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The Scholar Visionary: Malcolm Ross at Ninety

WHEN I FIRST HEARD of Malcolm Ross, I was a second-year student here at Dalhousie. Malcolm Parks, my advisor, spoke so highly of Ross as a scholar and a teacher that I enrolled immediately in Ross's course in Victorian literature.

So I saw Malcolm Ross a few weeks after I'd heard of him. At the same time, I met him without his being there at all. When I was wandering the Shirreff Hall Library late one night, I picked up a novel I'd never read by a writer of whom I'd never heard: *The Stone Angel* by Margaret Laurence. It was in paperback, one of a series of which I'd also never heard. I had no idea Malcolm Ross had anything to do with the series, or with the writer, but the book grabbed me and I stayed up all night to finish it. In the space of a few weeks, in one case unwittingly, I'd encountered evidence of the several facets of the genius of a man whom I eventually came to see not only as a scholar, but as a kind of visionary. I came to see a man who enacted a vision and an idealism which have nurtured whole communities—communities of scholars, of writers, of artists and actors and teachers. Underlying this vision and idealism is his profound sense of what he has called “the hidden unifying force behind all things, forming and informing everything.”¹

¹ The text of this article is based on a lecture delivered at Dalhousie University on 12 January 2001 to celebrate Malcolm Ross's ninetieth birthday. Much of the material is derived from a series of interviews Dr. Ross granted me between the spring of 1996 and the autumn of 1998; supplementary interviews have been ongoing since the autumn of 1999. The early interviews and research were made possible by a grant from St. Francis Xavier University's Centre for Regional Studies.

Malcolm Ross demonstrated his passionate commitment to country and community very early on. During World War I, when Malcolm Ross was a little boy in his native Fredericton, he was patrolling the walk in front of his family home, toting a wooden rifle. His mother was about to give birth to his sister Margaret. The doctor arrived to assist in the delivery, and four-year-old Malcolm halted him. "What's the password?" Only when Malcolm was satisfied that the Doctor wasn't a threat would Malcolm let him by. You might say that young Malcolm demonstrated a precocious sense of public responsibility and a simultaneous commitment to community and to family.

Within a couple of years, Malcolm was launching a career as a market gardener, picking lettuce from the family's garden to sell to local hotels and restaurants. And what did he buy with his first week's earnings? A book. Bliss Carman's *Ballads and Lyrics*.

It's almost uncanny. Young Malcolm Ross could already see a vista before him, was already heading down a path he'd discerned.

He attended the University of New Brunswick in his home town of Fredericton, graduating in 1933. He nearly didn't get the degree. Military service was a compulsory part of the Arts graduation requirement, and young Malcolm, now well-versed in the works of Bertrand Russell, H. G. Wells, and others, had decided study for an Arts degree was not the appropriate context for carrying a rifle—wooden or otherwise. He refused to comply with this requirement, causing the University Senate to meet for several hours over whether to relax the regulation or withhold the degree. Well, he got the degree. And there was one more sign of the clarity of that vision of his, of the integrity with which he pursued the path he discerned before him.

He went on to pursue a Master's degree at the University of Toronto in Renaissance literature—where, under the guidance of A. S. P. Woodhouse, he flourished. He was invited by Charles G. D. Roberts on the occasional Saturday for coffee; through Roberts he was introduced to the cultural life of Toronto in the thirties. He married Lois Natalie Hall of Toronto in 1938 and went with her to Cornell in 1939, where he studied Milton and the literature of the seventeenth century. He received his PhD there in 1941.

The outbreak of World War II had him wrestling with the notion of returning home to Canada. That sense of *place* that is

also part of his vision was stirring. He was teaching at Indiana University in 1942 when he came upon Donald Creighton's *The Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence*. The book struck him, he says, with the force of a kind of epiphany.

Creighton's history re-awoke an excited sense of belonging, and he decided to return to Canada immediately to enlist. He was not accepted, however, because of the discovery of a high blood pressure condition. So he turned his gaze toward the broader national effort. On the advice of a mutual friend, he contacted John Grierson of the National Film Board in Ottawa. He was invited to his home: "30 Cooper at 5 o'clock," he was told. ("I didn't know if it was a street or a horse," Ross said to me.) In any event, he found it. He went along one late May afternoon in 1942. He and Grierson spent an hour and a half talking about Milton and the Puritan Revolution—and Ross was told to report for work the following day.

Grierson assigned him to the distribution of documentaries in support of the national war effort—film series such as *Canada Carries On* and *World in Action*, about the war in Europe—and before long Ross was travelling the country from Victoria to Sydney, arranging instruction for teams of people at the various Chambers of Commerce in the use of the projector, setting up screenings in church basements and halls all across the nation. There was no television as yet, so these films—and the training of people to show them—were of special significance. By war's end, still only in his thirties, he was director of the whole national unit for distribution of documentaries in urban and rural areas, making trips to New York and Chicago for the Board, responsible for a large budget, and managing a staff of over two hundred in film bureaus across the country.

It is in the course of these years that Ross got a real sense of the country, of its vastness and diversity, as he encountered farmers, business people, artists, writers, and film-makers from communities of old and new Canadians. He met the Slavs of the prairies and the Jews of Winnipeg, he met the Manitoba Icelanders and the British Columbia Chinese. In a sense, through his work for John Grierson and the National Film Board, Ross discovered Canada while he was helping it to discover itself.

The emergence of the scholar visionary can be seen in those four years of encounter with landscape, people and politics. For Ross began to see the country whole and in parts, and his imagina-

tion was fired by it. Another facet of his particular visionary quality showed itself during this time: a career-long pattern of discernment and generosity. Ross began to help put talented people in the way of opportunities to build a culture.

In 1945 he was sent to Halifax to develop a film unit in Nova Scotia. It was to be attached to the Department of Education. He arrived the morning after the V-E day riots, and walked down a wrecked Barrington street with the stores' window-glass crunching under his feet. He met with a cool reception from a committee headed by a Provincial cabinet minister, F. X. Connolly—until they discovered he was a Maritimer: "I didn't know Fredericton was so popular," he told me, "but it seems it was more popular than Ottawa. And it may be I looked too young." In any case, once his Maritime connections were known, there was a thaw and plans fell into place. It was Ross who suggested film-maker Margaret Perry be offered the job of Director of the Nova Scotia Film Unit. Perry's illustrious career has recently been much and deservedly celebrated—but she would tell you it was Malcolm Ross who brought her to the NFB in Ottawa, and helped bring her to Halifax.

When the war was over and Ross's stint at the NFB ended, he refused an offer to return to Cornell in order to pursue that nascent vision of his. He accepted a post at the University of Manitoba. Dr. Ross has told me that he found Winnipeg itself, in its ethnic diversity and in its lively cultural variety, to be a cross-section of Canada at the time, and an education to *him*. At the university, just as in his post at the NFB he had both directly and indirectly encouraged young artists and film-makers, he shared his imaginative vision of the power of the arts with a group of young people who would go on to shape much of what we know as Canadian culture in the twentieth century.

In his first classes at Manitoba were Margaret Laurence, Adele Wiseman, Patricia Blondal, Jack Ludwig, critic and later NFB Film Commissioner Hugo MacPherson, actor Douglas Rain, film-maker Roman Kroiter (the man who created "Labyrinth" for Expo 67), and artist William Kurelek. He sparked their imaginations; all have acknowledged their deep debt to Ross as an inspirational and encouraging teacher and mentor. In her years at Trent, Margaret Laurence often told students that Ross was "a giant" of a man.

In the Winnipeg days, as in the Kingston, Toronto and Halifax days to come, Lois and Malcolm Ross welcomed many of these

students into their home; Mrs. Ross extended the wise encouragement and crucial support she gave her husband to his students. Thanks to her, the Ross home, where there was good food and lively discussion, was a gathering-place for generations of students. Their daughter Julie Ross—an award-winning writer in her own right—carries on the tradition today.

Wiseman and Laurence among many others entrusted their early work to Ross, and although they weren't in his class together, they forged much of their writerly connection around their common regard for him as a mentor, a critic, and a friend. Twenty years later, Laurence writes from West Africa to Wiseman, thanking her for putting Ross back in touch with her so that she could have his assessment of her African stories and poems. Twenty-five years later, Wiseman writes Laurence that she is about to send the manuscript of what would be her award-winning novel *Crackpot* to Malcolm Ross "so I can expect some straight comment from someone I respect, and who will have read the whole thing."² (Laurence and Wiseman learned early to trust the clarity of Malcolm Ross's vision, and they did not forget.)

Meanwhile Ross had still maintained a fine scholarly life of his own. As is well-documented elsewhere, he had published *Milton's Royalism* in 1943; in 1949–50 he won a Guggenheim Fellowship, which he used to spend terms at the Huntington Library and at Harvard for work on his next book, *Poetry and Dogma*, a study of the interconnections among religion, art and poetry in the seventeenth century. In 1950 Ross left Manitoba. He accepted a post at Queen's University, where from 1953 to 1956 he was editor of *Queen's Quarterly*, and from 1957 to 1962 he was Department Head.

In 1954, the same year that saw the publication of *Poetry and Dogma*, Ross collected and edited an important group of essays on Canada, *Our Sense of Identity*. In the introductory essay to this collection we get a first glimpse of the complexity of his cultural vision: "Irony," he says, "is the key to our identity ... the open irony of the multi-dimensional structure.... Our sense of time becomes multi-dimensional. Our sense of place, enlarged first by our

² Adele Wiseman to Margaret Laurence, 13 January 1969. In *Selected Letters of Margaret Laurence and Adele Wiseman*, ed. John Lennox and Ruth Panofsky (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1997) 287.

own largeness, by the endless open horizon of our land, shatters all horizons.”³

Such was the expansiveness of Ross’s vision of the artistic life of this country, such was the breadth and depth in which he described it, that he was invited by the Canadian Arts Council to conceive and edit a book on all the creative Arts. *The Arts in Canada: A Stocktaking at Mid-Century* appeared in 1958.

Ross’s vision of the cultural soul of Canada came into real focus during his years at Queen’s. He joined Robert Weaver’s CBC radio program on the arts, “Critically Speaking,” on a regular basis from 1950 to 1956. As editor of *Queen’s Quarterly* he pursued the path he’d begun in Winnipeg. As the letter from Laurence I cited earlier shows, he actively pursued gifted young writers, encouraging them to submit their works, offering criticism, and publishing those he thought the best. (Ross sent back one early story by Laurence, and published one she sent later: “Drummer of all the World.”) Then as now, that piercing gaze saw the value and the gift in those around him. It was Ross who published the early stories of Margaret Laurence, Sheila Watson, and Alice Munro. In fact, it was at Ross’s suggestion that Adele Wiseman developed a short story she’d submitted to him into a novel—*The Sacrifice*.

Ross was one of the key organizers of a seminal event in Canadian letters. Initiated and driven by F. R. Scott, a Canadian Writers’ Conference was held at Queen’s in the summer of 1955. The Conference theme was “The Writer, His Media, and the Public.” Calling on the vast network of writers and critics which his energy and his vision were helping to inspire, Ross assisted F.R. Scott in gathering Morley Callaghan, Earle Birney, Irving Layton, Jay MacPherson, Miriam Waddington, Dorothy Livesay, Adele Wiseman, Robert Weaver, Roy Daniells, Jack McClelland—critics, writers, academics, publishers, and just plain enthusiasts. Even Leonard Cohen—then an undergraduate—arrived, guitar in hand. (He “crashed” the party, it seems.)

It was an important event that stretched over several days. The Rosses opened their home to the visitors. One afternoon, when they were told to expect fifteen or twenty, they found the guests had other ideas. More than a hundred people arrived all at once, quickly dispatching all food and drink, and when the straggling

³ Malcolm Ross, ed., *Our Sense of Identity* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1954) x, xi.

Morley Callaghan and Hugh Garner showed up an hour or two later, everything was gone. (This so disappointed Garner that, decades later, he mentions it in his memoirs.)

At this conference, John Gray, the president of MacMillan Canada, described the current publishing scene by quoting E. K. Brown: "The notion that a whole literature can develop out of the happy employment of the odd moments of rather busy [people] is an unrealistic notion, and one that shows an alarming ignorance of the process by which great works are normally written."⁴

More than perhaps anyone else in the country, Ross worked to change this. He conceived and executed what was perhaps his most brilliant vision yet: the New Canadian Library.

It is hard to realize now (in a time when Canadian Literature has both national and international standing, when Canadian Studies programs—ironically, perhaps, especially those abroad—are funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and by Heritage Canada) but in the early 1950s, when Ross tried to bring his passion for Canada's writers to the classroom at Queen's, he found that there were simply no books in print to enable him to create a course. In 1955, John Gray had told the conference, there were five new novels published, of which 3,000 copies in all were sold. There was one book of poetry, which sold about 400 copies ("most ... to libraries and the poet's friends," he said).⁵ Within a few years, as the pattern went, all of these would be out of print. And so it was with the Canadian works published earlier—nearly all unavailable, out of print.

About a month or so after the conference, Ross approached John Gray with a scheme to change the entire cultural landscape. Following the pattern of a series he knew of in the States, Ross suggested that MacMillan reprint Canadian titles in paperback. The story is told elsewhere, but bears repeating. Gray dismissed the idea as entirely impractical, saying "we'd lose our shirt!" and adding that anyhow paperbacks were a "passing fad."⁶

⁴ John Gray, "Book Publishing" in *Writing in Canada: Proceedings of the Canadian Writers' Conference held at Queen's University July 1955* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1956) 62.

⁵ Gray, "Book Publishing" 63.

⁶ This story is recounted in David Staines' Introduction to his edition of Ross's essays, *The Impossible Sum of Our Traditions: Reflections on Canadian Literature* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986) 14.

But a man with a vision is not easily discouraged, and Ross, who had taught Jack McClelland in summer school at the University of Toronto right after the war, and who had been vetting manuscripts for the publishing house for a number of years, called on him. He persuaded Jack McClelland that the venture was “worth the gamble.” Plans were made, and Ross set about contacting—and expanding—his large national network of scholars and writers, both established and emerging, asking them to suggest works for the series, and asking them, too, to write essays to introduce Canadian literature to Canadians.

Ross’s vision was one of breadth and depth—he saw the series in both historical and geographical terms; he wanted, as the series continued, for readers to encounter the country on the axes of time and space. He wanted the regions to be represented, he wanted writers of the current generation to be known, and he wanted books that had been lost to public memory to be restored to view. In 1958 the first four titles appeared: Morley Callaghan’s *Such is My Beloved*, Frederick Philip Grove’s *Over Prairie Trails*, Stephen Leacock’s *Literary Lapses*, and Sinclair Ross’s *As for Me and My House*. He sought advice, he planned carefully—it was a balancing act, of course, because the series had to support itself. (Jack McClelland didn’t want to “lose his shirt” either, so he suggested including Leacock’s works in the proposed list.) Ross was true to his vision of the complex nature of Canadian society and culture; he actively sought to include works by writers of diverse regions and diverse ethnic heritage, as well as writers from what was then called French Canada: Gabrielle Roy’s *Tin Flute*, for example, was the fifth book in the series; Roger Lemelin and Marie-Claire Blais joined the list later on. Over the next twenty-five years, Ross brought out 168 novels and volumes of poetry, expanding the country’s imaginative horizons as he went.

The New Canadian Library was an idea whose time had come—but it was Malcolm Ross’s idea, Malcolm Ross’s vision, and his passionate commitment to embody that vision, that made it happen. Because of Ross’s energy and wisdom, Canadian Literature courses in this country became first a possibility and then a reality, both at the universities and in the high schools. And because of the series, writers and readers from the mid-twentieth century onward encountered more of their own country’s imagination. As a direct or indirect result of Ross’s impact on literary life in this country through the New Canadian Library, generations of

writers from the 1960s onward—Laurence, Kroetsch, Purdy, Atwood, Cohen—both Matt and Leonard—all found an audience more readily than they otherwise would have, and all found that audience more aware than they otherwise could have. Ross, more than any other figure in twentieth-century Canada, nurtured, fostered, and in a sense created our literature. The inclusive nature of his vision for self-encounter helped open the gates for the next generation of writers. Ross's vision had a kind of avalanche effect: Klein, Nowlan, Ondaatje, O'Hagan, have been followed by yet another generation of poets and novelists from increasingly diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Clarke, McKay, Domanski, Mistry, Langille, Mouré, Richards, Brand. All can trace the first and sustaining movement to Malcolm Ross's scholarly vision—or his visionary scholarship.

Most of us know the story recounted by Lampman in 1891 of how, ten years before, "one May evening" someone lent him a copy of Charles G. D. Roberts's *Orion and Other Poems*, then recently published. "Like most of the young fellows about me," said Lampman, "I had been under the depressing conviction that we were situated hopelessly on the outskirts of civilization, where no art and no literature could be, and that it was useless to expect that anything great could be done by any of our companions, still more useless to expect we could do it ourselves. I sat up all night reading and re-reading *Orion* in the state of wildest excitement.... It seemed to me a wonderful thing that such work could be done by a Canadian ... one of ourselves. It was like a voice from some new paradise of art calling us to be up and doing."⁷

It seems to me that Ross is to Canadian literature and indeed to Canadian culture in the twentieth century what Lampman said Roberts was to the nineteenth. Ross's vision in a sense awoke the country to itself, introduced regions to each other, got writers and critics talking and writing about the felt tensions, challenges, and inspirations of their lives. For the twentieth century, Ross's was the voice from "some new paradise of art calling us to be up and doing."

Ross continued his work on the New Canadian Library throughout the period when he went from Queen's to the University of Toronto, ultimately to serve as Dean of Arts and Acting

⁷ Archibald Lampman, "Two Canadian Poets," in *Towards a Canadian Literature: Essays, Editorials and Manifestos*, ed. Douglas M. Daymond and Leslie G. Monkman (Ottawa: Tecumseh, 1984) 1: 137.

Provost at Trinity College. He also continued actively to create a critical audience for Canadian writers in the universities, using his influence generously to help establish Writer-in-Residence positions across the country. Throughout the fifties, sixties and onward through the last three decades, he has devoted his formidable organizational skills and talents to the creation and implementation of councils for the arts, so that the lamentable state of affairs John Gray still saw in 1955 would be addressed. If you look closely you'll see Malcolm Ross's guiding hand behind the initiation of many grants, prizes and positions that have given artists the chance to work in better than what Gray had referred to as their "odd moments." At conference's close all those years ago, Gray offered a ray of hope: "We shall not build the New Jerusalem in our time, but we shall get in some good work on the foundations."⁸ Malcolm Ross is the foundation of much of what we know as Canada's artistic life today.

Malcolm Ross arrived here at Dalhousie in 1967. The Department Head, Allan Bevan, had invited him to advise on the feasibility of establishing a PhD program. Such was Ross's reputation as teacher, scholar, and superb administrator that it was an open secret that Dalhousie hoped to keep him. At Trinity College, Ross missed the teaching that was so much a part of his gift for inspiration. He also felt the pull of his roots in the Maritimes, so in 1968 he accepted Dalhousie's offer of a professorship. He was made Thomas MacCulloch Professor of English here in 1973.

It is here, of course, that I encountered Dr. Ross in the seventies. Along the way, in addition to his work on Milton and the seventeenth century, in addition to the seminal books of essays on Canadian literature and the arts, Ross had continued to publish insightful and challenging articles in learned journals on the literature of the Maritimes, on the literature of cultural and linguistic diversity, and on the whole complex project of constant "becoming" that is Canada.

Here, as at all the places that were privileged to welcome him before, he continued to enact all the facets of his vision of academic and artistic community: he held the general editorship of the *New Canadian Library* until 1982, he published a collection of his thoughtful and provocative essays in 1986 under the title *The*

⁸ Gray, "Book Publishing" 64.

Impossible Sum of Our Traditions, and he threw himself into the establishment of a sustainable cultural life here and across the country. He served as Chairman of the Dalhousie Committee for Cultural Activities in the late sixties and early seventies, when the Rebecca Cohn was just opening and most needed someone of his genius and generosity. He planned programs of music, dance and drama; he helped establish the Art Gallery, the concert hall and the theatre. In the seventies and eighties he served on the Arts Advisory Panel for the Canada Council and on the Board of the National Library. He was President of the Humanities Division of the Royal Society. Long ago, John Grierson described Malcolm Ross as “a man who can get things done.” And so he is.

I’ve barely mentioned the awards he has modestly accepted—in his early forties he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada; in his seventies he was Visiting Professor at the University of Edinburgh. He has been awarded eleven honorary doctorates at universities across the country and abroad. He is an Officer of the Order of Canada. But all of these are lists of accomplishments and honours—and believe me, they are merely partial lists.

I met Malcolm Ross in person, finally, in the classroom, where I joined the generations of students whom he inspired, whom he nurtured, and whom he guided. When you were in Malcolm Ross’s class, you were learning—and you were loving to learn. The course was an undergraduate class in Victorian literature, but the range was vast, the depth profound. We feared him, in an awestruck kind of way, but we loved and admired him. He would pretend to be gruff, if we weren’t working hard enough; he would patrol the corridor restlessly before a class, urging us in, eager for us to gather, eager to begin. He would fix us with those piercing blue eyes and challenge us to think, challenge us to engage with literature, with ideas, with art, with philosophy. And we were not allowed to shrink from what in one of his essays Ross calls “the dread questions”⁹—the dark shape of violence, hatred, doubt and despair that are as much a part of life and literature as the celebration of the beautiful or the good. In Ross’s vision, not only the light, but the dark must

⁹ Malcolm Ross, “Bliss Carman and the Poetry of Mystery: A Defence of the Personal Fallacy,” in *The Bicentennial Lectures on New Brunswick Literature: Wintthrop Pickard Bell Lecture Series, 1984-85* (Sackville, NB: Centre for Canadian Studies, Mt. Allison U, 1985) 21.

be faced. His gifts to us, although we did not really know it, were the tools with which to face it.

In his classroom we met all the arts—music, painting, sculpture. Under his guidance, we met Ruskin's artistic philosophy; the whole of Western art was before us. I never did study Canadian literature with him in the classroom; I joined his graduate course in the work of the late Victorians and the Pre-Raphaelites, and was spellbound by Ross's lectures on Pater and aesthetics, and absolutely rapt at the slides he showed us of paintings and tapestries and sculptures from the early Renaissance onward. His knowledge of the life of letters and arts of both Europe and Canada is the interactive background against which we learned—and grew.

Our learning from Malcolm Ross did not stop at the classroom door. When I was an undergraduate, Dr. Ross would go daily to the Students' Union for coffee in the morning, and encourage his students as they passed by to join him. I was too reticent to go along, but many of my classmates did, and they told of wonderful conversations ranging from art to politics to philosophy to sports—especially baseball. For myself, I had many conversations with Dr. Ross outside the classroom, in the Killam Library, in his office on Henry Street, and in later years over lunch in the Faculty Club. I treasured those discussions of philosophy, theology and poetry. It was in those conversations that Malcolm Ross encouraged me to pursue the interest I had in Maritime literature. He found I'd been enchanted by the Pre-Raphaelites, and so encouraged me to fuse my interests by doing graduate study with him on Francis Sherman, a Maritime poet influenced by the movement. He was a clear and concise critic. (Sometimes his supervision could be very practical; at one point, when I was struggling with a tight deadline for my Master's thesis, Dr. Ross would telephone me: "Miss McGillivray," he would ask, "... are you *up?*") And when he learned that, like him, I was haunted by certain Bliss Carman poems—I have never exhausted my fascination with "How soon will all my lovely days be over," nor grown weary of the mystical power of "Low Tide on Grand Pré"—he encouraged me to pursue my doctoral studies on Carman's poetry, and recommended me for a scholarship. I can even credit part of my education in the love of music to Malcolm Ross: through Ross's efforts in the performing arts series we students were being afforded more opportunities to hear concerts, and through his shining presence at those concerts—a presence

we all sought, and were delighted by—we knew we were being encouraged to return.

This, too, was and is Malcolm Ross's genius—to stimulate and inspire his students to pursue their own vague dreams and visions. As students, we thought we saw him everywhere, just as the speaker sees the Scholar Gypsy in the Matthew Arnold poem we studied in that Victorian literature class. One of my classmates was a sophisticated New Yorker who swore he kept seeing Ross in Manhattan when he went home for holidays. I kept thinking I saw him when I toured Europe for the first time after receiving my BA in the seventies.

“O life unlike to ours,” says Arnold's speaker of the elusive Scholar Gypsy. “Thou waitest for the spark from heaven! and we, / Light half-believers of our casual creeds, / Who never deeply felt, nor clearly will'd / Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds, / Whose vague resolves never have been fulfill'd / Ah, do not we, wanderer! await it too?”

Malcolm Ross has lived indeed a “life unlike to ours,” and like the Scholar Gypsy, lives in luminous hope. Compared to Ross, in the intensity and unwavering commitment with which he has served his vision of family, university, community, nation, and, underlying and unifying all, the life of the spirit, we are most of us “half-believers.” But if that is so, the failure is ours, for Ross, the scholar visionary, differs from Arnold's Scholar Gypsy in a singularly important respect. Malcolm Ross *received* what Arnold called “the spark from heaven” very early in his life, and he shared and shares the vision he was afforded, shares the “heaven-sent moment,” teaches it, conveys it to us, and makes it ours.

In a way, we *did* see Malcolm Ross everywhere, for we brought what he gave us with us.