing experiences of one particular group of married unemployed. Their progress from political naiveté to a considerable degree of class consciousness is traced with great care. The Roberts' work is an important contribution to the discussion of

20 Don Avery, "Canadian Immigration Policy and the Alien Question, 1896 - 1919: The Anglo-Canadian Perspective" (Ph.D., University of Western Ontario, 1973). This will be published shortly by McClelland and Stewart under the tentative title *European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896 - 1931*. See also his "Canadian Immigration Policy and the Foreign Navy", Canadian Historical Association, *Historical Papers* (1972), pp. 133 - 56; "Continental European Workers in Canada, 1896 - 1919: From 'Stalwart Peasants' to Radical Proletariat", *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 12 (1977), pp. 53 - 64; and his "The Alien and the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919", in Ramsay Cook and Carl Berger, eds., *The West and the Nation: Essays Presented to W. L. Morton* (Toronto, 1976).



working class women in Canada. He argues persuasively that women workers' failure to organize stemmed from structural, demographic, and economic causes rather than from psychological factors. Thus Roberts contests some of the contributions to the path-breaking *Women at Work: Ontario 1850 - 1930* (Toronto, Women's Educational Press, 1974).

Visual history has become popular of late and the National Museum and National Film Board have joined forces to produce *Canada's Visual History*, a series of slide collections with historical introductions, bibliographies, and suggested class assignments. Aimed primarily at the high school market, a number of these collections are of great interest for university teaching as well, such as Donald Avery, "Immigration to Western Canada, 1896 - 1914"; David Bercuson, "1919: A Year of Strikes"; Terry Copp, "Poverty in Montreal, 1897 - 1929"; Peter Neary, "Bell Island: A Newfoundland Mining Community, 1896 - 1966"; A. Ross McCormack, "The Blanketstiffs: Itinerant Railway Construction Workers 1896 - 1914"; J. St. Pierre, "The Asbestos Strike 1914"; and Jacques Rouillard, "Marie Blanchet, Valleyfield Cotton Weaver in 1908". Another interesting example of visual history is Robert F. Harney and Harold Troper, *Immigrants: A Portrait of the Urban Experience, 1890 - 1930* (Toronto, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1975). Focused on Toronto, this volume graphically depicts the realities of the urban immigrant experience. Unfortunately, the text is less successful than the pictures but what historian would want to match his writing style against the evocative abilities of period photographs.

While sociological work on the Canadian working class has been slight in quantity and quality to date, there are signs that there may yet be some hope in this area. James W. Rinehart, *The Tyranny of Work* (Don Mills, Longman, 1975) is a very useful overview of the sociological literature on work and class which incorporates recent Canadian historical and sociological work quite successfully. The published *Proceedings of the first Workshop Conference on Blue-Collar Workers and their Communities*, A. H. Turritin, ed. (Toronto, York University, 1976), although very uneven in quality, at least suggests a new dynamism in the field.

Some of this new sociological interest stems from the dramatic labour upsurge in Canada in the last decade. One of the most dramatic incidents was the Quebec Common Front strike of March to May 1972, when the Corporation des Enseignants du Québec (CEQ), the Fédération des Travailleurs du Québec (FTQ), and the Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux (CSN) joined together to fight the Quebec government for higher wages for hospital and other public sector workers. The resulting near-general strike and the arrest and jailing of the leadership of the three major labour centres as well as a number of local leaders brought Quebec to a near stand-still. These important events are described in Diane Ethier, Jean-Marc Pottie et Jean Reynolds, *Les Travailleurs Contre L'Etat Bourgeois, Avril et May 1972* (Montréal,

Les Editions de l'Aurore, 1975). Another book which attempts to analyze the new mood among Canadian workers in the 1970s is Robert Laxer, *Canada's Unions* (Toronto, James Lorimer, 1976). Laxer, a prominent left-wing political activist and Canadian nationalist, tries to cover all bases in this volume. In the process he tends to sacrifice sustained analysis. Moreover, as a strong nationalist he tends to blame the international unions for all the problems of the Canadian labour movement which begs far too many important questions about the nature and role of the working class in advanced capitalist society. Nevertheless, this book is a controversial introduction to the current labour situation.

Walter Johnson, ed., *Working in Canada* (Montreal, Black Rose, 1975) starts at the work place rather than with the labour movement. The book is a series of vignettes of conditions in various work places in different sectors of the economy. For those who take an optimistic view of twentieth-century improvements in factory, office and shop conditions, his book is a quite useful corrective. Especially interesting is Peter Taylor's account of conditions in the Canadian post office. Silver Donald Cameron, *The Education of Everett Richardson: The Nova Scotia Fishermen's Strike 1970 - 71* (Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1977) provides us with yet another starting point for a look at contemporary labour — namely, the intensive analysis of a single strike. Although popularly dismissed as a romantic and biased view of the Canso Strait fishermen, the book is a very welcome addition to Canadian labour studies. This was an important strike and the tensions which emerged are instructive. The clear inadequacies of the Nova Scotia labour relations' legislation, the anti-labour bias of nearly all agencies of the state, the double-dealing of elements of the labour movement, the residual anti-communism which plagues the United Fishermen's organizing drive, and the strain between the old independent commodity producer's life style and the new contingencies of an increasingly monopolistic fishing industry, all are adequately covered by Cameron without sacrificing readability.

Another journalist has written a far less successful book. Walter Stewart, *Strike!* (Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1977) wraps itself in a supposedly pro-labour bias and then goes on to trot out every anti-labour chestnut imaginable. Basically a call for a non-adversary labour relations system, the book is annoyingly glib and superficial. Class conflict would apparently disappear if only everyone would drop the pretense that it exists, argues Stewart. Unfortunately only John Munro seems to buy this rather strange notion. Certainly the Canadian Manufacturers' Association does not. A far briefer, but infinitely more perceptive, account of the contemporary scene which provides a stimulating analysis of the Liberal government's wage and "price" controls is Leo Panitch, *Workers, Wages, and Controls* (Toronto, New Hogtown Press, 1976). Drawing heavily on his analysis of the British scene developed in his important *Social Democracy and Industrial Militancy: The*

*Labour Party, the Trade Unions and Incomes Policy, 1945 - 1974* (London, Cambridge University Press, 1976), Panitch exposes the anti-working class bias of the Liberals' programme. He also lays bare the contradictions implicit in the seemingly reform oriented schemes of a Walter Stewart or a John Munro.

The more than forty titles discussed here should leave little doubt about vibrancy in the field of Canadian working class studies. This is especially true since these works are in many regards only the tip of the iceberg. A number of dissertations in labour topics have been recently completed and many more are in progress which, when they appear in print over the next few years, will further transform the field.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, Canadian labour studies still tend to reflect some of the old strengths and weaknesses of the Canadian historical tradition. Much of the work under review here and much of that now underway is still primarily concerned with institutional history and with labour in politics. While this is all useful work which adds to our knowledge of those aspects of working class life, there are many other components of both the working class itself and of all workers' lives.

The work of Michael Katz's Hamilton social history project, which until recently begged off some of the most important questions of class analysis, has provided us with valuable studies of various aspects of mid-nineteenth-century Ontario social history.<sup>22</sup> His forthcoming work, which will address the issue of class directly, promises to be even more stimulating. Equally the work of younger scholars influenced by British and American traditions

- 21 Among recently completed dissertations are Bryan Palmer, "Most Uncommon Common Men: Craft, Culture and Conflict in a Canadian Community, 1860 - 1914" (Ph.D., State University of New York at Binghamton, 1977); Ian Davey, "Educational Reform and the Working Class: School Attendance in Hamilton, Ontario 1851 - 1891" (Ph.D., University of Toronto, 1975); Jacques Rouillard, "Les syndicats nationaux au Québec, 1900 - 1930" (Ph.D., Ottawa, 1976); Michael Piva, "The Condition of the Working Class in Toronto, 1900 - 1921" (Ph.D., Concordia, 1975); Ross Johnson, "No Compromise - No Political Trading: The Marxian Socialist Tradition in British Columbia" (Ph.D., University of British Columbia, 1975); Joseph Hugh Tuck, "Canadian Railways and the International Brotherhoods: Labour Organization in the Railway Running Trades in Canada, 1865 - 1914" (Ph.D., University of Western Ontario, 1975); and Gregory S. Kealey, "The Working Class Response to Industrial Capitalism in Toronto, 1867 - 1892" (Ph.D., University of Rochester, 1977).
- 22 See, of course, Michael Katz, *The People of Hamilton, Canada West* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975). But also see Alison Prentice, *The School Promoters* (Toronto, 1977); Harvey J. Graff, "Literacy and Social Structure in the Nineteenth Century City" (Ph.D., Toronto, 1975); and Susan Houston, "The Impetus to Reform: Urban Crime, Poverty and Ignorance in Ontario, 1850 - 1875" (Ph.D., Toronto, 1974). Also of great interest is Michael Doucet's recently completed Toronto geography Ph.D. thesis on property owning patterns in late nineteenth-century Hamilton.

should help to bring more of a social history framework to the study of Canadian workers. This is especially necessary if we are to consider two critical areas of working class life which to date have received very little attention in this country — namely, the family and women. American and British work has recently begun to bring the family into the centre of working class studies through concepts of the family economy, the crucial role of the family in job placement, and as the most important transmitter of culture.<sup>23</sup> There has been very little consideration of these questions in Canadian work with the notable exception of the Hamilton project. Women played significant roles not only in production in industrial capitalist society but also in reproduction. We know far too little of their role in either sphere. An important recent paper by Alison Prentice may start to encourage research in this area.<sup>24</sup>

Another crucial area of study for working class history lies in community politics. Recent debates in Canadian urban history highlight the necessity to discover exactly what role urban workers played in both the old machine politics of Canadian cities and in the emergence of urban reform and of socialist interventions in urban politics.<sup>25</sup> The stimulating, but undocumented, notion of Viv Nelles that Ontario businessmen could afford to opt for public ownership of Ontario Hydro because of the weakness of the working-class movement certainly needs to be tested.<sup>26</sup> Consideration of Canadian workers in provincial and federal politics will be furthered greatly by a clear understanding of their role in municipal politics which both functioned as the cornerstone of the federal parties and was in addition the locus of the de-

23 See, for example, Herbert Gutman. *Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in Working-Class and Social History* (New York, 1976) and his *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750 - 1925* (New York, 1976); Tamara Hareven, "The Labourers of Manchester, New Hampshire, 1912 - 1922: The Role of Family and Ethnicity in Adjustment to Industrial Life", *Labour History*, 16 (1975), pp. 248 - 65; Thomas Dublin, "Women, Work and Protest in the Early Lowell Mills", *Labor History*, 16 (1975), pp. 99 - 116; and Daniel Walkowitz, "Working Class Women in the Gilded Age: Factory, Community and Family Life among Cohses, New York, Cotton Workers", *Journal of Social History*, 5 (1972), pp. 464 - 90.

24 Alison Prentice, "Writing Women into History: The History of Women's Work in Canada", forthcoming *Atlantis*. See also Susan Trofimenkoff, "One Hundred and Two Muffled Voices: Canada's Industrial Women in the 1880s", *Atlantis*, 3, 1 (1977), pp. 67 - 82.

25 See the special issue of the *Urban History Review*, 2 (1976), pp. 3 - 66 on urban reform and H. V. Nelles and Christopher Armstrong, *The Revenge of the Methodist Bicycle Company: Sunday Streetcars and Municipal Reform in Toronto, 1888 - 1897* (Toronto, 1977).

26 H. V. Nelles, *The Politics of Development: Forests, Mines and Hydro-Electric Power in Ontario, 1849 - 1941* (Toronto, 1974), pp. 254 - 5, 489 - 95.

cision making which affected workers most directly.<sup>27</sup>

Studies in these areas will further considerably the search for a new synthesis of Canadian history. The long-overdue insertion of a class analysis into Canadian historical writing already promises overviews which transcend the refreshing and liberating pluralism of the 1960s calls for attention to region, ethnicity and class. It should be increasingly clear, however, that these so-called "limited identities" are neither "limited" nor analytically separable. No historical notion of class (and there can be no other useful notion) can fail to incorporate ethnicity and place. Ramsay Cook's recent worry that the new "Golden Age" was already ending seems quite premature. Working class studies in the next few years will help transform qualitatively our view of the Canadian past.

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27 For a discussion of this and other important issues in working class studies, see David Montgomery, "Gutman's Nineteenth-Century America: A Review Essay", forthcoming. *Labour History*. For an attempt to discuss these issues in the Canadian context, see my "The Orange Order in Toronto: Religious Riot and the Working Class" in Gregory S. Kealey and Peter Warrion, eds., *Essays in Canadian Working Class History* (Toronto, 1976), pp. 13 - 34 and the final three chapters of my dissertation, *op. cit.*

### "Nova Scotia is My Dwelen Plas": The Life and Work of Thomas Raddall

When, in 1968, Thomas Raddall, then aged 65, unhesitatingly refused an invitation to become lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia, one major undertaking still remained to him — the composing of his memoirs. He was setting himself a formidable task, for autobiography is one literary form that is nearly always read with as much suspicion as anticipation. While we all know how frequently, and with what uncertainty, we tend to re-order our memories and opinions of ourselves, we unreasonably demand of the autobiographer extraordinary powers of recollection, self-knowledge, and fair-mindedness. In fact, we expect less. After all — we wonder — how far is the narrator to be trusted in what he says? How important to our fullest understanding of him is all that he leaves unsaid? Is his tale more self-serving than it is illuminating? And of those individuals most inclined to present the public with the stories of their own lives, is there anyone — apart, perhaps, from the politician or the general — who views himself with more self-esteem than a writer? Indeed, few generals or politicians enjoy as well-honed a bent for internecine climbing, so consuming an appetite for acclaim and rank. And when, late in the day, the opportunity arises to pay off old scores, the writer is likely to visit his enemies, alive and dead, with a malignity so pure, so direct, that it might be the envy of a Sicilian bandit. Furthermore, the writer lives by invention; with him, factual evidence will usually succumb to the temptations of metamorphosis. In his