

15 August 70

Mr. Thomas Raddall
44 Park St.
Liverpool
Nova Scotia, Canada

My dear Mr. Raddall:

I have been enjoying your literary production so very much and for such a long time, I finally decided to sit down and write you this. I am a French professor at the above named University and read, reread especially *THE NYMPH AND THE LAMP*, *PRIDE'S FANCY* and *TIDEFALL*. In addition, I have had occasion to recommend your works to colleagues, friends and students. In all honesty and humility, I want to thank and congratulate you most sincerely for your many, impressive literary accomplishments and achievements throughout the years.

At this time, I would like to address you several questions, sincerely hoping you will take time from your present schedule to answer them. I truly hope you don't mind this request from a most interested, longtime reader of yours.

Mr. Raddall, what are your present activities, literary and other? Who has influenced you the most in your distinguished career? May I finally ask you, dear Sir, which of your works is your personal favorite (or the one you consider your best)?

As you proceed with your future endeavors, whatever they may be, you should know that you have both my deep appreciation and gratitude. Goodspeed for the months and years ahead.

Respectfully,
Melvin B. Yoken

August 26, 1970

Mr. Melvin B. Yoken,
Southeastern Mass. University,
North Dartmouth, Mass.

Dear Mr. Yoken:

I'm very glad that you have enjoyed my books, and it is very kind of you to write and tell me.

In addition to two small books privately printed and issued in limited editions in the early 1930's, I have had seventeen books published. Long ago, as a young writer, I saw authors turning out books long after they should have stopped, and I determined that when I had written all the things that interested and excited me I would draw the line and say "That's it!"

I have reached that stage, and now I am engaged in putting my papers in order and preparing to write my memoirs.

As a young man I admired Kipling and Somerset Maugham, among other writers in English, and De Maupassant and Balzac. Their techniques were different but they knew human nature and how to set it down on paper. I had a deep interest in history also, and particularly the history of New England and the Maritime Provinces of Canada, consequently I enjoyed Kenneth Roberts' novels and the careful research behind them. However I would not say that I was deeply influenced by ^{any} writer. My continual aim was to be original in my choice of material, and to develop my own technique in the use of it.

My favourite book is "The Nymph and The Lamp", because it contains scenes and people from my own life. The scene which I called "Marina" is really Sable Island, where I was posted for a year as a radio-telegraph operator shortly after the First World War.

With deep appreciation of your letter, and my own good wishes,

Sincerely,

August 26, 1970

Mr. Melvin B. Yoken,
Dept. of Modern Languages
Southeastern Massachusetts University.

Copy
& returned book
Apr 11/72

Set of Modern Languages
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Southeastern Massachusetts University

North Dartmouth, Massachusetts 02747

25 March 1972

My dear Mr. Raddall:

One of my most faithful, esteemed and
re-read 'friends' is your excellent
THE NYMPH AND THE LAMP which
I am enclosing. Would you mind
inscribing and dating my precious personal
for me? In all honesty, I'd greatly
appreciate this kind gesture on your
part more than words alone can
possibly express.

George Matthew Adams' article echoes
my personal sentiments re your incomparable
book. Have you ever seen this article?
I suppose the answer is positive, but
just in case ^{you haven't} I've made a
photocopy which I'm enclosing.

To facilitate the return of THE NYMPH
AND THE LAMP, I am tucking in the
self-addressed, stamped envelope. In
either case, I'll respect your
decision... 'Merci de tout coeur'!

I hope you are in the best of health
and convey to you, Mr. Raddall, my
warm personal regards and friendliest
wishes.

Respectfully yours,
Melvin B. Yoken

Mr. Thomas Raddall
44 Park Street
Liverpool,
Nova Scotia

Ans'd
July 21/73

97 Delcar Street
Fall River, Massachusetts 02720
5 July 1973

Dear Mr. Raddall:

Relaxing in my back yard today, I reread several of your works, and must herewith confess that I relished them more than before. And since I liked them a great deal before, that's saying a great deal--to put it mildly. On today's agenda, there was a rereading of PRIDE'S FANCY, TIDEFALL and THE WINGS OF NIGHT. I didn't bother with THE NYMPH AND THE LAMP, for I know that book almost by heart, due to the fact that I've "sunk" my mind and spirit in it on a slew of occasions. My younger brother, Steve, recently read for the first time HIS MAJESTY'S YANKEES, and found this a very interesting, well-written book. Over the past few weeks, he's been insisting I read it, so I will before the end of the summer. For one enigmatic reason or another, I've never perused that book, which I believe is one of your earliest "children"--if my eidetic memory serves me justly. PRIDE'S FANCY is the type of book I like to read on a relaxing day like today. I just don't see why the book wasn't a better seller in the U.States. It had all the ingredients--and still does--to put it on the top.

I wish I could have a good tête-à-tête with you (avant l'an 2000, at least!). My head is presently teeming with 1,000 questions to pose you, so here are a few which are irresistible, as well as pertinent.

Do you have any particular predilection--as of this day and age--for PRIDE'S FANCY and TIDEFALL? Approximately how many copies of each have been sold over the years, Mr. Raddall? Of all your books, which one was the most popular in the States? Would I be correct to say THE NYMPH AND THE LAMP? Lastly ... How go your memoirs? Are they progressing at a good, rapid pace?

Yesterday we celebrated the Fourth. With Watergate so much on people's TV screens, journals and on most minds, there were mixed feelings re the usual ballyhoo. Slowly, the toal government system is gathering enough steam and energy and outrage to examine wrongs and wrongdoers of the past, and reach new and beneficial resolutions on what the future will and must be like. This, it seems to me, is the promise of our Delaration of Independence... By the way, have you been following the Watergate proceedings, and how has the Canadian press (particularly in Nova Scotia) been treating this unprecented event?

May your summer be as pleasant, agreeable and stimulating as the three marvelous books I reread today.

With all kind and friendly regards, I am

Yours most cordially,

Melvin B. Yoken
Melvin B. Yoken

Mr. Thomas Raddall
44 Park Street
Liverpool, Nova Scotia

Wrote letter & returned book
Feb. 18/76

97 Delcar Street
Fall River, Ma. 02720
11 February 76

Dear Friend Thomas:

How are things going with you these days? I always seem to be conble with work, but thrive on it. My book on Claude Tillier comes out chez Twayne next week, so naturally I'm mighty happy about this. Isn't it incredible that time lapse between the completion of a book and finally seeing it in print?

I hope you'll duly "deface" with an appropriate inscription and date my copy of THE GOVERNOR'S LADY, one of my THR favorites. By the way, Thomas, did the idea for the book's contents germinate in your mind for a long time, or did it come up quickly, spontaneously? Are there any translations available of THE GOVERNOR'S LADY?

I do hope to meet you one of these days! Aren't you planning to come to the States in the course of '76 to help us celebrate the Bicentennial? If so, get to Boston and I'll meet you there. Or even better, come 50 miles south and land in my home town of Fall River for dinner, a drink and a good tour of the region. Vale for the nonce.
Amities mon vieux
Mel

97 Delcan Street
Fall River, Mass.

23 April 76

Dear Thomas:

I'm sending along several endpapers about my book CLAUDE TRUSSARD. If you'd like an out-of-pocket copy, please inform me and I'll be delighted to send one to you.

Are you planning any trips soon to the United States this year? If so, you'll have to come to the Boston region where I'd be delighted to show you around. If Passaic, I'd like you to come to Fall River (my home town) while it's 50 miles south of Boston) to give a talk to the friends of the Library Group of which I am President. Do you indulge in such endeavors? Naturally, there will be an honorarium attached to this, and a reception in your honor. Am I tempting you??

The weather is simply magnificent today. (Outings in the low 70's along with a glorious sun. Last week we were stretched into mid-summer with 4 days of near 90° (at above) temperatures. As a result Easter Sunday was like no other in living history, a day which was an open invitation to visit beaches and back in a mid-summer sun. The shape from the preceding week was almost too radical to believe. And certainly summer is not here to stay... The Easter 76 job course will indeed be part of the region's folk lore - no man expects to see the other strong along the weather plates that have always made New England an unpredictable place in which to live. All my very, very best to you - West Canada.

April 26/76

Dear Mel:

Thank you for your letter and your very kind invitation to Fall River. Alas, the penalties of old age descend on me and prevent any more travelling and public speaking.

Arthritis forces me to move about with a pronounced stoop and a limping gait, and I must have an operation for cataract this summer.

My wife died about a year ago. She had been ailing for some time but I am thankful to say she did not suffer any pain, and death came in her sleep.

I couldn't endure a hired housekeeper under foot every time I turn around, so I live alone and like it. A charlady comes in once a week to do all the cleaning, dusting, waxing, etc., and I get along very well.

I read with interest the enclosures about your book, and I would indeed appreciate an autographed copy.

Your copy of "The Wings of Night" goes back today, with my autograph and good wishes.

Sincerely,

Dr. Melvin B. Yoken,
97 Delcan Street,
Fall River, Mass.



Dear ami Powers:

I bet you enjoy
my Villier "edition"
(I like Mrs' word!)
as well as the
interesting book I
on one date. —

All my very, very
best wishes

Mrs' cordially
Neil

28 April 76

by David Levine
Thanked him by holograph
letter May 6, 1976