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The Archival Legacy of Gary Lautens

McMaster University Library is pleased to have received the papers of distinguished journalist, humorist, and McMaster alumnus, Gary Lautens. To the McMaster community, Lautens scarcely needs an introduction. Born in Fort William, ON, he moved with his family to Hamilton in the early 1930s and completed high school at Hamilton Central Collegiate Institute in 1946. At McMaster he was graduated with a bachelor's degree in history. Lautens' apprenticeship as a journalist also occurred at McMaster. Editor of the *Silhouette* from 1948–50, he joined the staff of the *Hamilton Spectator* after graduation and worked there for a dozen years. His newspaper work as a columnist continued at the *Toronto Star* from 1962–82. He was executive managing editor of the *Star* from 1982–84 and editor emeritus and columnist until his death of a heart attack in 1992 at the age of 63. His premature passing was mourned nationally and certainly here at McMaster, a place that he always championed and cherished. In his moving tribute to Lautens (*McMaster Times* Spring 1992), Roger Trull, Vice President, University Advancement, wrote: "Whether it was chairing Alumni Weekend or the alumni phase of the Centennial Campaign, or stepping in to emcee the Hall of Fame banquet or simply showing up on cold and rainy days to support the football team, he was always there.... He never forgot what McMaster had meant to his life and always credited



S. Turcon, C. Spadoni viewing Lautens archives
Photo by Ron Scheffler, courtesy of *McMaster Times*

much of his success to his experience here." In Lautens' memory his family, friends and colleagues established the Gary Lautens Memorial Scholarship, awarded to a student who has completed any Level I programme, achieved notable academic standing, and demonstrated journalistic skills in the written media.

By his own reckoning Lautens wrote over 8,000 articles. The first collection of his columns, *Laughing with Lautens*, appeared in 1964. During that time he earned a National Newspaper Award for sports writing, the first of many accolades heaped upon him. It was not until the 1980s, however, that Lautens really came into his own stride. His career blossomed in 1980 when he penned a series of hilarious sketches that tickled the fancy of readers across Canada. His collection, *Take My Family—Please!*

won the Stephen Leacock Medal for Humour. He repeated his success with the Leacock Medal in 1984 with the publication of *No Sex Please, We're Married*. That same year Lautens redirected his comic pursuits toward the political arena with *How Pierre and I Saved the Civilized World*. In addition to being a journalist and satirist, Lautens was also a part-time radio and TV personality, including contributions to *Front Page Challenge*. Several collections of his writings have appeared posthumously, most notably *Peace, Mrs. Packard and the Meaning of Life* (1993) and *The Best of Gary Lautens* (1995). Like his mentor Stephen Leacock, Lautens believed that humour should be used for kindly purposes as an expression of life's incongruities. For someone often in the public eye, he was a shy, private person, a man of principle who disliked the slightest trace of insincerity and ostentation, who cared deeply about his family,

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friends and country. A website on Lautens, maintained by his oldest son Stephen, who writes a weekly newspaper column, can be found at: <http://www.lautens.com/dad.html>

The archives of Gary Lautens contain a great variety of interesting documents. They reflect the life and times of a dutiful and loving husband, a trusted father, a skilled journalist, and master of wit. First and foremost are copies of Lautens' columns and manuscripts of his writings. These go back to the start of his career. But there are also many other documents and realia such as correspondence, photos, films, scrapbooks, audio tapes, placards, and awards. Especially touching are several boxes of memorial books, mementos, and letters of condolence sent to Lautens' family. The archives of Gary Lautens are ultimately a celebration of his life—that he lived his life fully and that he lived it well. ■

Carl Spadoni

Bernard Freeman Trotter, Soldier Poet and McMaster Alumnus

McMaster University Library is pleased to announce that it has received the donation of the archives of Bernard Freeman Trotter. His archives consist of approximately 100 letters that he wrote to his family while overseas in Britain and France during WWI, training and instructional manuals, and manuscript notebooks. The collection was donated by Trotter's nephew, Bernard Fisher Trotter (Humanities '45). Following is a biography of Trotter written by Charles M. Johnston, Professor Emeritus, History.

Toronto-born Trotter was educated at Baptist schools in Nova Scotia and Ontario. In the fall of 1907, in the company of his brother, Reginald, he embarked for sunny California in the hope of improving his shaky health. A year spent tending a lemon ranch and two years as a private teacher on the



Luncheon for Library Retirees

On September 27th, library retirees attended the 3rd annual luncheon hosted by University Librarian Graham R. Hill in the West Room of the University Club. ■

Pacific Coast partially did the trick. In 1910 he returned to Canada and enrolled at McMaster, the Baptist institution in Toronto where his English-born father, Thomas, served on the theological faculty. By the time Bernard reached his senior year the Great War had broken out in Europe, and Canada had entered the fight alongside the United Kingdom—or Mother Country, as it was then styled. Consequently, in his final months at McMaster, academic studies shared time with the duties he undertook in the University's war-inspired Officers' Training Corps. Other undergraduate pursuits included his active participation in campus clubs and literary groups, where he shone as a poet, one of his pieces, indeed, making it all the way to *Harper's Magazine*. Not surprisingly, he served as a productive editor of the *McMaster University Monthly*, a forerunner of the *Silhouette*, and other student publications on campus.

Although his health was periodically a problem, Bernard was anxious

to "do his bit" in the war following his graduation in 1915. His opportunity came shortly after he had embarked on postgraduate studies at the University of Toronto. When the British (Imperial) Army announced plans to recruit Canadians and other colonials (as they were then dubbed) for service in its officer corps, he eagerly applied. After his application for a commission was accepted, he left Toronto for England in March, 1916. Following a training period, part of which was spent amongst Oxford's "dreaming spires", the freshly minted lieutenant was posted to the maelstrom known as the Western Front, an experience he graphically related in a series of well preserved letters to his family. On 7 May 1917, Bernard's letters and luck sadly ran out. While serving as a transport officer in the Leicestershire Regiment, bringing up supplies to the front line, he came under heavy shellfire and was instantly killed. He was twenty-six.

After his death, Bernard's family

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assembled and published his poetry. It had long been an outlet for his imaginative and literary powers, which had been stimulated by his sojourn in California and his frequent holidays in northern Ontario where he had helped to establish a family retreat, "Cecebe". His poetry collection was published in 1917 under the title *A Canadian Twilight and Other Poems of War and of Peace*. It joined *In Flanders Fields* and the other literary contributions that were such a defining and poignant feature of the Great War. *A Canadian Twilight* was republished in Canada and the United States and established his reputation as a poet. In 1927 the French government had his name inscribed in a section of the Pantheon in Paris devoted to those overseas writers and poets who had served and died in France during the world conflict.

More recently, in 1996, Bernard Trotter's rudely shortened but active life was reviewed and honoured closer to home, in a moving Remembrance Day address delivered by the University's Chancellor, Dr. James Taylor. He presented Trotter as a memorable symbol of the principles and commitment embraced by all those McMaster students and graduates who died in the two world wars of the 20th century. ■

Chuck Johnston

Preservation Tip: Newspaper Clippings

Those who collect newspaper clippings are familiar with their rapid deterioration. Newsprint is a poor quality paper made from acidic wood fibres which turn the paper dark and brittle. These changes take place even more quickly when newsprint is exposed to light. Although it can be chemically treated to slow down further deterioration, many treatments will also darken this type of paper. Newspapers will also damage other unprotected papers or photographic

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Public Lending

The library was recently involved in a project relating to its holdings of Canadian-authored titles. From 1995 to 2000, it was one of ten major libraries across the country called upon by the Public Lending Right (PLR) Commission (www.plr-dpp.ca) to act as a measure by which Canadian authors receive payment for the use of their books. The Commission sent lists of titles registered with it to each library, and the library then indicated which of those titles were in its collection. Every time such a 'hit' was reported back to the Commission, the author received a payment of \$35. McMaster's results were added in with those from the other nine libraries and cumulative calculations were then made for the cheques the Commission sends to authors each February. This year, the maximum any one author received from this program was \$3,525. In all, 12,740 authors received a total of \$8.7 million in 2001.

The PLR Commission has been in operation since 1986. Funded by the federal government, it is managed by a writer-run board under the administrative aegis of the Canada Council for the Arts. Its mandate is to recognize the public service authors provide by the presence of their books in Canadian public and university libraries.

Extremely popular with authors, the PLR Commission also provides sampling libraries with a snapshot of the health of their Canadian collections. We are pleased to note that McMaster garnered the second highest score among the ten libraries in three out of the five years of its participation in this program. ■

Gwen Hooder

Reception for Library Representatives

On November 8, University Librarian Graham R. Hill and Peter G. Sutherland, Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic) hosted a reception to recognize the work of faculty members who volunteer as Library Representatives. Library reps are appointed by their department/school/programme to coordinate the selection of library acquisitions in their respective areas, and also liaise with the Library on their academic unit's behalf. We are grateful to all Library reps who have served in the past and those who are serving currently, and appreciate the tremendous time commitment they make.

A highlight of the reception was the presentation of the first Library Advocate Award to Dr. Alvin A. Lee, who has contributed much to the development of the Library, and given his untiring support over many years. Among his many contributions are his leading role in raising the \$21 million of public and private money to expand and renovate Mills Memorial Library during the Centennial Campaign, and more recently, his work to help raise over \$1 million for the *Library of the Future* Endowment Fund.



Dr. Alvin A. Lee & Graham R. Hill

To commemorate his award, the Library has purchased two books selected by Lee: *The Encyclopedia of Canadian Literature*—which, when published next year, will be the most complete and up-to-date reference work on Canadian literature ever published—and *The Diaries of Northrop Frye, 1942–55*, v.8 of the *Collected Works of Northrop Frye*.

Finally, the reception also recognized faculty members who had a book published in 2001. Thanks to *Titles* bookstore for its display. ■

(Preservation Tip — cont'd from p.3)

materials when stored together. To preserve these mementos, place individual clippings in a polyester film folder or acid free page protector with a sheet of alkaline buffered paper behind it. Place these folders or sheet protectors in file folders and boxes of high quality, acid free, alkaline buffered materials. Store the boxes in a cool dry location.

Acid free page protectors and file folders can be purchased at office supply stores. Acid free boxes, buffered papers and polyester film (mylar) are all available at art supply stores. ■

Audrie Schell

American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies

With the support of the Society and McMaster's Dean of Humanities we have been offering two short-term research fellowships annually since 1987, and have welcomed many distinguished scholars who made excellent use of McMaster's 18th Century Collection. In 2002 the Society is able to support only one short-term ASECS fellowship. The deadline for applications is January 31, 2002.

One of the 2001 fellows, Kevin Berland, English and Comparative Literature, Penn State, spent his fellowship month during the summer of 2001 preparing a new edition of John Gilbert Cooper's *Life of Socrates* (forthcoming Thoemmes Press). This scholarly edition of the text will include a comprehensive introduction and annotations. Berland used his fellowship to work on the historical introduction and notes, making extensive use of McMaster's collections on the mid-18th century controversies about natural religion and eschatology.

The second McMaster-ASECS fellow of 2001, Chloe Chard, will take up her fellowship in spring 2002.

Recently published: "The Spectacle of Protest and Punishment: Newspa-

per Coverage of the Melksham Weavers' Riot of 1738," *Media History*, 7 no. 1 (2001): 71-86 by David McNeil, as a result of research during his 1992 fellowship. ■

Charlotte A. Stewart

Recent Notable Gifts

The Library has received the following gifts from:

- ❖ Sydney Banks, 169 rare maps of Cumbria, Great Britain, South America, Canada, and the world.
- ❖ Rabbi Bernard Baskin, a small collection of notable books, including first editions of Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885) and Edna St. Vincent Millay's *The King's Henchman* (1926).
- ❖ Michel Brisebois, 3 novels by Cr billon fils.
- ❖ Professor Emeritus Simon Haykin, books on signal processing, mobile communications and neural networks.
- ❖ Francois Lachance, a collection of books on multimedia.
- ❖ James Leach, a small collection of 17th, 18th and 19th century books.
- ❖ J.B. Neilands, four letters from Bertrand Russell, cassettes, a film in Japanese, and other material related to his role as a scientific expert on the Bertrand Russell International War Crimes Tribunal on Vietnam.
- ❖ Fran Willey, a collection of books mostly on modern European history.

We are grateful to all donors for their generosity to the Library. ■

Grants

American Institute of Physics, \$3,560 US, to arrange and describe the archives of McMaster professor, physicist and Nobel prize winner, Bertram Brockhouse.

Canadian Council of Archives, \$18,038.26, to place RAD-compliant descriptions on the ARCHEION database and to put finding aids on the Archives and Research Collections website. ■

Publications

The following recent publications made use of our collections:

Buss, Helen M. and Kadar, Marlene, eds. *Working in Women's Archives: Researching Women's Private Literature and Archival Documents*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2001. Life Writing Series.

Fitzgerald, Carol. *The Rivers of America: A Descriptive Bibliography: Including Biographies of the Authors, Illustrators, and Editors*. Jean Fitzgerald, ed. New Castle, Del.: Washington, D.C.: Oak Knoll Press; Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, 2001.

Griffin, Nicholas, with the assistance of Alison Roberts Miculan. *The Selected Letters of Bertrand Russell: The Public Years, 1914-1970*. London and New York: Routledge, 2001.

Perkins, Ray, Jr. *Yours Faithfully, Bertrand Russell: A Lifelong Fight for Peace, Justice, and Truth in Letters to the Editor*. Chicago: Open Court, 2001.

Turcon, Sheila. *Bertrand Russell's Odyssey: Exhibition Handlist*. Hamilton, ON: McMaster Museum of Art, 2001. Description of the artifacts on display, November 12, 2000-January 7, 2001. This catalogue can be purchased for \$8 from Archives and Research Collections, Mills Library. ■

Calendar

Exhibit in Archives and Research Collections, Mills Library: *November 2001-January 2002: A Novel Idea: 18th Century Novels*. ■

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