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JAMES McINTYRE: NEGLECTED EMIGRE

As any schoolboy of fourteen knows, a native literature cannot flourish where people cannot read and write. As Canada gained a few brave souls who would write even in the face of derision and hardship, a native literature slowly began to emerge: its beginnings may be seen in Thomas Chandler Haliburton, in Joseph Howe, and in John Richardson. Emigrés, however, have always been important in the country's literary life: people like Susanna Moodie, who remained, or people like Malcolm Lowry, Nicholas Monserrat and Brian Moore, who were birds of passage, offered native Canadians new ways of looking at their own country, and a new impetus to recording their own interpretations. Yorkshire-born William Kirby, using old Quebec legends, was followed by native-born Gilbert Parker who created new Quebec fictions. Perhaps it was English-born Catherine Parr Traill who opened the eyes of Archibald Lampman. With further encouragement and criticism from Irish emigrés and from early Yankee invaders—to say nothing of Scotch—the native-born began to create what might be seen as a Canadian school of writing.

The term "school" when used in "Poe School" or "Zola School" or "Eliot School", to say nothing of "New School" or "Black Mountain School", is a vague and inexact term, but seems to mean the awakening of one group by another to the possibilities of and for art. In Canada, the school, if indeed one did grow, was certainly based on the collegiate system and often the relationships are tenuous. The Great Lakes School of Poets¹ was based, naturally, in Ontario: Archibald Lampman, Wilfred Campbell, Duncan Campbell Scott. The Birchbark School,² exemplified by Charles G. D. Roberts and his cousin Bliss Carman, had maritime waterways as playing fields. With the opening of the west the Birchbark School tipped over to the prairies and

then up over the mountains to British Columbia: Pauline Johnson's paddle sang all along the way. But perhaps she belongs more exactly to the Vaudeville School,³ along with Robert Service and Robert Stead. Eventually, even a nationalistic school emerged.

Literature has always promoted nationalism, though in Canada both nationalism and heroism have been almost professionally derided. Why here is almost inexplicable. No one sneers at Herodotus for his cult of the Greek; no one sneers at Gawain and his Middle English heroism. And who does aught but praise William Shakespeare for his almost continuous bleatings about "This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,/This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,/This other Eden, demi-paradise;/This fortress built by Nature for herself . . ."? What romantic nonsense! "Built by Nature for herself". What nationalistic arrogance! Nor do they snub Browning when he wants to be in England. No one flays Michael Drayton, no one bullies him for bragging about his King Harry when "Fair stood the wind for France". "Breathes there a man with soul so dead" is surely a line scratched by a chauvinist. Walter Scott gained a knighthood by praising the Highlands. Keats glorified his friends, as well as the Mermaid Tavern in which they drank and the countryside through which they wandered. But let a Canadian write about drinking beer in Savona or Lac La Hache or Piapot, in Windsor, N. S. or Ont., and critics will condemn him not only as being local, regional, and provincial, but also as being nationalistic.

Canadian writers, too, are often charged with being derivative, of being so unimaginative as to borrow from other writers. No such accusation is made against Chaucer, who not only borrowed but stole from Boccaccio. University lecturers, indeed, actually praise Wyatt and Surrey for lifting the entire idea of the sonnet from Petrarch, as did, indirectly, not only Roy Daniells, but also Shakespeare, Donne and Milton. But perhaps Boccaccio and Petrarch are fair game because they are Italians. But what lecturers denounce those nineteenth-century English writers who pilfered odes from the Greeks? Those same lecturers would blast Charles Heavyside for stealing from King James' version, but they would turn a blind eye to Milton, another purloiner of biblical ideas.

Canadian writers are also, apparently, too vocationally minded, too work oriented, too Puritanical in their attitudes toward hewing wood and hauling water, too bound up with dairying and sowing and reaping and with other basic activities, to be truly creative. But who admonishes Wordsworth for writing about the sheep-herding Michael, or about some far-off and romantic

solitary reaper? Who squirms when Ben Jonson refers to Queen Elizabeth as a "huntress"—one chaste and fair no less? Elizabeth chaste? Or fair? Tennyson wrote about a bloody deckhand in the Azores. And look at Coleridge's geriatric mariner. People actually rally around John Milton for depicting the way in which Adam ran that Paradise Valley Ranch and then lost it because he could not control his wife's expensive tastes. At least the Canadian poet, even while being snubbed as an industrial hack, respects the person who sticks to his job. A good Canadian would berate both Marlowe and Raleigh for trying to lure that shepherdess away from her flock.

Critics of our Maple Leaf School suggest that we have too much of the Laurentians, the Mounties, of maple syrup, of beaver, moose, and caribou, of birdsong, and of roaring rivers. Those critics forget Lucy Gray and that violet by a mossy stone. They forget that besides writing about a ploughman, Shelley sang to skylarks and to clouds. Those critics do not downplay Tennyson for writing about tooth-and-claw nature and about wild cataracts that leap in glory. At least our Canadian cataracts seldom leap. Who objects to Wordsworthian sparrows' nests, Keatsean seasons, Yeatsean bees that buzz and beanrows that wilt? If a Canadian wrote a pastoral poem about going through the rye, the critics would damn him as an alcoholic.

Nor in Canada may schools of any kind be didactic. But who blasts off at Will Langland's *Piers Plowman*—if it indeed be his? Or at Ben Jonson? Or even at Robert Herrick for teaching young virgins what to do with their time? No one slashes at Tennyson for wanting to teach Maud something about gardens. But a didactic Canadian is charged with being too talky, too preachy. In truth, the writers of other countries may be educated—even must be educated—but frontier Canada throws up a constant critical barrage if a writer belongs to a school of any kind: agricultural, economic, legal, pastoral, separate; belletristic, cerebralistic, paternalistic, socialistic, or visceralistic.

It is little wonder then, in view of our historic conditioning in self-abnegation, that we Canadians have rejected and wilfully relegated to the literary junk pile one of our most illustrious emigré poets, James McIntyre, the Principal of the School of Cheddar Cheese poetry. In 1841 the town of Forres, in Morayshire, Scotland, lost one of its sons who sailed away to Canada at the age of 14.⁴ And this town may well one day be known as the very bedrock of Canadian literature.⁵

We know little of McIntyre's early life in Canada, and his experiences were no doubt varied. We do know that he handled cows on a farm near St. Catharines, where he met and married Euphemia Fraser. Then, sick of

the sight of the rape of the land and the forest in the Niagara Peninsula, he moved to Ingersoll. There James McIntyre became a carpenter.

We have it from very high authority that some mighty great men have been carpenters or carpenters' helpers, and as a carpenter McIntyre became a great man. He was a founding member of the local Presbyterian church in that stronghold of Presbyterianism. He was a Mason for forty years, and an Oddfellow for longer. He was also the local undertaker: we know from westerns that the local carpenter is usually the local undertaker—perhaps "mortician" would be the better term in view of McIntyre's fraternal connections. The fraternal orders of Western Ontario were noted for their lavish funerals and in his time McIntyre organized some of the finest ever held in the Ingersoll-Stratford region. In addition, he was the local furniture dealer who made and rented out chairs and tables and beds. As a result of operating in that vocational-fraternal-religious syndrome, he was aware of every spontaneously planned local happening. And, regardless of how uncomfortable the position, by keeping his nose to the grindstone and his ear to the ground, he was able to pick up every bit of chaff. Having a lyrical quality about him, he became a poet in the tradition of the Scottish bard—like Robert Burns, only clean. McIntyre saw everything and knew everything that went on in the village and wrote on almost everything he saw or knew: fires and firemen, the charm of Niagara, Methodist union, D'Arcy McGee, towns, cornerstone layings, holidays, Mrs. Moody, and even games and steam power.

The change in the country since he came to it fascinated him. When he arrived, Upper Canada was crude and rough; when he died in 1906 he left the kind of rural Ontario that we know today. Oxford County is particularly wealthy; the good land, rich in pastures and subdivisions, is dotted with great comfortable-looking stone or brick houses, or "Jalnas". And the bard knew that this late nineteenth-century wealth was based almost entirely on dairying.

By 1860 the rich soil of Ontario had been ruined by over-cultivation, by raising grain, by depletion of the forests for making fertilizer and for making soap. A depression settling over the country increased the fears of the uneasy Ontario people, who were somewhat envious of American farmers who had a war machine to which to sell their products. The answer to the problem came from an American farmer named Ranney, who settled in Dereham where his wife began to make cheese.⁶ By 1858 her one hundred cows produced a steady stream of high-grade cheeses, which proved to be the best way out. In 1866 a Mr. Farrington, a relative of Ranney, started the first commercial cheese factory in Norwich and the production of cheese that year

amounted to 2,867,172 pounds, all dairy cheese made on the farms of the region. The farmers found a ready market in the growing American cities along the lakes, another in the American army, and an even better one in England. Rural Ontario took note. Within five years cheese dominated the thinking of the country and changed Ontario overnight from a rural slum to an area of riches.

By 1874 there were 200 cheese factories in Ontario. In 1904 Canada exported 233,890,716 pounds of cheese to Britain alone and accounted for 95% of the cheddar on the English market which was so well known for its cheddars. From there the Canadian cheese was often exported to the continent. For about thirty years Canada was the world's great producer of great cheddar cheese. The product was even better after 1923, when it was improved by law. Though by 1934 the depression had reduced the total export to an even 100,000,000 pounds, in the mid-war year of 1942 some 206,215,228 pounds of exported Canadian cheese helped bind the allies together.⁷

Probably never in the history of farming had a change-over been adopted so quickly, never had people so happily paid off the mortgages, developed rich pastures, raised fine cattle, built grand houses, and bought proud monuments and coffins. They yearned to show the world the greatness of their achievement. Establishing the Royal Ontario Winter Fair was not enough, though it has remained the great winter show in North America. They needed something more. It came in June 1884, when E. Caswell received an order for 32,000 cheeses, each weighing 65 pounds or over—"about three million lbs. in all."⁸ Someone then conceived the brilliant idea of making one huge cheese from which smaller cheeses could be cut; it would be the largest cheese in the entire world and would be a dramatic means of signalling to the entire world the cheese-making supremacy of the Ingersoll area.

James Harris, a son-in-law of Ranney, manufactured the four-ton cheese, "all of it a uniform fine quality and colour",⁹ and "four large grey teams in a triumphal procession"¹⁰ drew it into Ingersoll for shipment to Toronto's Provincial Exhibition. That was by chance the year of the world fair in Paris. Why not enter the cheese in that exhibit? And then on to London? The giant cheese required an entire railway flatcar for shipment from Ingersoll to¹¹ Toronto and from Toronto to New York, where longshoremen carefully loaded her on a ship which "sailed with triumph o'er the seas".¹²

James McIntyre felt the excitement and put his pen to paper. He wrote in the pastoral tradition, perhaps, but without gods, without reedy pipes or shaggy Pans, with neither passionate shepherds nor their loves. His poetry

proved to be refreshingly realistic, nearly naturalistic; it had an almost animal naturalism which broke with both sterile neo-classicism and outmoded romanticism. True, some romantic elements in it hang on for a while, but the style is of historical significance in a literary sense. On gazing at that huge history-making cheese, McIntyre was inspired to write his now famous "Ode to the Mammoth Cheese".¹³ A note, almost a subtitle, added "Weighing over 7000 pounds".

We have seen the Queen of cheese,
Laying quietly at your ease,
Gently fanned by evening breeze—
Thy fair form no flies dare seize.

All gaily dressed soon you'll go
To the great Provincial Show,
To be admired by many a beau
In the City of Toronto.

Cows numerous as a swarm of bees—
Or as leaves upon the trees—
It did require to make thee please,
And stand unrivalled Queen of Cheese.

May you not receive a scar as!¹⁴
We have heard that Mr. Harris
Intends to send you off as far as
The great World's show at Paris.

Of the youth—beware of these—
For some of them might rudely squeeze
And bite your cheek; then songs or glees
We could not sing o' Queen of Cheese.

We'rt thou suspended from baloon
You'd caste a shade, even at noon;
Folks would think it was the moon
About to fall and crush them soon.

Despite its popularity as McIntyre's most quoted poem, this "Ode on the Mammoth Cheese" is not his most interesting one. It is however, experimental; it breaks with the traditional ode for it has neither strophe nor anti-strophe. "Oxford Cheese Ode", though about the same phenomenon, is superior in that it seems more spontaneous, seems to have been written at the moment of hearing about the Caswell order. Although called an ode, this

second poem exhibits that spaciousness that we generally look for in the epic. Perhaps the poet is consciously breaking with form here too. Note that though the "Oxford Cheese Ode"¹⁵ is in couplets, the verses are six lines, instead of four as in "Ode on the Mammoth Cheese".¹⁶ Note the change in factual information. In "Mammoth Cheese" he states it weighed "over 7000 pounds". In the "Oxford Cheese Ode" he shows himself to be the conscientious craftsman who constantly revises for accuracy; here he comes closer to the true weight, "eight thousand pounds". Note his Canadian concern with climate, a traditional topic for most Canadian writers. Notice, though, the exuberance, the joyously lyrical way in which he lays low an old canard right in the first verse. Begone, Voltaire, with your few acres of snow!

OXFORD CHEESE ODE

The ancient poets ne'er did dream
That Canada was land of cream,
They ne'er imagined it could flow
In this cold land of ice and snow,
Where everything did solid freeze
They ne'er hoped or looked for cheese.

A few years since our Oxford farms
Were nearly robbed of all their charms,
O'er cropped the weary land grew poor,
And nearly barren as a moor,
But now their owners live at ease,
Rejoicing in their crop of cheese.

And since they justly treat the soil,
Are well rewarded for their toil;
The land enriched by goodly cows
Yields plenty now to fill their mows,
Both wheat and barley, oats and peas,
But still their greatest boast is cheese.

Cow, you must treat her as a Queen,
When grass is dry cut her feed green;
She will repay you for your toiling
For there's profit in the soiling,
Its benefits one daily sees
Who takes an interest in the cheese.

And you must careful fill your mows,
With good provender for your cows;

And in the winter keep them warm,
 Protect them safe all times from harm,
 For cows do dearly love their ease
 Which doth insure best grades of cheese.

To us it is a glorious theme,
 To sing of milk, and curds, and cream,
 Were it collected, it could float
 On its bosom small steam boat,
 Cows, numerous as swarm of bees,
 Are milked in Oxford to make cheese.

To prove the wealth that here abounds,
 One cheese weighed eight thousand pounds;
 Had it been hung in air at noon
 Folks would have thought it was the moon;
 It sailed with triumph o'er the seas,
 'Twas hailed with welcome "Queen of cheese".

Just when McIntyre first began to compose cheese poetry is difficult to establish, but an examination of his poems could lead one to believe erroneously that his first mention of cheese, in a literary sense, as a literary topic, might have been in "Lines on Salford",¹⁷ which he read at the opening of the new parsonage there. In that poem he calls Salford "parent of the cheese" because in that town Ranney had settled. McIntyre's first volume does not tell us when the new parsonage was opened, but *Poems* gives the date as 1883. Following the same line of reason, one could consider "Lines on Norwich"¹⁸ to be the second cheese poem. In that absolutely impossible-to-date poem McIntyre mentions Farrington as the initiator of the factory system of cheese making in 1866. Allowing for the time lapse, perhaps 1883 is a good date for this poem too because McIntyre says that "The farmers they now all make rich,/Since Farrington went to Norwich. . . ." In *Musings* he says a poem entitled "Oxford Cheese Maker's Song" is "One of our early cheese odes".¹⁹ By 1889, in *Poems*, he is more positive. This same poem he calls "Father Ranney, the cheese pioneer" and comments that "This is our earliest cheese ode".²⁰ This poem is in seven verses of eight couplets each, and each verse is followed by a two-line chorus, each similar in sentiment to the first: "Then long life to Father Ranney/May he wealth and honour gain aye".

But by 1889 McIntyre himself seems to have forgotten the dates. A note to one poem published in 1884 suggests that as early as 1859 he had written six lines in couplets and entitled them "The cheese pioneer".²¹ *Musings*

was published in 1884, and the suggested date of the poem comes from a notation: "Lines on Rannie, the cheese pioneer, written a quarter of a century ago". That would be the year following Mrs. Ranney's herd having reached one hundred head. If we can take the poet literally, then these lines written in 1859 might well be his first on cheese or at least related to cheese:

Rannie began with just two cows,
 Which he in winter fed on brouse,
 And now he hath got mighty herds,
 Numerous as flock of birds;
 May he long live, our hearts to cheer,
 This great and useful Pioneer.

This problem of dating is a very real one for the scholar working in the McIntyre canon. An Homeric-like bard or balladeer or entertainer, the man seems to have wandered around the countryside to different social gatherings where he would compose and recite a poem; at the opening of a parsonage, for example, or at a funeral, or a wedding, or a formal dinner, or a dance. Even at a political meeting. After holding back his poems for some time, or after publishing only in local *avant garde* or even underground newspapers, he published his first volume in 1884. None of the poems does he date. Many he introduces or ends with prose bits explaining how they came to be written, but he gives no explicit time. This is not always the case, for along with the poem "Port Stanley" goes the note "Lines composed on an excursion to Port Stanley, 1883".²² Doubtless some other dates could be established. For instance, "Lines on Mt. Elgin" carries the note, "Delivered at opening of Odd-Fellows' Lodge".²³ The date of that event could be uncovered. But "Lines delivered at a Fireman's Soiree in the days of the hand engines"²⁴ and "Lines written when Nova Scotia was threatening to withdraw from the Confederation"²⁵ might have been written at any time. Some poems are merely ambiguous: "Nuptial Ode on Canada" was "Written during the visit of delegates from the Lower Province to negotiate for confederation".²⁶ A scholar might have difficulty in deciding whether the occasion was the Charlottetown Conference or the conference at Quebec, but he has no difficulty in grasping the sentiments and hopes of the poet:

And soon shall Red River valley
 And distant Vancouver,²⁷ rally
 To form this empire gigantic
 From Pacific to Atlantic.

Another problem is in dating the individual works in the order and timing of the publication of the books. After publishing the first volume, apart from the many poems in local Ontario newspapers, McIntyre waited fifteen years before publishing the second, *Poems of James McIntyre*,²⁸ which appeared in 1889. This volume contained 196 pages of his poems with their now famous prose comments, and included an index. But the poet obviously did not intend this volume to be his last. Though he writes a "Final address to our patrons", he also warns that "Now to our friends who proved so true,/ We bid you for short time adieu".²⁹ The price of the book was one dollar; only half the edition appears to have been bound. Between 1889 and 1891, ever writing, he produced a group of poems entitled "The Rise and Progress of the Canadian Cheese Trade". Obviously he planned this as a separate volume, a third volume of poems, but financial problems probably forced a change in plan. At any rate, the copies of *Poems* not sold by the time of publication of "The Rise and Progress" were duly bound with the latter, the paging made consecutive, and published as a single volume. Page 201 begins "The Rise and Progress". Such a printing innovation has obviously caused a considerable amount of confusion among less careful researchers. The scholar then might work with three different volumes of McIntyre: *Musings on the Canadian Thames*, *Poems of James McIntyre*, and *Poems of James McIntyre [including "The Rise and Progress of the Canadian Cheese Trade"]*. The Vancouver Public Library owns the second, while a private collector in Vancouver has acquired the first and third.

Though we might not know when McIntyre started writing we do know that he revised many poems before letting them be seen a second time. In the first edition³⁰ of "Mammoth Cheese" we note a romantic tendency to capitalize: Queen of cheese, Provincial Show, Queen of Cheese, World's show. In the second printing³¹ this tendency disappears: he is more realistic and uses lower case. The use of romantic punctuation—the dash, for instance—also disappears in the second edition to be replaced by the comma: "Cows numerous as a swarm of bees—/Or as leaves upon the trees—" becomes simply and more effectively, "Cows numerous as a swarm of bees,/Or as the leaves upon the trees, . . ."

Other changes are also obvious. The first edition said, "We have seen the Queen of cheese/Laying quietly at your ease. . . ." That statement makes little sense either grammatically or morally. The new edition reads, "We have seen thee, queen of cheese,/Lying quietly at your ease. . . ." The dif-

ference in meaning is profound. As it is in the change from "We could not sing o' Queen of Cheese", to "We could not sing, oh! queen of cheese". The revisions in "Oxford Cheese Ode" are often in punctuation or in slight changes from "time" to "times" and "grade" to "grades". But one change is almost inexplicable—poetically, philosophically, or agriculturally. He eliminated the entire stanza beginning "Cow, you must treat her as a Queen. . . ." ³² Perhaps printing costs were too high, but one suspects that his private correspondence might show a rather prophetic insight into the changes in the meaning of both "Queen" and "grass".

As McIntyre churned out his poems and as his cheese poetry increased in volume, like many popular poets—and be assured that he was popular—he turned from pure lyricism to didacticism. He began writing gems of wisdom to encourage the cheese industry to keep production at a peak. At one time when the price of cheese was low, he appears to have thought that farmers might kill off or sell off all their cows. In order to discourage such misadventure he wrote "Low price of cheese" ³³ which contained this stanza:

Price soon will rise though now 'tis low
And brooks of milk will onward flow,
Were they collected in one stream
There would be floods of milk and cream.

Another poem, "An average rule to judge of Cheese" ³⁴ demonstrates the advantages of producing cheese instead of grain, and extolls the richness of one ten-cent pound of cheese. And in "Lines read at a Dairyman's Supper" ³⁵ he protests the wastage of manure, a valued by-product of dairying:

. . . . let the farmers justly prize
The cows for land they fertilize,
And let us all with songs and glees
Invoke success into the cheese.

In "Ensilage" ³⁶ he recommended planting corn. Already pointed out is that McIntyre experimented with the form of the ode. Here he experiments freely with rhyme; notice his daring to mate "ensilage" and "engage", notice the romantic-picaresque connotations as he rhymes "rover" and "lover".

The farmers now should all adorn
A few fields with sweet southern corn,
It is luscious, thick and tall,
The beauty of the fields in fall. ³⁷

For it doth make best ensilage,
 For those in dairying engage,
 It makes the milk in streams to flow,
 Where dairymen have a good silo.

The cow is a happy rover
 O'er the fields of blooming clover,
 Of it she is a fond lover,
 And it makes milk pails run over.

Obviously McIntyre knew his cheese. A professional himself, he appreciated the professional approach: keep the cheese dishes clean and sweet. Once McIntyre was accused of being part owner of a cheese factory and with producing cheese poetry out of self-interest. But we have no evidence of that. Though a good member of the Liberal Party, he does not seem to have been in the cheese business himself. In fact, it is because of his attitude toward those dishes that William Arthur Deacon so rightly rejected the idea that McIntyre made the big or mammoth cheese, or indeed was a cheese manufacturer at all. No one who gave such profound advice would make cheese in his undertaking parlour—cheese would absorb the smell of embalming fluid. In "Hints to Cheese Makers"³⁸ McIntyre manages advice to both cheese makers and pig raisers:

All those who quality do prize
 Must study color, taste and size,
 And keep their dishes clean and sweet
 And all things round their factories neat;
 For dairymen insist that these
 Are all important points in cheese.

Each side of the river hath its work
 Devoted to the cure of pork,
 For dairymen find it doth pay
 To fatten pigs upon the whey;
 For there is money raising grease
 As well as in the making cheese.

The revised version of this poem loses some of the Tennysonian quality—the sense of "On either side the river lie"—by replacing the first line of the second verse with "Grant has here a famous work".³⁹ McIntyre is honouring J. L. Grant who installed a cold storage plant along the Grand Trunk Railway line for the purpose of curing pork.

For nearly thirty years when Ontario's great cheese boom was based on the cow, McIntyre the carpenter stuck to his last as a scribe, but did not always stick to cheese as a topic. As a patriot trying to bolster immigration to Canada, he wrote, for example, a long 136-line epic poem.⁴⁰ It is experimental as an epic in the stripping away of the old-fashioned paraphernalia which usually marks an epic as an epic, the invocation to the muse, the statement of purpose, and those old epic similes. In his "Canadian Romance" the epic hero is an immigrant Englishman, and we learn that the immigrant could be well off in this new country rather quickly, especially if he married the daughter of the wealthiest man in the township. Not only assured of bridges, the immigrants are reassured that happiness is in having plenty of damned hard work. And "Canadian Romance" displays the standard Canadian nineteenth-century imagery: in this poem, in this one poem, we see the great twin image of the wilderness and the garden, the metamorphosis of the country from wilderness to garden. John Roe married Jane Tripp. No doubt the wild wedding bells rang out, and then the bridegroom

He his young oxen did adorn
 With fine gay ribbons on each horn,
 And to his home with joy and pride
 He did bring sweet blooming bride,
 Such happiness is seldom seen,
 Happier far than king or queen;
 She helped him in the fields to reap,
 And spun the wool from off the sheep,⁴¹
 All they required they had for both,
 Of her own weaving of good cloth,
 And she was a good tailoress,
 Did make his coat and her own dress. . . .

Apart from that pastoral element reminiscent of Spenser's "Epithalamion", and indeed of both Marlowe and Raleigh, here is a hearkening back to Chaucer in the couplet at the end of that passage: "And she was a good tailoress,/Did make his coat and her own dress".⁴² Although not in the alliterative long line, the broken rhyme scheme and unwritten aspirate "e" are evidence that McIntyre was aware of that great English poet who too had cast off the old "auctorite" and set up his own standards. In fact, McIntyre often makes one think of Chaucer. Like him, in "Port Burwell" McIntyre even assays a double rhyme: "They must be clad in fur well,/For it blows cold at Burwell".⁴³ Note too that almost Chaucerian touch in the use of both "clad"

and "cold" in the same couplet.⁴⁴ A careful reading of McIntyre, as does a careful reading of Chaucer, reveals many of the social customs of the day; for example, in "Mammoth Cheese" McIntyre almost forces the reader to accept what must have been an early pronunciation of Toronto.

Nor is pronunciation all he reveals. He reveals the customs of the Ontario countryside, the dairymen's suppers, and especially the great dairymen's social of 1887. Like Chaucer and many a poet since, especially like Tennyson, McIntyre often made a shrewd social comment. Before the cheese boom the ladies' pin money came from the sale of eggs, but after the cheese boom

. . . the ladies dress in silk
From the proceeds of the milk:
But those who buy her butter
"How dear it is", they mutter.⁴⁵

But even more than a social commentator, McIntyre is a social philosopher and a social realist: ". . . no young man should be afraid/To court a pretty dairymaid". Though no snob, as we see, he might be accused somewhat of localism when he adds, "And far abroad he should not roam/But find a charmer here at home. . ."⁴⁶ Like Shelley in "England 1819", McIntyre is almost a seer, almost a prophet, as he issues warnings. Unless Ontario sticks to her dairy herd, she will lose her position as the greatest province and lose it to the great grain-growing west. Already aware of that developing area, alert to what is going on around him, the poet wisely counsels Ontarians to stay with cheese:⁴⁷

Ontario cannot compete
With the Northwest in raising wheat,
For cheaper there they it can grow
So price in future may be low.

And of course he was right. It is interesting to note too that as early as 1858 he was predicting a national railroad that would be instrumental in uniting the whole of British America under one law.⁴⁸ Later he even prophesied a cheese weighing all of ten tons.⁴⁹ But he was also saying that ". . . Winnipeg perchance may be the capital of the Dominion".⁵⁰

Throughout McIntyre's work one can recognize his debt to others besides Chaucer. In all truth, McIntyre acknowledges his indebtedness to the other great poets—nationalistic, didactic, and pastoral—by writing poems about them, especially about the English poets and Robert Burns, although he did give a passing nod to Longfellow, Poe and Lowell. He was very gracious in

giving a verse to Susanna Moodie, who was writing, he says, "When this country it was woody".⁵¹ But obviously the great influences came from the English. From Milton he certainly took some of his cadences: "Like mightiest organ in full tone/Melodious grand is great Milton. . .".⁵² To indicate that "sweet and gentle Will" is commemorated also upon the Canadian Thames, "The gentle maids and comely dames/Do meet and each does bring her scroll/Of laurel leaves from Ingersoll".⁵³ Wordsworth and Coleridge delighted McIntyre because "With joy they did pursue their themes. . .".⁵⁴ Dryden he praises for having translated Virgil.⁵⁵ Perhaps Tennyson evokes the most applause, the Laureate, who "England's glory did uphold": "And he hath the people's benison,/Greatest of living poets Tennyson".⁵⁶ Though prophetic like Shelley, but perhaps feeling a need to compete with him, McIntyre is less effusive about him though absolutely sincere. The poem entitled "Shelly" might be short partly because, as the local undertaker, McIntyre might have had certain adverse feelings about cremation:⁵⁷

We have scarcely time to tell thee
Of that strange and gifted Shelly,
Kind hearted man but ill-fated,
So youthful drowned and cremated.

Generally speaking, in McIntyre we see the spirit of Canada and Canadian literature. We see it changing from crudeness and rudeness to elegance and eloquence. We see the spirit of the frontier giving way to one of urbanity. In McIntyre's complaint about the high price of butter, we see the mistrust and fear of the city. We see the patriotism. We see the love of the land. In him we see an early break with the usual and still present Canadian colonial-mindedness. Although he did write a couple of poems on the visit of the Prince of Wales they are not his best; he actually refers to this country as a "land o'er flowing with milk and honey/Where the industrious may gather money. . .".⁵⁸ He himself seems perfectly happy to have escaped from Scotland. Although he makes no mention of divine assistance, no mention of God, he does show another well established characteristic of Canadian writers—the Scots Presbyterian theme of work, work, work, for the night is coming.⁵⁹ A superficial psychological interpretation of McIntyre might suggest that what appears to be a lack of interest in sex was responsible for some of his infelicitous rhythms. On the other hand one might say, as one might say of Dickens, that McIntyre was fully aware of the times for which he wrote, and that he carefully excised anything sexual which would have crept in while he was creating,

for creating is a sexual act, a passionate act. The scatological is present in McIntyre, of course, and some day it should be examined clinically in a full-blown and independent study. It seems though that in his Puritanical respect for reason, McIntyre has rejected passion, and even passion-invoking four-letter words. Four-letter words he uses, yes, but none of them suggestive.

This poet, then, this philosopher who saw poetry as "the pure cream,/ And essence of the common theme",⁶⁰ this inheritor of the mantles of Chaucer and Dryden, among others, is ignored, disowned, disbarred. Because he is too nationalistic? Too vocationally minded? Too didactic? Englishmen know how to be Englishmen because they have been raised on Chaucer and Shakespeare and Milton, on Pope and Rider Haggard. On Ian Fleming. Americans know how to be Americans because they have been raised on Emerson and Twain and Hemingway, on Kerouac and Hailey. Canadians do not know how to be Canadians because they do not read their writers.

James McIntyre appears in no anthologies, his volumes are out of print; he must be read in Reserve Rooms or not at all. A renaissance man with more than one foot in the future, he might really have become the guru of a neo-Chaucerian school had he been but recognized. Truly versatile, McIntyre could even give new meaning to an inscription. On the fly leaf of the Vancouver Public Library's copy of *Poems 1889* McIntyre inscribed in his own hand a short poem dated at Ingersoll, November 13, 1890. Notice the cadences even here; notice more surely that this five-line poem experiments in rhyming the first three lines and then ending with a couplet. Note too the mark of a truly great man: McIntyre is kind and generous to one less fortunate and less famous than himself. Note the sincerity, that sense of real friendship, and the modesty. And yet notice that McIntyre like other great men, knows his own worth. He sees himself as songster, and accepts himself indeed as a true bard:

'Mong our friends of an early day
None rank higher than McKay⁶¹
To whom we dedicate this lay
The latest warblings from the Lyre
Of his old friend Bard McIntyre.

NOTES

1. J. D. Logan, "A decade of Canadian poetry", *The Canadian Magazine* vol. 40 (Feb. 1913), p. 343.
2. *Loc. cit.*
3. *Loc. cit.*

4. The authority on James McIntyre is William Arthur Deacon. See his *The Four Jameses*, Toronto, Ryerson, 1927 (1953), pp. 42-82; and his "James McIntyre" in R. G. Riddell, ed., *Canadian portraits*, Toronto, Oxford, 1940, pp. 124-130.
5. Forres is also thought to be the place at which King Duncan was slain.
6. Deacon, in *The Four Jameses*, p. 62, gives this date as 1856, but McIntyre himself quotes Mrs. Ranney, who was 91 in 1891, and who gave him the date of 1838. See James McIntyre, *Poems of James McIntyre [including The Rise and Progress of the Canadian Cheese trade]*, Ingersoll, [Chronicle?] 1891, p. 205. Hereafter referred to as *Poems 1891*. V. *infra*.
7. *The Canada Year Book* 1967 indicates that Canadian cheese production was not so great as it had been in wartime: 154,987,000 pounds in 1963; 161,964,000 pounds in 1964; 172,980,000 pounds in 1965. Exports in 1964 were 31,685,000 pounds, and in 1965, 32,055,000 pounds. *The Canada Year Book* 1970-71 indicates a production of 189,559,000 pounds in 1967; 199,477,000 pounds in 1968; and 206,576,000 pounds in 1969. Exports in 1968 amounted to 44,261,000 pounds, and in 1969 to 35,958,000 pounds.
8. James McIntyre, *Musings on the Canadian Thames*, Ingersoll, [Tribune?], 1884, pp. 44. Hereafter referred to as *Musings*. What is a million pounds of cheese one way or another?
9. McIntyre, *Poems 1891*, pp. 205-206.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
11. "Ingersoll 30 years ago was the centre from which radiated the light and refulgence of the cheese knowledge". McIntyre, in *Poems 1891*, p. 206.
12. *Loc. cit.*
13. McIntyre, *Musings*, pp. 111-112.
14. "I". Surely a printer's error.
15. McIntyre, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45. Deacon, in *The Four Jameses*, p. 63, says that "there is a sublimity in the lines. . ."
16. Hereafter referred to as "Mammoth cheese". Note the recurring moon image.
17. McIntyre, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 108.
20. James McIntyre, *Poems of James McIntyre*, Ingersoll, [Chronicle?], 1889, p. 69.
21. McIntyre, *Musings*, p. 70.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 41. Note to poem entitled "Our Firemen".
25. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

If you are sulky, Nova Scotia,
We'll gladly let you float away
From out our Confederation;

You sicken us with sily [*sic*] agitation.
 If any more our patience you do tax
 We'll let you go to Halifax.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
27. Vancouver Island. The city of Vancouver was not incorporated until April 6, 1886.
28. McIntyre, *Poems of James McIntyre*, Ingersoll, [Chronicle?], 1889, 198 pp. Hereafter referred to as *Poems 1889*.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 196.
30. *v. supra*.
31. McIntyre, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
32. *v. supra*.
33. McIntyre, *Poems 1891*, p. 210. A revised version of a poem in *Musings*, p. 99.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 211.
35. McIntyre, *Poems 1889*, p. 72.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
37. Note the skipping-song rhythm in these last two lines.
38. McIntyre, *Musings*, p. 111.
39. McIntyre, *Poems 1889*, p. 73.
40. McIntyre, *Poems 1889*, pp. 32-35.
41. The original version used a delightful archaism: "span", instead of "spun". An investigation into his reading at the time might account for the change.
42. See Deacon, *The Four Jameses*, p. 50.
43. McIntyre, *Musings*, p. 25.
44. Deacon, *op. cit.*, p. 70, has a full discussion of this difficult triple-rhymed construction.
45. McIntyre, *op. cit.*, p. 109.
46. McIntyre, *Poems 1889*, p. 74.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 78.
48. McIntyre, *Poems 1891*, p. 202.
49. *Ibid.*, pp. 209-210. An even greater cheese for the next world fair:
 . . . view the people all agog, so
 Excited o'er it in Chicago.
50. McIntyre, *Poems 1889*, p. 42.
51. McIntyre, *Musings*, p. 52. McIntyre often has problems with the spellings of names.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
53. McIntyre, *Poems 1889*, p. 119.
54. McIntyre, *Musings*, p. 88.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
56. McIntyre, *Poems 1889*, p. 121.
57. McIntyre, *Musings*, p. 88. A later edition was entitled "Shelley". See *Poems*

1889, p. 120.

58. McIntyre, *Poems 1891*, p. 203. This poem, "Lines on Canada", was published in *The Ingersoll Chronicle*, August 20, 1858, and refers to the gold discoveries on the Fraser River, in British Columbia.
59. See "Work, for the night is coming!", a well known Canadian hymn by Louisa Walker.
60. McIntyre, *Poems 1889*, p. 157. Lines from "Poetry".
61. McIntyre, *Poems 1891*, p. 296, indicates that Dr. McKay was appointed whip of the Ontario Legislature, and McIntyre commented that
McKay he is a clever chap,
Will make good whip for he has snap.