

Box 242,
Thorold, Ont.
November 1 1940.

Mr. Thomas H. Raddall,
Liverpool,
Nova Scotia.

Dear Mr. Raddall:

A week or so ago I had the pleasure of reading your story "Blind McNair" in the Saturday Evening Post of a few weeks back. I hesitate to use superlatives but I think this story is a masterpiece.

In it you have succeeded in building up and maintaining a mood with great success. But the most outstanding point I thought, was the way you handled the "love element". It seems to me that the situation as you built it up could have very easily led you on to a more orthodox finish. I am sure that the general run of contemporary Americans would have injected considerable "goo" into the closing paragraphs and would have had to enlarge and thereby weaken the end by at least another column. I admire your sense of the dramatic, and I congratulate you on a polished technique.

I have not read all your published stories. Beyond a couple of Blackwoods which Dorothy Wickwire lent me once, and "Blind McNair", I have read only those that have appeared in McLean's. I am ashamed to say that I have not yet purchased your book, but I am rectifying this oversight in the very near future.

Your first story in McLean's was good but your last was immeasurably better, to my mind at least. However, "Triangle in Steel" seems to suffer when compared to "Blind McNair" and this perhaps is because no Indian could ever approach an old "Bluenose" for depth of character. And who will say that a paper mill skeleton is comparable to a South Shore blacksmith shop for atmosphere?

I would like to remind you of Joe Wentzell who lives at Fort Point. I have spent many an hour soaking in his reminiscences and it may be that you would find him interesting.

If you ever come up this way please look me up. I will take you over to Toronto and introduce you to Dr. Robbins of the University English Department. He is the antithesis of the typical English professor and has spent a good deal of time in lumber camps. He has I beleive, the largest collection of lumbermen's chantey's in Canada. I imagine such a meeting would be mutually entertaining and beneficial.

If you think it would be of any help to you I will gladly write to a movie company and plead to have one of your stories filmed. Just tell me which company.

I don't know that I have any right to act as a literary critic but I would like to say that if the quality of your output increases as much in the next ten (even five) years, as it has in the last two or three, you will be known as THE Canadian Author and the much tooted Morley Callahan will be --as he should have long ago been -- buried beneath his insipid drivel.

Yours very truly,

Lorne Campbell

Lorne Campbell.