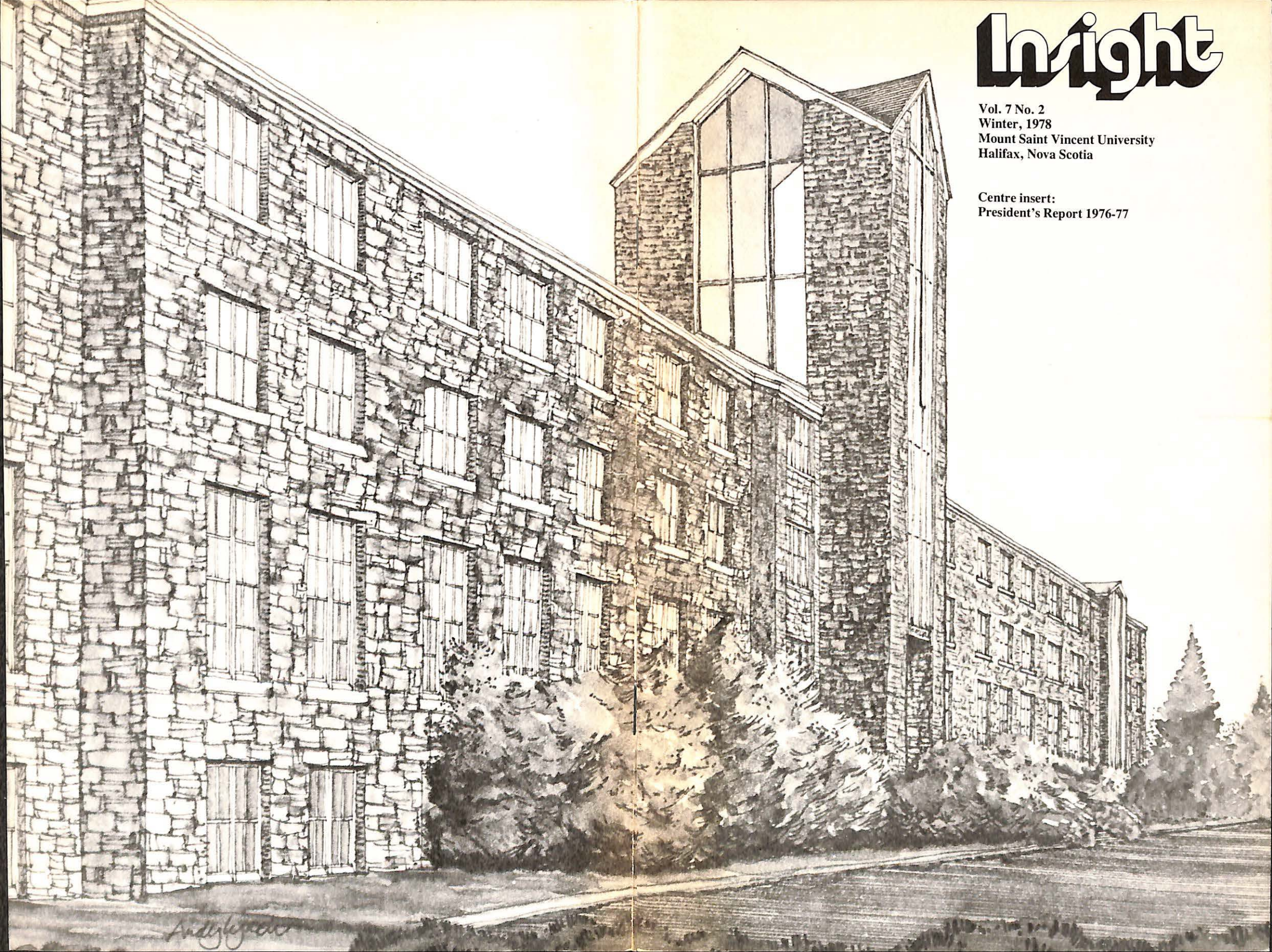


# Insight

Vol. 7 No. 2  
Winter, 1978  
Mount Saint Vincent University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Centre insert:  
President's Report 1976-77





# Table of Contents

At the Gallery 1

In this issue 2

Edwin J. Pratt — The Unique Poet 3  
Ena Butt

Manipulative and Perceptual Materials 11  
Child Study students create their own tools

An Examination of the Poet Alden Nowlan 15  
Michael Hamm

Homecoming '78 . . . You're invited! 28

Centre Insert:

President's Report 1976-77

*Insight* is published by the Public Relations and Development Office of Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, N.S., four times each academic year and is distributed by mail free of charge to members of the faculty, staff, parents and friends of the university.

Correspondence to *Insight* should be addressed to:

Director of Public Relations and Development  
Mount Saint Vincent University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
Telephone: 443-4450

Material published in this magazine may be reprinted without consent. A Mount Saint Vincent University *Insight* credit is requested.



*Noted Halifax folklorist Dr. Helen Creighton (left) attended the opening of Older Ways: Traditional Nova Scotian Craftsmen at the Art Gallery and here congratulates the show's creators, co-ordinator Joleen Gordon (centre) and photographer Peter Barss (right.)*

credit Paul Zwicker

## At the Gallery

Until April 2

**Portrait of a People**, drawings by Micmac artist Leonard Paul, with a selection of traditional Micmac crafts from the Nova Scotia Museum  
(Downstairs)

**Feathers, Fibres — Forms** by Diana Asimakos  
(Upstairs)

April 7 to 30

**American Photography: Process and Transformation: Eleven American Photographers**, courtesy of the National Gallery  
(Downstairs)

**Beauty and the Basket**, an exhibit exploring different types and techniques of contemporary utilitarian basketry from around the world; organized by Mern O'Brien, exhibitions officer, MSVU  
(Upstairs)

May 5 — 28

**Recent Works by Julia Healy**, Julia Healy, Halifax  
(Downstairs)

**Brother and Sister: Crocheted Clothing** by Paula Scott, Chester, N.S. and **Metal Work** by Ronald Pearson, Deer Isle, Maine  
(Upstairs)



## In this issue . . .

Sometimes it seems universities almost ignore their excellent students. We hear a lot today about students who have problems reading and writing, and we hear about the special testing and remedial help planned for them. Yet there are many who excel and in the recent past they haven't been much on display.

I'd like to do my bit to change that situation and so in this issue you'll find two papers submitted to Professor Renate Usmiani for a course called Canadian Poetry (English 106). One paper, which focuses on Alden Nowlan, was written by first year Bachelor of Arts student Michael Hamm. The other is about Edwin Pratt and was written by continuing education arts student, Ena Butt. Both are excellent and I invite you to find out for yourself.

The next issue will carry two papers written for a sociology course and poems by students Brian Denison and Marci Lin Melvin. Should other material be submitted in the meantime, it, too, will be published. In the past *Insight* has carried the work of many faculty members and I plan to continue to do this but I do hope to be able to continue to offer student material as well.

In addition, I urge alumnae and other members of the Mount community to share their writings — poems, stories, opinion pieces — in this publication.

This issue also carries a special reminder to all alumnae: Homecoming '78 is planned for May 5, 6 and 7. See page 28 and 29 for more information and plan to attend.



Carol Sutton  
Director of Public Relations

## Edwin J. Pratt — The Unique Poet

by Ena Butt

*Ena Butt is a continuing education student. She submitted this paper to Professor Renate Usmiani for Canadian Poetry (English 106).*

Edwin J. Pratt occupies a very special place in the development of Canadian poetry. His work spanned the era between the Nature poetry of the early century and the Realistic school, which emerged in the nineteen-twenties. Though Pratt began as a Nature poet, his search for a fusion of substance and style more in keeping with the growing urban and technological society of the post-war World I era, resulted finally, in the concise, forceful poetry, which is uniquely Pratt — substance stripped bare of everything but the truth. "His lines have the apt finality of great nails driven truly home".<sup>1</sup> He has no imitators and no followers, and is, therefore, unique.

A keen ear for just the right word, (for though Pratt writes in polysyllables he never sounds pompous), a powerful sense of rhythm, and his genius for imagination, all combine to make Pratt a very dynamic poet. We are carried along, as by a tide, and the pictures which are created are so vivid that they take us directly into his world. His world is huge, encompassing the universe, from the constellations of outer space, to the far-reaching ends of the earth, into the earth herself, and into the sea.

Edwin J. Pratt was born 1883, in Western Bay, Newfoundland, a fishing village on the island's east coast. His father was a Methodist minister, and because of this the family moved from one outport to another, usually every three or four years. His early education ended at age fifteen, after which he served an apprenticeship in a draper's shop in St. John's, for a couple of years. Following this, he attended the Methodist College in St. John's, and received his Matriculation. This was followed by some years of teaching and

probationary work for the Methodist ministry in the outports. These last years were to leave an indelible impression, for he worked with people who eked out sparse lives, but managed to do so with great dignity — accepting the hardship and tragedy of the sea as part of it. Pratt eventually went to Toronto, where he attended Victoria College, at the University of Toronto, graduating in 1911 with a B.A. He then did graduate work in theology and philosophy, with one of his major interests being psychology, in which he lectured while earning his Ph.D. He turned away from theology and psychology and joined the English department of Victoria College, where he remained until his retirement in 1953. He died in 1964.

The changes of direction for Pratt, shown above, pointed toward the attitude which he eventually took in his writing, that of realism rather than pure ideas; he had finally come to the conclusion that "philosophical and ethical insights, whenever they found their way into poetry, should be renderings of experiences actually lived or imaginatively grasped." This is what he strove for, and finally succeeded in doing.

Pratt's first epic, a philosophical rendering, called "Clay", was finally rejected by him, for reasons which we have seen. Previous poetry had been in the Nature idiom, and could have been Carman or Lampman. He was not satisfied, for he was searching for a new substance and style. His first book of poetry was finally published in 1923, "Newfoundland Verse". This was a varied collection, and showed clearly his experimental stage in trying to find the style right for what he wanted to say. Though most showed no radical change, there were signs of the poet to be, in them.

Even such lyrics as "Newfoundland", contained the forceful quality which was to



be his trademark, and showed clearly that he was no singing poet.

*Here the tides flow and here they ebb,  
Not with that dull unsinewed tread of  
waters*

*.....  
But with a lusty stroke of life  
Pounding at stubborn gates.*

However, the poem in "Newfoundland Verse" which showed, most clearly, the Pratt of the future, was "The Ice Floes" a narrative about sealers who perished during the annual seal hunt. In this was shown his gift for forceful description of heroic action, from which he, as a poet, separated himself completely; he was simply the narrator. This was what he was striving for, for he long believed that emotion on the part of the poet when recounting an action only succeeded in clouding the reality.

*Over the bulwarks again we were  
gone,  
With the first faint streaks of a misty  
dawn;  
Fast as our arms could swing we slew  
them,  
Ripped them, "sculped" them, roped  
and drew them  
To the pans where the seals in  
pyramids rose  
Around the flags on the central floes,  
.....*

The central theme of most of Pratt's poetry is the force shown in the struggle for survival in nature, usually man against the sea, or the wilderness. This is why Pratt's poetry is considered "heroic", Pratt views nature as a whole, with man as just one part of it. The courage displayed in the struggle is the important thing with Pratt, not the victory or the death. In the poet's eyes, physical death is not as significant as the immortality which transcends the physical; this is especially true when courage has been in the form of self-sacrifice or love. The symbols of death are the sea and the cave, the temple and the Cross symbolize the victory.

Another theme which figures largely with Pratt is his concern that the boundary which separates modern man from his savage, primal nature is very thin, and that

given the right circumstance, all mankind could revert to savagery. These lines from "From Stone to Steel", show this clearly:

*The snarl Neanderthal is worn  
Close to the smiling Aryan lips  
The civil polish of the horn  
Gleams from our praying finger tips.*

The heroic struggle is depicted in the last verse of the same poem, so that both themes are contained here:

*The road goes up, the road goes  
down —  
Let Java or Geneva be —  
But whether to the cross or crown,  
The path lies through Gethsemane".*

We can see by these lines, and by our previous look at the central theme, that Pratt's poetry is, in essence, religious. Pratt was also fascinated by evolution, and we see an allusion to this, too, in the lines above. It is interwoven often with both main themes.

In order to appreciate the poetry of Pratt, we need to know him as a human being. Edwin Pratt was a big man, both in size, and spirit. He had a buoyant, humorous personality, and an exuberance which delighted all who knew him. He has not by nature, a politically or socially minded person, (although this latter changed with events, as we shall see). His main concern was that his fellow human beings should be able to live spontaneously, and freely able to express themselves, but with compassion towards their fellows. He was a Christian humanist. This was reflected in his own life, for he rejected the narrow concepts of organised religion, especially the extreme Puritannical concept of Methodism, feeling that it was stifling. Later on, he rejected the then popular German theory of physiological psychology: that man's nature was controlled by sensory impulses within a mechanical Cosmos. Pratt declared that each person is unique, for only a human being has reason. In his poem, "The Truant", we see man (described as "the little genus homo, six feet high, whom we suspect is Pratt himself), defying the god of the mechanical universe:

*"You oldest of the hierarchs  
Composed of electronic sparks,  
We grant you speed,  
We grant you power, and fire  
That ends in ash, but we concede  
To you no pain nor joy nor love nor  
hate,*

*No final tableau of desire,  
No causes won or lost, no free  
Adventure at the outposts-only  
The degradation of your energy  
When at some late  
Slow number of your dance your  
sergeant-major Fate  
Will catch you blind and groping and  
will send  
You reeling on that long and lonely  
Lockstep of your wave-lengths towards  
your end.*

Northrop Frye considers this to be the most remarkable poem ever written.

Pratt was fascinated by machinery and technology, including wireless, and radar, which had only recently been invented, and in astronomy. This was a new idea in poetry, but Pratt felt that in order to be a truly modern poet, one should be able to incorporate technology into one's writings. This, he certainly did with great success. In the poem "The man and his machine", Pratt showed his skill in using machinery as a vehicle for his imagery:

*The man whose hands were on the  
wheel  
Could trace his kinship through her  
steel,  
.....  
He felt his lesioned pulses strum  
Against the rhythm of her hum,  
.....  
so neatly timed  
From storage tank to piston shot —  
This creature with the cougar grace,  
This man with slag upon his face.*

The sense of rhythm, too, makes the machine come to life.

Pratt takes us into the heavens too, with his imagery, as in these lines from "The Titanic".

*As clear below as clear above, the  
Lion  
Far on the eastern quarter stalked the  
Bear:  
Polaris off the starboard beam-and  
there  
Upon the port the Dog-star trailed  
Orion.  
Capella was so close, a hand might  
seize  
The sapphire with the silver Pleiades.  
And further to the south-a finger span,  
Swam Betelgeuse and red Aldebaran.  
Right through from east to west the  
ocean glassed  
The billions of that snowy caravan  
Ranging the highway which the  
Milkmaid passed.*

It was a very starry night, indeed!

That Pratt decided to revive the Narrative was understandable, it being the best form for his heroic theme. He did, however, continue to write shorter poems, a few of which we will see later.

Pratt's first long narrative was the "Witches' Brew", written in 1925. Although it departed from his heroic theme it, was successful in separating him from the action completely, and thus established his style. It was also written in tetrametric couplets — a very active form which created spontaneity and excitement — and was indicative of Pratt's two major works which followed. This form, combined with Pratt's imagination, makes "The Witches' Brew" pure entertainment. We are brought into a sea-world of fantasy and the result is dazzling. Three sea witches are curious to know whether alcohol will have any effect on the cold blooded fish; the result is a brew which defies description, as is the action that follows. The humour, and perhaps the main reason for the poem, is shown by these lines:

*Puritans to whom the chance  
Had never come in life to dance  
Save when the dreadful circumstance  
Of death removed their maiden aunts.*

Could it be Pratt's way of getting even with the rigidity of Methodism?



The last lines showing the manner of Tom the Cat's disappearance demonstrates the electricity of the poem.

*Now with his tail electro-tipped  
Swiftly, but leisurely he made  
Around the steaming palisade  
A blazing spiral which outshone  
the fiercest glow of Acheron  
He sharply turned.....*

only

*To Satan and the Witches Three  
(In touch with his galvanic tail  
By more occulted masonry),  
Appeared a phosphorescent trail  
That headed for the Irish Sea.*

The next book to appear was "The Titans", made up of two poems, "The Cacholot", and "The Great Feud", in 1926. In the first we see Pratt freely exulting in the theme of supreme strength. It is a spontaneous poem; the action begins suddenly and everything following this is a surprise; even the ending is sudden. This, combined with such powerful words as Cacholot, mammalian, Maharajah, Lordship, give the whole poem as Majestic tone. After all, the whale, does imagine himself king of his realm, and it is his pride which he takes to the grave, right to the end, when both whale and ship go to their deaths together.

*He felt his now unchallenged right  
To take by demonstrated merit  
What he by birth-line did inherit —  
The lordship of each bull and dam  
That in mammalian waters swam,  
As Maharajah of the seas  
From Rio to the Celebes.*

The above lines demonstrate the whale's pride. Pratt creates a scene of nervous action with both the surprise tactic and the use of active verbs, along with the tetrameter:

*He somersaulted, leaped and sounded,  
When he arose the whaleboats  
hounded  
Him still; he tried gigantic breaches,  
The irons stuck to him like leeches,  
For every surface run, he towed  
The boat crews faster than they rowed.*

The second poem of "The Titans",

"The Great Feud", is a much longer and more complex poem than "The Cacholot". It, too, is in tetrametric couplets, and, therefore, full of action. It is allegorical in meaning; it depicts a prehistoric war between the creatures of the land and those of the sea. All perish, either in battle or as a result of another force, an erupting volcano, which, in the height of frenzy the creatures fail to notice, except for the ape; she is already showing signs of reason, and escapes. However, she is really the cause of it all, for it is her cunning and rhetoric which has incited the beasts into battle in the first place.

*And every lobe of every ear,  
Was cocked that none might fail to  
hear  
The message when the ape unfurled  
Her simian marvel to the world.*

Here is Pratt's look at man in his primal stage of reason; he is using it, too, as an inference to the leaders and politicians of our own century, who by the same cunning and rhetoric, are still achieving the same disastrous results.

"The Great Feud" is, like the "Witches' Brew", an extravaganza of fantastic detail. It seems to contain the name of every creature — mammal, fish or fowl — ever known to exist. Illustrating this would mean quoting at a length not possible here. However, the poem, in essence, a warning to the world of the possible result of another global conflict.

In 1930, Pratt wrote "The Roosevelt and the Antiope", a gripping story of rescue at sea against terrible odds. It received high praise, but I will pass it over in preference to "The Titanic", which I found to be more interesting. This may be due to the fact that it is presented in several short parts, each one giving the date and time of the main events within the story, thus making it easier to follow than the preceding poem. It also has more subtlety and is more complex than the other. In the first verse we see the ice-berg being directed by seemingly, an unknown force, toward the ship. This suggests that the ship is foredoomed:

*It drifted where  
Ambushed, fog-grey, it stumbled on its  
lair  
.....  
Awaiting a world-memorial hour.*

This sense of doom and the ultimate destruction of the ship and its passengers, suggests a parallel with Greek tragedy, the Aeschylean tragedy, "Agamemnon". Both accounts have main characters so full of pride that it is unthinkable for them to believe their lives could end tragically — pride<sup>2</sup> was the cause of their destruction.

Beauty, reverting to the brute, is shown in the description of the berg being reduced, on its melting journey, from a Temple of "inward pillars, and steeped bells", to the "Brute palaeolithic outline of a face"; thus it becomes the symbol of destruction as it comes closer to its prey. Pratt's theme of power is suggested by the berg, in the size and assumed unsinkability of the ship, and a third — the wealth and arrogance of a lot of its passengers, who are depicted as "Grey templed Caesars of the World Exchange".

The story, itself, is told with Pratt's genius for concise, but meaningful description. With his vivid and carefully built up details of the ship's routine and dialogue of passengers and crew, we are brought into the scene. It is one of dazzling wealth and careless gaiety, but Pratt shifts this mood gradually to one of uneasiness, then into confusion and incredulity that the ship is in danger, to the final realisation that she is doomed. In the interim of these changes we see how many of the giants of the Stock Market are transformed from arrogant to heroic beings by their calm in the face of danger:

*Men came to Guggenheim as he stood  
there  
In evening suit, coming this time to  
borrow  
Nothing but courage from his calm,  
cool face.  
.....*

*Other acts are shown too:*

*A boy of ten,  
Ranking himself within the class of men,*

*though given a seat, made up his  
mind to waive  
The privilege of his youth and size,  
and piled  
The inches on his stature as he gave  
Place to a Magyar woman and her  
child.*

*The end comes suddenly:*

*With a roar,  
Which drowned all cries upon the deck  
and shook  
The watchers in the boats, the liner  
took  
Her 1,000 fathoms journey to the  
Grave.*

The berg is apparently the victor, but because of the manner of the death of the ship, she becomes the victor.

In the interim between "The Titanic, 1935, and his true epic, "Brebeuf and his brethren", we see a great change in the mood of Pratt. Pratt, who travelled a lot because of his lecturing, during the Depression years, sobered by the poverty and general despair of the people he met. He was troubled, too, by the attitudes of politicians who did not seem to care about the deepening problem in Europe — the threat of Fascism — and he wrote several poems dealing with this. Contained in "His Fable of the Goats and other poems", is "Seen on the Road", and these lines express his concern:

*The pundit lectured that the world was  
young  
As ever.....  
.....the class hung  
Upon his words, I listened like a dolt,  
And muttered that I saw the wastrel drawn  
Along a road with many a pitch and bump  
By spavined mules — this very day at dawn  
And heading for an ammunition dump:*

"Brebeuf and his brethren" is a reflection of the more sober Pratt. Gone is the exultation and spontaneity of his earlier works, for it is written in the midst of a world at war. It is a compelling narrative, and is the perfect expression for his theme of supreme heroism — that of sacrificial love. It is for Pratt, "a summation of his thinking at a moment of greatest illustration



of the truth of his reading of experience",<sup>3</sup> rather than a Christian epic or historical account.

"Brebeuf" tells the story of the Jesuit missionaries who came from France and worked among the Huron Indians in the middle of the seventeenth century. The account is written in blank verse, a new approach for Pratt, and the whole poem has a quietness about it, as if reflecting the stillness of the wilderness, which was the setting for most of it. The story is told unhurriedly, with a steady rhythm, thus conveying the feeling of the great patience of the priests in their attempt to win over the Indians, as well as the passage of time — from 1625 to 1649. The research which went into this epic, so that it could be recounted with absolute accuracy is remarkable, even for Pratt!

The poem begins with the reason the Jesuits were coming to New France:

*The story of the frontier like a saga  
Sang through the cells and cloisters of  
the nation  
It caught the ear of Christ, reveined  
His hands  
And feet, bidding His marble saints to  
leave  
Their pedestals for chartless seas and  
coasts  
And the vast blunders of the forest  
glooms.*

In these lines we can see how the sense of urgency of the cause is implied by repetition of the hissing sounds of the s's and the cracking sound of the c's. This is a method used at other times throughout the story to convey a sense of urgency, when it is needed.

The Indians, despite their barbaric cruelty, are not seen as "good" or "bad", by Pratt; but are people striving against the hardships of nature. The priests, too, are struggling against the wilderness, and they and the Indians are forced against one another. However, the priests are not struggling for themselves, but for Christ, and it is this willingness to sacrifice their own bodies for Love which is the real message. They know they are walking in the shadow of death every day of their lives, but the joy of knowing they are

performing their highest task is shown in these lines form a letter by Brebeuf, asking for further missionaries:

*There is no gain but this — that what  
you suffer  
Shall be of God. Your loneliness in  
travel  
Will be relieved by angels overhead,  
Your silence will be sweet for you will  
learn  
How to commune with God.*

The whole poem is divided into the 12 books of the traditional epic. The story reaches a partial climax with Book IX., when, after the building of Fort Ste. Marie, the priests have a headquarters from which to operate and pursue their mission. After years of extreme hardship and cruelty at the hands of the Hurons, hundreds of converts are won, and Brebeuf writes to his Superior:

*Peace, union and tranquility are here  
Between the members of our order. We  
need  
More workers for the Apostolic field  
Which more than ever whitens for the  
harvest.*

The tide turns after this, with the Iroquois uprising and the result is the burning of the smaller missions and finally Ste. Marie itself. Brebeuf and his friend Lalemont are taken captive, and their final hour of the struggle draws near. Both are killed; Brebeuf is the supreme symbol of heroism to the end. He does not moan, but comforts his dying friend. The savages are in awe of his strength, and they hack him to try and find it, but the source was in another sacrifice on Gethsemane:

*But in the sound of invisible trumpets  
blowing  
Around two slabs of board, right-  
angled, hammered  
By Roman nails and hung on a Jewish  
hill.*

Most critics view this as the pinnacle of Pratt's art — as, indeed, Pratt felt too. By its very nature, nothing which followed could surpass it. It was a reminder to French and English Canada of their common heritage and was received with

great acclaim by both. It established Pratt as a true Canadian poet.

Pratt's poetry became very topical in the following years of World War II. "Behind the Log" is the story of a Canadian convoy being attacked by German U boats. It says nothing new in theme or style, but in it Pratt is able to use a lot of his mechanical and technical knowledge as a vehicle for his imagery; it is, also, an assertion of his patriotism.

"Towards the last Spike" is Pratt's last narrative, published in 1952, and is the story of the building of the Canadian Pacific Railroad. Here we have two struggles, one of man against the elements, and a political one between the "Grits" and "Tories" of the day. It is forceful, contain humour and has some excellent phrasing. Here is an example of the phrasing; — we have Sir John A. Macdonald musing in his room at night about the western overland route:

*'Twas chilly at the window. He  
returned  
To bed and savoured soporific terms:  
Superior, the Red River, Selkirk,  
Prairie,  
Port Moody and Pacific. Chewing  
them,  
He spat out Rocky grit before he  
swallowed.  
Selkirk! This had the sweetest  
taste . . . . .*

Pratt presents characters as individuals in this last narrative, rather than symbols, as "Brebeuf" was, for instance. These are Sir John A. Macdonald and Cornelius Van Horne, who are the progressive forces in the story. Here is a look at Van Horne:

*Fast as a bobcat,  
He'd climb and run across the shakiest  
trestle  
He breakfasted on bridges, lunched on  
ties;  
Drinking from gallon pails, he dined  
on moose.  
He could tire out the lumber jacks;  
beat hell  
From workers but no more than from  
himself.*

Its most distinguishing mark is the image of the ancient Laurentian Shield as a monstrous, prehistoric reptile impeding the forward path of the railroad.

*This folded reptile was asleep or dead:  
So motionless, she seemed stone  
dead-just seemed:  
Ice-ages had passed by and over her,  
She had shed water by the longer  
rivers  
To Hudson Bay and by the shorter  
streams  
To the great basins to the south, had  
filled  
Them up, would keep them filled until  
the end  
Of Time.*

The sea is still the symbol of destructive force, but now it is a "Sea at mountains", and the thousands of men who strive to build the railroad through them are a group, not individuals. They are the nameless heroes but Pratt is aware of them, as the following lines show:

*Ring, ring the bells, but not the engine  
bells:  
Today only the ritual of the steeple  
Chanted to the dull tempo of the toll.  
Sorrow is stalking through the camps,  
speaking  
A common mother-tongue . . . . .  
Ring, ring the bells but not the engine  
bells:  
Today only that universal toll,  
For granite, mixing dust with human  
lime,  
Had so compounded bodies into  
boulders  
As to untype the blood, . . . . .*

With "Towards the Last Spike", Pratt had unified the Canadian landscape, another "first" for him as a poet.

Pratt continued to write shorter poems while pursuing the narrative, and there are many fine examples from his "Many Moods", 1932, And "Still Life and other Verse", 1943. Three of these are shown, and they are further examples of Pratt's versatility. "Sea Gulls", shows his gift for impression, and the metaphor:



For one carved instant as they flew  
 The language had no similitude,  
 Silver, crystal, ivory  
 Were tarnished .....  
 .....for the lift  
 And carriage of the wings would stain  
 the drift  
 Of stars against a tropic indigo .....  
 .....  
 No clay born lilies of the world  
 Could blow as free  
 As those wild orchids of the sea.

Pratt's "The Parable of Puffsky", is a satire, and describes a man who never gave, but only sold. He had a price on everything, including his own soul:

He sold by night, he sold by day  
 Sold long, sold short, sold anyway;  
 He'd sell his teeth, he's sell his eyes; it  
 made

No difference to his trade  
 No matter what he sold —  
 The other fellow took the goods,  
 But Puffsky took the gold.

Puffsky dies, and being unable to dicker for his soul in Heaven, goes down to Hell to try his luck, but Satan's laboratory tests show

"Both size and weight,  
 Are indeterminate,  
 It is a watered soul,  
 That hath a swollen diaphragm,  
 Gaseous, but non-inflammable  
 When mixed with coal,  
 Therefore in hell  
 Not worth a current damn".

The following gem "Erosion", is perhaps the best known of Pratt's short poems:

It took the sea a thousand years,  
 A thousand years to trace  
 The granite features of this cliff,  
 In crag and scrap and base.

It took the sea an hour one night,  
 An hour of storm to place  
 The sculpture of these granite seams  
 Upon a woman's face.

This is a powerful poem. By repetition and the sudden meeting of time, we get the feeling of being hit by the huge wave of the

second verse which has been coming for a thousand years, and then recedes as suddenly as it comes, leaving as dazed with its impact and the utter finality of its statement.

Although Pratt's themes are universal in nature, a lot of his poetry has been topical, and much more has been set against the "terror and awe" of the Canadian landscape. Whatever the reason, he has never reached the status of a truly popular, international poet. Too, he has to be studied in the round in order to be appreciated. Television, too, may be to blame, for Pratt's narratives were suited perfectly for radio, and it was in the 1940's that his works knew their greatest popularity, and gained him the admiration of the world. However, this was his highest peak of writing too, with "Brebeuf", and his war-time narratives were popular partly because they inspired patriotism. Through all of this we cannot help but wonder why a man of such genius should not attain international stature; perhaps one country does not wish to borrow the hero of another.

However, we are chiefly concerned with Pratt's uniqueness. As we saw in the beginning, Pratt has no predecessors and no imitators thus far; his style is completely his own. He has also played a significant role in unifying the Canadian landscape and strengthening its heritage and culture, the only poet to do so. For this he received much recognition, including the Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, the highest civilian honour Canada can bestow. On his seventy-fifth birthday the CBC recorded tributes to him from all over Canada, and it was a sign that the work that he has helped to start, of bringing Canadian culture to life, had been well begun. As Northrop Frye so aptly put it "... as long as that culture can remember its origin, there will be a central place in its memory for the poet in whom it found its tongue".

#### Footnotes

1. J. Bartlett Brehner, Foreward to "Edwin J. Pratt", Ryerson.
2. Professor Henry W. Wells, Foreward to "Edwin J. Pratt", Ryerson.
3. R. E. Rashley, Poetry in Canada

continued on page 27

# Manipulative and Perceptual Materials

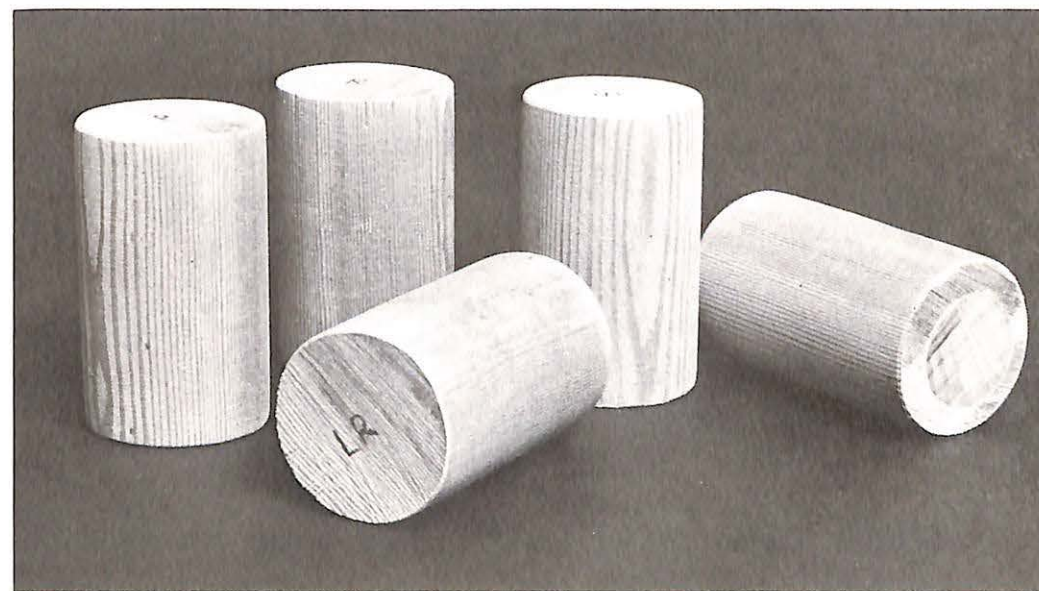
## Child Study students create their own tools

Toys and games give children the opportunity to learn how to do many everyday tasks in an enjoyable way. Materials which can be laced, buttoned, shaken, sorted, heard or smelled are fun and provide valuable information through the senses. Students in the Bachelor of Child Study program know this and, as part of their program, have the chance to design and create some learning materials.

All of the items shown here were made by second year students, in a class taught by Mrs. Carol Ann Wien. She said these manipulative and perceptual materials provided additional interaction with the environment for pre-school aged

youngsters and teach visual discrimination as well as fine motor co-ordination. For instance, children may have a number of objects to match by colour, shape, function or concept.

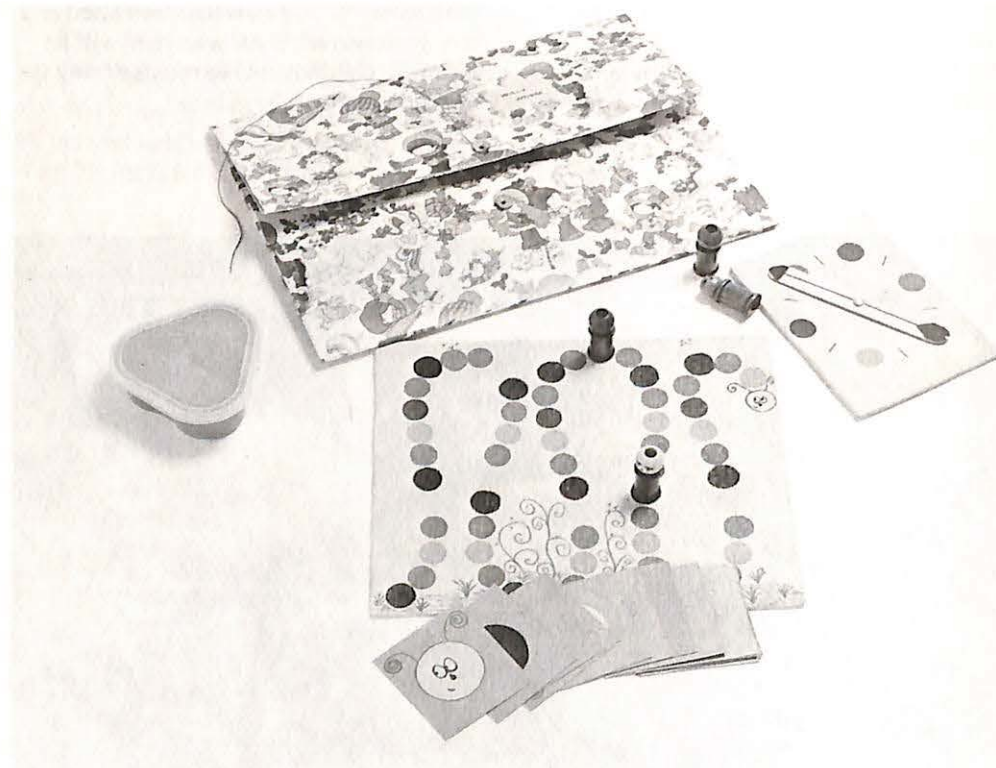
In addition, the assignment is an opportunity for the university students to learn which of the objects they've made work in the classroom and which don't and why. Mrs. Wien also said she was very impressed with the quality of students handiwork: "... It's well constructed and very professional." All materials will be used with children in classrooms during the students practicum sessions.



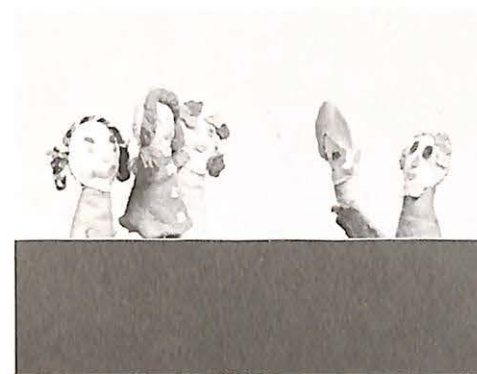
The sound cylinders shown above made by Lynda Swinemar, are ingeniously capped to be child-and spill-proof. Each one makes a different noise when shaken, from hard to soft, to focus a child's attention on sound as a separate element in the environment.



*This rag doll by Jan Coles is a "manipulative material" because all of the clothing and accessories are removable: some tie, others button or fasten in some manner, including the satchel. The special feature here is that "Sandy" is a non-sexist item; each child decides whether Sandy is a boy or girl.*



*This colour game, designed by Rhia Davidson, will give primary school child experience differentiating colours and developing a suitable vocabulary for dealing with them. Ms. Davidson was especially inventive in her use of everyday materials: the place markers are beads glued to wooden spools and the spinner is a popsicle stick.*



*Designed by Barb Dionne and Rhia Davidson, the finger puppets shown here provide a perfect mechanism to facilitate verbal interaction among children and the university students. Playing with these also exercises the children's fingers, helping them develop fine motor control.*



*Susan Soucy's fake shoe gives children the chance to practice tying shoes at their leisure, instead of fumbling during the rush before gym or at dismissal time.*



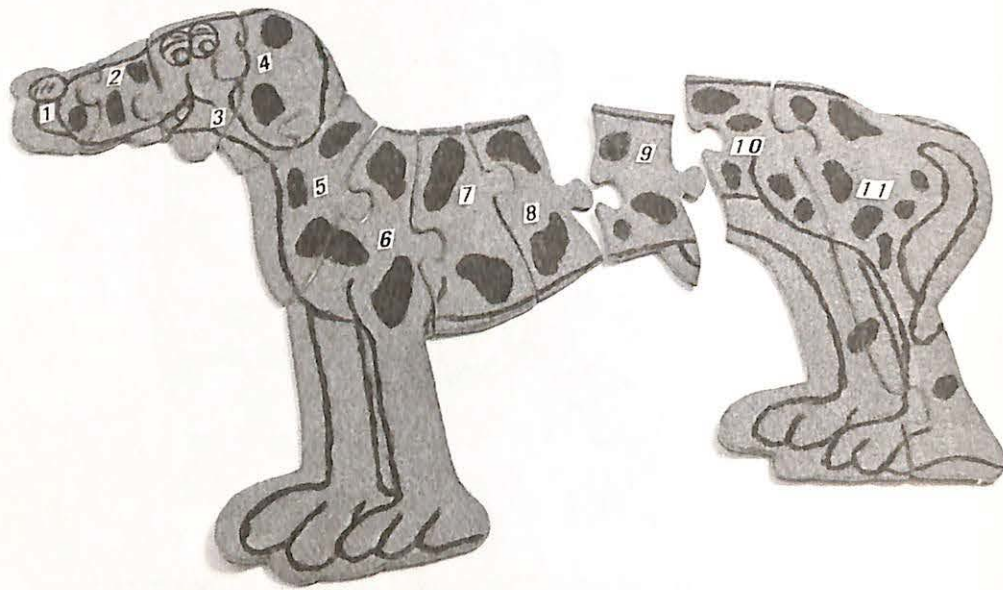
*A wide variety of materials are represented in the mini-kit prepared by Gabriele Dragone. Clockwise from left, these are: sticks for the tasting jars; sandpaper rubbing boards; colour gradation board (from light to dark) and a box, container for the colour chips; tasting jars (containing peanut butter, ketchup, mustard, honey, etc.) and sound cylinders. All of these provide activities which require manipulation, such as taking the caps off jars and handling crayons, as well as using the senses to explore the environment.*





*The Muppet (left) and Lamb Chop (right) are special favorites of many children and so often elicit extra enthusiasm and involvement. These and other puppets play a dual role. They require finger and hand movement by the children and also offer an opportunity for conversation and storytelling. These two were made by Rhia Davidson.*

*All photos by Don Robinson*



*Puzzles are useful because they require both visual discrimination and hand-eye coordination. They also allow children to work independently because they are self-explanatory and may thus be completed through trial-and-error. Eva Edmonds designed and drew this puzzle, using safe, durable materials which were readily available to her. The numbers provide some aid and control for children.*

## President's Report 1976-77



**Mount Saint Vincent University**



## Board of Governors 1976-1977

It gives me pleasure to present the president's annual report for the 1976-77 year ending on June 30, 1977. The individual reports prepared by the personnel responsible for the various administrative areas provide a comprehensive view of the activities of the university. I have simply selected from these very complete reports facts and events which seemed to be of special significance in the life of the university. Of particular interest to me is the indication of real growth in so many areas of the university and the deep commitment manifested by those who bear the extra burdens and responsibility associated with this growth. The most vital task for the university administration is to maintain, in the face of financial constraints, the integrity of the programs essential to the university as an institution dedicated to the liberal arts and science tradition and to providing education in selected professions. The serious dialogue which has taken place during the year in regard to this question gives assurance that a serious effort will continue to be made so that a proper balance may be maintained.

*Sister Mary Albertus*

Most Reverend James M. Hayes, D.D.  
Archbishop of Halifax, Chancellor  
Mr. Gordon Mader, Chairman  
Mrs. Richard Goldbloom, Vice-Chairman  
Sister Mary Albertus  
Mrs. Jane Archibald  
Mrs. Margot Aucoin  
Ms. Jacqueline Banyard  
Dr. Susan Clark  
Reverend John F. DeLouchry  
Mr. John H. Dickey, Q.C.  
Mr. Eric Duggan  
Mr. J. Gerald Godsoe  
Mr. John W. Graham  
Father Thomas Mabey  
Sister Rita MacDonald  
Mrs. H. A. MacDonald  
Mr. Rod McCulloch  
Ms. Patricia Martin  
Ms. Joanne McGinn  
Sister Katherine O'Toole  
Mrs. Barbara Shea  
Dr. Walter Shelton  
Mr. J. Donald Simpson  
Mr. R. C. T. Stewart  
Sister Maria Sutherland  
Ms. Elizabeth Weber

The following governors have completed their term: Ms. Jacqueline Banyard, Mrs. H. A. MacDonald, Ms. Joanne McGinn and Ms. Elizabeth Weber. The university wishes to express its gratitude for the dedicated service which these governors have rendered to the Mount during their term of office.

The corporation has approved the following appointments for 1977-78: Mrs. Wendy Doyle, faculty representative; Ms. Gwyneth Hughes and Ms. Louise Abraham, student representatives and Mrs. Lorraine Green, Dalhousie representative. The following members have had their terms renewed: Mr. J. Donald Simpson, Mr. John Graham, Dalhousie

representative and Mr. Rod McCulloch. At its final meeting on May 19, 1977, the following officers were elected: Chairman, Mrs. Richard Goldbloom; Vice-Chairman, Father Thomas Mabey; Treasurer, Mr. J. Gerald Godsoe and Executive Secretary,



Sister Mary Albertus. Sister Katherine O'Toole, on behalf of the congregation, expressed gratitude to Mr. Gordon Mader for his generous and efficient service as the chairman of the board.

The following is a summary of the principal activities of the board:

- approval was given to the statement of the philosophy and objectives of the university.
- a presidential search committee was established to secure a successor to Sister Mary Albertus, whose term will expire June 30, 1978.
- prolonged discussion of plans for fund raising on behalf of the university took place. Mr. D. Lorne Gales, the recently retired fund raising officer at McGill University, was invited to the campus and met with various members of the university community. From his own very extensive experience, he was able to offer some excellent advice in regard to the preparation and carrying out of financial campaigns.
- the resignation of Mrs. Margaret Root

as Director of Public Relations was accepted and approval given to the appointment of Ms. Carol Sutton to succeed her. The chairman expressed appreciation of Mrs. Root's contribution to the university.

- approval was given to the attendance of the Executive Assistant to the President and the Comptroller as resource persons at regular meetings of the board.
- prolonged discussion took place on the brief submitted to the MPHEC by the university. The commission had issued a public invitation for submissions regarding the role, and functioning of the commission as well as suggestions on the financing of post-secondary education in the Maritime provinces. The university attempted to indicate those areas in which it saw itself able to make a special contribution.
- approval was given to the revised five-year projections covering enrolment, programs, capital and operating statements as well as the change in the fiscal year-end from June 30 to April 30.
- approval was given to the collective agreement with the staff association of clerical and secretarial personnel.
- approval was given to a copyright policy for the university.
- approval was given to the recommendation of the president that the office of comptroller be expanded to include the duties of the Coordinator of Planning suggested by the long range planning committee. The person to be appointed would be named Assistant to the President for Finance and Planning. Approval was given to engaging the services of a management consultant firm to search for a suitable person.
- approval was given to the appointment of Ms. Wendy Blackwood as Director of Student Services. Sister Marie Gillen resigned from this position after five years of dedicated service to the university and especially to the students.



# SENATE 1976-1977

## Ex-officio Members:

Sister Mary Albertus, Chairman  
Dr. Walter J. Shelton  
Mr. Lucian Bianchini  
Sister Marie Gillen  
Mrs. Jean Hartley  
Dr. Wayne Ingalls  
Dr. Mairi Macdonald

## Faculty Representatives

Sister Elizabeth Bellefontaine  
Dr. Susan Clark  
Mrs. Wendy Doyle  
Dr. Janet Kendall  
Mr. Earl Martin  
Dr. Paul McIsaac  
Dr. David Monaghan  
Sister Patricia Mullins  
Mrs. Alleyne Murphy  
Ms. Joan Ryan  
Sister Rosemarie Sampson  
Mr. Lawrence Spencer  
Dr. Lillian Wainwright  
Ms. Elizabeth Weber  
Professor Barry Wheaton

## Student Representatives

Ms. Jacqueline Banyard  
Ms. Nancy Hoegg  
Ms. Paula Montford  
Mrs. Nadine Smith

## Dalhousie Representatives

Dr. B. K. Hall  
Dr. J. L. Gray  
Dr. J. E. Flint

## Senate Activities

Senate held eight meetings in the course of the academic year. Dr. Susan Clark served very efficiently as the parliamentarian. In fulfilling its responsibilities for the academic affairs of the university the senate

— discussed at some length the recommendations of the Nova Scotia Task Force on the Status of Women

which pertained to universities. These recommendations were referred to relevant committees for further action. The Academic Dean was directed to communicate with Ms. Kathryn Logan, Coordinator of Task Force activities, describing the accomplishments of Mount Saint Vincent University in reference to the recommendations and indicating that further study will be made as to how our efforts might be intensified.

- approved at various times during the year changes in the regulations to be included in faculty manual.
- approved the statement of philosophy and objectives for the university.
- discussed at great length the term "faculty status" endeavoring to arrive at a clear definition of the term. Because the term has been used with so many different connotations, the effort to decide on a clear-cut exclusive definition was abandoned and it was decided to allow the present understanding of the term to remain.

approved the following programs:

- (1) Bachelor of Public Relations — the courses in journalism will be taken at University of King's College when the program in journalism is initiated at that institution.
- (2) Master of Science in School Psychology
- (3) Major and Minor in comparative literature

- established the principle that in recommending programs and courses to Senate, the Committee on Academic Affairs should give attention to the priority aspect and the financial implications of its recommendations.
- approved the conferring of the honorary degree Doctor of Humane Letters on Senator Thérèse Casgrain.
- approved program and course changes in economics, history, philosophy, political studies, religious studies, modern languages, English, comparative literature (major and

minor), education, sociology, psychology, Canadian Studies, chemistry, biology, home economics, business (secretarial and administration), child study program.

- approved changes in the requirements for Master's degrees in education and the granting of a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics.
- approved changes in the structure of the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees as well as in the course requirements for the Bachelor of Home Economics degree. Provision has been made for a general Bachelor of Arts without a major.
- established an *ad hoc* committee of five elected members to examine the composition and function of university committees and to make suitable recommendations to senate.
- approved the following change in the present method of handling curriculum proposals:
  - a) that the faculty meeting assume the function of making recommendations to senate concerning curriculum changes
  - b) that the committee of department and divisional chairmen assume the function of reviewing curriculum proposals prior to the discussion of them at the faculty meeting.
- approved joint honors program in psychology with Dalhousie.

## Faculty

The total university faculty consisted of 85 full-time and 59 part-time members.

Six were in administrative positions with faculty status.

A total of 312 courses were taught and the over-all faculty/student ratio was 1:15.7. The major concern this year was with planning, particularly as it related to the development of new programs in the professional areas and affected the balance between the traditional arts and science disciplines and the professional programs.

Discussion took place at Senate, and at meetings of chairmen and faculty. The sharing of relevant statistics pertaining to enrolment trends in professional and liberal arts programs, faculty-student ratios and projected enrolment for future years, brought about broader input into decisions from all segments of the academic community.

Faculty participated on a voluntary basis in a programme of orientation counseling for all new arts and science students. Continuing contact between faculty advisors and students were encouraged.

A total of \$64,700 was received in research grants. The granting agencies were the National Research Council, Canada Council and the University Research Fund. Dr. Charles Edmunds, Dr. Robert S. McDonald, Sister Patricia Mullins and Dr. Lillian Wainwright received second installments of their NRC grants. Canada Council grants were received by Sister Geraldine Anthony, Dr. Ronald Van Houten, and Sister A. Martha Westwater. A Canada Council sabbatical leave grant was awarded to Dr. David Monaghan.

Sister Theresa Corcoran of the history department and Dr. Ram Seth of the economic department spent the academic year 1976-1977 on sabbatical leave. Interesting papers for faculty colloquia were prepared by Dr. Pierre Payer, Mr. Lucian Bianchini, Dr. Bridglal Pachai, Dr. George Patterson and Professor Renate Usmiani.

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Appointment, Rank, Promotion and Tenure the following appointments were made:

### Chairman

Dr. Pierre Payer, Division of History, Political Studies, Philosophy and Religious Studies to replace Dr. Philip McShane who has given very dedicated service in that position over the past two years. The university is grateful to Dr. McShane for his valuable contribution.

Sister A. Martha Westwater, Division of English, Modern Languages, Fine Arts, Music and Drama for one year to complete the term of Dr. Paul McIsaac.



The following promotions were made:

#### Assistant Professor

Mrs. Wendy Doyle — Business

(Administration)

Miss Jean Mills — Business (Secretarial)

#### Associate Professor

Dr. Larry Fisk — Political Studies

Mrs. Alleyne Murphy — Home Economics

#### Professor

Sister Geraldine Anthony — English

Dr. Pierre Gerin — Modern Languages

The following members of faculty were granted tenure: Dr. Ronald Van Houten, Dr. Larry Fisk, Mr. Jacques Barthomeuf, Dr. Susan Clark, Miss Marial Mosher. Dr. David Monaghan, Mrs. Alleyne Murphy and Dr. Jacques Goulet have been granted sabbatical leave for the academic year 1977-1978.

The university sustained a great loss through the tragic death of Dr. Paul McIsaac who died in a hotel fire in Amsterdam. Dr. McIsaac has been associated with the Mount since 1964 and has made a significant contribution to the university. The Paul McIsaac Memorial fund has been established by the university and the contributions to the fund will be used to award one scholarship each year to an outstanding student majoring in English. The first scholarship, for 1977-78, has been awarded to Leah Clark, a student whom Dr. McIsaac himself had nominated for a scholarship.

## Students

Enrolment December 1, 1976

	Women	Men	Total
Full-time			
Undergraduate	1298	121	1419
Full-time			
Graduate	9	3	12
	1307	124	1431

Of the 1431 full-time students, 760 or 53.1% were new enrolments.

#### Women Men Total

Part-time			
Undergraduate	606	116	722
Part-time			
Graduate	60	12	72
	666	128	794

This represented an increase of 5.9% in full-time enrolment over last year and of 5.4% in part-time. The full-time increase seemed to be largely due to students in Child Study and Child Development. The Bachelor of Business Administration enrolment increased noticeably. The Bachelor of Education class was smaller than last year but the enrolment had been curtailed in order to comply with a request from the Minister of Education.

The student body included 161 students from countries other than Canada, 41 were on student visas; others were landed immigrants.

The distribution within Canada was as follows:

	Male	Female	Total
Nova Scotia	120	1084	1204
New Brunswick	—	89	89
Prince Edward			
Island	—	41	41
Newfoundland	—	21	21
Ontario	1	17	18
Quebec	1	14	15
British Columbia	—	1	1
Northwest			
Territories	—	1	1
	122	1268	1390

84% of the full-time student body were Nova Scotians. 41 students came from abroad and of these 19 were from Bermuda.

On May 6, twenty-three certificates in Child Development and sixty-five diplomas in Secretarial Studies were granted. The speaker on this occasion was Ms. Kathryn Logan, who took as the title of her address "Commitment with Dignity".

At the annual convocation on May 8, 1977, 267 degrees were granted while 54

degrees had been granted by Senate on September, 1976.

The Honorable Thérèse F. Casgrain, C.C. O.B.E. L.L.D. was awarded the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*.

The Admissions Office was very ably administered this year by Ms. Diane Morris and her very capable staff. The use of the computer with access to data storage and retrieval has vastly improved the admission process both quantitatively and qualitatively. Certain trends were noticeable in this year's applications:



increased interest in the general Bachelor of Arts program due in part to the increasingly demanding prerequisites for certain programs: BA/BEd integrated program, Bachelor of Child Studies, Bachelor of Public Relations and Bachelor of Business Administration. The latter program has been strengthened by the addition of a fourth year devoted chiefly to liberal arts courses.

The number and frequency of contacts between the university and prospective students has been increased as well as coordination between the admissions office and academic departments in the university.

Ms. Morris and some members of her staff visited approximately one hundred schools, meeting with guidance counselors and prospective students in a variety of situations.

Holding Open Week during the Nova Scotia public school Spring Break has been established as a tradition. Over 400 people came to visit the campus and arrangements were made so that they could pursue their own particular interests on the campus. Most visitors had a tour, lunch or dinner, and sat in on at least one class and one information session.

The whole area of recruitment has been closely studied so that the resources of valuable personnel will be used well and the needs of prospective students will be efficiently served.

## Scholarships

Mount Saint Vincent has always maintained a generous policy of scholarship assistance to enable capable students to enjoy the advantage of a university education. A total of 175 students received financial assistance for the 1976-77 academic year. The Elizabeth Bayley Seton Scholarship donated by the Halifax Province of the Sisters of Charity was awarded to Deborah Cowan of Dartmouth.

Fifteen part-time students were assisted on the basis of their performance in three courses.

## Student Services

Sister Marie Gillen, who has served the university as director of student services for the past five years submitted her final report this year. We are grateful to Sister for her dedicated service and her cheerful optimistic outlook which has enabled her to deal with the ever-expanding demands made upon her department. Student services is one area of the University where the team approach has produced excellent results.



Approximately 40% of the student population lives in residence and the integrating of resident and non-resident students has been a long-standing objective of the student services department.

## Chaplaincy

Father Alphonse Bates, C.S.C., the Roman Catholic chaplain, assisted during the year by Ms. Joy Noble, a candidate for ordination in the United Church, provided services for the entire student body.

The Liturgical Committee was especially effective during the year and under the direction of Sister Margaret Young, an enthusiastic and capable choir did much to enhance our liturgical celebrations each Sunday.

The Inter-varsity Christian Fellowship group had an active year and sponsored two very successful coffee-houses.

## Student Counsellor

Mrs. Jean Stirling in her second year as counsellor reached out to a larger number of students though we all readily admit that the situation is far from what we would like it to be.

Programs were presented in the area of study skills, career planning, shyness control and test anxiety. Helpful information on writing assignments, how to study, bibliographical lists of relevant library resources and schedule sheets for time management have been made available. Audio-visual materials on reading improvement and reading tests for placement and later comparison are also available.

In evaluating the work of the past year, Mrs. Stirling has expressed concern that the number of non-resident students taking advantage of counseling services is comparatively small and one of the objectives of all student services is to endeavor to reach a larger number of non-resident students. The administration

of the university has devoted considerable time to a study of the available bus transportation through the transit system in an effort to make it possible for non-resident students to spend more time on the campus and to increase their participation in extra-class activities.

The counseling service personnel at Dalhousie University have been extremely cooperative in sharing expertise and resources with the Mount and this assistance is very much appreciated.

## Health Services

During the year, additions have been made to the staff in health services in order to ease the burden which increasing demands have created over the past few years. Mrs. Marion Baxter has been of inestimable assistance in taking responsibility for night calls and the addition of Mrs. Sylvia Fraser as a receptionist-secretary has increased the efficiency of the department and enabled personnel to give more personal and individual attention to the many requests for health services.

Doctor R. J. Gonsalves and Mrs. Diane Tinkham continue to render excellent service to all students and we are grateful to Mrs. Judith Langlois for carrying on so efficiently during Mrs. Tinkham's absence from the university. Special programs in weight control, proper nutrition, preventive medicine, the undesirable effects of alcohol and drug addiction and human sexuality have been arranged for evening sessions in the residences. The Mount continues to have an excellent liaison with Dalhousie health services.

## Financial Aid

Mrs. Mary-Lou Brousseau as financial aid officer has rendered invaluable assistance to many students in making application for student loans or in preparing appeals for increased aid. The dissemination of general information regarding provincial student aid programs

has become an important dimension of student financial aid. A program of bursary awards has been of great assistance to needy students. Due to prevailing economic conditions, an increasing number of students applied for financial assistance this year. In addition, new regulations for the disbursements of provincial monies necessitated more careful attention and more deeply detailed information to students. As tuition fees increase in Maritime universities, students are compelled to become more interested in financial aid and so the service rendered by the financial aid officer becomes more significant than even before. From September to December of 1976 the number of enquiries regarding student loans increased three-fold over those of last year.

This year the university established the Sister John Elizabeth emergency fund for the assistance of needy students and contributions to this fund were made by the Alumnae Association and the Student Council. This fund was used for non-resident students and the number of requests indicate that there is a need for this kind of interest-free loan.

Mrs. Brousseau also served as advisor to foreign students of whom the Mount has 55.

## Athletics

Mrs. Margaret Ellis, the newly-appointed athletic recreational

director, brought great enthusiasm to her task of involving as many students as possible in physical recreation and competition. Teams competed in six sports: field hockey, basketball, volleyball, curling, tennis and badminton. In basketball, the Mount team won the provincial Intermediate "A" Championship. Recreational opportunities in tennis, badminton, fitness, swimming, modern dance and netball were also available.

The lack of proper social and athletic facilities presents a serious hindrance to the development of any kind of respectable recreational programs at the Mount. Because the campus is relatively isolated from the metropolitan area, it becomes more urgent that there be at least minimal facilities for physical fitness and recreation programs.

The construction of such facilities is a matter of high priority for the university.

## Library

The year 1976-77 has been a year of quiet growth for the library.

The Public Service area is responsible for orientation tours and lectures for new students and between September 20 and October 20, twenty groups of about 400 students took advantage of this service.

In the Circulation Department, statistics





show an increase of 18.7% among students and 9.1% among faculty in the number of books borrowed. There is growing use of microforms — films, fiches, and recordings.

The value of the Reserve Collection as it functions at the present time could well be questioned. It actually handicaps the student in becoming familiar with the organization of the library and with other library resources.

The Cataloguing unit processed 4,688 items, including withdrawals.

The MacDonald Collection is made up completely of rare items. The use of this library by scholars within and outside the university has increased and we feel that this will be even more true in the future when listings will be incorporated into National and Provincial catalogs.

Sister Alice Foley, the university archivist, has manifested great ingenuity in the use of limited space for archival materials. The Archives services have been widely advertised within the university. Materials have been attractively displayed for Open House Week and for the Alumnae Annual Meeting.

Several special projects were undertaken by the library this year:

1. Assistance was rendered to the Atlantic School of Theology in the reclassification of its collection. Ms. Kathleen Currie with several student assistants rendered highly commendable service in this project.
2. Periodical holdings have been re-checked and prepared for computerization.
3. Periodical subscriptions have been re-assessed and seventy titles have been discontinued.
4. An inventory of library holdings begun in the summer of 1976 has been completed. It was probably the first complete inventory ever made and while the number of volumes missing was 912, these losses probably extended over a number of years. Periodical

inventories will allow more accurate assessment of losses over a specified period of time.

According to the M.P.H.E.C. space survey, our library space for reader's use is severely inadequate. However, for the present according to standards for collection sizes, the stack space is adequate. Recent renovations on the lower floor carried out very efficiently by university maintenance personnel has brought about improvement in this regard.

Discussions with librarians of other universities in the area have taken place on the development of coordinated collection policies. Among librarians it is agreed that a majority of books need not be purchased by each and all neighboring universities. Loan privileges could also be made easier.

The total library acquisitions to date are:

	<b>Titles</b>	<b>Volumes</b>
Books	54,424	68,351
Recordings (sound)	675	675
Microform	4,842	15,242
Slides	849	849
Periodicals		
(Current)	805	11,912
(Discontinued)	248	
MacDonald Collection	5,260	7,632
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>104,661</b>

The large increase in microform is due to the Gerretsen Collection on microfiche, a collection of studies on women.



## Continuing Education

Until recent years, and even now in many universities, the focus has been on students in the 18 to 24 year age bracket. In this century, the education of adult learners is no longer peripheral but is an area of important growth.

The number of part-time students at the Mount increased from approximately 700 in 1975-76 to over 800 in 1976-77. In addition there are 300 full-time "mature admission" students attending the university. In the fall of 1976 an informal survey revealed that prospective continuing education students indicated strong interest in the following topics: part-time study, women's programs, summer sessions, mature admissions, non-credit and off-campus courses. The most popular areas of study according to individual course selections are psychology, sociology, economics, business, English and political studies. A substantial number of part-time students were also found in education, fine arts, anthropology and religious studies.

The provision of a comprehensive counseling service has continued to be a major priority of this department. Doctor Mairi Macdonald and Mrs. Jean Stirling made a vital contribution in this regard.

The Continuing Education Students Association members provide helpful peer counseling and academic advice to new continuing education students. The association assisted voluntarily during registration and orientation and took a good deal of responsibility for Open House activities.

Two off-campus courses were offered in Spryfield and Sackville. This is an area of continuing education which might well be developed through co-operation among the various universities in the province.

The Italian Circle conducted by Lucian Bianchini continues to be well-attended.

A group of approximately 25 senior

citizens continues to make a unique contribution to the university.

An experimental TV project was undertaken by Doctor Mairi Macdonald in cooperation with Dartmouth Cablevision, Channel 4. Three university professors, Sister Marianita Power C.N.D., Sister A. Martha Westwater, S.C., and Doctor Jacques Goulet each presented an excellent lecture in Child Study, Children's Literature and Religious Studies respectively. Several continuing education students participated in a general discussion of the problems and satisfactions associated with their attendance at university.

The 1976 summer sessions were attended by 860 students: 396 in session I and 464 in session II.

Mount Saint Vincent has already achieved a number of desirable goals in the area of continuing education: the integration of "mature admission" students into the total student population, the provision of counseling and child-care services, the initiation of non-credit programs for women, the 60+ program for senior citizens and flexibility in day-evening, winter-summer programming for both part-time and full-time continuing education students.

The university desires to make its educational resources and its professional expertise available to as many in the community as is consonant with its general commitment to post-secondary education.

## Art Gallery

The Mount Art Gallery represents a centre of activity which brings together on many occasions the diverse elements of the university community. Under the dynamic direction of Mary Sparling, the gallery has had a very successful year.

During 1976-77 the gallery sponsored 24 exhibits. Among these, the most successful and most demanding was *Jewish Experience in the Art of the Twentieth Century* held during the Christmas and Chanukah season. Material was borrowed from seven major Canadian galleries as well as from the Jewish Museum in New



York City. Bernard Ostry, Secretary-General for the National Museums Corporation opened the exhibit and during the showing the exhibit received wide coverage in the media.

Among other significant exhibits were *Alice Hogen — Pioneer Potter from Mahone Bay* whom the Mount is proud to claim as an alumna; *The Clam Harbor Collection* by Charlotte Hammond; and *Swedish Textile Art* which was opened by the Swedish Ambassador to Canada.

The art gallery's involvement with the general life of the university is attested to

gallery lost one of its outstanding patrons in the tragic death of Doctor Paul McIsaac. Because of his personal interest and professional commitment, he made an enriching contribution to the work of the gallery.

We are proud of the fact that the Ohio State Award for outstanding work in film production was given to *The Artist as Historian* produced by Mary Sparling, Art Gallery Director and Margaret Root, former Public Relations Director at Mount Scotia Department of Education and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.



by its numerous special projects: fourteen sets of adults' and children's classes were taught by local artists; fifteen film series were shown; performance of music, poetry, dance and puppet theatre were held in the gallery and numerous groups held meetings, receptions, and interpretive tours.

Robin Peck, M.F.A., as exhibitions officer, has made a significant contribution to the gallery's program as have his two predecessors in this position.

The gallery received a total of \$22,780 in funding from the Bronfman Foundation, the Secretary of State, Canada Council and a number of private individuals in support of various exhibits and events.

The university is grateful to all those individuals, too numerous to mention, who have lent their professional expertise at various times during the past year and thus have contributed to the success of the gallery's program. In this regard, the

## Alumnae Association

The Alumnae Association became involved this year in the recruitment program of the university. In August of 1976, two alumnae, Joanne Potter Lovett of Ottawa and Mary Martin Rowe of St. John's were invited to the university and briefed in admissions policies and procedures. The purpose of this program was to provide local contact for high schools in areas where the admissions officer was not able to travel due to limitations of time and budget. Mrs. Rowe has interviewed several applicants for the child development program.

For the first time in recent years the alumnae association took an active role in the orientation of new students. Sandra Arnold, Alumnae Officer, served on the orientation committee and the association

sponsored a free feature-length movie for all interested students during orientation week.

In her report to the annual meeting, Patricia Whitman, the president of the association, indicated that the executive committee had experienced a good year. The association's memorandum of association and by-laws had been revised and these revisions were passed at the annual meeting; the association was looking forward to a Fall fair to be held at the Motherhouse in October; an eight-week lecture series on a variety of topics had been held in the Spring and a very successful occult party had been hosted for the graduating class.

The Alumnae Annual dinner at which the Honorable Thérèse Casgrain was the guest speaker proved to be a very enjoyable and successful event. Particularly touching were Madame Casgrain's recollections of her mother and aunt's association with Mount Saint Vincent many years ago.

Ms. Sandra Arnold resigned as Alumnae Officer at the end of June. The Alumnae Association and the university administration are grateful to her for the contribution she has made to the university while she has been associated with it both as alumnae officer and as a member of the registrar's staff.

## Computer Service

Several accomplishments in the area of computer services have contributed to increased efficiency in the operation of the university:

- An admissions-system was designed and implemented.
- Fall registration was done entirely on the computer. This project was very successful, except for some minor problems.
- An analysis was made of the Alumnae System.
- Work is progressing on the analysis and design of the Students Accounts Receivable and it is hoped that the

operation will go into effect in September, 1977.

- The Library Periodical Holdings have been computerized.

Usage of the computer is slowly building up and the introduction of courses in computer education especially for future teachers is a matter of high priority. The proliferation of mini-computers and the widespread application of the computer to common activities of life make these courses essential. Mr. Siegfried Deleu, Director of Computer Services is to be commended for the very efficient service which is so humanely and courteously rendered to the university community. Several important service areas of the university have been computerized with a minimum of inconvenience or disruption.



## Public Relations

On December 21, 1976, Mrs. Margaret Root, Director of Public Relations for the past three years tendered her resignation.



The university administration expressed its appreciation to her through, among other things, a piece of native Eskimo sculpture which it was hoped would be a reminder of her pleasant association with the Mount.

In January, 1977 Carol Sutton, formerly of Kitchener, Ontario took up the position of Director of Public Relations.

The past six months have been very busy ones for the public relations office and the various issues of the Newsletter and Insight as well as the preparation of press releases for all university events, publicity for Open Week, Summer School, the Art Gallery and Convocation attest to the never-ending activity of the Public Relations Office.

At its national conference held in Halifax in June, 1977, the Canadian Public Relations Society gave strong support to the new Bachelor of Public Relations program to be initiated at the Mount in September, 1977. Several members of the university community were hosted at a luncheon at which appreciation for the work done by the university in the area of public relations was expressed. The Office of Public Relations and Development with the Alumnae Office will, I am sure, be called upon to play a vital role in the development and fund raising activities of the university in the near future.

## Print Shop and Secretarial Services

Mrs. Peggy Stephens continues to make a significant contribution to the university through her very competent and dedicated management of the print shop and the secretarial pool. The annual report makes it evident that an impressive volume of work passes through these two areas.

## Parking

On July 1, 1976, the university established parking regulations and fees. The growth of the university has necessitated that the use of space be regulated as efficiently as possible and the initiation of regulations and fees for parking is a move towards this end.

## Security

Pinkerton Security continues to serve the university requirements for security, to maintain order, and to provide safety on the campus.

## Transportation

The matter of public transportation to the Mount has been given a great deal of attention during the year. The shuttle service between Mount Saint Vincent and Dalhousie has been improved by making possible better connections between our service and the main Halifax Transit System, as well as providing more convenient pick-up points with shelter areas. In addition, detailed route information and diagrams were widely distributed by pre-registration mail and at registration to show the interrelationship of all bus service to the Mount.

Three members of the Board of Governors: Mrs. Richard Goldbloom, Mr. Gordon Mader, and Mr. J. Gerald Godsoe along with Mr. Michael Merrigan have met several times with Mr. McKim of the Transit Corporation in an attempt to improve the service through reducing the subsidy, introducing a pass system and increasing bus service on weekends and in the evening.

Surveys of needs have been conducted in an effort to determine precise transportation difficulties encountered by Mount students. The results of the surveys will be submitted to the Transit Corporation as the basis for our request for improved service.

## Food Services

For the past three years Mrs. Alison Miner, a part-time lecturer for the Home Economics Department in the area of food management, has been responsible for the university food services and has attempted to utilize the kitchen as a laboratory for the dietetic internship program. The university

as a whole and the Home Economics Department in particular benefited very much from this arrangement. In April, Mrs. Miner resigned from the university to take a position in Toronto and the university has contracted for the services of Versa Foods for 1977-78.

The Saceteria, managed by Major Vending provides a much-appreciated quick-food service in Seton Academic Centre.

## Physical Plant

It is through the careful management of physical plant resources under the direction of Mr. Michael Merrigan and his staff that significant savings have been realized by the university. A number of major involvements contributed to making 1976-77 an extremely busy one for all who are part of physical plant maintenance and auxiliary services.

The Child Development Centre, a very attractive facility which makes possible a model day-care practicum for the child study program, was very efficiently constructed by university maintenance personnel. Their dedicated and persevering efforts kept the costs of the project to a minimum.

The provision of a 250-300 seat quick-food service in Seton Academic Centre brought about the fulfillment of a long-term objective. The new Saceteria provides attractive food snacks and as well

creates an area for socialization, dialogue and relaxation for those who spend their working day at Seton.

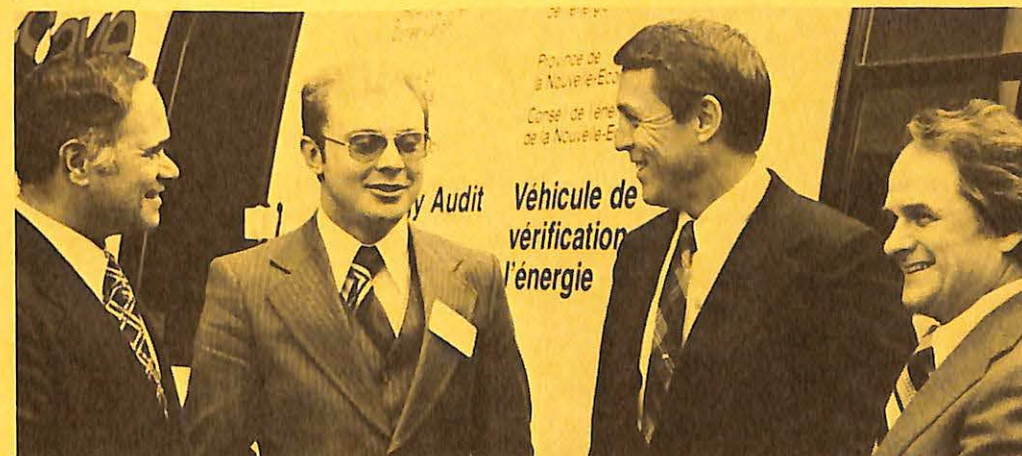
Stack space in the library was increased through renovations on the lower floor carried out between the end of the spring term and the opening of summer school, thereby causing a minimum of inconvenience to the general university community.

The interceptor sewer project which was a 12-month on-going process was the source of very time-consuming activity in preparing evidence for insurance claims as a result of blasting activity which seriously affected our buildings over a six-month period. An untimely water main break three weeks prior to Convocation was both costly and extremely time-consuming to repair.

Through the rental of university facilities an effort is made to place our resources at the service of the community whenever this is possible without disrupting the efficient functioning of the university.

## Personnel Office

The Mount Saint Vincent University Staff Association representing secretarial, clerical, technical and non-professional library staff was certified on September 8, 1976. The first collective bargaining agreement has been signed and as the president of the university, I am grateful to all who participated in the negotiations,





which, though quite amiable, were very prolonged and time-consuming for all concerned. That good relationships and open communication have continued to be characteristic of university personnel contacts is gratifying.

Favorable response to several appeals made to the Anti-Inflation Board has enabled the university to bring salaries more in line with comparable scales at other Maritime universities. It is particularly gratifying that our turnover rate has noticeably decreased during the 1976-77 year.

As part of the Christmas festivities a special luncheon was held to honor nine long service employees and certificates of appreciation were presented to them.

January 28th was set aside as Don McNeil Day to honor one who has given twenty-five years of continuous dedicated service to the university. Many took advantage of the occasion to express their appreciation and friendship.

## Campus Canada Manpower Centre

The Mount Saint Vincent University Canada Manpower Centre on campus is operated on a year-round basis as an integral unit of the Department of Manpower and Immigration of the government of Canada, in cooperation with the university administration.

Under the competent and dedicated Manager/Counselor, Mrs. Donna McNeil, the centre renders excellent service to students, alumnae and faculty as well as to academic and other support staff.

The annual report reveals some interesting trends for 1976-77:

- a program of continuous mail-outs to students has brought about a marked increase in student participation in the activities of the Manpower Centre.
- the number of actual student registrations dropped from 813 in 1975-76 to 614 in 1976-77. This is a

rather puzzling phenomenon in a period of high unemployment.

- the overall number of job vacancies registered with the Centre increased greatly as did the number of students who successfully obtained employment through the Centre.
- many companies and school boards curtailed their active recruiting efforts on university campuses across Canada because of the economic climate.
- although fewer students registered with the Manpower Centre those who did seemed to utilize the resources more diligently.
- the highest percentage of registered clients placed occurred in secretarial diploma (85%) and Bachelor of Education (61.7%).
- proficiency in accounting is a very desirable component of a Bachelor of Business Administration degree.

The university is cognizant and deeply appreciative of the substantial assistance rendered to the university community by the Canada Manpower Centre.

## Special Events

The sixth annual meeting of the Atlantic Canada Economics Association was held at the Mount on October 1 and 2, 1976. A number of papers on contemporary economic concerns were presented.

Ivan Illich, world renowned social critic of educational and medical institutions and author of *Deschooling Society* and *Medical Nemesis* gave an informal lecture on Monday, October 18 in Seton Academic Centre.

A four-day national conference entitled *Research on Women: Current Projects and Future Directions* was held at the Mount from November 11 to 14. Canada's most prominent women scholars presented papers on their individual research efforts and representatives from all parts of Canada attended the sessions.

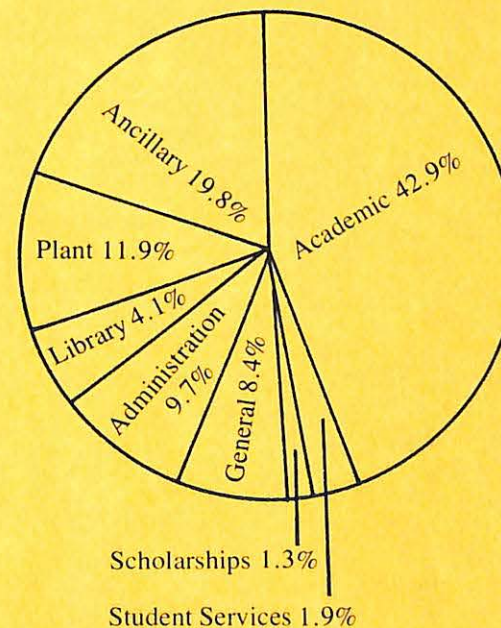
Dr. Susan Clark, a member of the Sociology Department coordinated the conference. Financial support was provided by Canada Council, the Department of Manpower and Immigration

## University Finance

It is perhaps in the area of university finance that the spirit of the Mount community most clearly reveals itself. Originally supported by the contributed services of a religious congregation, the university has always had limited financial resources. Careful budgeting and good management have of necessity been a vital part of its operation. During the present period of financial constraint, special measures of economy have been effected under the direction of Michael Merrigan, Executive Assistant to the President and the university comptroller Maureen Lyle. Substantial savings have been realized, especially in the area of maintenance, energy and utilities. The cooperative spirit in which restraint has been accepted by members of the university community and their willingness to accept the reality of the situation seem to maintain the *esprit de corps* that has always been traditional at the

Mount.

Income	1975-76	1976-77
Tuition	\$1,124,661	\$1,245,632
Government		
Grants	3,343,219	3,769,600
Ancillary	882,154	989,392
Miscellaneous	124,678	207,691
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Academic	\$2,172,395	\$2,580,563
Library	222,727	245,333
Assisted		
Research	34,972	64,242
Administration	450,716	586,517
General	357,849	338,621
Student		
Services	104,018	114,340
Scholarships	83,318	77,275
Ancillary	1,097,155	1,193,476
Plant	529,649	714,599
Capital	146,460	101,504





and the university itself.

"Herod's Play: Pageant of Shearmen and Tailors" a medieval Christmas play complete with carols from the Middle Ages and instrumental music on lutes and recorders was presented by the drama society under the direction of Doctor Patrick O'Neill.

The university choir under the direction of Sister Margaret Young entertained with delightful Christmas music.

Under the direction of Professor Renate Usmiani of the English Department, Jean Paul Sartre's *No Exit* was performed by students and faculty. The performance was offered free of charge to the public.

In March, Sister Margaret Young and John F. Brown co-directed the pop musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. The show written by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber of Jesus Christ Superstar fame, draws on many musical styles. On June 29, Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, world famous authority on death and dying, delivered a free, public lecture on "Life and Transitions" in Seton Academic Centre. Dr. Ross' visit to Halifax was sponsored by the Sisters of Charity. A special session was held at the Motherhouse for Sisters, ecumenical church groups and for those in the social service profession who minister to dying patients in their homes and in public institutions.

The Mount had its first Seton exchange student during the Fall semester, Janille Monnier, a student at Mount St. Joseph College in Cincinnati, Ohio took advantage of the opportunity to spend a semester at Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax. The exchange program is offered by colleges taught by members of the various congregations which trace their origins to Elizabeth Bayley Seton. Its purpose is to give students the educational opportunity of spending one semester or one year at an institution other than the one at where they are registered. The program requires students to pay tuition at the home institution and room and board fees at the exchange institution.

## Conclusion

I wish to express my grateful appreciation to all members of the university community who have contributed so willingly and generously to the well-being of the Mount during the past year.

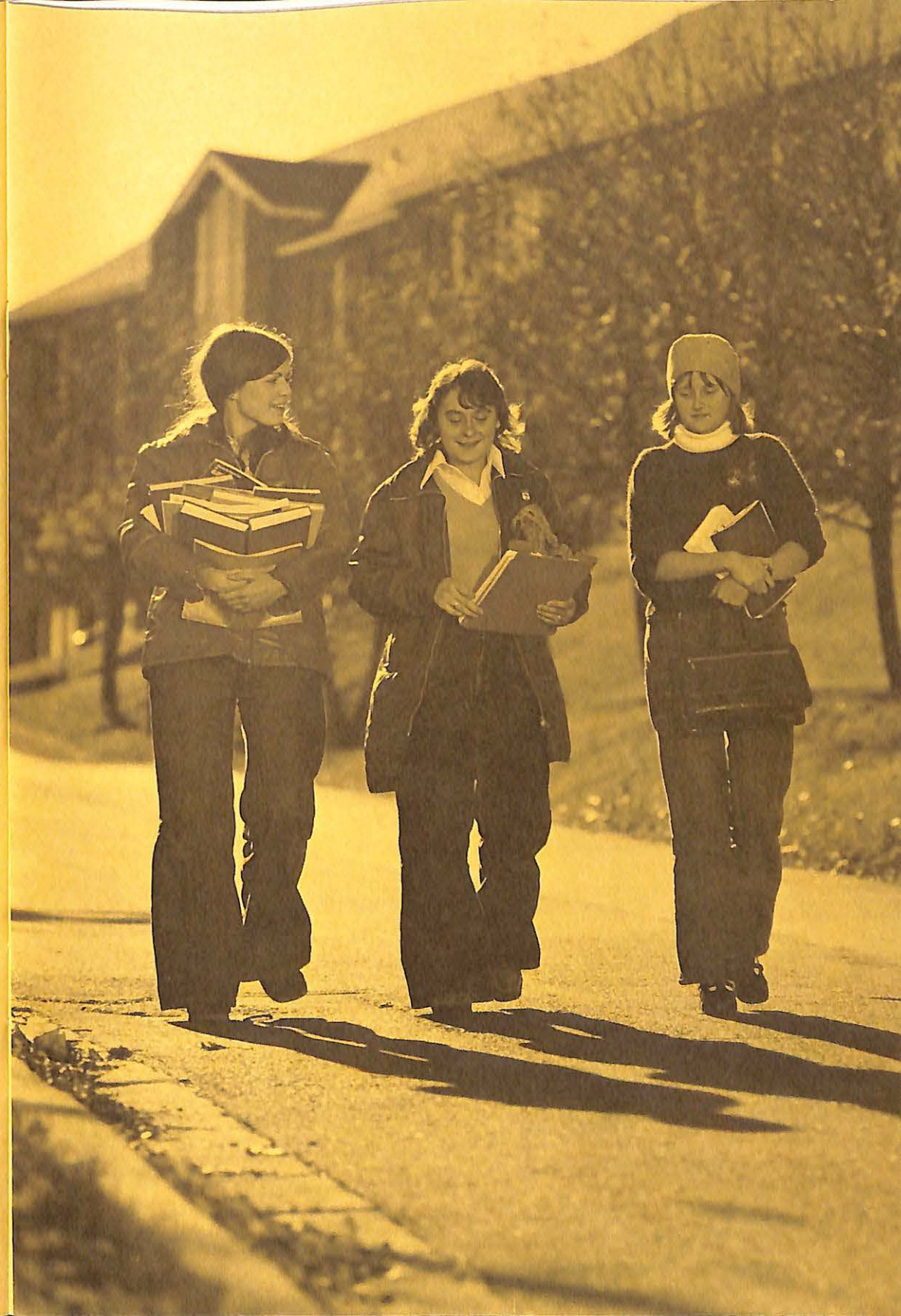
Sister Katherine O'Toole, chairman of the university corporation, always manifests a keen and intelligent interest in the affairs of the university in spite of very demanding responsibilities as Superior General of the Sisters of Charity.

Members of the corporation and the Board of Governors render invaluable assistance through the interest and expertise they bring to the discussion of university concerns.

In their sincere dedication, members of the administration have given generously of their time and efforts to the necessary planning for the growth and development of the university.

The harmony which has characterized relationships among administrators, faculty and support staff has given the Mount its traditional *esprit de corps* is a source of great satisfaction to me. That all have shown good-will, support and encouragement in times of difficulty has assisted us in coping successfully with difficult problems which in other institutions have caused serious stresses and strains.

I feel it has been a good year in that we have established the aims and objectives of the university and initiated the process of examining how they are to be implemented.







# An Examination of the Poet Alden Nowlan

by Michael Hamm

*Michael Hamm is a first year Bachelor of Arts student. He submitted this paper to Professor Renate Usmiani for Canadian Poetry (English 106).*

*Thesis sentence:* Repression, Alden Nowlan's main theme, emerges in all stages of the poet's work.

- I. *Thesis paragraph.* From conception through to adulthood, mental and physical harnesses are pictured holding back Nowlan's characters. Specifically, in his later verse, these restraints appear chiefly in the form of cloaked truths. The struggle to uncover reality, thusly, constitutes the overall purpose of Nowlan's poetry.
- II. *A brief profile of Alden Nowlan.*
- III. *The poet's principal theme: repression.*
  - A. the origin of repression.
  - B. oppressed childhood and attempts to escape.
  - C. stifled love.
  - D. realizations: the search for basic truths.
    1. a selection of isolated topics.
    2. sentiments of war.
    3. reality of the self.
- IV. *Style and technique.*
  - A. comparison of early and later works.
  - B. simplicity and directness.
  - C. limited description.
  - D. regionalism.
- V. *Conclusion.*

Maritime poet, Alden Nowlan, speaks on his early, bucolic life in Nova Scotia:

*That country around Stanley wasn't like the Annapolis Valley; the soil was too poor for farming. The people there were mostly pulp-cutters. A great feeling of insecurity all the time.<sup>1</sup>*

In this context, the man is basically remarking upon the economically precarious lives of his family and friends; employment and, hence, wages were scarce and not long-lasting. Once acquainted with Nowlan's work, however, this mere reminiscence takes on a more profound meaning. The villagers of Stanley (and later, Hartland, New Brunswick) grow in scope, transcending their small part of the world until they encompass the whole; their insecurity branches into the many facets of a global personality. Nowlan uses his upbringing, his particular, intimate feelings, and extremely perceptive mind to project, on a vast screen, a blunt, often shocking view of humanity. This treatise will discuss lightly these views as presented in the recurrent themes, style and techniques of Alden Nowlan's poetry. Firstly, a profile of the poet will be given since it is of considerable significance.

The community of Stanley, Hants County, Nova Scotia welcomed the birth of Alden Nowlan on January 25, 1933. The son of parents of Irish heritage, he grew up in an atmosphere of austere Calvinism. Education, although, was secondary to money-earning so, as was the norm, after grade five, Nowlan left school for a job in a local pulp mill (at the age of eleven, he began to write). In 1952, the need for something more led him to Hartland, New Brunswick where he became the editor of the town newspaper; that position not offering much responsibility, Nowlan assumed many roles in this period: installer of storm windows, magazine subscription salesman, secretary for the Provincial Fish and Game Protection Association, manager of a country and western band. Having married (Claudine Orser) and wanting some form of stability, he then entered the



newspaper world once more as a reporter and editor of Saint John's chief paper. Health problems beset Nowlan in 1966 and a series of traumatic hospital visits followed, culminating in throat surgery. The next few years proved to be highly productive for the poet; and in Canada's centenary, he won the Governor General's Gold Award for his collection of poems, *Bread, Wine, and Salt*. In the late sixties, the then well-established poet became writer-in-residence at the University of New Brunswick. Nowlan continues to turn out volumes of his distinctive poetry, in addition to excellent short stories, articles, and adaptations of Atlantic Indian legends.

From the scant observations already made, it is possible to illuminate two specific ones that come together to form a major portion of Nowlan's themes; in the impressionable days of youth, he had breathed the air of a stagnant town and a severely religious home. When seen from the perspective of an adult Nowlan, the union of the two results in an overall feeling of repression. This sentiment not only abounds in the early stages of his development; nor is it totally confined to his personal experiences in life.

*The suffering born of repression (of more than one kind) . . . characterizes his voice, from the poems of his childhood, through the love poems, to its final development in symbolic, "imagist" poem on the human condition in general.<sup>2</sup>*

In all of the three areas mentioned, Nowlan forcefully opens the curtains upon this darker side of human nature; he shows how one person may inhibit another, how the collective dictates the individual or even how repression commands the self.

Alden Nowlan's personal belief is that repression for an individual is conceived at the moment of conception; this is depicted in the poem "Beginning",<sup>3</sup> a piece most obviously influenced by his parents' creed. Here, the conditions under which the speaker is originated are told, a series of paired images that are clearly contradictory: the couple regard their love-making as "most lovely" but also as "most abhorred" (a direct reflection of

Calvanism); a simile of music presents the act first as the soothing calm of a violin, then as an overture to the chase of a hunt; during the ritual, there is "bright bliss"; once completed, dark "shame". Each is the antagonist of the other; the morals of the man and woman are so confused that the resultant embryo will assuredly be born into an atmosphere of emotional stress. The final statement of the poem is short and sharply conclusive; "thus I was Made" translates into the inevitability of the parents' persecution of the child for what is, to them, their sin. (A tell-tale sign of physical violence is included in the sentence "their mouths left bruises".)

The celebrated "When Like the Tears of Clowns" (*Poetry of Mid-Cen.*, p. 215) extends this situation and gives a glimpse of the now-grown child ruminating over his unhappy youth. The occurrences that stir up his thoughts are indicative of his childhood: "tears of clowns", or extremely morose happenings that should not be, rain (symbol of gloom), the "shrill" of children trying to play, all are familiar to him. Even Nowlan's choice of words, "ordered", "chant", "repitious", "sexless", connote suppression and a dull existence. The second part of the poem is a very vivid flashback, strongly connected with "Beginning". The expected repercussion of the lovers' night of passion/trespass becomes fact. The speaker's heart palpitates with fear as he remembers: "whipt" and "punished", he seeks refuge in a hayloft and, inspired by his kinship with the horses, momentarily does so; a pang of rebellion is felt as "wolf-thoughts" howl within his "punished wrists". It is no reassurance, however, when a vision of a "deep and narrow heritage of earth" interrupts his reverie. Even dismissing all others, inescapable is the supreme repression, death.

"I, Icarus"<sup>4</sup> pursues the same theme but in a much less harsh manner. The tone is more casual and simplistic; it is not outrightly stated that the speaker is a child, but rather implied by the use of the past tense. Also, no direct references to a disciplined or cruel rearing are made.

Nevertheless, an identical conclusion is reached.

In "I, Icarus", instead of seculsion in a barn, the phantasmagoric exercise of willing oneself to fly is used to break the restrictive bonds of life. At each bedtime, the child, although "hard work", coaxes himself into taking wing, floating "three feet or four/above the floor". With emphasis on the image of a window or, in other words, source of escape, Nowlan allows the boy to drift outside, where he passes over a fence and clothesline, possible representations of the hemming-in efforts of the adults; the barrier of trees he overcomes are "dark, haunted". At the point where the child seems to be completely reless, the element of death is again drawn in; the ethereal boy is constantly confronted by "the music of flutes" and often hears "voices singing". Like Icarus, he falls back down to earth and its limitations.

As Nowlan literally matures in his poetry, he still cannot hide the mental scars of his oppressive childhood. The poignant "And He Wept Aloud, So That the Egyptians Heard It" (*Bread, Wine, Salt*, p. 8) is a failing attempt to destroy the past. It is an episode where a young man, most assuredly Nowlan himself, visits his grandfather, only to come into contact with a part of his life he had presumably left and forgotten. Embodied in a swarm of flies buzzing about the house is the repression of poverty. The grandfather's life is indeed still meagre, as indicated by the "rough deal table" set with "tin-plates of/rainbow trout and potatoes", but the insects bring the idea of poverty down to its lowest form. Nowlan cleverly associates this seediness with the speaker's past by having the antics of the flies parallel those of children's gambol: the vermin plan "crazy football" and leap-frog. The man, recognizing this affinity, is then disgusted by what he calls "their symbolism", which is too stark a comparison for him to shoulder; he looks upon them as messengers of Baal-Zebub, Egyptian Lord of Flies, "god of the poor and outcast" and must accordingly eliminate the pests to eliminate memories of his destitution. Therefore, in the poem's

climactic fourth stanza, the character strikes wildly at the flies with a newspaper, creating a crescendo of buzzing. Yet, as in the previous two works, a dramatic twist ensues; grandfather enters and begins to swat the insects also. At this point, the speaker notices the old man's "baffled and pitiful" voice, and is immediately ashamed of his action; in attacking the flies, the grandfather's unpretentious world has also been attacked. Ladden with guilt, the speaker weeps aloud and is forced to accept his past, however humble.

A great portion of Nowlan's love poetry treats the subject of repression in much the same fashion as does "He Wept Aloud". That is to say, its course of action resembles a pattern often found in his poems of love. In many of them, an individual is suppressed in some way, he decides to retaliate, but then has a dubiety over his decision afterwards. This system, which renders love a very delicate and doubtful emotion, is reinforced by Nowlan's overall tendency to be midly puritanical. Once again prejudiced by his parents' religion, he admires virginity and denounces today's "free-for-all" sexual liberation (as manifested in the viciously condemning "God Sour the Milk of the Knacking Wench" (*Poetry of Mid-Cen.*, p. 220)). This point is proven by the sensual look at love in "A Poem for Elizabeth Nancy" (*Poetry of Mid-Cen.*, p. 216).

As the poem opens, the defloration of a young girl has taken place; the male speaker has been "emptied from Eden". Although the girl is obviously no longer chaste, she remains as though she were. She is described as the zenith of solitude and virtue; her eyes are "blue-green valleys" that enclose a paradise and her windows have curtains as "white as brides". It is the male who is looked upon as insensitive to true love and indecent; his hands "stink from milking" and he returns to the girl's house "not caring much" if she is there or not. Yet, why would the speaker seek Elizabeth Nancy if he were not concerned; why does he stress her not being there? Nowlan defends the male character, but only when his love is pure affection and not purely physical.



The described pattern of love's repression, retaliation, and final doubt is faintly present in "Elizabeth Nancy"; in "Dead Letter"<sup>5</sup>, it is more than conspicuous. From the outset, a stifled communication is relayed to the reader: "I wanted to speak, but could not". The reason why this person is "mute" and comes to "despise" his mouth is left unknown, but a strong presumption can be made on the basis of Nowlan's philosophy up to this point: people, at large, are suppressed and feel it only fitting to suppress their emotions and opinions in turn. As anticipated, though, the speaker battles with himself and finally reveals his pious love for another; he is carried away by his new freedom, finding he cannot stop once started. Yet, the circular path is completed; this person suddenly realizes he had "waited too long" and all his confessions of love have been distorted by time, causing them to be actually false.

Nowlan's impression of ardour, sexual and spiritual, therefore, are largely negative. For example, it is his conviction that most present marriages are based on a warped form of love. The frankness in which this thought is expressed in "The Married Man's Poem" (*Tears and Laughter*, p. 39) is exquisite.

*Five years married  
and he never once  
wished he dared kill her,*  
*which means  
they're happy enough.  
But it isn't love.*

Unfortunately, it is a sad, but often valid statement.

Even when the summit of a faithful love is reached, many people (usually elders) refuse to accept it as normal. Nowlan observes such a frustration in the aptly entitled poem "The Masks of Love" (*Bread, Wine, Salt*, p. 54).

*I come in from a walk  
with you  
and they ask me  
if it is raining.  
I didn't notice  
but I'll have to give them  
the right answer  
or they'll think I'm crazy.*

As the couple is literally "masked" by the euphoria of infatuation, "they" are figuratively "masked" by a lack of understanding. So, synopsised, Alden Nowlan assesses love cautiously, usually with a cynical eye, whether the suppression is internal or external.

Continuing with his obsession with the choking at atmosphere of the world, Nowlan extends far beyond the subject of love. Comprising the majority of his works (especially those of the late sixties), the poet attempts to unearth the basic truths of society, destroy biases, and simply recognize the flaws and eccentricities of human nature. As in the two previous selections, the oppressive force cannot be pinpointed and a blame laid; rather, Nowlan holds mankind, at large, responsible for "masking" actuality and devising trickeries to check the growth of compassion and honesty, on a personal or world-wide scale.

This crusade to expose the truth takes shape in a series of usually short, but bluntly profound illustrations, depicting some human experience; these may be termed "realizations." Invariably, each tiny episode concludes with a startling revelation that compels the reader into evaluating himself; he asks, "do people really act this way; do I really act this way?" The response is always "yes."

"The Spy" (*Bread, Wine, Salt*, p. 32) contains all the ingredients of a Nowlan human-relation poem. For heightened dramatic effect, it is pithy; the simplicity of its diction tells the reader it is a common occurrence; it discloses a verity that is knowingly suppressed.

*My child cries out in his sleep.  
I bend close, try to make out the  
words.  
Though it fills me with shame,  
I spy on his dreams,  
try each word like a key  
to the room where he keeps  
things too private to share  
even with me.*

The parent really has no right to eavesdrop on his child, especially when asleep and vulnerable, and Nowlan

acknowledges this by imbuing the parent with a sense of shame. In the poet's opinion, simply being a parent does not justify the act of stealing unconscious thoughts from the child. However, such behavior is tolerated, if not approved by contemporary moral ethics; in fact, the reader realizes he, himself, is prone to fall victim to this weakness in the human character. The meat of this incident is not cached in intellectual or mystifying rhetoric as some poets prefer to do; it is naked and easily comprehensible and so much so, that the most apathetic poetry reader is intrigued by the realization that is offered. Therefore, Nowlan asserts that if the reader were in the same situation, he would undeniably be straining to hear also.

---

## Nowlan forcefully opens the curtains upon this darker side of human nature

---

As previously stated, the bulk of Nowlan's newer works consists of these enlightenments. The ground he covers is vast, observing life from all angles. In order to give an adequate account of these subjects, three short poems typical of this brand will be explored, followed by a brief discussion of one motif that Nowlan is particularly concerned with.

Inspired by his frequent stays in the hospital, "Suddenly, A Stranger" (*Bread, Wine, Salt*, p. 69) reveals a manufactured fallacy concerning the sick. The son of a hospitalized person arrives for a visit, but upon opening the door, hesitates. "Fear" is in his face and simply because people have contrived an image of the ill; they are "bandaged monsters". Thusly, the obvious truth, that sickness does not emotionally change the sick, but rather, the relatives, is unveiled. Society has made the innocent child a "stranger" to his mother/father.

The peculiarities of the human mind is hauntingly represented in "The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner" (*Bread, Wine, Salt*, p. 61). Particularly, what Nowlan finds so strangely amazing is how

fickle the mind can be, especially in terms of emotion. Here, love is transmuted into animosity as quickly as the volatile Autumn wind changes direction. Although the poem may be interpreted as an exclusive look at a poet's mind (the title bears this out), the piece can easily be applied to the whole human race.

The last of the examples of Nowlan's isolated topics, "A Tiger in the Dublin Zoo" (*Tears and Laughter*, p. 17) investigates man's physical confinement of animals (or any non-human, for that matter). The poet employs irony to awaken the reader to this atrocity. For instance, the royal beast is named Napoleon and references to an emperor are made. Indeed, the petite Frenchman possessed a soul that was almost indomitable and he rose to power to become emperor; but, lurking behind his shield of greatness was an ultimate downfall and imprisonment. This is the exact fact of the tiger. Irony too is the fact that the great cat continues to assert his freedom and superiority; it rationalizes by exclaiming, "I stop and turn where I choose" (in the cage). Nevertheless, the bars are there and Nowlan points out how matter-of-factly people can build them.

The brutalities of war and their effect on an insouciant audience are the combined subjects which Nowlan deems the greatest threat to the future of the earth. Viewing again on a most fundamental level, the poet uncovers how the human psyche operates. For example, "In Those Old Wars" (*Bread, Wine, Salt*, p. 23) speaks of the need for heroism in battle; afterall, he writes, "war stinks without gallantry". In the depicted war, the American Civil, the qualifications for a respectable leader did not include sincerity of motive or military knowledge, but, a bloated ego. Nowlan also explains, "lost causes were the best", the tone intimating man's view of war as a sport.

In such a manner, one is not totally shocked by the ugly images of "In Our Time" (*Bread, Wine, Salt*, p. 24). While updating the theme, the poem makes the realization that, in attitudes, nothing has changed. Reporting on two acts of torture, the media exploits the catastrophies of war, transforming horror into entertainment; in



this case, print is singled out (the tactics of which Nowlan is well-aware of), but television or radio could easily be substituted. Thus, the poem conveys the madness of war in triplicate: there is the barbarity of the torturers, the misshapen values of the newspaper, and the saddism of its clientele.

With such distressing appraisals of the past and present, Nowlan can not portend anything but bleakness for the future. He is so resolved in his pessimistic stance, in fact, that his prophetic eye can see the irrevocable ruination of the world. The title of the poem "O" (*Bread, Wine, Salt*, p. 22) is a pictorial representation of this colossal disaster; wasteland, naught, zero, a vacuum is the eventuality seen by the poet. The prelude to this Armageddon, "O" is a succession of provocative questions demanded of mankind; the overall intent lies in the query "what is going to happen when man's perverted fascination with dissension and bloodshed becomes too great?" The extent to which this idea is already developed is shown in Nowlan's image of "gunners concealed in the olive grove". Haply alluding to today's drama in the Middle East, the very symbol of peace is infested with the rot of malice. Nowlan's objective in writing "O", one of his most serious and, hence, structurally superior poems, is to rouse a spirit of compassion and dispell non-involvement; he tries to convince the reader that only through concern can the menace of war be removed and the olive tree healthy.

By reviewing the themes of Alden Nowlan and the way in which he expounds them to include every person, there is no basis labelling him an introvert. Nonetheless, on selected occasions, he does refer to himself, even to the point of citing his actual name in the poem. Reverting to what is expected, though, never does he restrict himself to himself; all can relate to his message.

The following pair of poems do find Nowlan in a moment of slight inwardness. Their value to the reader lies in what he is trying to uncurtain: the absolute rudiment of life, truth.

A poet's perspective of the truth is given in "The Encounter, the Recognition"

(*Tears and Laughter*, p. 69). A triumph over the repression of reality is achieved here as the speaker/poet "recognizes" his dual personality: "I enter it (forest path, building's hallway)/at both ends and walk slowly toward myself". The "encounter" is the poet's acceptance of his duality, the meeting of an extreme representing the good (or the "wholly sober") and the bad, (the "wholly drunk"). The two combine "midway" and form the poet's one self, a compromise situation in which his "best poems are created". A leaning toward one or the other produces a twisted version of himself. When he says, "'Hello, Alden'", Nowlan is content in the knowledge that he has reached a balance and can be as honest as possible with himself and his readers.

---

### Nowlan holds mankind, at large, responsible for "masking" actuality and devising trickeries

---

So it should be with all individuals. Indeed, if each reader of "The Encounter, the Recognition" would follow the example, Nowlan would not find it necessary to write about repression and the search for truth. It is the difficulty in achieving a mean between two opposing mentalities that impels humans to shun such a realization. If accomplished, the aftereffect may also be remarkably overwhelming.

With wit, "Letter to a Young Friend" (*Tears and Laughter*, p. 28) proves this point. Addressing someone in the process of "encountering" himself, Nowlan pens:

*My young comrade:  
So you aspire to be  
yourself and no one else!  
An aging freak,  
for whom there was no choice, wishes  
you strength  
to bear it should you find that which  
you seek.*

He feels acknowledging the darker side of one's being, as well as the bright, is a harrowing experience. As a poet, Nowlan was obliged to do so; otherwise, his poetry would be worthless. Moreover, in being consistent with his major theme, repression, Nowlan adds "freak" as a reference to himself. Society, with its knack for concealing truth, causes one who does not, to look upon himself as an alien, an oddity. The poet makes known this additional burden; his "young friend" must surmount obstacles inside and outside himself.

The theme of repression and its offshoot, the quest for liberating truths, are fulfilled when Nowlan savours absolute freedom. This is done almost exculsively in an atmosphere of aloneness; "He Finds Himself Alone in the House" (*Tears and Laughter*, p. 18) is a premier example.

In Nowlan's environment, the

*saving grace for his characters,  
apparently, leads often to the . . .  
tongue-in-pen engagement with their  
eccentricities.<sup>6</sup>*

Such is the case here. Being physically by himself, the speaker acts the buffoon. His antics are zany, to say the least; he composes a song entitled "'The Ballad of the Itching Anus'" and does not leave it at that; he sings it; nude, he struts throughout the house, fantasizing, slobbering over raw meat, purring. This clownery is overshadowed, however, by the poem's final statement. The speaker is not unbound by the sensuality of such acts; he says his newfound freedom is brought on by the fact that

*. . . I'm happy and there's nobody  
else here, nobody not even myself to  
deny me the pleasure of going crazy.*

That is to say, his nudity cannot be condemned by strangling moralities; he is able to eat from the floor without being judged insane. Because of the absence of outside pressure, not even he can find fault with himself. Salvation from his "Beginning" finally is found as Nowlan revels in a moment completely free of

inhibitions; at this stage, there are not tears on this clown's face.

Alden Nowlan's style and technique do not, like his theme(s), fluctuate from poem to poem. A greater visible difference in structure can be seen in his initial poems of the early sixties and more recent works.

For instance, within the former, a rigid, definable construction of stanza and line length is recognized; "Beginning" and "Poem for Elizabeth Nancy", both written by or before 1962, are examples. Consequently, rhyme and rhythm play a more prominent role in this period; as a model, "Beginning" lends itself to quite a traditional form in this respect. Each of its quatrains have alternate and rhymes and an iambic pentameter beat is nearly maintained in each sentence.

Contrarily, the form of poems written after 1966 cannot be so easily identified; the stanzas cannot be labelled by number of lines since Nowlan enjoys manipulating sentences; half-lines separate stanzas, yet continue them. Enjambment is used to extremes and, hence, the rhythm content is generally nil; rhyme is altogether forgotten.

As a similarity, poems of both groups are relatively short, especially in comparison to those produced most recently; the works of the mid-seventies are substantially lengthier, frequently taking the typographical shape of a narrow paragraph of prose.

If the form of Nowlan's poetry is modern, then his style or tone is equally or more so. Each piece conveys its message succinctly, simply, and directly; there is a casualness about the poems' voice that is reminiscent of Raymond Souster. Nowlan intensifies his straightforward and personal speech even to the point of inserting his name; as in "The Encounter, the Recognition", therefore, his poetry often reads like the transcript of an intimate conversation. Combined with the use of a very colloquial language, this results in a extremely effective means of expression.

Hence, the game of obscuring a work's purpose does not interest Nowlan. He shys away from confusing metaphors, allusions, devices that can detract from a poem's value as a giver of information; he does not indulge in mellifluous description. After



noting that many poets write ornately for the sake of writing ornately, fellow Maritimer and patriarch of Nova Scotian literature, Ernest Buckler says of Nowlan,

*His poetry is of quite a different order. No gingerbreads of self-consciously fine phrases, no puffballs of fancy irrelevance.*<sup>7</sup>

When Nowlan does allow a poem a bit of colour, texture, smell, it is solely for the enhancement of its theme. For instance, "Canadian January Night" (*Tears and Laughter*, p. 35) opens with a beautifully accurate vignette of this country's winter; it is not written for the reader's pleasure, although. The picture is an introduction, leading into the realization.

*Ice storm: the hill  
a pyramid of black crystal  
down which the cars  
slide like phosphorescent beetles while  
I, walking backwards in obedience  
to the wind, am possessed  
of the fearful knowledge  
my compatriots share  
but almost never utter:  
this is a country  
where a man can die  
simply from being  
caught outside.*

A scene of Canada's severe winter and the havoc it can create is essential in that a proper mood is established. The concept of nature as a tremendously oppressive force is easily accepted when such a graphic illustration is provided.

In summation of the poet's approach to his work, one can term Nowlan a moderate regionalist. Although not too extensively revealed in this essay's selection of poems, the cities of Halifax and Saint John and notably the villages of Hartland and Hainesville, New Brunswick appear frequently as his verse progresses. He does not deal specifically with the customary Maritime themes of the sea; nonetheless, poems with a setting are, in bulk, related to rural quaintness, rather than urban superiority.

Eventually, the profundity of Alden Nowlan's poetry dismisses any thoughts of

regionalism. As stated earlier, the limitations of specifying the setting of a poem are transcended to the stage where it is incidental. The true wealth of his regionalism is its universality; all persons of all regions can relate to a Nowlan poem. This fact is demonstrated when the writer, himself, refers to his chosen location as,

*. . . Hartland, New Brunswick,  
Canada, North America, world, solar  
system, centre of the universe*<sup>8</sup>

Retrospectively, one must admit that the poetry of Alden Nowlan is just as complex as it is wise. The outward simplicity of its language and individual brevity is just that: outward. Deep contemplation is required after every piece, its realizations often being so stunning and always so true. Many subjects that are of no monumental proportions, as a parent trying to overhear his sleeping child's mutterings, are investigated by Nowlan in his search for reality. Being that these incidents are not so earth-shattering, the reason behind writing such poems may be questioned by some. Nowlan's reply: "Oh, admit this, man, there's no point in poetry if you withhold the truth".<sup>9</sup>

This crusade to break down walls of dishonesty leads to Nowlan's major theme: repression. Running through the poems of youth to adulthood, it takes many shapes: the facades of love, society's imposition of its values and its rejection of truth, the physical repression of war and cages. In his handful of nature-related poetry, the utopia of Tantramar is replaced by the harsh repressiveness of a Canadian January night.

From such studies, Nowlan's impression of the world and its population is, in toto, negative. As shown in the torture of "In Our Time", the poet believes man to be basically blackhearted. This deduction is simply stated as Nowlan, giving advice to a future social worker, writes:

*Take my word for it. They're human.  
Most of them will hate you.*<sup>10</sup>

And being a member of the human race, and not a self-righteous poet, Nowlan

graciously confesses to his own flaws. One of the most appealing aspects of the man's writing, he recognizes something within himself that is ignoble. His struggle to conquer this, his "finding himself", is inspiring to the reader, offsetting the gloom of his other pieces. But most of the world refuses to yield and repression remains. In a poem entitled "Scratchings" (*Tears and Laughter*, p. 102), Nowlan sums up, in a number of separate dictums, his views on such a world. Here are three that condense most appropriately the poet's philosophy presented in this composition:

*The day the child realizes that all  
adults are imperfect he  
becomes an adolescent; the day he  
forgives them, he becomes  
an adult; the day he forgives himself  
he becomes wise.*

*Perhaps the ultimate indignity is  
loneliness without privacy.*

*Twentieth-century man is obsessed  
with sex like the baboons  
in a zoo, and for the same reason: it's  
the only emotional  
outlet from his captivity.*

---

## by Alden Nowlan

---

### Tiger in the Dublin Zoo

Know that I am Napoleon, the great, the magnificent tiger.  
Observe how an emperor  
takes possession of the ground  
on which he stands, imposes his own order  
on the space around him.

I stop and turn where I choose.

is three feet short  
of the end of the cage.

Never once have I forgotten myself  
And been stopped by the bars.

I am Napoleon, the great, the magnificent tiger.

I walk to and fro,  
and am never halted.

And that

No more and no less.



### He Finds Himself Alone in the House

I talk out aloud  
in three different voices.  
I try to swallow my nose.  
I make up a song called "The Ballad  
of the Itching Anus" and sing it.  
I dance about  
naked, my fat belly  
bouncing. I play at being  
Silenus, father of Bacchus,  
whose statue in  
the Victoria and Albert  
Museum I so much resemble.  
When a slice of beef happens  
to fall to the floor  
I snatch it up and eat it,  
dust and all, my eyes rolling.  
I purr like a lion.  
Not because I'm drunk or drugged  
but because I'm happy and there's nobody  
else here, nobody not even myself to deny  
me the pleasure of going crazy.

O

the boy resting by the sepulchre,  
oblivious to the questions  
of dark, imaginative children,  
how will we tell him  
it is too soon for the resurrection, and  
the gunners concealed in the olive grove,  
how  
does one explain to them  
the quivering of the earth  
over yesterday's enemies, and  
the women who are almost content  
with memories, what  
will we say when they  
refuse to open the door,  
and what will the vultures eat  
or the worms,  
and there were stars, perhaps,  
where will we go  
when they burst from the caves of not?

### Dead Letter

I wanted to speak, but could not.  
I stood mute for so long  
that I came to despise my mouth  
and would have been almost agreeable  
to having its silence punished  
by permanence: the penances include  
the ground invited to  
open and swallow,  
the stammering tongue  
torn out by the roots.

Today at last I was able to tell you:  
I love you and wish we could be together  
always

I say it easily now over and over again.

And you are so pleased with it  
I can't allow myself to  
stop, even for an instant,  
although I knew,  
almost as soon as I spoke,  
that I'd waited too long, that  
everything had changed and  
not a single word I said to you was true.

### Suddenly, A stranger

Fear in my young son's face  
entering my hospital room  
for the first time  
since the operation  
eyeing the door  
as though ready to bolt  
should this bandaged monster  
spring from its horrible bed  
to chase him.

### The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner

My wife bursts into the room  
where I'm writing well  
of my love for her  
and because now  
the poem is lost  
I silently curse her.

### And He Wept Aloud, So that the Egyptians Heard It

In my grandfather's house  
for the first time in years,  
houseflies big as bumblebees  
playing crazy football  
in the skim-milk-coloured windows,  
leap-frogging from  
the cracked butter saucer  
to our tin plates of  
rainbow trout and potatoes, catching the  
bread

on its way to our mouths,  
mounting one another  
on the rough deal table.

It was not so much their filth  
as their numbers and persistence and —  
oh, admit this, man, there's no point in  
poetry

if you withhold the truth  
once you've come by it —  
their symbolism:  
Baal-Zebub,

god of the poor and outcast,  
that enraged me, made me snatch the old  
man's  
"Family Herald", attack them like a maniac,  
lay to left and right until the window sills  
over-flowed with their smashed corpses,  
until bits of their wings  
stuck to my fingers,  
until the room buzzed with their terror . . .

And my grandfather, bewildered and afraid,  
came to help me:

"never seen a year  
when the flies were so thick"  
as though he'd seen them at all before I  
came!

His voice so old and baffled and pitiful  
that I threw my club into the wood box and  
sat down

and wanted to beg his forgiveness  
as we ate on in silence broken only  
by the almost inaudible humming  
of the flies rebuilding their world.

### I, Icarus

There was a time when I could fly. I swear it.  
Perhaps, if I think hard for a moment, I can even tell you the year.  
My room was on the ground floor at the rear of the house.  
My bed faced a window.  
Night after night I lay on my bed and willed myself to fly.  
It was hard work, I can tell you.  
Sometimes I lay perfectly still for an hour before I felt  
my body rising from the bed.  
I rose slowly, slowly until I floated three or four feet  
above the floor.  
Then, with a kind of swimming motion, I propelled myself  
toward the window.  
Outside, I rose higher and higher, above the pasture fence,  
above the clothesline, above the dark, haunted trees  
beyond the pasture.  
And, all the time, I heard the music of flutes.  
It seemed the wind made this music.  
And sometimes there were voices singing.



## The Encounter, the Recognition

There's a path through the woods, or a corridor  
in an empty building. I enter it  
at both ends and walk slowly toward myself.  
I am wholly drunk.

We meet midway

"Hello, Alden," I say.

That's how my best poems are created.

I am wholly sober.

and recognize one another.

## In those Old Wars

In those old wars  
where generals wore yellow ringlets  
and sucked lemons at their prayers,  
other things being equal  
the lost causes were the best.

Lee rode out of history  
on his gray horse, Traveller,  
so perfect a hero  
had he not existed  
it would have been necessary to invent him —  
war stinks without gallantry.

An aide, one of the few who survived,  
told him,  
Country be damned, general,  
for six months these men  
have had no country but you.  
They fought barefoot  
and drank blueberryleaf tea.

The politicians  
strung up Grant  
like a carrot,  
made him a Merovingian.  
They stole everything,  
even the coppers from Lincoln's dead eyes.

In those days, the vanquished  
surrendered their swords like gentlemen,  
the victors alone  
surrendered their illusions.  
The easiest thing to do for a Cause  
is to die for it.

## In Our Time

The newspapers speak of torture  
as though it were horseplay.  
This morning a picture of a Congolese rebel  
being kicked to death  
was captioned "the shoe is on the other foot"  
and a story from Saigon

told of a Viet Cong prisoner  
who complained of thirst  
being "overwhelmed by the hospitality  
of his captors  
who cheerfully refreshed him  
and also his memory"  
by pumping a generous quantity of water  
through rubber tubes into his nostrils.

## Scratchings

Every great idea contains the seed of its own destruction.

Without God we have no rights, only such privileges as may be granted us by the state.

Definition of a hypocrite: one who is too kind to be wholly honest and too honest to be wholly kind.

The day the child realizes that all adults are imperfect he becomes an adolescent; the day he forgives them, he becomes an adult; the day he forgives himself he becomes wise.

Nothing is more likely to stunt the intellect than a knowledge of history unaccompanied by a sense of history.

Perhaps the ultimate indignity is loneliness without privacy.

When nothing sexual is regarded as obscene, romantic love will cease to exist.

Men and women are not equal: each is superior to the other.

Twentieth-century man is obsessed with sex like the baboons in a zoo, and for the same reason: it's the only emotional outlet for his captivity.

## Footnotes

1. Alden Nowlan, "Interview with Alden Nowlan," *The Fiddlehead*, Kent Thompson, ed., Vol.: No. 81; University of New Brunswick Press: Fredericton, 1969, p. 5.
2. Michael Ustick, "Repression: The Poetry of Alden Nowlan," *Canadian Literature*, George Woodcock, ed., Vol.: No. 60; Morris Printing Press Company: Victoria, B.C., 1974, p. 43.
3. Alden Nowlan, "Beginning," *Poetry of Mid-Century: 1940-1960*, Milton Wilson, ed., McClelland and Stewart Limited: Toronto, 1964, p. 215.
4. Alden Nowlan, "I, Icarus," *Bread, Wine, and Salt*, Clarke, Irwin, & Company Limited: Toronto, 1967, p. 3.
5. Alden Nowlan, "Dead Letter," *Between Tears and Laughter*, Clarke, Irwin, & Company Limited: Toronto, 1971, p. 7.
6. Keith Fraser, "Notes on Alden Nowlan," *Canadian Literature*, George Woodcock, ed., Vol.: No. 45; Morris Printing Press Company: Victoria, B.C., 1970, p. 50.
7. Ernest Buckler, "Alden Nowlan: An Appreciation," *The Fiddlehead*, Kent Thompson, ed., Vol.: No. 81; University of New Brunswick Press: Fredericton, 1969, p. 46.

8. Nowlan, "The Last Waltz," *Bread, Wine, and Salt*, p. 64.
9. Nowlan, "The Social Worker's Poem," *I'm a Stranger Here Myself*, Clarke, Irwin, & Company Limited: Toronto, 1974, p. 18.

## Bibliography

- Nowlan, Alden. *Between Tears and Laughter*. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, & Company Limited, 1971.
- Nowlan, Alden. *Bread, Wine, and Salt*. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, & Company, 1967.
- Nowlan, Alden. *I'm a Stranger Here Myself*. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, & Company, 1974.
- Thompson, Kent, ed., *The Fiddlehead*, Vol.: No. 81. Fredericton: University of New Brunswick, 1969.
- Wilson, Milton, ed., *Poetry of Mid-Century: 1940-1960*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1964.
- Woodcock, George, ed., *Canadian Literature*, Vol.: No. 45. Victoria, B.C.: Morris Printing Press Company, 1970.
- Woodcock, George, ed., *Canadian Literature*, Vol.: No. 60. Victoria, B.C.: Morris Printing Press Company, 1974.

## Edwin Pratt continued from page 10

### Bibliography

- Brown, E.K.: "On Canadian Poetry", Ryerson, Toronto, 1944.
- Frye, Northrop: "Preface to an Uncollected Anthology", from "Contexts of Canadian Criticism" edited by Eli Mandel, University of Chicago Press, 1971.
- Pacey, Desmond: "Ten Canadian Poets", Ryerson, Toronto, 1957.
- Pacey, Desmond: "Creative writing in Canada"

Ryerson, 1964.

Pratt, Edwin J.: "Collected poems of E. J. Pratt" edited and prefaced by Northrop Frye; MacMillan & Co., Toronto, 1962.

Rashley, R.E.: "Poetry in Canada", Ryerson, Toronto, 1958.

Wells, Henry W., Klinck Carl F.: "Edwin J. Pratt", *The Man and His Poetry* Foreword by J. B. Brebner, Ryerson, Toronto, 1947.



## Homecoming '78 —

## You're Invited!

Homecoming '78 will be held from May 5 through 7. All Mount Saint Vincent Academy, College and University Alumnae are invited to come back to the Mount and meet old friends. Some of the events to look forward to are:

- the Annual Meeting and installation of executive officers
- the Annual Dinner and special presentations
- Mass at Evaristus Chapel
- sporting events and craft demonstrations
- guided tours of historic Halifax
- bus tour and lunch, Peggy's Cove
- entertainment at the Metro Centre
- Harbour tour followed by tea at the Motherhouse; special guests will be many retired Sisters of Charity, former teacher and staff at the Mount

Watch for more information in the mail or contact the Alumnae Officer, Michal Rankin, if you have suggestions or would like to become involved. See you in May!



*It was September, 1954 at Mount Saint Vincent College; Evaristus Hall was a new building, completed only two years before. This year, Mount Saint Vincent welcomes all Alumnae back to Evaristus Hall, and to the rest of the campus as well during Homecoming '78, May 5 through 7.*