

Nancy W. Fraser

The Development of Realism in Canadian Literature During the 1920's

The world is a wilderness; guilt, isolation, the menace of death are inherent in the human condition. Yet the problem of how to affirm such a world . . . is resolved by accepting these conditions. That acceptance effects a real transformation; the alienation produced by attempts to exclude or destroy every menace is replaced by a larger communion . . . what was the condition of our defeat is now also the condition of our victory; what was a wilderness is now also a garden.¹

This quotation from the concluding chapter of D.G. Jones' study of themes in Canadian literature, *Butterfly on Rock*, has two-fold usefulness as a definition. It defines realism as it has applied to much Canadian fiction published in the last fifty years. It also defines the attitudes to the Canadian environment of both the author and his fictionalized protagonist. The origins of this concept of realism are to be found in various books and articles of literary criticism written during the 1920's. The present study is an examination of these sources and of the way in which they directed the development of realism in Canadian fiction.

The word "realism" has many meanings. For example, in Plato's theory of the forms, it was associated with idealism and the doctrine that universals like justice and goodness have a "real" or "ideal" form and existence, independent of the particular objects or situations in which they can be found. In contrast, the French writer Zola defined realism as the description of externality. Because he believed that the imagination and its products were suspect, Zola formulated his theory of naturalism. Naturalism came to be associated with the observation and documentation of natural phenomena and with a faith in the possibilities of science. Accordingly, the naturalistic or the realistic novel — the terms have often been used interchangeably — was a novel of observation and analysis.

In the twentieth century the range of possible meanings of the "reality" was increased with the developing interest in human consciousness as a scientific study. Psychological truth in whatever literary form it took — whether symbolism, impressionism, or surrealism — became an additional reason for a treatment of realism in literature. The psychological motivation and emotional states of fictional characters like Ursula Brangwen, Stephen Dedalus, and Lily Briscoe all became equally valid as subjects for literary investigation. Realism had become the study of experience and of responses to experience.

From this range of definitions, twentieth-century realism can be loosely categorized as follows: exact representationalism; naturalism, which, by portrayal of the darker side of life, can include social criticism; impressionism, or the intensification of experience; and expressionism, or the use of symbolism and psychological and narrative techniques to produce a presentation of ultimate rather than visual truth. Finally, however, the whole question of realism becomes "subsumed in the larger question of the relationship between life and art."² What is bound to emerge in any writer's attempt to describe experience realistically is the interpretation or the imaginative re-creation of that experience by both author and characters. A quotation from Gwen MacEwen's poem "Cartaphilus" delineates the way in which the sensitive apprehension of events and objects can result in a fusion of external and internal experience into a single vision of what is "real":

I believe there is more room inside than outside. And all the diversities
which get absorbed can later work their way out into fantastic things, like
hawk-training, IBM programming, mountain-climbing, or poetry.

It is the intake, the refusal to starve.
And we must not forget the grace.³

Canadian literary critics of the 1910's and 1920's were far from clear what they meant in their use of the word "realism". This was caused by the fact that there was a virtual absence of any Canadian creative writing that could be readily classified as "realistic" and that could therefore serve as a basis for criticism. Criticism during this period reflects a concern with a growing national awareness and with its expression through literature. Canada's gradual emergence from a colonial status, the presence in Canada of two main cultures and the proximity of another English-speaking country were all factors that intensified the desire for a national identity. The need for a native literature to be the outgrowth of

a national self-awareness may have been the cause of critical interest in the ethnic origins of authors writing in and/ or about Canada.

In an article written in 1913,⁴ Thomas Marquis indicates his preference for native-born Canadian writers and for Canadian themes. This dual qualification is found again in Logan and French's *Highways of Canadian Literature*, published in 1924. Pelham Edgar and Archibald MacMechan, both of whom were influential critics, place less emphasis than Logan and Marquis on Canadian birth as a necessary attribute for a "Canadian" author, but each stresses the need for a Canadian writer to identify himself with the national sensibility. MacMechan's criteria for "Canadian" literature are that it must deal with Canadian themes and that the mind of the author must have been formed by Canadian life. Pelham Edgar says that a work can be considered "Canadian" only if it shows an identification with the interests of the country so complete that a Canadian character is stamped on it.⁵

The emphasis on country of birth and education led these four critics into some inconsistencies when their desire to be selective and judicious in their critical judgements conflicted with their self-imposed boundaries. For example, MacMechan dismisses Susanna Moodie's contribution to Canadian literature because she came to Canada as an adult when her mind was already formed by her life in Britain. Yet it is hard to deny the "Canadian-ness" and therefore the value of the experiences she and other members of the Strickland family documented.

For literature to be considered *Canadian*, it was considered necessary that it be based on Canadian experience. Critics were therefore directed into an examination of what constituted valid Canadian experience. Those critics whose attitudes were shaped by the principles of Victorian morality admired literature that sought to instruct and ennoble the reader. Thus Logan had high praise for the Confederation poets for their attempts to express the "beauty" and "truth" of Canada. This moral basis for criticism caused Logan to castigate Charles G.D. Roberts for his failure to express the "supreme ethical note" or "ideal" in his poetry. On the other hand, Lampman's poetry, which was admired by all these critics, was considered by Logan to contain the ethical qualities he esteemed. Logan, and the other critics who shared his views, deemed Canadian nature a suitable subject for literature not because of its power to inspire realistic description but because it reflected certain moral qualities thought to be intrinsic in the Canadian personality:

The peculiar moral qualities of the Canadian people are an inviolable faith in themselves, an indomitable courage, and an imperturbable sereni-

ty. The ground and inspiration of these qualities are in Canadian woods and hills and waters, and Archibald Lampman in his nature poetry interprets these qualities of the Canadian people and country with sweet reasonableness and genuine nobility.⁶

Logan's customary method of criticism, based on a hierarchy of ethical rather than literary values, accommodated the work of John Richardson, Gilbert Parker and Ralph Connor. Logan praises Richardson for his "wholesome" romances, Parker and Connor for the triumph of good that invariably marks the conclusions of their novels.

MacMechan's *Headwaters of Canadian Literature* and Logan's *Highways of Canadian Literature* were published within months of each other, yet each represents a polarity of critical judgement. Logan's approach is characterized by what we would now describe as an ideal and therefore unreal expectation of the relationship between the Canadian landscape and Canadian life and character. He applied to literature a standard of criticism already widely in use. It may be that this influenced the fact that he appears to be more dogmatic in his pronouncements than MacMechan who was attempting to enunciate an approach to literature that had no precedent in Canadian criticism. By present standards MacMechan would be considered more modern in his attitudes than Logan because he showed more interest in a realistic depiction of life.

In his criticism (found in *Headwaters* and in his many newspaper articles), MacMechan seems to be in support of literature that attempts a realistic portrayal of externality but that at the same time includes a representation of the dignity and worth of life. In *Headwaters* he uses De Quincey's terms, the "literature of knowledge" and the "literature of power", to define his two basic categories of literature. MacMechan believed that the "literature of knowledge" is to be found in periodicals, historical writing, journals and so on and that it deals with the practical and mundane aspects of life. Even so, it "proceeds from local, provincial, or national self-consciousness and pride"⁷ and is a necessary precursor to the "literature of power" or the true creative writing that can reveal the soul of a people: "When that literature manifests the strange quality of moving the imagination to body forth the forms of things unknown and of stirring the human heart by which we live, then it deserves to be called the literature of power" (p. 17).

It is this re-creation of life as lived that seems to determine what MacMechan means by "realism", a word that appears from time to time in his critical writing. He praises Haliburton for his realism

because the Sam Slick sketches were based on "first-hand observation of actual life" (p. 38). Sara Jeannette Duncan's *The Imperialist* he commends for the same reason: "Its distinction lies in its choice of theme (humdrum life in a contemporary Ontario town) and its truth of observation" (pp. 138-139). On the whole, MacMechan's strictures on Canadian fiction are severe. Connor he dismisses because his didacticism overrides the truth of representation. "Parker's Canada seems . . . utterly unreal" (p. 141), and the fact that Parker did write on Canadian themes is insufficient for MacMechan's standard of excellence. In fact, "only those rare works which combine deep knowledge of life, dramatic power to represent it and style, have a chance to survive" (p. 141).

In spite of his words, there is in *Headwaters* the feeling that "knowledge of life" representation must include the dignifying of experience that comes from its association with a proud Canadian self-awareness and identity. The re-creation of experience must be significant in terms of a hoped-for national sensibility. Therefore MacMechan condemns romances because they say nothing truthful about the experience of being Canadian, whatever their historical basis. Yet MacMechan cannot recommend the poetry of Robert Service, which might be considered a more accurate depiction of life than the romance, because of its "brutality of theme and violence of language" (p. 193). It lacks the "soul of goodness" (p. 220). What MacMechan seems to want in fiction is a well-behaved realism based on a true-to-life representation of contemporary society. With the exception of novels like *Rockbound*, *Fruits of the Earth*, and *Wild Geese*, "modern problems are as yet untouched, unapproached in Canadian fiction. Direct, honest realism is also sadly to seek. . . . So far Canadian fiction is conventional, decent, unambitious, 'bourgeois'. It has nowhere risen to the heights or plumbed the depths of life in Canada" (p. 215).

MacMechan makes a demand for fiction that deals with human experience that is to some extent verifiable by observation. Presumably he would have welcomed the realism of Morley Callaghan and Hugh MacLennan, whose novels depict ordinary people dealing with typical human problems. MacMechan's interest in realism would seem to be sociological rather than psychological. He is interested in man as a member of a group rather than as a unique figure placed in a typical situation.

This view of realism is all part of the 1920's interest in the development and expression of a Canadian consciousness. MacMechan states that in the development of any "literature of power" poetry must

precede prose. It is not surprising that MacMechan believed that the Canadian soul and mind is formed as a result of the inter-action between man and nature. Because he saw the ethos of the Canadian people to be in the land, he praises those poets who faithfully portray the Canadian landscape. In common with other critics both before and since his time, MacMechan admired the nature poetry of the Confederation poets, especially Lampman's, not only for its accurate evocation of the Canadian scene but also for the way it pin-pointed the "sense of place" as a psychological foundation for a unanimous Canadian pride of belonging.

In his belief that in some sense a country comes into being as it is written about, MacMechan was expressing a commonly-held viewpoint. However, critical dispute developed over how the material provided by Canadian life and landscape should be treated as a means of expressing a true and real Canadian spirit. The division of opinion over what was significant in Canadian life is perfectly illustrated in two articles that appeared in the *Canadian Bookman* in 1929. Writing in the April issue,⁸ "E.M." supports Logan's uncritical point of view that any expression of a national Canadian feeling is praiseworthy. Replying in a vigorously-worded article in May, Marcus Adeney made a plea for a qualitative and realistic assessment of Canadianism:

. . . neither poetry nor art can be purely the expression of an ideal. Rather do they attempt to give an ideal expression to something very real. Until we realize the direct applicability of literature and art to the life of every day, until we accept imaginative writing as interpretative social criticism, until, in short, the dream of an ideal realm of art . . . is shown to be itself a pure fiction, we cannot hope to produce real artists and vital art forms. For a thing to function truly, there must be a need for that functioning. Before great art can come out of Canada, Canadians must realize that only the artist can truly interpret the present in terms of an ideal future and that without an ideal the future can hold only a futile repetition of all our blunders. . . . When we have a social criticism and a communal culture that compares favourably with the best criticism and culture of the Old World, then it will be time to think . . . of developing a national consciousness.⁹

Earlier issues of the *Canadian Bookman* give further evidence of the split between the realists and the idealists and of the varieties of critical response to the idea of a Canadian consciousness.

Lionel Stevenson, for example, regrets the fact that Canadian history, the potential raw material of fiction, has rarely been used to create a realistic account of Canadian experience. He regards the historical

romance and the novels of Connor, L.M. Montgomery, Nellie McClung and many others as being not significantly reflective of a distinctive Canadian spirit. As a result, he welcomes the developing trend to a "more serious treatment of life"¹⁰ in all its diversity and "harshness". The opinion Stevenson expresses here is somewhat inconsistent with the thesis he propounded a few months earlier in the same magazine. In the February issue he states that the essential Canadian spirit is to be found in the response of writers to Canadian nature and that the quality of this response, although idealistic (here he cites the Confederation poets), acknowledges "the so-called 'realities' of life's pantheistic (sic) . . . seldom revolutionary, perhaps, but with much of the pioneer spirit, independent and assured; forward-looking and confident in the future of man."¹¹

Replying to Stevenson's February article, George Bugnet agrees "that the distinct qualities of Canadian literature are: nature and mysticism, imbued with the pioneer spirit."¹² He goes on to say that the Canadian's response to nature, as presented in literature, shows two influences: the American tradition of material conquest in which a strongly individualistic superman triumphs over nature and Indians (Bugnet specifies Cooper, Whitman, Zane Grey, and Jack London), and the European tradition of the psychological depiction of the individual's response to his circumstances. In Canadian literature, Bugnet says, these influences are reflected in a two-fold response to nature. On the one hand is a sense of pride in the victories of man and civilization over the environment, but there is also an admiring and loving attitude to a nature that is forever unconquerable. Bugnet concludes that it is the adoring acceptance of nature as a force greater than man that provides the distinctive flavour of Canadian consciousness and Canadian literature.

It can be seen that the attitudes of Stevenson and Bugnet can encompass both an idealistic and a realistic treatment of the environment. This ambiguity is characteristic not only of critics of the time searching for a suitable objective correlative for the Canadian spirit but also of those 1920's novelists whose work shows signs of realism. Francis Dickie was one of the few critics to deal with the problem of realism in literature divorced from its very specific Canadian application to nature. Realism, as he understands it, does not exist in Canadian literature. He distinguishes between two schools of realism. The school of naturalistic realism, founded by Zola and represented by writers like Theodore Dreiser, Somerset Maugham, Upton Sinclair and Samuel Butler, deals

with life frankly and with "accurateness and vividness".¹³ A second school, represented by Daudet and Sinclair Lewis, presents a modified, kindlier realism. Dickie claims that it is the Puritanism ingrained in the Canadian character that has produced the parochialism and intolerance that makes the presentation of life-as-lived in all its variety, whether sordid, tragic or joyful, so generally unacceptable to the Canadian public. He concludes by saying that for the good of Canadian literature, we should stop trying to make people think as we believe they ought to think.¹⁴

Historically, the most noteworthy and the most inescapable fact of Canadian experience has been the coming of the immigrants and the settling of the land. Canadian literary criticism of the past few years has adjudged this confrontation between man and the environment, whether literal or metaphorical, to be the pivotal statement of nearly all Canadian literature, hence the titles of three recent books of criticism: *Survival*, *Vertical Man/Horizontal Landscape*, *Patterns of Isolation*.

The first realistic writers in Canada — the early travellers, traders, explorers and settlers — all attempted to deal with the awesome fact of the Canadian landscape and climate. Only by trying to portray the environment objectively could the newcomers hope to come to terms with it psychologically. Early non-fiction accounts of the prairie, for example, describe the experience of prairie life factually and simply:

. . . the records which (the fur-traders and explorers) left behind them are nearly all alike in their attention to the factual and disregard of the ornamental. . . . There were the unnumerable details of daily existence — the unending search for food, the winter-long battle against storm and cold, the contacts, sometimes pleasant, frequently disagreeable, with the native tribes.¹⁵

The elemental quality of the encounter between man and the land is reinforced by the poetry and prose of those nineteenth-century writers who wanted to re-create the experience in a literary framework. Whether nature is described in terms of its ominousness or its beauty, its vigour and intensity are always implicit in the description. Oliver Goldsmith's *The Rising Village* and Joseph Howe's *Acadia* are both neo-classical narrative poems heavily overlaid with poetic conventions but, even so, the Canadian scene, prior to the white man's civilizing influence, is seen as a threatening and hostile environment. In Susanna Moodie's world, everything is threatening, and her response to her immigrant status is a perfect example of what Northrop Frye describes as

the "garrison mentality". Disapproving as she did of the standards of the new world, she clung desperately to the values she had brought from the old world. Her sister, Catharine Parr Traill, is a more detached and impartial observer. Here is her description of a storm:

Suddenly we heard a distant hollow rushing sound that momentarily increased, the air around us being yet perfectly calm. . . . A dense gloom overspread the heavens. . . . Instinctively I turned towards the house, while the thundering shock of trees falling in all directions at the edge of the forest, the rending of the branches from the pines I had just quitted, and the rush of the whirlwind sweeping down the lake, made me sensible of the danger with which I had been threatened. The scattered boughs of the pines darkened the air as they whirled above me; then came the blinding snow-storm. . . . Not a leaf remained on the trees when the hurricane was over; they were bare and desolate. Thus ended the short reign of the Indian summer.¹⁶

The desire of the preceding writers to make some kind of statement about their experience in a new surrounding was, unfortunately, not shared by the writers of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century fiction. The most popular forms of fiction prior to the beginning of fictional realism in the 1920's were the romance and regional tale. These genres filled some need in the reading public for nostalgia, idealism and vicarious adventure. Both poetry and fiction were derivative and were aimed at audiences in Eastern Canada and Great Britain. The American take-over had already started in prairie fiction where the West's history was re-created in the historical traditions of the American "Wild West", an area of experience that never occurred in the Canadian west. This distortion of observable experience Edward McCourt attributes in part to the inability of prairie writers "to comprehend the dramatic impact on character and ordinary human relationships of an environment whose most obvious characteristics was — and perhaps still is — monotony."¹⁷ In the regional romance, the emphasis is on plot. Setting is basically incidental to the lives of the characters. In realistic fiction, characterization is of major importance, and on the prairies, where realism in fiction began, character is seen to be intertwined with the effects of nature.

There are two reasons, perhaps, why fictional realism began in the West. As a frontier, the West attracted both interest and immigrants. For various sociological and economic reasons, it was the dynamic focus of Canada in the first decades of the twentieth century. Secondly, "there was a distinctive pattern of life which could be clearly differentiated

from that of Europe and even from that of the United States, and where the conditions of pioneer life were so forbidding that it was almost impossible to idyllicize them."¹⁸ Although Ralph Connor used his themes for didactic purposes, he was the first novelist to make realistic use of the material provided by prairie life. Connor, Nellie McClung and Laura Salverson were writers of regional idylls, but their novels do make some use of the circumstances of pioneering.

In 1925 and 1926 three novels were published in which the treatment of the themes is essentially realistic. What makes these novels realistic is the description of the environment they contain and the effect of that environment on the characters. The authors of *Grain* (Robert Stead), *Wild Geese* (Martha Ostenso), and *Settlers of the Marsh* (Frederick Philip Grove) differ in their attitudes to nature and nature's effect on man but, whatever the difference in treatment, all three novels present aspects of experience that had not previously been examined in Canadian fiction. Broadly speaking, each novel gives an account of the conditions of life in a particular rural settlement. To the extent that they describe prairie community life these novels are chronicles but, in addition, each focuses on the effect the environment has on a central male character and on his response to his circumstances and to his fellows.

Against the immense backdrop of nature — the endless, monotonous expanse of prairie — is seen the solitary figure of a person who has chosen to do battle with a vastly superior force. In such a situation, man can be shown as either an insignificant speck doomed to failure or as a monolithic figure who, by effort of will, intelligence and adaptability, is capable of asserting himself against a nature that appears to be basically malevolent or, at best, indifferent. The portrayal of man as a giant suggests the magnitude of the force against which he is contending as well as his own capacity to cope with it in some significant way. Caleb Gare (*Wild Geese*), Gander Stake (*Grain*), and Niels Lindstedt (*Settlers of the Marsh*) all possess, to an unusual degree, strength and distinctiveness of character. All three are farmers who are engaged in a demanding and vital relationship with the environment. The nature of this relationship isolates them in three ways: socially, physically and spiritually. The struggle to subdue the land is so relentless that each man's energies are absorbed in his task. As a result, loving and meaningful relationships with other human beings are denied or at least made difficult. Secondly, farming, as described in *Wild Geese* and *Settlers of the Marsh*, is a solitary and lonely endeavour with each man occupied in caring for his own land. Thirdly, the vagaries and the harshness of the natural setting

can have the effect of alienating the protagonist from his environment. This alienation can be expressed in a variety of ways and can precipitate an action or a series of actions that can prove inimical both to the protagonist and to those around him.

The effect of the prairie environment on character is influenced by the fact that the attitude to nature of both the authors and the characters is ambivalent. In these three novels, nature both charms and repels. Gander Stake's first love is the farming life, but he recognizes that he must escape to the city if he is to enjoy wider opportunities. Similarly, the lives of both Caleb Gare and Niels Lindstedt are tragically distorted by the very power by which they are voluntarily bound to the land. The reader is left with "the ambiguous feeling that the prairie is both the seat of spiritual nourishment, and, in the labour it demands, liable to frustrate the very life to which it is suited."¹⁹

As a transitional novel, *Grain* has many characteristics of the romance and the regional idyll. The principal theme is the threatened break-up of the traditional pattern of farming life. Sophisticated farming techniques, often carefully described, are applied to the mass production of grain, and the increasing use of technology provides a link in the story between the old style of farming in which the farmer had a direct and physical relationship with the land and the urban-oriented mechanization of farming that leads away from the basic impulse of farming. There is little nature description in *Grain*. Stead may have wished to stress the sociological development of prairie farm communities rather than the struggles of his central character, Gander Stake.

Grain has been described as a novel of modified and optimistic realism. This is attributable, in part, to the humour, lightness of tone, and unheroic quality of the protagonist. What makes *Grain* significant as a realistic novel is not its depiction of a hero at war with his environment but its description of farming activity and procedures at an important time in the development of prairie agriculture. The harshness of nature that has so devastating an effect on the lives of the characters in *Wild Geese* and *Settlers of the Marsh* is not evident in *Grain*. The infrequent passages of nature description in *Grain* are included as a means of emphasizing Gander's inarticulate acceptance of his way of life.

In *Wild Geese*, the effect of environment on character is much more dramatic and has a direct influence on the theme: the depiction of a brutal nature's effect on a community of people who live close to the soil and whose lives are restricted by their primitive circumstances. Caleb

Gare's most noteworthy characteristic is his complete identification with the land he works. The flax, beautiful to look at but difficult to grow, is a symbol of nature's capacity to subjugate man. Caleb becomes in his own personality an extension of the dualism in nature. In his attempt to establish his mastery over the land he loves, he is enslaved by the demands it makes. His daughter Judith, trapped by Caleb's dictatorial power, is an example of the vital life force displayed at its most basic level. A girl of strong and undisciplined emotions, her spirit is in perfect harmony with nature, yet she hates the land because its unending demands are channelled through her father's inflexible will. The resolution of the conflict is realized in Caleb's death as he strives to save his precious flax from fire and in Judith's escape to the city and the chance to develop some of her potential.

The primary trait of the settlers who people *Wild Geese* is their capacity to endure. They endure because the land has taught them to believe that there is no alternative. It is as if the characters tacitly recognize that any disturbance in the uneasy equilibrium between man and nature will result in total chaos. It is this quality of the imminence of doom that determines the mood of *Settlers of the Marsh*, a novel in which the basic conflict is not between man and the land but between man and his own nature, a nature that is revealed to him by circumstances. The main characters of Grove's novels emerge as heroes not because they *may* have subdued the terrain but because they have persistently fought against what often appears to be an implacable fate. The oppressive prairie landscape is therefore useful to Grove's purposes but it is not essential. Grove felt that the natural setting was subsidiary to a character's psychological response to his situation.

In the 1920's Grove was in the forefront of those writers who demanded a greater use of realism in literature. His chief requirement for a novel was that it must be "socially significant" and that its crises and characters must be reflective of contemporary social conditions. In *Settlers of the Marsh* Grove uses the conditions of homesteading life as a metaphor for the tragedy of life. Thus Niels can feel that against fate, but not necessarily against nature, he is powerless. In one way Grove's view of nature as the manifestation of the inexorability of fate moves *Settlers of the Marsh* beyond the definition of a realistic novel. On the other hand, if Niels' struggles are removed from their macrocosmic frame and considered as an example of a typical experience common to many early settlers, *Settlers of the Marsh* has significant value as a contribution to what is and has been thought to be "real" in Canadian life.

The most striking fact that emerges from a study of these three novels is the stubborn resistance to nature's assaults by nearly all the characters. Yet they experience little sense of joy or buoyancy in their continued survival. In the context of these three 1920's novels, realism has been defined as the description of man's encounter with the environment. The gloom that accompanies the encounter establishes man's uneasy presence in an alien world. In coming to terms with his situation — the only main character in the three novels to do so — Niels Lindstedt acquires a sense of place both physical and mental. He can be said to be realistically portrayed because his character is integrated with the setting, whether that setting is interpreted literally or metaphorically. The sense of feeling "at home" in the Canadian setting is the result of the assimilation of experience and environment. It is the awareness of promise in the circumstances of Canadian life that is the meaning of the MacEwen poem quoted earlier. *Grain*, *Wild Geese* and *Settlers of the Marsh* all helped to define the direction realism in Canadian literature could take.

Notes

1. D.G. Jones, *Butterfly on Rock* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1970), p. 183.
2. Damian Grant, *Realism* (London, Methuen, 1970), p. 64.
3. Gwen MacEwen, "Cartaphilus", *A Breakfast for Barbarians* (Toronto, Ryerson, 1966).
4. Thomas Marquis, "English Canadian Literature", *Canada and Its Provinces* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1973), pp. 493-589.
5. Pelham Edgar, "English Canadian Literature", *Cambridge History of English Literature* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1916), XIV, pp. 343-360.
6. J.D. Logan and Donald G. French, *Highways of Canadian Literature* (Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1924), p. 134.
7. Archibald MacMechan, *Headwaters of Canadian Literature* (Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1974), p. 27. Subsequent references are made in the text.
8. "E.M.", "A Builder of Canada", *Canadian Bookman* (April 1929), pp. 83-84.
9. Marcus Adeney, "The National Consciousness Idea", *Canadian Bookman* (May 1929), p. 116.
10. Lionel Stevenson, "The Outlook for Canadian Fiction", *Canadian Bookman* (July 1924), p. 158.
11. Lionel Stevenson, "Manifesto for a National Literature", *Canadian Bookman* (February 1924), p. 46.
12. George Bugnet, "An Answer to Lionel Stevenson's Manifesto", *Canadian Bookman* (April 1924), p. 85.
13. Francis Dickie, "Realism in Canadian Fiction", *Canadian Bookman* (October 1925), p. 165.
14. Francis Dickie, "A Plea for Tolerance", *Canadian Bookman* (May 1924), p. 110.
15. Edward A. McCourt, *The Canadian West in Fiction* (Toronto, Ryerson, 1949), pp. 1-2.
16. Catharine Parr Traill, *The Backwoods of Canada* (Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1971), pp. 55-56.
17. McCourt, p. 13.
18. Desmond Pacey, "Fiction: 1920-1940", in Carl F. Klinck, ed., *Literary History of Canada* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. 676.
19. Laurence Ricou, *Vertical Man / Horizontal Landscape* (Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press, 1973), p. 33.