

local level are rare. It is refreshing to see a local history publication containing something other than church and family histories. This article is useful, too, as a counterbalance to articles discussing primary documents. In this way, the journal can appeal to a broader readership.

The reputation of the Simcoe County Archives is enhanced by the professional quality of this publication. As well, the East Georgian Bay Historical Foundation deserves credit for recognizing the need to promote the use of its local archives and for doing something concrete about it.

Mike Proudlock
Region of Peel Archives

The Poet and the Critic: A Literary Correspondence Between D.C. Scott and E.K. Brown. ROBERT L. McDOUGALL, ed. Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1983. 308 p. ISBN 0-88629-011-2.

E.J. Pratt: The Truant Years, 1882-1927. DAVID G. PITT. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984. xix, 415 p. ISBN 0-920502-39-3.

These two volumes form an interesting pair for archival review. Perhaps the first point of professional interest is the perilous existence of primary sources. How much archival material has been inadvertently lost? The contrite unfortunate who did not recognize familial talent early enough — “How did I know that he [Pratt] was going to be famous?” — deserves our sympathy. One is less tolerant of the loss of Lampman’s letters, which seem to have vanished. And gratitude seems too mild a response to those who in “an inspired moment scooped” up two boxes of Scott Papers from what must have been the brink of extinction. Authors, though with more right, can themselves pose threats to the record. When Pratt destroyed an early poem which had reduced his fiancée to gales of laughter, perhaps no more than historical curiosity suffered. On the other hand, the poet could have missed an important lesson about his art, later gleaned from a “cold critical” reading of *Clay*, had not Mrs. Pratt salvaged one copy when its disappointed author “tore the tremendous manuscript to shreds in all its copies and sent them into the flames.” Similarly, Duncan Campbell Scott cannot date published poems for Brown because “lately [his] lyrics were scribbled on bits of paper that were destroyed”

Researchers, too, can leave tracks which are difficult to follow. Understandably, David Pitt cites locations for his sources at the time he used them. It is possible to lose the trail to those in private hands, however, as indeed was the case for nearly twenty years, from Bourinot to McDougall, for the Scott-Aylen Papers. Perhaps only the archival heart shivers to read that Brown went back to Cornell well stocked with Lampman manuscripts, but the conservator should experience a similar *frisson* to learn that one notebook was “in bad condition, cover gone, and some pages, very yellow” Alas, too, Brown’s study wall was decorated with some “framed ms. poems of A.L.” Admiration, it appears, can take its own toll.

The Scott-Brown letters reveal a nicely defined episode in the lives of a poet and a critic and, as a bonus, give us a Chinese box view of an editor watching editors at work, as Brown and Scott prepare Lampman’s poems for posthumous publication. Since editions of letters and manuscripts are sometimes said to devalue the originals, it is interesting to

see what can be learned from this example. The outer box (McDougall's) reveals that a previous editor, Bourinot, had removed references that he thought might embarrass living persons. McDougall himself carefully spells out his own editing practice, where, for instance, he lets Scott's punctuation stand "except in a few cases in which the sense of the sentence seemed in danger of being lost," which is precisely where another scholar needs to make his or her own decision. And as McDougall points out, the careful editor who seeks to preserve the texture of his documents finds that a printed version suppresses "the troubled look" of a page and with it the full evidential content of the original.

The inner box of Scott and Brown shows the editors of Lampman's poetry justifying changes on the grounds that they are not dealing with fair copies, but with relatively rough drafts. Early in the correspondence, Scott took upon himself the provision of punctuation since, he said, "I think I know what he [Lampman] would do." The task soon proved painful to the elderly poet's sensitivities, but his qualms — "It seems profane to be laying hands on these poems" — are allayed by the critic's assurance that what they are doing is designed "to strengthen something that was left without the last scrutiny of the author."

Disagreements in scholarly interpretation also demand an examination of the primary sources. Where one researcher sees deliberate excision, another sees nothing more sinister than the careless removal of postage stamps from the covering envelope. To the archivist mired in arrangement and description, it is cold comfort when a researcher is likewise unable to discern an order of composition from "random hieroglyphical jottings that grew into the wayward drafts," the originals of which, therefore, promise a lasting critical challenge which no reproduced or edited text can meet. And finally, there is the verification of fact, sometimes deliberately or accidentally obscured by Pratt, for instance, which requires reference to archival documentation. Under these circumstances, archivists may rest easy about the enduring value of the original documents in their care.

No doubt the economics of modern publishing have destroyed our chances of having footnotes instead of endnotes. In addition, Pitt did not want to "clutter the text" with reference signals. Thus it is impossible to tell what has endnotes without turning to the back and searching under page numbers, a procedure possibly more disruptive than standard academic practice. This is a minor irritant, however, in comparison to the inconvenience caused by the McDougall volume, whose author might well lodge a complaint with his publisher. The book is so tightly bound that, short of breaking the spine, the reader is faced with a two-handed struggle to keep it open. Referring to endnotes under these conditions is to lose one's place, reference, and temper.

But, of course, such comment is peripheral to the major achievement of these two volumes. Although both cover only a portion of the lives of their subjects, they succeed in giving the reader a pure sense of the characters and interests of the men involved.

The Scott-Brown correspondence is truly that — a genuine exchange between individuals pursuing a common interest in Archibald Lampman in particular and Canadian poetry in general. In the process, a touching bond is created between the younger critic and the elderly poet, and although inevitably the greater dependence is Scott's, there is genuine balance in the relationship. Some observations catch the modern eye. Canadian nationalism did not spring full grown from the 1960s. It was there twenty years earlier. There also was regional intolerance. Brown commits himself to spend time at the Banff School "with Alberta Writers (God save the mark!)" Afterwards he reports that they

seemed a "sad lot," the result, he was told, of the "absence of an intelligent audience, the absence of the best books, or any knowledge of what they were." Only Gwen Pharis Ringwood impressed him. He would no doubt be pleased to know that her papers are now in safekeeping at the University of Calgary. He is redeemed for this reviewer, however, by urging Scott "to keep [his] ... materials for deposit in one place." And the days of government cultural largesse were still in the future. Its modern extent would no doubt surprise Scott, who wrote that it was "visionary" of the Canadian Authors Foundation "to think that the Govt is going to give us a grant"

The Pratt volume covers a much longer period and, since it is a fully developed biography, paints a more detailed picture of the man and his milieu. The writing is strong and elegant, with some nice touches of suspense. It is highly recommended to those who believe Canadian denotes dullness. Pratt is a picturesque character who created his own *persona*, by embellishment if he thought it necessary. The son of a frugal religious household, he could, nonetheless, flog homemade patent medicine to finance his studies or pawn his gold medal for "\$17 in cash to spend on a 'glorious dinner' ... for a 'crew' of recent emigrés from Newfoundland!" Fortunately for him and us, he flourished in days before the regimentation of universities. The tyranny of the mandatory doctorate in the minutiae of a single discipline had not yet arrived. Where now could a latter-day Pelham Edgar hire a clergyman-psychologist to teach English, particularly one of whom his office-mate, Douglas Bush, could recall, "I'm sure his classes were lively and illuminating in essential ways, though I don't know that Ned's hold on English Literature was ever very firm"? Indeed, it was unsure enough that the obliging Bush, newly graduated with an Honours B.A., allowed Pratt to beseege him with questions, pick his brains, and on occasion, borrow his lecture notes.

Anyone with an interest in Canadian literature will want the Brown-Scott letters on the shelf. The appeal of the Pratt volume is much wider. Anyone interested in Canadian culture will appreciate this lively biography of a colourful and talented poet.

Jean F. Tener
University Archives
University of Calgary

Arctic Ordeal: The Journal of John Richardson, Surgeon-Naturalist with Franklin, 1820-1822. C. STUART HOUSTON, ed. Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1984. xxxiii, 349 p., illus. maps. ISBN 0773504184 \$29.95.

During the years 1819-22, Lieutenant John Franklin of the Royal Navy led an expedition through northern Canada to locate and explore the north coast of mainland North America. With him were two midshipmen, Robert Hood and George Back; a surgeon and natural historian, John Richardson; a seaman, John Hepburn; and a group of Canadian voyageurs. The journey ended in disappointment in terms of exploration and, ultimately, in tragedy. Only a short stretch of the coastline was explored, between the Coppermine River and the Kent Peninsula, and, during the overland return to base, eleven of the twenty members of Franklin's party died of starvation and murder, amid rumours of cannibalism.

For just over 150 years, the only substantial source of information on this extraordinary expedition was Franklin's own rather ponderous *Narrative of a journey to*