

May 28, 1966

Dear Mrs. Macleod,

Thank you for sending me Robert Weaver's review of my book in the Toronto Star. I hadn't seen it but I'm not surprised. The most acid critics are frustrated writers themselves, and I understand that Weaver has earned his living as a CBC hack for years, mostly in the Talks and Public Affairs Department, and that he takes out his literary frustrations in little magazines catering to the arty-arty types.

The "Literary History of Canada" from which he quotes was put out last year by a group of lofty academic critics. J.B. McGeachy said of it: "Its compilers are unsure whether there is any literature to write about. Luckily they have no qualms about the quality of their own work ... It is sad that Canadian literature is so second rate, but what a mercy it is that we have such clever critics to tell us so."

I don't subscribe to any of the clipping agencies, although some reviews come my way. I found long ago that I could bear the paper darts of the Weaver type very well. So can any author who has won enough acceptance by the public to live entirely by his pen, and in the competition of the open market, not in some salaried side-alley.

Nevil Shute put it best, I think. "Most reviewers are unsuccessful practitioners of the art of creative writing, or they would not be interested in the meagre fees they get for writing about other people's books, and in part their lack of success may be due to the fact that they have completely misunderstood the character and intelligence of the reading public. Young authors should accept the embittered fulminations of reviewers with the greatest reserve. From the nature of their employment these people are quite unlikely to know what they are talking about."

Edith joins me in good wishes to you and yours.

Sincerely,



Mrs. George D. Macleod,
165 St. Germaine Avenue,
Toronto 12, Ontario.

May 28, 1966

Mrs. George D. Macleod,
165 St. Germain Avenue,
Toronto 12, Ontario.

Isn't history the genre?

Toronto Star, May 21, 1966

Mr. Raddall's so conventional

HANGMAN'S BEACH:
Thomas H. Raddall. Double-
day. 422 pages. \$5.95.

Thomas Raddall's new book is a conventional historical novel, crafted from oak, and a typical example of the kind of fiction that Mr. Raddall has been writing since his first success with "His Majesty's Yankees" in 1942.

The novel takes place in Halifax at the time of the Napoleonic wars.

The city is a remote English outpost, a tough seaport where hanged men rot in the gibbets on the beach at the entrance to the harbour, and with a prison camp on its outskirts.

To this prison camp comes a French naval officer, Michel Cascamond, whose dangerous secret is that he was the man who fired the shot that killed Lord Nelson at Trafalgar.

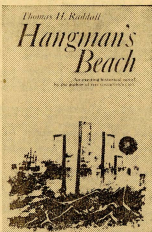
Cascamond is one of the two major characters in "Hangman's Beach" who are fictitious. The others, as Mr. Raddall points out in a brief preface, are "actual people . . . who now belong to history."

The other fictitious character at the centre of the novel is Ellen, ward of Peter McNab, who lives with his family on an island in the harbour to which they gave their name.

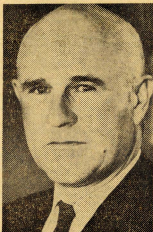
It was foredoomed, given the kind of novel this is, that Ellen and the prisoner Cascamond will fall in love, that their love will seemingly be star-crossed, and that finally they will be reunited and escape, as it happens, to an Acadian settlement.

The love affair is the weakest and most unlikely part of "Hangman's Beach." In a note about Thomas Raddall in the "Literary History of Canada" published last year he is described as a writer whose "principal weakness . . . is his inability to penetrate deeply into the psychology of his characters." This is a painfully obvious defect in the new novel, where it's difficult to distinguish in quality between the imagined characters (Ellen and Cascamond) and those who actually "belong to history" (like Peter McNab.) Both the people who are real and those who come from the imagination lie shadowy and inert on the page.

But the "Literary History" also says of Thomas Raddall, perhaps a trifle extravagantly, that "he has



HANGMAN'S BEACH
A novel crafted from oak absorbed the history, landscape, manners and accent of his region with a completeness that amounts to possession." Raddall was born in England but came to Nova Scotia as a child, and has lived there ever since. He has been writing about the province for a quarter of a century: in short stories, in a number of historical novels, in an



THOMAS H. RADDALL
Historical novelist

ambitious but not very successful novel placed nearer to our own time, "The Nymph and the Lamp," and in a major historical study of the city of Halifax.

The best qualities of "Hangman's Beach" come from this long identification with Halifax and the Province of Nova Scotia. Mr. Raddall writes in his pre-

face that the background of the novel "is the result of long and diligent research and of personal observation on the ground and the sea," and we believe him.

The portrait that Thomas Raddall draws of Halifax and the province at the beginning of the 19th century is an interesting one.

Halifax itself is a busy garrison and commercial town with the threat of a French attack hanging over it and somewhere on the horizon the Americans pondering intervention in the war that began in Europe.

It's a crude, lively and self-possessed town. It has its blind folk singer for public occasions (there is a blind folk singer in one of Mr. Raddall's early short stories).

Up country is wild, empty and beautiful. And when Michel Cascamond escapes for a time from the city he finds himself in difficulty in the great tides of the Bay of Fundy. Somewhere the Acadians cling to survival.

The descriptions in "Hangman's Beach" of the place, the way of life, and of the seasons and the land itself are conservative but solid as oak. The people in the novel are stamped on tin.

Thomas Raddall's new novel is one of his better historical romances, but it is not intrinsically as interesting as his first novel "His Majesty's Yankees," and it is certainly a lesser book than his non-fiction study "Halifax, Warden of the North."

It's sad to say it now, but popular history, and not the novel, was probably Mr. Raddall's genre from the beginning.

—ROBERT WEAVER

Wednesday afternoon at 3 o'clock, Interment Prospect Cemetery.

CUNNINGHAM, Rev. Thomas Trench, B.A., Grad. New Castle, N.B.—Unwicked, on Tuesday May 17, 1966. Rev. Thomas T. Cunningham, beloved husband of Eleanor Barker, in his 49th year. Loving father of Thomas and Betty, at home. Son of Mr. and Mrs. George B. Cunningham of Orillia, and brother of Mrs. (Mayme) of Orillia, Jean (Mrs. Grant) MacLean and Rev. George Cunningham, of Toronto. Resting at the Mundell Funeral Home, 79 West St., North. Orillia. Service in the Orillia Presbyterian Church on Monday May 23rd at 2 p.m. Interment St. Andrew's Cemetery, Orillia.

DAVIS, Marion Charlotte—At her home on Friday, May 20, 1966, Marion Williams, in her 88th year. Beloved wife of the late Howard Alfred Davis, dear mother of Norman of Edmonton and Ethel (Mrs. B. Taylor). Survived by seven grandchildren. Friends may call at the Trull Funeral Home, 2704 Yonge St. (after 7 p.m. Sunday). Service in the chapel Wednesday afternoon at one o'clock. Interment Mt. Pleasant Cemetery.

DIGGINS, Victor—Passed away May 19, 1966 in Chicago. Dear husband of Mary Wray Trull. Formerly of Toronto, Ont. Dear father of William of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, daughter Irene (Mrs. R. Pickett) Cookville, loving grandfather to Peter, Jim and Missy, dear brother of Hugo, Belleville, Omar and Bernard of California and Una (Mrs. Fred Leace) of Brampton.

DOBBS (Dubinsky), Samuel—On Saturday, May 21, 1966, Samuel Dobbs, husband of Golda, father of Harvey, Mrs. James (Lillian) Betesh, Mrs. Sidney (Bessie) Bernstein, Mrs. Morris (Sue) Bloom and Irving, brother of Mrs. Joe (Abby) Levine of Stamford, Conn. Also survived by grandchildren and great grandchildren. Member of the Sons of David. For time and place of funeral, please call Park Memorial Chapel, 922-6195 after 8:30 Saturday evening, Shiva 70 Cedillac Ave., Downsview. In lieu of shiva gifts please donate to the Heart Fund.

DOW, Margaret Irene Cameron—At 733 Jepson St., Niagara Falls, Ont., on Friday, May 20, 1966. Margaret Irene Cameron Dow, beloved wife of John (Jake) Dow; dear mother of Kenneth, Niagara Falls; daughter of Charles Sydney Cameron, Buffalo, New York, and sister of Nora Cameron, Toronto. Resting at the Funeral Chapel of Hetherington & Deans, 1176 Victoria Ave., Niagara Falls, Ont. Service in the chapel, Tues., May 24, at 11 a.m. Interment in Fairview Cemetery.

DURAND, Grace Elizabeth—On Friday, May 20, 1966, at Toronto, Grace Elizabeth Rice, dearly loved wife of the late Ernest Durand, loving mother of Edwin and John Durand, dear grandmother of Christine, Paul and Alan, Sister of Mrs. W. Martin (Sadie) and William Rice. Resting at the Ryan and Odette Funeral Home, 1498 Dundas St. W. (just west of Dufferin) after 1 p.m. Sunday. Funeral service Tuesday afternoon at 1 o'clock, Interment Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

EADES, Margaret Mary—At the Queen Elizabeth Hospital on Friday, May 20, 1966, Margaret Eades, late of 2001 Bloor St. W., sister of the late Hugh John Boyle, M.B.E., loved aunt of Mrs. Elizabeth McClean, Burlington, Mrs. Nancy Scriven, West Hill; James Hugh Boyle, Montague, Mich., sister-in-law of Mrs. Hugh Boyle and dear friend of Mr. M. L. Davis. Resting at the Funeral Chapel of Wm. Spens, 2926 Dundas St. W. (near Keele). Service Tuesday afternoon at one o'clock, Interment Markham Cemetery.

GIBSON, Joseph Edward—Suddenly at his home, 4 Arnold Joseph Edward, dear brother of Amy Gibson, Rose (Mrs. R. Pope) and the late William Gibson. Resting at the Giffen-Black Chapel, 2570 Danforth Ave. at Main St., after Sunday 7 p.m. Service Tuesday, 2 p.m. Interment Park Lawn Cemetery.

Sister of Ethel, Violet and Agnes. Private funeral service was held at the Murray E. Newbigging Funeral Home, 733 Mt. Pleasant Rd. (at Eglinton). Friday morning. Interment Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

PENNEY, Jesse A.—At St. Michael's Hospital, on Thurs., May 19, 1966. Jesse A. Penney, beloved husband of Edith Penney, dear father of Mrs. James Patterson (Thelma), and Norman H. Penney. Friends will be received at the "Kinship" Funeral Home, 1403 Bayview Ave. (at Davisville). Service in the chapel Sat. afternoon at 1:30 o'clock. Interment Highland Memory Gardens.

PORTER, Edwin John Horatio—At the Ajax-Pickering General Hospital on Saturday, May 21, 1966. Edwin John Horatio Porter, beloved husband of Anna Jean Cornish. Friends may call at the Trull Funeral Home, 2704 Yonge St. (after 2 p.m. Sunday). Service in the chapel Tuesday afternoon at 3 o'clock. Interment Mount Pleasant Cemetery. Remembrances may be made to the Canadian Cancer Society.

RAE, Catherine—On Saturday, May 21, 1966, Catherine Ridell, in her 81st year, beloved wife of George Rae of Keswick, dear mother of Mrs. S. Stevenson (Edith), Aurora, Mrs. Wm. R. Cropper (Lorna), Keswick, Irwin, Cedarbrae, George H., Gravenhurst, Wilfred, Zephyr, and Mrs. F. Hockley (Kathleen), Sandford. Resting at the Straesler Funeral Home, Queensville. Service 2 p.m. Monday, Interment Mount Pleasant Cemetery, Zephyr.

ROBERTSON, Ann Stewart—On Thurs., May 19, 1966, Ann Stewart Robertson, 28 Ellsworth Ave., mother of Alexander, Donald, Richard and John. A private service was held at the Funeral Chapel of A. W. Miles, 30 St. Clair Ave. W. on Friday.

SAMER, Samuel—On Friday May 20, 1966, at the Branson Hospital, Samuel Samer, formerly of 3270 Bathurst St., beloved husband of Bea Samer, loving father of Mrs. H. Posner (Annette), of Brookline, Mass.; brother of Mrs. Minnie Freeman of Cleveland; Mrs. P. Smith (Fanny); Mrs. Ray Lalonsky of New York; David Samer, Lou Harris and Mrs. Rose Steinberg. Funeral services on Sunday, May 22, at 2:30 p.m., from the Beth Shalom Synagogue, 1445 Eglinton Ave. W. Interment Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park, Shiva 106 Ridgewood Ave.

SCHROEDER, Margaret—At Toronto on Friday, May 20th, 1966 Margaret Schroeder, in her 84th year, late of Roxhampton Ave., Toronto. Beloved

and friends are invited to attend.

COHEN—The unveiling of a monument to the beloved memory of the late Mr. Jacob Cohen, late husband of Eva Cohen and father of Mrs. Doreen Gottlieb and Mrs. Sybil Stewart will take place Sunday, May 22, at 11:30 a.m. at Kol Yonker, Lambton Cemetery, Royal York Rd. N. Relatives and friends are invited.

GROSSMAN—The unveiling of a monument to the beloved memory of the late Ida Grossman, dear wife of Max, loving mother of Mrs. M. Mayzels (Gertrude), Morris, Mrs. Wm. Campol (Pimmy), Harold and Dr. S. W. Grossman (Mickey) will take place Sunday, May 22 at 10:30 a.m. at Dawes Rd. Cemetery, Zion Benevolent Society Section. Relatives and friends invited.

KRAKOVER, Edith (Ida)—On Sunday, May 22, at 1 p.m. at Mount Sinai Memorial Park, Wilson Ave., Beth Shalom Cemetery.

LEVINE—The unveiling of monument to the beloved memory of the late Fred Levine, beloved husband of Rosemary Levine, will take place Sunday, May 22, 1966 at 12 noon, Mount Sinai Memorial Park, Pride of Israel section. Relatives and friends invited.

LEWIS (Max)—The unveiling of a monument to the beloved memory of the late Max Lewis, beloved father of Sid and Eleanor Wolfson, will take place Sun., May 22, at 11:30 a.m., at Roselawn Ave. Cemetery, Malvern Section.

MACKLIN—The unveiling of a monument to the beloved memory of the late Fanny Macklin, beloved mother of Charles, Bell Silver, and Irene Klein, will take place Sunday, May 22 at 9:30 a.m. at Bathurst Lawn Cemetery, U.J.P.O. Section. Relatives and friends are invited to attend.

REISS—The unveiling of a monument to the beloved memory of the late Gertrude Reiss, beloved wife of Joseph, loving mother of Harry and Sidney, will take place Sunday, May 22, 1966, 2:30 p.m., at Dawes Rd. Cemetery, Sons of Jacob section. All invited.

SARESKY—The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late Arthur (Alter) Sareisky, will take place Sun., May 22, at 11 a.m. at Mt. Sinai Memorial Park, Workmen's Circle Section.

SCHWARTZ—The unveiling of a monument to the beloved memory of the late Mr. Wolfe Schwartz, loving husband of Miria Schwartz and father of Abraham, will take place Sunday, May

DICECO—In loving memory of a dear mother, Louie, we passed away May 21, 1957.

We miss your loving voice, dear. The touch is on my hand; Smile on us, dearest mother. From out the better land. Sadly missed by daughter Valia, son-in-law Carman and Grandchildren.

DOHERTY—In loving memory of a dear father, John Jack Doherty, who passed away in 1935. We have only your memory dear father.

To remember our whole life. But the sweetness will linger forever. As we treasure the image of you. Ever remembered by his Family.

DOLMAN—In loving memory of my dear husband, Ernie, who passed away May 21, 1961.

He is not forgotten. He is, and as dawn another year, In our lonely hours of thinking Thoughts of him are always near. Days of sadness still come over me. Friends may think the wound is healed. But they still know the sorrow That lies within the heart concealed. Sadly missed by wife Marie.

DOLMAN—In loving memory of our dear dad, Ernest, who passed away May 21, 1961. May a sweet angel give if we could say Hello, dad, in the same old way; To hear your voice, see your smile, To sit with you and chat awhile. So I hope you are a father. Cherish him with care. For you'll never know the heartache Till you see his vacant chair. Remembered by son Bernie and daughter-in-law Elaine.

DOWNER—In loving memory of my dear wife, Bessie, who passed away May 23, 1961.

Just a thought of sweet remembrance, Just a memory of love and true, Just a token affection. And a heartache still for you. More each day I miss you. Though my thoughts are not revealed Little do they know the sorrow That is within my heart concealed. Sadly missed by husband Cecil.

DUNSEATH—In loving memory of my dear wife, Gertrude, who passed away May 22, 1963.

In all the things we shall not find A heart so wonderfully kind, So soft a voice, so sweet a smile, Inspiration so worth while; A sympathy that comes so deep. A love so beautiful to keep. Sadly missed by husband, daughter, Helen (Mrs. G. Go.) Phillips, West Rouge and son Talbot of Detroit.

FAIRLEY—In loving memory of Hugh S. Fairley, who passed away May 22, 1959.

In our hearts you will always stay. Loved, and remembered every day. —Wife and Family.

FOSTER—In loving memory of my dear husband, Albert, who passed away May 21, 1960.

It is sad to walk the road alone, Instead of side by side. But to those who come a moment When the ways of life divide; You gave me years of happiness. Then came sorrow and tears. But you left me beautiful memories. I will treasure through the years. —Deeply missed by wife Alice.

FOSTER—In loving memory of a dear father, Albert, who passed away May 21, 1960.

Although we smile and make no fuss, No one misses him more than us. And when old times we oft recall, That's when we miss him most of all. —Sadly missed and ever remembered by his Daughters, Sons-in-law and Granddaughters.

FRASER—In loving memory of a dear father, Charles A. Fraser, who passed away May 23, 1965. Gone but not forgotten. —Remembered by Jean, Frank and children.

GARNER—Cherished memories of a very dear husband, Arthur Garner who passed away May 21, 1963. Shared remembrances linger in the lonely hours. —Forever missed, Jean.

GARNER—Dear Dad. Those we love we never lose. They will be remembered always. —Son Arthur and Family.

GREEN—In fond remembrance of Mrs. Ethel Green who passed away May 23, 1955. Too dearly loved ever to be forgotten. —Lovingly remembered, daughter Irene.

HADDLETON—In loving memory of a dear brother Bill who passed away May 21, 1961. Those whom we love go out of sight, But never out of mind; They are cherished in the hearts Of those they leave behind. —Lovingly remembered by sister Evelyn and brother-in-law Tom and Family.

Funeral Directors

Washington & Johnston
Funeral directors, 717 Queen St. E.
at Broadview, HO-5377.

it was emphasizing, exploiting
& encouraging the sex
situation & I said so.
But I don't want you to
think that I'm a person
who scolds. Because I
try not to. It is a very easy
habit to slip into - especially
for older people.

I am keen on Howard
Spring's book, now & have
to review Margaret
Walker's Jubilee for our
Book Club in February.
My garden has claimed three
weeks of my time in July. But
now I hope I'm going to be
able to enjoy it. Sincerely,
Frances M. MacLeod

July 31, 1969

Dear Dr. Tom,

I would like to keep
up a nice leisurely corr-
espondence with you
and I'm not sure
who owes who now.
Do you get the Globe &
Mail? In this morning's
edition there was
an article about a
new Dictionary which
is to come out in Sept.

and evidently there was quite a planned discussion on the use of some words in it by a group of men of great erudition. One of them I noticed wanted to abolish the use of the word "whom" - so I'm following his advice in my first sentence!

What are you doing now? Writing? Relaxing? Planning future books? I haven't read your last book yet, so don't get too far ahead of me!

We are still both working a little beyond our strength. I'm glad that we have the health to do it but I am looking forward to the time when things won't be so strenuous.

I remember in one of my former letters to you that I said something disparaging about the Program "Lake Thru" on T.V. At that time I thought

November 6, 1969

Mrs. Frances MacLeod,
165 St. Germaine,
Toronto 12, Canada.

My dear Mrs. Frances:

I have just been re-reading your pleasant note of July 31st, with its news of George and yourself and family. You and he are still working too hard, it seems to me.

For myself I can say that I am living a relaxed life at last, although I have plenty of things to occupy my time. Long ago, when I was a young and struggling novice, I saw famous writers of an older generation (like Charles Roberts and his brother Theodore) go on writing long after they should have stopped, and turning out poor and poorer stuff. Every bit of this took something away from their reputations, and the new generation (without ~~hate~~ bothering to look up their earlier and best work) wondered what on earth their fathers and mothers had seen in them. I resolved never to make the same error, and that when I had written all the tales and themes that interested and excited me (so that I could interest and excite other people about them) I would draw the line and say, in effect, "That's it!"

I've reached that time now, although publishers are urging me to write this and that. I shall never write another novel. I may gather another collection of true short stories about Nova Scotia, like those in my last book ("Footsteps On Old Floors") and perhaps a bit of straight history, but nothing that depends on a creative imagination as all fiction does. My own fiction was drawn from my own experiences in life, and the observations I drew from them, beginning with the time when I went to sea as a boy of fifteen. My years at sea and on lonely coastal wireless stations, then the years exploring the forest of the Mersey watershed, digging in the sites of ancient Indian camps, and talking to the surviving Micmacs about their language and legends, and the residence in Halifax and Liverpool, digging in the records of the past, all gave me characters and themes that I could put on paper because I saw them clearly with what I can only call an informed imagination. And all that is done. To go on with the same sort of thing, without the mental chain-reaction that comes from a younger mind playing on comparatively new experiences, would be merely hack work.

I'm now at an age when the National Library, and universities in Canada and the United States, are asking me to donate all my manuscripts, diaries, notes and papers. I haven't decided yet, but I think they should include, for the help of any future students of Canadian literature, my own account of my

life and interests, from which I drew the material of my work. (If students are sufficiently curious, they can check the autobiography against the diaries and papers.)

Last month Saint Mary's University at Halifax invited me to address their Fall convocation, and presented me with an honorary Litt. D. to add to the string of letters after my name. When I look at them, and reflect that I left the old Halifax Academy at the term end of Grade Nine and never got back to school, the whole thing ~~xxxxxx~~ seems unreal -- as I suppose a bird might regard the wagging tail on a very plain kite.

The affair at St. Marys produced a Raddall reunion that was quite remarkable in itself. Francie and her husband came from Moncton to attend the ceremony with their four youngsters, and Tom and Pam came up from Liverpool with two of their three, and two of my sisters were able to attend. I daresay the kids will remember the occasion chiefly because Grandpa wore a strange gown and a very funny hat.

We've had some frosts here and one snowfall in October, which disappeared in subsequent rains. Yesterday I was playing golf alone at White Point, under a typical grey November sky, with a sea wind blowing half a gale, and great surf roaring on the beach.

For years I've had attacks of lumbago, and more recently a permanent arthritis in my right hip; but I keep going, albeit it with a limp and a bit of a stoop. Edith has been blessed with an apparent immunity to that sort of thing until this Fall, and she is now taking treatment for rheumatic pains in ~~her~~ her arms and legs. Nevertheless she still gets about, and otherwise has no ills.

I gave up hunting and fishing years ago, but last week I spent a couple of days with some friends who were after deer at Eagle Lake, one of my favourite haunts in time past. They stayed a whole week themselves, and didn't see a deer at all. I got a chuckle out of telling them they'd been too far back in the woods -- our golf pro. at White Point had shot a fine buck just a few yards from No. 5 green, in the scrub woods there.

And that, as they say on TV, wraps up the local news from Liverpool as seen by your local correspondent.

Edith joins me in best wishes.

Sincerely,