

THE ROMANTIC CHILD IN SELECTED CANADIAN FICTION

THE ROMANTIC CHILD
IN
SELECTED CANADIAN FICTION

By
MARGARET JEAN STEFFLER, B.A., M.A.

A Thesis
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

McMaster University

May 1987

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (1987)
(English)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: The Romantic Child in Selected Canadian Fiction

AUTHOR: Margaret Jean Steffler, B.A. (University of Victoria)

M.A. (McMaster University)

SUPERVISOR: Dr. R. Hyman

NUMBER OF PAGES: vi, 314

ABSTRACT

Studies of children in Canadian fiction have tended to be very general, and often label the individual characters as certain "types" of literary children, already familiar to the reader. By far the most popular and common type of child in twentieth-century Canadian fiction is the pastoral child, who plays an integral role in the literature's nostalgic focus on memory, the past and a Romantic communion with nature. The treatment of the use and effect of this pastoral child, however, has been superficial and tentative. Numerous articles on the individual characters exist, but an attempt to tie together these pastoral children in an extended and detailed study is lacking.

The Romantic child, as established by Wordsworth, provides a logical and effective source and focus for a study of this group of pastoral children in Canadian fiction. The pastoral or Romantic child in Canadian fiction is a descendant of the Wordsworthian child, and enjoys an active and participatory relationship with nature. The relationship epitomizes the imagination and vision which are lacking in the child's society. This child is not merely "pastoral" in a nostalgic sense, but plays a role as society's critic, opponent and mitigator. The large gulf between the sublime nature and the insular society of twentieth-century Canada is bridged to some extent

and in some fashion by this Romantic child. The onus on the Canadian Romantic child is to invest society with the imagination and vision he or she derives from nature.

The development of the Romantic child in Canadian fiction stresses the Wordsworthian concept of the imagination transforming the common and concrete object. Such an approach refutes accusations of sentimentality and false nostalgia which often surround the pastoral child. A close examination of the actual process involved in the child's Wordsworthian communion with the natural world reveals and accentuates the importance of the child's vision and imagination in a society which seldom values such qualities. Such an examination also ties together these various characters, providing a means by which to define and study the uniquely Canadian Romantic child.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Roger Hyman, for his criticism, encouragement and unfailing enthusiasm throughout the preparation of this thesis.

I am also greatly indebted to Dr. Carl Ballstadt and Dr. Joan Coldwell, who devoted a generous amount of time and energy to the reading of this thesis. Their support and criticisms are sincerely appreciated.

I extend my deep appreciation to my parents, who instilled in me a love of literature. My deepest gratitude goes to Neil Steffler, whose patience and sense of humour made the completion of this thesis possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Notes to the Introduction	18
I W.O. MITCHELL'S ROMANTIC CHILD: THE INFLUENCE OF WORDSWORTH	21
Notes to Chapter One	59
II ERNEST BUCKLER'S ROMANTIC CHILD: A WORDSWORTHIAN "CHOSEN SON"	68
Notes to Chapter Two	108
III BRIAN O'CONNAL AND DAVID CANAAN'S PREDECESSORS AND CONTEMPORARIES	116
Notes to Chapter Three	159
IV GABRIELLE ROY'S CONCERN WITH THE INDIVIDUAL: WORDSWORTHIAN COMMUNION, UNITY AND HARMONY	164
Notes to Chapter Four	207
V TIMOTHY FINDLEY'S HOOKER WINSLOW: WORDSWORTH OVERTURNED	211
Notes to Chapter Five	235
VI RECENT VIEWS OF THE ROMANTIC CHILD	237
Notes to Chapter Six	291
CONCLUSION	295
Notes to the Conclusion	303
BIBLIOGRAPHY	304

INTRODUCTION

i

While studying "the treatment of childhood in modern literature,"¹ Peter Coveney discovered that it was "impossible to consider an author's attitude to childhood without very soon realizing that one was considering his attitude to something very closely synonymous with life."² Although such a claim is perhaps overstated, it is difficult not to agree, to a certain extent, with Coveney's assertion that "in writing of childhood, we find that in a very exact and significant sense the modern writer is writing of life."³ In his important and influential work, The Image of Childhood (1967), originally published as Poor Monkey in 1957, Coveney refers to the unusual emphasis placed on the child in nineteenth and early twentieth-century English literature, claiming that "a theme ceases to be personal or eccentric when it becomes the serious and deliberate choice of so many over so long a time."⁴ In Coveney's view, the vast number of works dealing with childhood justifies his study of the motif of childhood and the symbolic function of the literary child.

If, as Coveney claims, the frequency and importance of the theme of childhood constitute a "literary phenomenon" in our modern culture,⁵ then Canadian fiction definitely conforms to this modern phenomenon. The number of Canadian works dealing with childhood is indeed remarkable, and the attention accorded to the child has been

noted by numerous critics.⁶ Northrop Frye's interest in the pastoral myth in Canadian literature, for example, necessarily envelops the theme of the child, as he himself points out: "The pastoral myth in its most common form is associated with childhood, or with some earlier social condition--pioneer life, the small town, the habitant rooted to his land--that can be identified with childhood."⁷ Similarly, Eli Mandel, in probing what he calls the "myth of humanism,"⁸ focuses on the contrasts inherent in the pastoral: "the city as opposed to the country; the past (always ideal, golden, better) as opposed to the present (always crass, vulgar, worse than it once was); the age of childhood as opposed to the adult world; innocence as opposed to experience."⁹ Mandel places the child at the centre of the pastoral myth in Canadian literature. Similarly, Frye identifies the "popular and sentimental social form" of the Canadian pastoral as "an idealization of memory, especially childhood memory."¹⁰

It is specifically this "pastoral" child with whom I am concerned in this thesis. Both Brian Loughrey and Peter V. Marinelli, in their studies of the pastoral, identify the modification of the traditional form in the replacement of the distant place of Arcadia by the distant time of childhood.¹¹ In his discussion of the pastoral in Canadian literature, David Stouck maintains that the Canadian artist "idealizes the past in a consistently nostalgic art."¹² Stouck interprets this concern with childhood and the pastoral as being indicative of a situation "wherein the creative imagination, finding present existence unsatisfactory, goes back into the past in quest of a more perfect world--something once experienced but now lost."¹³

He also examines the use of nostalgia, suggesting that although nostalgia indicates an "emotional longing to go back to the past," it also encompasses the "conscious recognition that it is neither possible nor ultimately desirable to do so."¹⁴ This explanatory interpretation of the reasons for the presence of nostalgia, the pastoral and the child in Canadian literature is appropriate; yet the question of exactly how the child is used in this pastoral mode remains, as does the larger concern of why the society continually feels the need to indulge in a nostalgic longing for the past and childhood.

Pastoral children are prolific in Canadian literature, and share enough identifiable characteristics to be differentiated or selected from the larger category of children in general. The particular type of child with whom I am concerned contributes to the creation of some type of pastoral world, or to use Frye's words, helps to form "the vision of a social ideal" by providing "nostalgia for a world of peace and protection, with a spontaneous response to the nature around it."¹⁵ Critical treatment of this pastoral or Romantic child in Canadian literature consists of fairly traditional and general views, such as David Stouck's. The common and basic assumptions of such views, however, should be examined and questioned, while the area itself demands research and study in order to reveal more exact details and distinctions, which will distinguish the Canadian Romantic child from the child in general. Such distinctions not only shed light on the character itself, but also on the society and environment in which he or she functions.

The pastoral child in Canadian fiction is a descendant of the

nineteenth-century Romantic child, as established by Wordsworth.¹⁶ The popularity of this traditional Romantic child in nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canadian fiction is noticeable enough to demand attention. Not only does the child share many of the attitudes and characteristics of the Wordsworthian child, he or she also displays a conventionally Romantic relationship with nature and society. As in many nineteenth-century English works, the child in Canadian fiction is used to comment on the state of the society in which he or she lives. This is not to say that the child becomes a mere symbol or device; the best of these Romantic children are fully developed and interesting characters, eliciting the reader's sympathy and enthusiasm. The development and celebration of this vital character of the Romantic child, with its pastoral associations, provides an opportunity for indirect social commentary, the world of the child being upheld as an ideal, or at least as possessing certain necessary qualities which are lacking in adult society.

The themes of progress, urbanization and industrialization, at the basis of much nineteenth-century English literature, are also major concerns in those pieces of Canadian fiction which place the Romantic child in a central position. Such nineteenth-century trends continue into twentieth-century Canada, and thus the traditions and conventions of the nineteenth-century English Romantic child are easily transferable to twentieth-century Canada. Because of this rather obvious inheritance from English literature, the Canadian Romantic child can be placed in an historical context and a literary tradition. Peter Coveney's Image of Childhood, even though thirty years old, still

provides the most comprehensive and detailed historical and literary context for this figure of the Romantic child. Other works, such as William Walsh's The Use of the Imagination, and more recent works, such as Robert Pattison's The Child Figure in English Literature and Richard N. Coe's When the Grass Was Taller, also deal with the Romantic child, but do not provide the general overview and broad scope of Coveney's study. These other writers have more specific and specialized interests and aims: Walsh, in education; Pattison, in the "Fall of Man" and "Original Sin"; and Coe, in the autobiographical "Childhood." The basic intent and comprehensive approach of Coveney's work are responsible for its accessibility and popularity as a general survey. The Image of Childhood suggests and inspires by providing a solid base and background on which other studies can depend, and from which related interests and ideas can develop.

Coveney's study, which moves from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, concludes with some useful generalizations concerning the literary child, which are especially pertinent to the Canadian situation. He maintains that the established tradition sees the child as a symbol of "concern with the individual humanity of Man in relation to the influences, most often the encroachments, of modern, industrial, urban society upon it."¹⁷ Coveney goes on to discuss how particular authors use the child to depict "the proper relation of the sensitive individual to, for them, an insensitive society" and the "establishment of the individual's re-integration with society."¹⁸ Coveney is referring to a common interest shared by Blake, Wordsworth and Coleridge, developed in Dickens and Twain, and continued in Lawrence and Joyce.

This same tradition, originating in the English Romantic poets, can obviously be traced in Canadian literature. Instead of moving from the Romantic poets and Dickens to the America of Mark Twain, we can move from nineteenth-century England to nineteenth-century Canada, and rather than returning to the England of Lawrence and Joyce, continue to explore the traditions and conventions of the Romantic child as they are uniquely adapted to, and developed in, Canadian fiction.

ii

Eli Mandel has claimed that "in Canadian writing the figure of the child assumes exceptional importance."¹⁹ In an attempt to explain this importance and the preponderance of works dealing with the child in Canadian literature, Elizabeth Waterston suggests that "perhaps a 'young' country, a country of hope rather than of memory, places special emphasis on its children."²⁰ The child is seen as a symbol of optimism, as he or she is associated with the promise and potential of an untainted beginning. M.G. Hesse, in her introduction to the anthology, Childhood and Youth in Canadian Literature, emphasizes the link between childhood and identity: "A concern with the early years of life is neither trivial nor futile; it is a means of discovering truths about the nature of ourselves and others."²¹ Hesse indirectly suggests that this concern with childhood and identity is especially suited to the literature of a new country, and, like Waterston, connects the child figure and the "newness" of the country in a positive manner.

Margery Fee links the child directly to the land or nation

in her article, "Romantic Nationalism and the Child in Canadian Writing." She maintains that although Canadian writers do use the child in the Romantic tradition identified by Coveney, the tendency is to "link an image [the child] so suitable to a discussion of individual identity with that great Canadian obsession, the search for national identity."²² Fee's article explores the relationship between "Romantic theories of nation and national literature" and "the use of the child figure in Canadian writing."²³ Again, the common element between the child and the country is the "newness," which demands a fulfillment and an identity.

This observation of a link between the new country and the concern with the child is fair enough, but is too vague and general to inspire anything but the most obvious observations and associations. The classification, "the child," is simply too broad, and the assumptions about "the child," lacking a close examination of individual characteristics, take too much for granted. The more specific category of the pastoral or Romantic child is more manageable, but even Frye and Mandel, who concentrate on the pastoral child rather than the child in general, do not explore the nature of that character in detail, in order to point out specific and significant connections between the interest in childhood and the state of the country or literature in which that interest is found. Rather, they neatly fit the child into the traditional and standardized pastoral mode, dismissing any study of the character itself, preferring to submit the importance of the individual figure to the larger mythical implications.²⁴ Thus the wide variety of children referred to in these studies, children

as diverse as Reaney's and Richler's,²⁵ do not share common characteristics or form a coherent group. Only the most obvious and conventional pastoral associations can be applied to this large group and, as expected, the conclusions and observations are very general as well. A more refined definition of the pastoral child is needed, as well as a more specific and extensive analysis of the individual characters within the group. Criticism should begin with the particular child rather than the aura and mythology surrounding him or her. Distinction, rather than uniformity and conformity, should result from such a study.

I do not mean to imply that Northrop Frye and Eli Mandel should have looked carefully and extensively at the pastoral child; such an approach was clearly not appropriate to their studies. A detailed and analytical study, however, does seem to be a natural outgrowth of, and response to, numerous critical studies which make rather general comments about the child and the pastoral tradition in Canadian fiction. Obviously, my thesis has been inspired by critical works which look at Canadian literature in a Romantic light. There is a need, however, for a narrower, more focused approach in this area--one which closely examines the temperament and actions of the child. The approach of this thesis acknowledges the validity of Frye's theory of the "imaginative continuum"--that "writers are conditioned in their attitudes by their predecessors, or by the cultural climate of their predecessors, whether there is conscious influence or not."²⁶ The thesis connects the nineteenth-century Romantic child with the Canadian child, and sees a development in the use of the child in Canadian fiction. More basic yet is my acceptance of Frye's observation that Canadian

literature "is an indispensable aid to the knowledge of Canada" as it "records what the Canadian imagination has reacted to, and it tells us things about this environment that nothing else will tell us."²⁷ Coveney hesitates to connect literature and society--"To suggest a relation between literature and society might seem to imply that too much, perhaps, is to be explained too easily by too little"²⁸--but he nevertheless manages to make a strong case for the relationship between modern society and the theme of childhood.

On a more personal level, my selective and obsessive reading as an adolescent seems to be at the basis of the subject matter of this thesis. My oft-repeated readings of L.M. Montgomery and the Romantic poets obviously had an effect on my consciousness. To relate one to the other, or to search for common ground, did not occur to me until fairly recently, when my study of Canadian fiction repeatedly drew me back into the work of the Romantic poets. Most obvious and interesting, from my point of view, was the relationship between the Wordsworthian child and a particular type of child scattered throughout Canadian literature. My familiarity with the background and composition of the child in The Prelude inspired me to pursue the connections between the two. That valuable revelations and implications would result was readily apparent, as was the fact that the identification of similarities and influences was more than just a pedantic exercise, for such comparisons provide the means for the close examination and definition of the Canadian Romantic child. The Wordsworthian child, the basis and source of the Canadian Romantic child, provides insight into characters such as Brian O'Connal and David Canaan. The Canadian

creators of these Romantic children are not necessarily conscious of the Wordsworthian child, but neither are they oblivious to the tradition within which they are writing. To apply Wordsworthian precepts to their characters is not only appropriate, but is often invited and expected. To delve beneath the obvious and superficial similarities results in an enlightenment of the character of the child, as well as his or her society and environment.

iii

In order for parody and satire to exist, there must be a tradition or school to be satirized. The appearance of Paul Hiebert's Sarah Binks in 1947 suggests that the presence of the Romantic and artistic child in Canadian fiction was familiar enough and well enough established to be recognized and humourously deflated. Hiebert's description of Sarah's relationship with nature assumes a knowledge of the Romantic tradition he is satirizing:

She was keenly aware of the beauty of sky and field. She loved the hot sunlight of the afternoon and the feel of the wind on her cheek. One need only read My Garden and The Bug to realize how deep is Sarah's sympathetic understanding of nature.²⁹

In the same year, 1947, W.O. Mitchell treats the identical theme with reverence and seriousness in Who Has Seen the Wind. Sarah's behavior elicits laughter, whereas Brian's actions inspire sympathy. Both children are products of the same Romantic tradition; the difference in tone and presentation reflects the remarkable range and diversity of the Romantic child at this time. Both Hiebert and Mitchell demand

and assume a familiarity with the Romantic tradition on which their characters are based. Such a knowledge enriches the reader's appreciation and understanding, not only of character, but also of the author's more general thematic intent.

These interesting extremes of treatment found in Mitchell and Hiebert mark the mid-twentieth century as an enriched period for the Romantic child in Canadian fiction. Mitchell's well-known Brian O'Connell provides a logical starting point for a study of the Canadian Romantic child. His obvious companion, in the traditional and pure mode of the Wordsworthian child, is Ernest Buckler's David Canaan, who appears only five years later in 1952. These two characters stand out as examples of the sensitive and artistic child, in tune with nature, but in conflict with society. My study of Romantic, and more specifically, Wordsworthian, influences on the characterizations of Brian and David reveals the reasons for the rejection, or at least misunderstanding, of the Romantic child by his society. The intolerance of these Prairie and Maritime communities suggests their need for the vision, imagination and wonder embodied by the Romantic child. The alienation of such a child includes a judgement of those who fail to value or assimilate his characteristics and temperament.

From this rather obvious and rich starting point of Mitchell and Buckler in the mid-century, the way is not quite as clear. The selection of works to be included in the thesis has been the source of much lively internal debate and discourse. Writers as diverse as Nellie McClung and Leonard Cohen make their entrances and exits, only to be examined and rejected for a variety of reasons. The confines

of this subject matter are obviously not predetermined or static, and a certain amount of personal choice and preference is involved in the inclusion and emphasis of particular works. A logical explanation of the final choice of works is of course in order, especially since the criteria and means of selection are fairly open to interpretation. Guidelines, however, do exist, even though to certain readers some absences may appear to be omissions and some inclusions, superfluous. I have attempted to limit the choices to a certain extent through precise definitions and examples of the pastoral child, and have basically included those works which I judge to be extensive and solid contributions to the development of the Canadian tradition of the Romantic child, as I define and interpret it.

Firstly, the writers and works included in the thesis are concerned with the child rather than, or as well as, the youth or adolescent. Wordsworth's distinctions between the child and the youth in The Prelude emphasize the extensive and basic changes which take place between these two stages, rendering the two periods, even though consecutive, fundamentally different in tone and attitude. Thus, works which concentrate mainly on adolescence have been eliminated, although those which delineate the shift from childhood to youth often contain relevant material and are therefore included and discussed.

Secondly, the selected works are fictional rather than autobiographical, or at least are included in the classification of the "fictional memoir." In his recent book, When the Grass Was Taller, Richard N. Coe establishes the genre of the "Childhood," defining

the fictional memoir and fiction.³⁰ Although these forms are closely connected, and at times difficult to distinguish, I have limited my concern to fiction as opposed to autobiography. However, the source of the thesis, and in a way its inspiration, Wordsworth's Prelude, is autobiographical. The Prelude, as an epic poem, is also different in form and structure from the novels and collections of short stories included in my classification of Canadian fiction. It is, however, the philosophical concepts and depictions of the child in The Prelude which are important, rather than the genre and the form. Moreover, it is interesting to note the modifications and adaptations of the treatment and presentation of this theme in the move from nineteenth-century England to twentieth-century Canada.

• Thirdly, these works are accessible in that they are easily available and generally well-known. Failing to see the point of resurrecting often second-rate obscure and forgotten works, I have tried to ensure that my subject matter is more or less from the mainstream of Canadian literature, and have also used the most accessible and readily available editions, which often means New Canadian Library or a suitable equivalent. In the same area of availability and accessibility, the French Canadian works included are those which are familiar to an English Canadian audience. I have quoted the French Canadian primary works in the English translations I have studied rather than the original French editions I have merely perused. Again, these French Canadian works are readily available and well-known to an English audience; even more importantly, the English editions enjoy a widespread and substantial popularity, so that the translations can be seen

as viable works in themselves.

Lastly, I must address this issue of French Canadian literature, as well as children's literature. Initially, I perceived that I could create neat and precise distinctions by eliminating and disregarding the clear and well-defined categories of French Canadian and children's literature. However, I quickly discovered that I was imposing and creating false divisions and distinctions in this artificial, albeit convenient, adherence to established and obvious classifications. The concern with justifying and explaining the selection of works became more important than the choice of the most appropriate and rewarding material. How could I study the Canadian Romantic child without including L.M. Montgomery and Gabrielle Roy, who at different stages were sources of inspiration for my topic? I thus decided to establish a fairly general definition of subject matter: "fictional works--novels, fictional memoirs or collections of short stories--in which the central presence of the Romantic child is strongly felt and makes a significant impact." Although indefinite and open to interpretation, the choice is not overwhelming when the term "Romantic child" is given a specific and detailed definition, such as the one I provide in Chapter One. I have thus chosen what I consider to be the most appropriate and vital works in this rich and yet circumscribed area.

iv

The initial chapters, which trace the Wordsworthian elements in the portrayals of Brian O'Connell and David Canaan, not only place these characters within an established tradition, a rather futile

exercise in itself, but also define the Romantic child, pointing out the modifications and adaptations necessitated by the Canadian environment and society. The thwarting, stifling, or at best, toning down of the Romantic temperament seems to be at the heart of these important novels, which are obviously just as concerned with the state and atmosphere of the community and society as with the plight of the Romantic child--indeed, the two are inextricably connected.

Having established the presence and importance of the Wordsworthian child in modern Canadian fiction, I then discuss its earlier origins, and the receptivity of the literary tenor and conditions of nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canada to this Romantic motif. Works prior to, and contemporary with, Who Has Seen the Wind and The Mountain and the Valley concentrate on the relationship and inevitable conflict between the Romantic child and his or her society. The child experiences the Wordsworthian harmony and communion with nature, satirized by Paul Hiebert in Sarah Binks. The empathy and sensitivity responsible for this relationship are also the impetus and cause of the child's alienation from the community.

In Gabrielle Roy's Romantic child a change of emphasis is not only apparent, but is also timely and refreshing. Her concern with the individual, with the humanity and intellect of her characters, moves her work away from the interaction of the child with society to a close and intense internal examination of the thoughts and emotions of the child. Her humanistic approach concentrates on the child's effect on other individuals, and the Romantic child's unconscious role as an agent of enlightenment, wisdom and love. Her Romantic children

are not substantially different from the ones who immediately precede them. The difference lies in Roy's more concentrated scope, approach and intent, in her concern with personal rather than societal relationships.

The intense and sustained interest of Mitchell, Buckler and Roy in the Romantic child not only indicates the popularity and prevalence of this figure, but also provides a base and inspiration for more recent modifications and adaptations of the Romantic child in Canadian fiction. In the final two chapters of the thesis, these recent and modified views are considered and examined. Such views range from the very traditional to the anti-Romantic. Based on the Wordsworthian child, these children both conform to, and deviate from, the traditional depiction and treatment of the Romantic child. The tone and intent of the authors vary greatly, as do their philosophical views and beliefs. The range and diversity of these works which use the Romantic child indicate the embracement and expansion of this motif by Canadian writers, as well as the central and integral position of this figure in Canadian literature.

I do not at any point mean to imply that this concern with the Romantic child is at all unusual or peculiar to Canadian literature. The interest in the subject is obviously universal. Nor am I suggesting that Canadian conditions are more inviting or receptive to the figure than conditions in any other country. The works dealt with in Coe's When the Grass Was Taller--works written in "English, French, German, Russian, Italian, and Spanish"³¹--although different from Canadian fiction in form, in that they are autobiographical "Childhoods," are

similar in content, and would thus render such a claim absurd. I merely explore the treatment of the figure and motif of the Romantic child as it has been adapted by, and developed in, Canadian literature.

The composition and temperament of Canadian nature and society necessarily result in a uniquely and characteristically "Canadian" Romantic child.

The insular and intolerant aspects of the traditional Canadian community place the mystical and transcendental child in the alienated, and yet strangely enviable, position of a creative and sensitive visionary in a down-to-earth and pragmatic environment.

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

¹Peter Coveney, The Image of Childhood (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967) 34.

²Coveney 12.

³Coveney 35.

⁴Coveney 34.

⁵Coveney 35. In his introduction, Coveney connects "the modern literary child" with the "romantic revival," maintaining that "the creation of the romantic child came from deep within the whole genesis of our modern literary culture." See Coveney 29.

⁶Critics who indicate an interest in the Canadian literary child include Northrop Frye, Eli Mandel, M.G. Hesse, Margery Fee, David Stouck, Laurence Ricou, Warren Tallman and Ronald Sutherland, to mention but a few.

⁷Northrop Frye, "Conclusion to A Literary History of Canada," The Bush Garden (Toronto: Anansi, 1971) 238-39.

⁸Eli Mandel, "The Study of Canadian Culture," English Quarterly 4.3 (1971): 20.

⁹Mandel 20.

¹⁰Frye 241.

¹¹Brian Loughrey, ed., The Pastoral Mode (London: Macmillan, 1984) 21. Also see Peter V. Marinelli, Pastoral (London: Methuen, 1971) 77.

¹²David Stouck, "Notes on the Canadian Imagination," Canadian Literature 54 (1972): 18.

¹³Stouck 17.

¹⁴Stouck 18.

¹⁵Frye 238-39.

¹⁶ The idea of the "Wordsworthian" Romantic child is very common, and Wordsworth's establishment of the English literary child is widely accepted. Babenroth claims:

More than any other eminent English
Man of letters, Wordsworth is the poet of
childhood. His poetry depicts the moods
and activities of children more extensively
than verse prior to his. His heart was
attuned to childhood in all its manifestations.

See A. Charles Babenroth, English Childhood (New York: Octagon, 1973) 299.

Similarly, Robert Pattison argues:

Whatever intimations and imitations of
Rousseau's Pelagian vision of childhood
there may have been in eighteenth-century
English literature, it was Wordsworth who
transformed the essentially French sentiments
of Emile and the Confessions, from which
Day and others had merely borrowed, into
fundamentals of English poetics.

See Robert Pattison, The Child Figure in English Literature (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978) 55-56. I use the term "Wordsworthian child" primarily in the context of The Prelude rather than the shorter poems or the somewhat artificial "Ode: Intimations of Immortality."

¹⁷ Coveney 339.

¹⁸ Coveney 339.

¹⁹ Mandel 20.

²⁰ Elizabeth Waterston, Survey: A Short History of Canadian Literature (Toronto: Methuen, 1973) 147.

²¹ M.G. Hesse, ed., Childhood and Youth in Canadian Literature (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979) 1.

²² Margery Fee, "Romantic Nationalism and the Child in Canadian Writing," Canadian Children's Literature 18-19 (1980): 46.

²³ Fee 46.

²⁴ Frye's major concern is with the actual myth--"At the heart of all social mythology lies what may be called, because it usually is called, a pastoral myth, the vision of a social ideal"--and the child is secondary, as an element which fulfills or "proves" that myth. See Frye 238. Similarly, Eli Mandel begins with the irony of the pastoral form and treats the child as an ingredient, albeit central, in that ironic equation. See Mandel 20. I merely wish to reverse the emphasis by starting with the more specific aspect of the relation-

ship--the child itself.

²⁵Eli Mandel, for example, stresses the amazingly broad spectrum of children in Canadian literature, beginning a paragraph with Reaney and ending with Richler. See Mandel 20.

²⁶Frye 250.

²⁷Frye 215.

²⁸Coveney 29-30.

²⁹Paul Hiebert, Sarah Binks (1947; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1964) 31.

³⁰Richard N. Coe, When the Grass Was Taller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984) 1-40.

³¹Coe xiii.

CHAPTER ONE

W.O. MITCHELL'S ROMANTIC CHILD: THE INFLUENCE OF WORDSWORTH

i

In an interview with David O'Rourke, W.O. Mitchell admits the influence of Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" on the formation of the themes in Who Has Seen the Wind.¹ In this interview Mitchell limits Wordsworth's influence to the ode, which addresses itself to Mitchell's concern with arriving at truth through intuition.² The reference to Wordsworth's ode near the end of Who Has Seen the Wind directly connects this novel with that particular poem.³ Of Wordsworth, the poet, however, W.O. Mitchell uses the rather strong verb "detest" to convey his feelings. He maintains that "God wasted on him [Wordsworth] more perceptions than any goddamn, square, conservative Anglican I've ever known . . . perceptions which he bitched up."⁴ Brian O'Connal, however, is a Romantic child in a Wordsworthian sense,⁵ and a close study of the novel, Who Has Seen the Wind, reveals that Wordsworth's influence is indeed greater than Mitchell acknowledges.

The character and growth of Brian O'Connal provide the focus of Who Has Seen the Wind, and it is in the vivid creation of this Romantic child that Wordsworth's influence is most obvious. The actions and responses of Brian are reminiscent of those displayed by the young child in the first two books of The Prelude. In both cases, an extraordinary and gifted child is examined and studied by a writer who is

concerned with how the child interacts with the world around him. The way in which Brian O'Connal responds to his environment, particularly the Saskatchewan prairie, is similar to the young Wordsworth's response to the English Lake District. The child and the environment are different, but the nature of the relationship is basically the same.

Wordsworth's motivation for examining the child in The Prelude is obvious, as he is tracing "the growth of a poet's mind"⁶ by studying the origin and development of his imagination. Mitchell's reasons for creating Brian O'Connal are not quite as apparent. Certainly, Brian is interesting and delightful as a character, and his development is a major concern in the novel. But Brian's temperament and outlook are also used by Mitchell to comment indirectly on the society of the Canadian prairie during the depression of the thirties. Mitchell's use of the Wordsworthian child for social commentary and criticism is effective. It is Brian's temperament and growth which reveal the characteristics and atmosphere of the age and place in which he lives. The Romantic attributes and tendencies of the child provide perspectives and values which expose and intensify the hypocrisy and lack of vision in his society.

ii

Both Brian O'Connal and Wordsworth undergo intense and mysterious experiences during childhood. Although these experiences continue into Wordsworth's adult life, they are strongest and most prevalent

in his early years, as he himself admits:

Such moments, worthy of all gratitude,
Are scatter'd everywhere, taking their date
From our first childhood: in our childhood even
Perhaps are most conspicuous. (Prel. XI, 274-77)

For Brian, such moments are associated with childhood alone, for as he matures, he moves away from these strange and powerful encounters with the external world. Brian's "feelings" are akin to Wordsworth's "spots of time." The process associated with the "feeling" or the "spot of time," although vague and abstract, is made up of several distinct stages. Both children obviously undergo visionary, or more specifically, mystical experiences--mystical in the sense of "having an unseen, unknown, or mysterious origin, character, effect, or influence"⁷ and demonstrating a "reliance on spiritual intuition or exalted feeling as the means of acquiring knowledge of mysteries inaccessible to intellectual apprehension."⁸ These experiences can also be termed "transcendental," due to the transcendence of the physical world in favour of a spiritual realm.⁹

For Wordsworth the child, a "spot of time" is a moment when he is taken out of himself and placed in a realm beyond his physical existence, as the real world fades in order to be superseded by an abstract or spiritual realm.¹⁰ The magic and power of the event are based on the child's feeling that he has no part in the experience, but is merely the passive recipient of external forces. The process begins with sense impressions, which are initially the single mode of perception, but are subsequently subordinated to, and overpowered by, abstract thoughts and emotions, as the mature Wordsworth explains:

"We have the deepest feeling that the mind / Is lord and master, and that outward sense / Is but the obedient servant of her will" (Prel. XI, 271-73). The distinctive characteristics of these moments are that the transcendence of the physical plane is, for the child, sudden, unexpected, fleeting and uncontrollable. Also, the mystical moment is difficult to describe, explain or re-experience; the memory of the moment is vague and elusive:

the soul,
Remembering how she felt, but what she felt
Remembering not, retains an obscure sense
Of possible sublimity. (Prel. II, 334-37)

These characteristics are apparent in the examples of "spots of time" cited by Wordsworth in Book XI of The Prelude. In the first example, the mystical moment experienced by the young child--"I was not then six years old" (Prel. XI, 280)--is instigated by his exposure to a site where a murderer had previously been hung. Before confronting the scene, Wordsworth is isolated and fearful:

We were a pair of Horsemen: honest James
Was with me, my encourager and guide.
We had not travelled long, ere some mischance
Disjoin'd me from my Comrade, and, through fear
Dismounting, down the rough and stony Moor
I led my Horse, and stumbling on, at length
Came to a bottom where in former times
A Murderer had been hung in iron chains. (Prel. XI, 283-90)

Subsequently, the murderer's name carved in the turf--"those characters inscribed / On the green sod" (Prel. XI, 301-02)--causes fear to overpower all other emotions: "I fled, / Faltering and faint, and ignorant of the road" (1850 Prel. XI, 246-47). The child has invested the carved name with a terror and power that it does not actually possess.

After leaving the scene of the murder, Wordsworth encounters

a very different scene, composed of three elements: the pool, the beacon and the girl:

forthwith I left the spot
And, reascending the bare Common, saw
A naked Pool that lay beneath the hills,
The Beacon on the summit, and more near,
A Girl who bore a Pitcher on her head,
And seemed with difficult steps to force her way
Against the blowing wind. (Prel. XI, 302-08)

Wordsworth allows the scene to pervade his senses and seems to be impressed by the desolation and isolation of each entity. The significant phrase in this passage--"It was, in truth, / An ordinary sight" (Prel. XI, 308-09)--conveys the idea that it is Wordsworth's state of mind at the time which incites the mystical experience rather than the scene itself. The child cannot explain why this ordinary sight has been "invested" with such "dreariness," and thus has affected him in such a powerful manner. Neither can he express that dreariness in words: "but I should need / Colours and words that are unknown to man, / To paint the visionary dreariness" (Prel. XI, 309-11).

The child experiences an abstract sensation inspired by the physical scene, but he is actually responsible for the transcendence of the physical world. He identifies with the isolated objects, projecting his own emotions onto the natural scene, investing the elements with his loneliness and confusion. In his second description of the scene, after he perceives a "visionary dreariness," the "Beacon on the summit" (Prel. XI, 305) becomes the "Beacon on the lonely Eminence" (Prel. XI, 314), and the woman no longer forces "her way/ Against the blowing wind" (Prel. XI, 307-08), but is "vex'd and toss'd/ By the strong wind" (Prel. XI, 315-16). Wordsworth projects his own

loneliness onto the beacon, and his own feelings of helplessness and frustration onto the woman. The word "visionary" is significant, for it emphasizes that the dreariness is a creation of Wordsworth's imagination. The physical scene becomes a catalyst for the emergence of Wordsworth's emotions, which overpower his senses.

Similarly, Brian O'Connell's "feeling" often occurs during moments of isolation, fear and uncertainty.¹¹ He is in such a condition when he runs away from Uncle Sean's farm:

As the stook shadows lengthened in the fields,
his loneliness drove him more and more into
his mind, there to seek the company of his
thoughts and reassure himself in the face of
all the frightening emptiness outside. (Wind 228)

The description of Brian's separation from the self suggests a trance-like state and a removal from reality and the physical world: "A strange lightness was in him, as though he were separated from himself and could see himself walking down the prairie trail" (Wind 228). Like Wordsworth, Brian feels that the external world works on him, a passive recipient: "Brian could feel its [the wind's] chill reaching for the very center of him, and he hunched his shoulders as he felt the wincing of his very core against it" (Wind 228). The resultant feeling of terror—"He was filled now with a feeling of nakedness and vulnerability that terrified him" (Wind 228)—is derived from the nocturnal prairie world, composed of the sky, stars and wind. Like Wordsworth, Mitchell's child feels that the terror is inspired by, and the responsibility of, the external world, particularly the wind.

Nature becomes animated and threatening when its condition duplicates the condition of the child. In this case, the prairie,

at the mercy of the "fierce, deep prairie voice" (Wind 228) of the wind, seems to duplicate Brian's isolated and desolate condition. In order to intensify and indulge his desolation, Brian sees himself as a passive recipient of the malevolent power of the wind: "As the wind mounted in intensity, so too the feeling of defencelessness rose in him" (Wind 228). Although the child's predicament renders him an actual physical victim of those natural forces of malevolence which threaten him, his sensitive and imaginative response exaggerates and intensifies that physical threat, through the personification of the wind. The fear and isolation of the child, combined with the desolate prairie scene, prompt him to invest that scene with a significance which will enhance his own vulnerability and take him out of the physical realm: "It was as though he listened to the drearing wind and in the spread darkness of the prairie night was being drained of his very self" (Wind 229).¹² The power of these mystical experiences is derived from the fact that "the child is granted but a masked suspicion of the mind's power."¹³ Geoffrey Hartman's observation of the child in The Prelude is applicable to Brian as well:

It is quite clear that the child does not know that what he sees and feels is an effect of the power of his imagination. The impact of the scenes on him is inseparable from overwhelming sense-impressions. For the retrospective poet, however, the power that belonged to the external world is now seen to have belonged to the mind.¹⁴

Closely connected with fear and isolation is guilt. In several cases Wordsworth and Brian seem to be especially moved by the external world when they are experiencing remorse or guilt for their actions. In such circumstances the process involves the child's unconscious

investment of the elements of nature with a power and force which will intensify and prolong the guilt and thus provide punishment. In the incident discussed above, Brian feels a degree of guilt for driving the horses, as well as for running away from the farm. More importantly, he experiences guilt for the resentment he has felt towards Ab and Uncle Sean. The fading of the resentment is initiated by the vastness of the prairie, which emphasizes Brian's insignificance: "He was having difficulty in keeping alive within himself the resentment that had urged him from the farm; it was fast fading, till now it seemed to him a pitiful thing in the prairie's stillness" (Wind 227-28). The loneliness inspired by the grandeur of the prairie forces Brian to look inward: "his loneliness drove him more and more into his mind, there to seek the company of his thoughts and reassure himself in the face of all the frightening emptiness outside" (Wind 228). The elements of the prairie are then seen by Brian as they relate to, or comment on, his own condition. His concentration on the wind intensifies and prolongs his "feeling of nakedness and vulnerability" (Wind 228), threatening his physical and emotional security. Brian's accentuation of the wind's power inflicts suffering, and thus acts as an agent of punishment for his crimes. The physical suffering caused by the wind--"His fingers were aching with the cold" (Wind 229)--suggests an emotional and spiritual suffering which forces Brian, who is already looking inward, to attempt to derive strength and comfort from inner resources: "he slid his hands between his thighs for warmth" (Wind 229). The process involved in this "feeling" consists of a struggle for strength, initiated by the combination of the child's

vulnerable position and the condition of the external world.

In the most familiar guilt-ridden episode in The Prelude, the boat-stealing incident, the shape and appearance of the cliff invite the child to use it as an admonishing force: "a huge Cliff, / As if with voluntary power instinct, / Uprear'd its head" (Prel. I, 406-08). The cliff changes shape because of the movement of the boat, but the child, failing to take this movement into consideration, explains the change in shape by investing the mountain with life and intent:

I struck, and struck again,
And, growing still in stature, the huge Cliff
Rose up between me and the stars, and still,
With measur'd motion, like a living thing,
Strode after me. (Prel. I, 408-12)

In Brian's case, the wind takes on the function and properties of Wordworth's cliff, acting as an admonishing and threatening force, seeking out the child as a victim. The other guilt-ridden episode in The Prelude, the bird-stealing incident, also involves the projection of guilt onto the landscape, but in this case, nature's remonstrance is vague and mysterious, taking the form of sound:

when the deed [stealing another's bird] was done
I heard among the solitary hills
Low breathings coming after me, and sounds
Of undistinguishable motion, steps
Almost as silent as the turf they trod. (Prel. I, 328-32)

Nature in this situation, as in the boat-stealing episode, is an agent, unconsciously established by the child, for the enforcement of moral values.

Brian's struggle for strength as the prairie night falls entails a process of maturation and a search for identity: "He was trying to hold together something within himself, that the wind demanded and

Mitchell seems to see sublimity in the prairie. The initial description of the prairie at the beginning of the novel definitely contains the necessary components of form, power and duration: "Here was the least common denominator of nature, the skeleton requirements simply, of land and sky--Saskatchewan prairie" (Wind 3). Both the mountain and the prairie inspire wonder and fear in the child, stressing his own insignificance and lack of power.¹⁸

Brian's guilt is often associated with religion, as is apparent in his reaction to Miss MacDonald's punishment, which introduces the fear of a vengeful God: "Brian lay wide-eyed, filled with awful guilt, and--much worse than that--with the fear of promised punishment" (Wind 91).¹⁹ Fear and guilt are also closely connected with the acquisition of sexual knowledge. Brian feels "ashamed and frightened" (Wind 199) when Art informs him that babies come from "Yer Ol' Man an' yer Ol' Lady" (Wind 199). In both cases, the guilt forces Brian to come to terms with large concepts--religion and sexuality--and in both cases the inevitable growth prepares him for a mystical experience emanating from the sensation of guilt. For example, the very "religious" reaction to the drop of water on the spirea leaf (Wind 104-05) follows Brian's struggle, initiated by Miss MacDonald, to determine the nature of God and religion. Similarly, the "feeling" inspired by his father's sickness and his mother's comfort and closeness (Wind 204) immediately follows Brian's need to come to terms with his parents and his origins.

Brian's discovery and view of religion is much "holier" than the Christianity of the institution of the church: "The congregation rose. Holy, holy, holy, they sang. That meant unbelievably wonderful--

like his raindrop--a holy holy holy drop lying on a leaf" (Wind 108). Brian's unorthodox view of religion causes guilt later on--"he experienced a feeling of guilt at being upon the Ben's side rather than that of Mr. Powelly and the Lord" (Wind 252)--as he cannot possibly realize that he is actually closer to God than is Mr. Powelly.

Mitchell directly connects the guilt of religion and sexuality with the "feeling" in Brian's response to Saint Sammy's speech about God's judgement on the "harlots" and "fornicators":

Looking into Saint Sammy's face, unexpectedly calm after the squeezed intensity of the harangue, Brian felt stirring within him the familiar feeling, colored with sickening guilt. (Wind 192)

In this same episode Mitchell stresses the impossibility of capturing the "feeling" for future examination, or of making that fleeting moment endure:

And yet for breathless moments he had been alive as he had never been before, passionate for the thing that slipped through the grasp of his understanding and eluded him. If only he could throw his cap over it; if it were something that a person could trap. If he could lie outstretched on the prairie while he lifted one edge of his cap and peeked under to see. That was all he wanted--one look. More than anything! (Wind 194)

Both "spots of time" and the "feeling" are also associated with calm emotions and the beauty of nature, inspiring awe and serenity, as well as with fear and guilt and "sublime" nature.²⁰ In incidents involving the beauty of nature, the emotions inspired are elusive and vague, and the impact of the natural world is indirect and subtle. The flute-playing episode in Book II of The Prelude is comparable to

the incident involving the dew drop on the spirea leaf in Who Has Seen the Wind in terms of the actual process involved.

In the flute-playing episode the mystical moment is initially inspired by sound and the concept of solitude:

in our pinnace we return'd
Over the dusky lake, and to the beach
Of some small Island steer'd our course with one,
The Minstrel of our troop, and left him there,
And row'd off gently, while he blew his flute
Alone upon the rock. (Prel. II, 171-76)

Through the use of words such as "dead," "still," "lay," "weight," "sank," and "held," Wordsworth stresses that nature is the active agent, forcing itself upon the child whose condition is receptive to such an influence:

Oh! then the calm
And dead still water lay upon my mind
Even with a weight of pleasure, and the sky
Never before so beautiful, sank down
Into my heart and held me like a dream. (Prel. II, 176-80)

The word "dream" suggests that the child is not fully aware of what is taking place and that nature infiltrates a subconscious level of perception.

Similarly, Brian's mystical moment is inspired by sound--"The Catholic church bell began slowly and majestically to tongue the silence" (Wind 104)--and the lack of sound--"When the bell stopped, the morning stillness seemed to have a quality of numbness" (Wind 104)--which accentuate his solitude:

Sunday was different, he decided. It gave
one a feeling of set-apartness. Until they
came down he would be all alone with the
cuckoo clock ticking loud in the living
room beyond the hall, ticking loud like an
old man limping along. (Wind 103-04)

Brian's subsequent examination of the drop of water on the spirea leaf reveals an intricate and delicate beauty. The emphasis on the minute detail, such as the leaf's veins, with the suggestion that Brian sees much more than is actually there, brings to mind the Blakean ideal of being able to "see a World in a Grain of Sand."²¹ As in Wordsworth's case, Brian's response to the scene immediately invites the forces of nature to work on him as a passive recipient: "The barest breath of wind stirred at his face, and its caress was part of the strange enchantment too" (Wind 104). Mitchell, however, describes a longer process than does Wordsworth, for the child begins to react to the pressure of the wind:

But it was happening; an alchemy imperceptible
as the morning wind, a growing elation of such
fleeting delicacy and poignancy that he
dared not turn his mind to it for fear that
he might spoil it, that it might be carried
away as lightly as one strand of spider web
on a sigh of a wind. (Wind 104-05)

The process does not reach a moment of fulfillment, for the father's interruption prevents the release of the boy's feelings, which would bring about a sense of completion. The emphasis on the fragility of the experience echoes many of Wordsworth's descriptions in The Prelude,²² while the reference to Brian's participation--"Within him something was opening, releasing shyly as the petals of a flower open, with such gradualness that he was hardly aware of it" (Wind 104)--is reminiscent of the activity attributed by Wordsworth to the baby and the child: "From nature largely he receives; nor so / Is satisfied, but largely gives again" (Prel. II, 267-68). The relationship between the child and nature involves an active response on the part of the

child. Brian's lack of awareness of this response recalls the Wordsworthian emphasis on the child's "unconscious intercourse" (Prel. I, 589) with the natural world, which implies a relationship based on a mutual exchange, despite the child's lack of recognition of his own participation and contribution.

Another common bond uniting these two children is their ability to commune with nature while surrounded by others, often in the midst of activity. The mystical moment, because of its private and intense nature, is generally conceived of as a solitary experience. However, when the inspiration from the external world is powerful enough, the necessary isolation and alienation can be induced in a child who is not physically alone. In the flute-playing incident, for example, Wordsworth experiences an intense communion with nature while rowing with his friends, resulting in a removal from those friends and the activity. The retrospective poet states that nature, which induces his transcendental experiences, is secondary to physical activity, and it is only during youth that he begins to seek nature in a conscious manner:

Those incidental charms which first attach'd
My heart to rural objects, day by day
Grew weaker, and I hasten on to tell
How Nature, intervenient till this time,
And secondary, now at length was sought
For her own sake. (Prel. II, 203-08)²³

Similarly, Brian O'Connell often experiences the "feeling" in the presence of his friends. The torturing of the gopher involves other individuals and a great deal of activity, but despite these distractions, the sight of the Young Ben on the prairie inspires the

"feeling": "He realized with a start that an excitement, akin to the feeling that had moved him so often, was beginning to tremble within him" (Wind 123). Obviously, these intense moments are not sought; the child is moved by the external world and subsequently responds. The condition of the child, however, is one which invites, and is receptive to, a mystical experience. In this instance, Brian's actions immediately before he sees the Young Ben indicate guilt and revulsion for Art's cruel treatment of the gopher. The presence of the Young Ben, who represents the harmony and unity of the prairie, serves as a force to intensify the cruelty and guilt, and to remove Brian from the activity taking place.

The "feeling," for Brian, is closely associated with the prairie and the wind: "Always, he noted, the feeling was most exquisite upon the prairie or when the wind blew" (Wind 120). The importance of the wind lies in its animation of the universe and its association with a spiritual force, as Mitchell points out: "Many interpreters of the Bible believe the wind to be symbolic of Godhood" (Wind ii). The wind endows the prairie with a life of its own; the prairie waits for "the unfailing visitation of the wind, gentle at first, barely stroking the long grasses and giving them life" (Wind 3). It is this power and animation of the wind which move the child: "And all about him was the wind now, a pervasive sighing through great emptiness, unhampered by the buildings of the town, warm and living against his face and in his hair" (Wind 11).

Wordsworth's universe is similarly animated by the wind, as well as by the movement and sound of water. The "voice" of the Derwent

(Prel I, 275) is obviously a shaping force for the young child, and is representative of the larger voice of nature. In the bird-stealing episode the wind is the means by which the universe communicates with the child: "With what strange utterance did the loud dry wind / Blow through my ears" (Prel. I, 348-49). Wordsworth's reluctance to refer to a traditional Christian God is apparent in his deliberate use of vague phrases, such as "Wisdom and Spirit of the universe" (Prel. I, 428). The movement of the wind and water in The Prelude animates the universe and invests it with a life and spirit suggestive of a superior power or being, disassociated from conventional religion. Mitchell's reference to the one hundred and third Psalm, and his acknowledgement of the association of the wind with Godhood, indicate a similar intention. The wind, like God, is both creative and destructive, initiating and curtailing life. The "supreme being" is portrayed as a pantheistic spirit rather than a traditional deity.

In The Prelude Wordsworth refers to the child's fascination with the effect of the wind on a kite:

at this hour
 The heart is almost mine with which I felt
 From some hill-top, on sunny afternoons
 The Kite high up among the fleecy clouds
 Pull at its rein like an impatient Courser;
 Or, from the meadows sent on gusty days,
 Beheld her breast the wind, then suddenly
 Dash'd headlong; and rejected by the storm. (Prel. I, 517-24)

The power of the wind and its ability to buffet the kite are representative of Wordsworth's view of the interaction between nature and himself as a child; nature works on the child in the same way in which it controls the kite. As the kite is receptive to the force of the wind,

so the child is receptive to the force of nature--both are at the mercy of the element which overpowers them.²⁴

Thus an animate universe impresses itself on a child receptive to its power. The experience can end there, as in Wordsworth's flute-playing episode and Brian's reunion with Jappy:

Every grass-blade and leaf and flower seemed
to be breathing, or perhaps whispering--
something to him--something for him. The
puppy's ear was inside out. Within himself
Brian felt a soft explosion of feeling. It
was one of completion and culmination. (Wind 58)

More often, however, the child responds to the scene, as in the boat-stealing episode and the night on the prairie, investing it with even more vitality in an attempt to intensify the experience and prolong its duration. Brian's experience with the dew drop on the spirea leaf involves his participation as he feels the beginning of a response which will complete the process: "He was filled with breathlessness and expectancy, as though he were going to be given something, as though he were about to find something" (Wind 105). His father's interruption, of course, breaks the feeling "as a bubble breaks" (Wind 105). Thus the child is initially passive in that he is open and receptive to the influence of an external force. The mystical experience, however, is most powerful and effective when the child is in a position to respond actively to the initial influence, thereby participating in and completing the process, acting as both a "creator and receiver" (Pre1. II, 273). Mitchell talks of the child's participation in a rather authoritarian passage in which he postulates that the child, although "malleable" at a young age, will by the age of eight "try

to impress his personality upon the world he has come to dissociate from himself" (Wind 86). This separation of the child and the environment allows the child to respond to external stimuli, thus participating in the creation of those elements which influence him.

iii

The obvious parallels between Brian's "feelings" and Wordsworth's "spots of time" invite a further comparison of these two children. Mitchell, like Wordsworth, sees childhood as an "age of sensation."²⁵ Wordsworth, the retrospective poet, emphasizes the "hallow'd and pure motions of the sense" (Prel. I, 578), which are the basis of perception in early childhood.²⁶ Rousseau's philosophy, which to a large extent formed the foundation for the nineteenth-century view of childhood, associates sense impressions with childhood:

In the dawn of life, when memory and
imagination have not begun to function, the
child only attends to what affects its senses.²⁷

Rousseau maintains that "the senses are the first of our faculties to mature,"²⁸ based on the following observation:

Since everything that comes into the
human mind enters through the gates of
sense, man's first reason is a reason
of sense-experience.²⁹

For the young child in The Prelude the mystical experience originates in a sense impression of the external world which, through association, fear or awe, induces the child's mind to experience a communion with a spiritual plane beyond the physical scene:

I would stand,
 Beneath some rock, listening to sounds that are
 The ghostly language of the ancient earth,
 Or make their dim abode in distant winds.
 Thence did I drink the visionary power. (Prel. II, 326-30)

Similarly, Brian recognizes that the "feeling" is prompted by his own sensory response to such diverse objects as the wind, a bucksaw, a crow and baking bread (Wind 120). Sound and smell seem to dominate: "the smell of leaf mold, and clover and wolf willow" (Wind 120).³⁰ Both Wordsworth and Mitchell stress the presence of random chance in the combination of elements associated with these impressions. Wordsworth speaks of "chance collisions and quaint accidents" (Prel. I, 617) being responsible for nature speaking to him, while Brian realizes that "many simple and unrelated things" (Wind 120) initiate the "feeling." Obviously, the loss of deep sensitivity and an ability to respond intensely to sound and smell would render the wind and baking bread commonplace and unexceptional, even if combined with circumstances which could ostensibly enhance a mystical experience. Thus this random combination of unrelated elements is only meaningful to the individual who responds to it. The emphasis placed upon the child's senses is central, as a sensuous response is the basis of a transcendental experience. This sensitive child uses his physical senses and intuition, rather than reason, to perceive and understand the external world.³¹

Mitchell's ability to see the world through Brian's eyes, from the perspective of a child, involves an acute awareness of sense impressions and the imagination. The first reference to Brian incorporates both: "He sat under the table at the window, imagining

himself an ant deep in a dark cave. Ants, he had decided, saw things tiny and grass-colored" (Wind 4).³² In this first chapter Brian associates Dr. Svarich with a "bitter smell" (Wind 4), and cannot comprehend God as a spirit, but tries instead to identify him in a sensory manner: "Does He smell?" (Wind 9). Brian's literal conception of God as a human being is based on his tendency to perceive only through the senses. The conclusion Brian reaches at the end of the chapter--"God, Brian decided, must be like the boy's prairie" (Wind 12)--involves the accumulation of various sense impressions, but specifically the sense of sound associated with the wind on the prairie: "He had seen it [the prairie] often, from the veranda of his uncle's farmhouse, or at the end of a long street, but till now he had never heard it" (Wind 10). The sound and touch of the wind are mysterious and powerful; the wind's origin and nature cannot be determined. Brian is strongly affected by phenomena which must be perceived by senses other than sight. The subtle and indirect influence of such impressions has a powerful effect on the child:

And all about him was the wind now, a pervasive sighing through great emptiness, unhampered by the buildings of the town, warm and living against his face and in his hair. (Wind 11)³³

Combined now with the vastness of the prairie and the sky, and the beauty of the sunlight through the clouds, the wind causes the sense impressions to coalesce, until the mystery, power, vastness and beauty become abstract, separated from the elements of nature with which they are associated, thereby suggesting the existence of a spiritual presence behind the physical elements of nature.

Christina Rossetti's poem, which provides the title for the novel, stresses the effect and power of the invisible entity of the wind. Similarly, the spirit of the universe has no origin or substance. The emphasis on the song of the meadow lark throughout the novel accentuates this concept of an invisible source of power. It is the beauty of the natural world, a manifestation of a benevolent spirit, which reassures Brian that God is not threatening:

it was not until he had looked from the
breakfast room window to a yard covered
with freshly fallen snow, and to rimed trees
and hedges twinkling in the sunlight,
that the frightening conception of an
avenging God had been replaced by a
friendlier image borrowing its physical
features from Santa Claus, its spiritual
gentleness from his father. (Wind 95-96)

Although unconsciously Brian has been able to associate nature's beauty with a benevolent God, he must still visualize that God in human terms--both physical and spiritual--and attribute to God a form which can be perceived by the senses.

By the end of the novel, Brian has managed to achieve the impossible, which is to "see" the wind.³⁴ He no longer has to perceive in concrete, sensuous terms, but can accept the presence of the wind, an obvious parallel for a spiritual power, without constant or direct proof of its existence. In The Prelude the wind is an animate force of nature which provides inspiration:

O there is a blessing in this gentle breeze
That blows from the green fields and from the clouds
And from the sky: it beats against my cheek,
And seems half conscious of the joy it gives. (Prel. I, 1-4)

The wind in Mitchell's novel recalls this traditional Romantic wind, animating the universe, inspiring a response and a faith from

the individual who is receptive to its power.³⁵

The tendency of the child to indulge his senses, and to perceive the world as more than just a visual phenomenon--"he went silently through the smell of newly-ironed clothes" (Wind 27)--makes it difficult for that child to comprehend anything that cannot be perceived in sensory terms. For Brian O'Connell, death is difficult to comprehend except on a physical level. His development includes a growth from seeing death as merely physical, when he steps on the caterpillar and the spider in Chapter One, to understanding the spiritual and emotional implications of the deaths of his father and grandmother.³⁶ A degree of development, according to Mitchell, necessarily accompanies an understanding of death, for in coming into contact with death a child is forced to confront a situation which cannot be experienced in terms of sense impressions alone.

Wordsworth, like Mitchell, sees death as being foreign to a child:

Nothing was more difficult for me in
childhood than to admit the notion of death
as a state applicable to my own being.³⁷

In the poem, "We are Seven," Wordsworth suggests that the vitality and freshness of a child render death inapplicable and invalid:

--A simple Child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?³⁸

The inability of the child in Wordsworth's poem to see death in rational terms comes from a mind which focuses on the physical bodies of the dead: "Two of us in the church-yard lie, / Beneath the church-yard

tree."³⁹ The child's refusal to accept the adult's logical argument, distinguishing the living from the dead, stems from her concentration on the existence of the graves, the last perceptible phenomenon associated with the children:

"Their graves are green, they may be seen,"
The little maid replied,
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's door,
And they are side by side."⁴⁰

The permanence of the graves and the child's conviction that death is not evil--"Till God released her of her pain; / And then she went away"⁴¹--imbue the siblings with a type of immortality. In this poem Wordsworth suggests that human reactions to death are acquired rather than innate. He maintains that most children share "an indisposition to bend to the law of death as applying to our own particular case."⁴²

In Who Has Seen the Wind the entire process of growing up involves coming to terms with mortality so that Brian is able to reach a stage of acceptance and understanding. Brian struggles with the futility and indifference associated with the deaths of the prairie animals:

Prairie's awful, thought Brian, and in his
mind there loomed vaguely fearful images of
a still and brooding spirit, a quiescent power
unsmiling from everlasting to everlasting
to which the coming and passing of the
prairie's creatures was but incidental. (Wind 125)

More difficult is his attempt to come to terms with the mortality of man, as opposed to the permanence and continuity of nature: "everything that was once--was again--forever and forever. But for man, the prairie whispered--never--never. For Brian's father--never" (Wind 239). Those verses of Psalm 103 which Mitchell quotes stress man's place within

nature, establishing death as part of a natural process:

As for man, his days are as grass; as a
flower of the field flourisheth.
For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone;
and the place thereof shall know it no more.⁴³

If the wind is "Godhood," then God is connected with the concept of death and mortality. Mitchell does not quote the preceding verse, which reduces man: "for he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."⁴⁴ Nor does he refer to the following verses which talk of the mercy of the Lord and his kingdom: "The Lord has prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all."⁴⁵ Mitchell is concerned with the similarities and integration of man and nature, rather than man's relationship with a conventional deity.

Obviously, Brian is not expected to come to a traditional Christian understanding of death, but through the "feeling" and intuition, should come to see it as "natural," despite the reluctance of the intellect to accept it. On one level, this lesson infiltrates the subconscious in the form of the effect of the wind on the boy-- "the prairie wind that lifted over the edge of the prairie to sing mortality to every living thing" (Wind 30). On another level, the lesson is learned through the mystical feeling. For example, the vitality of nature and the puppy inspire in Brian "a soft explosion of feeling. It was one of completion and culmination" (Wind 58). The feeling is the result of the juxtaposition of this life with the death and burial of the pigeon, which precedes it. The words "completion" and "culmination" suggest the relationship and interdependency of life and death--each fulfills and completes the other in a type

of cycle. Indeed, this cycle is seen in the human context of the generations in the close relationship between Brian and his grandmother, and even in the dedication of the novel--"To / O.S. Mitchell / my father and my son,"--which recalls Wordsworth's axiom: "The Child is father of the Man."⁴⁶

The idea of the necessity and even justice of mortality is also connected with the "feeling," but on a more rational and logical level, following the transcendence. When the Young Ben chokes the gopher and attacks Art, meting out mercy and punishment, Brian is filled "with a sense of the justness, the rightness, the completeness of what the Young Ben had done--what he himself would like to have done" (Wind 124), had he the courage and conviction to inflict and curtail pain for a "higher good." Similarly, the feeling inspired by the two-headed calf leads to the rational realization that creation is not perfect, that "the calf . . . was a mistake" (Wind 174). This confrontation with the imperfection of the universe helps Brian accept the mistake, or the dilemma of Jappy's death. Jappy's death is particularly disturbing because it cannot be justified as can the deaths of the rabbits, the gopher and even the potential death of the runt pig. For Brian, this is his first experience with the death of a recipient of his intense love, who faithfully returns that affection. His emotional response--"Now there was an emptiness that wasn't to be believed" (Wind 177)--contrasts with the "feeling," which wells up inside until it almost overflows. This contrast instills in the child the sense of emptiness and repletion.

Unlike the child in "We Are Seven," Brian sees death as final:

Then he remembered the stiffness of the body,
 the turned head, the filmed eyes. He knew
 that a lifeless thing was under the earth.
 His dog was dead. (Wind 176)

He is able to confront the type of reality that Milt Palmer claims people avoid (Wind 135-36). Brian differentiates between the living and the dead, a distinction which the young girl in Wordsworth's poem is unable to make, and he consequently displays an understanding of mortality, as well as the sorrow and emptiness which accompany it. The way in which Brian opts for the living is based on his view of the finality of death and his discovery that only the living can benefit from his grief and sympathy:

His mother! The thought of her filled him
 with tenderness and yearning. She needed him.
 He could feel them [tears] sliding slowly
 down his cheek; he could taste the salt of them
 at the corners of his mouth. (Wind 240)

The similarities between Brian and the young Wordsworth are obvious in the gopher-drowning and bird-snaring episodes. Both children's actions demonstrate a disregard for nature, and yet their guilt suggests an inherent, albeit suppressed, respect and love for the balance of the natural world.⁴⁷ Even before Wordsworth steals another's prey, he feels guilt for trapping the birds: "I was alone, / And seem'd to be a trouble to the peace / That was among them [the moon and stars] (Pre1. I, 322-24). The boyish act works against the harmony of nature, and in its cruelty, interrupts the balance and peace of the nocturnal world. Similarly, Brian's participation in the torturing of the gopher intrudes upon the natural order of the prairie, represented by the figure of the Young Ben: "the Young Ben was linked in some indefinable

way with the magic that visited him often now" (Wind 124). The Young Ben's significance lies in his association with a moral and natural justice, not contained within the mores of his society. The contrast between the ideal embodied by Ben and the "justice" actually practised by the community inspires the "feeling."

Both boys have transgressed against nature by becoming destroyers, taking on a role which belongs to God. The boys are agents of useless and wasteful death, and their mischief becomes dangerous and evil. Both Brian and Wordsworth are aware of their sin, but Brian, unlike Wordsworth, continues to explore the implications of the act. Brian's development involves coming to terms with the nature and origin of mortality at a very young age, whereas Wordsworth's childhood experiences do not constitute a complete and harmonious process, or reach a definite conclusion. Perhaps the distinctions are partially the result of the different demands and expectations of the two forms, the autobiographical poem and the fictional novel. Wordsworth's early years seem to be composed of unrelated and intense impressions, which only acquire meaning when examined by the retrospective adult. Brian's struggles with God and mortality connect his mystical moments, constituting a comprehensive process and development which conclude with a partial understanding of what it means to be human: "It had something to do with dying; it had something to do with being born. Loving something and being hungry were with it too" (Wind 292). Brian, through intuition and the "feeling," has acquired a view of mortality which stresses both birth and death, as well as human emotions and physical appetites. Through the physical aspect of death--the bodies of the

pigeon, gopher, calf and dog--Brian senses a deeper, more spiritual side, embodied by the prairie, the meadow lark, the Young Ben and Mr. Digby.

Mitchell stresses Brian's dependence on intuition and feeling rather than rational logic or philosophy. Mitchell rejects a dependence on the intellect and formal philosophy, through the deflation of such terms as "dualist" (Wind 135), and by emphasizing the improbability of arriving at truth through a fixed and limited system, such as Berkley's, when "a person can do it by feeling" (Wind 287). This rejection of systems is obvious in Digby's angry and indignant response to Powelly:

"Is yours the Utilitarian viewpoint--the greatest happiness for the smallest number? Is it Stoic--the smallest? Do you follow Plato? Aristotle? Which side of the fence are you on? The empirical? The ideal? Do you perhaps sit on top of it as a dualist? Do you feel that there is a continuous fence at all--pragmatist? Is Christ your--" (Wind 211)

Mitchell himself comments on the attractions and limitations of "systems" in his interview with Cameron:

So for a long time I thought of myself as a Platonist, with Presbyterian overtones, but at some point in my writing apprenticeship I suddenly realized that it wouldn't do, there could be no closed systems in art.⁴⁸

Such suspicions of intellectual systems and examinations are truly Wordsworthian, derived from a sensibility which professes that it is indeed a "Hard task to analyse a soul" (Prel. II, 232), and one which will not be accomplished through the application of

that false secondary power[analytic reason], by which,
In weakness, we create distinctions, then

Deem that our puny boundaries are things
Which we perceive, and not which we have made.
(Prel. II, 221-224)

iv

In The Prelude Wordsworth emphasizes the manner in which his active childhood imagination was sustained and nurtured throughout his adult life. Such a development, however, is an exception:

Such, verily, is the first
Poetic spirit of our human life;
By uniform controul of after years
In most abated or suppress'd, in some,
Through every change of growth or of decay,
Pre-eminent till death. (Prel. II, 275-80)

This "poetic spirit," which is both "creator and receiver" (Prel. II, 273) in its relationship with the natural world, manifests itself strongly in the young Brian, who, like Wordsworth, is both affected by, and also contributes to, the scenes surrounding him. Although this imaginative spirit is not exactly "abated and suppressed" in Brian O'Connell, it is controlled and directed by circumstances and his society. The young Brian and Wordsworth are similar in the indulgence of their senses and subsequent animation of the universe, as well as in their sensitive receptiveness which invites mystical experiences. However, Brian's admission to Digby--"I don't get the feeling any more. I--don't think I will--get it any more" (Wind 290)--and his acceptance of his loss set him apart from Wordsworth, who consciously seeks mystical moments in order to nurture his imagination. When Wordsworth begins to sense a loss, he struggles to retain or restore his imagination, as is apparent in Books XI and XII ("Imagination, how Impaired

and Restored") of The Prelude. For Wordsworth the poet, the loss of childlike vision is the loss of his gift and power--a death of his creativity. For Brian O'Connal, such a loss is part of the process of growing up and accepting practical responsibilities. Although Brian is an exceptional child, especially when contrasted to the cruel Mariel and the cynical Arthur, he is not idealized or set apart as a prophet or poet. Brian is depicted as a real child rather than an anomaly.⁴⁹ The first glimpse of him concentrates on his jealousy, while his search for God is instigated by vengeance for his grandmother. Brian, unlike Wordsworth, is not a "chosen Son" (Prel. III, 82) and although different from other children, is not different enough to be an outcast like the Young Ben.

Although Wordsworth repeatedly recaptures his vision and imagination, he does not claim to retain the innocence of childhood, as there is a large void between his childhood and adult days:

so wide appears
The vacancy between me and those days
Which yet have such self-presence in my mind
That, sometimes, when I think of them, I seem
Two consciousnesses, conscious of myself
And of some other Being. (Prel. II, 28-33)

Similarly, Mitchell stresses the importance of innocence--"innocence is the best human quality"⁵⁰--but does not advocate retreating into the innocence of childhood. He speaks of the horror of "people confusing the innocence of childhood and the innocence of experience, and [thinking] they can go back to the innocence of childhood."⁵¹

Digby responds to Brian's admission of loss with the thought: "Intimations of Immortality" (Wind 290), and it is Wordsworth's ode,

tracing the decline and loss of the imagination, rather than The Prelude, the delineation of its development, which pervades the conclusion of Who Has Seen the Wind. The inability to experience the "feeling" is associated with growing up: "'Perhaps,' said Digby to Brian, 'you've grown up'" (Wind 290); and yet ironically Brian is growing away from the maturity and wisdom associated with the child's innate knowledge of immortality. Brian's rational and gradual understanding of mortality takes him away from the visionary and mystical plane so easily achieved during his early years. The maturity and wisdom which Digby perceives on the childish faces of Young Ben and Brian (Wind 290) are strange and mysterious, not acquired through daily experience. The process of growing up involves losing that childlike wisdom, and learning how to cope with daily life, perceiving the world with "an eye / That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality"⁵² rather than with a soul which has had sight of immortality.⁵³ It is a difference between a rational and visionary perception. The visionary aspect of Brian's mind, suggestive of an earlier state of existence or awareness, is apparent in his conviction that he knows the Young Ben: "I knew him a long time ago" (Wind 57). This fascination with Ben haunts him: "yet it seemed to him that at some time he had known him intimately" (Wind 85-86). Mitchell also stresses the presence of the visionary, and the lack of rationality in the child, when he describes Saint Sammy as "child-like, senile or gently insane" (Wind 264). These three adjectives emphasize the absence of reason, which has either been lost or never been present. To be "childlike" is to depend on intuition and emotion rather than on reason and logic.

The process involved in the ode and Who Has Seen the Wind is obviously similar in its emphasis on loss and compensation, and in the idea that the child, through contact with mortality, inevitably moves from a visionary state of mind to a more "philosophic mind."⁵⁴ The visits to his father's grave fill Brian with a great sense of responsibility. Although all the necessary elements for the inducement of the "feeling" are present in the cemetery--the prairie, the wind and even the meadow lark--Brian no longer experiences that sensation: "He would wonder too, with regret, that he had never had a return of the old excitement since he had heard the meadow lark sing to him the day of his father's funeral" (Wind 244). The responsibility resulting from his father's death makes him a more integral part of the family and community, thus removing him from the mysticism associated with the prairie of the Young Ben. The death of his father marks the premature loss of the ability to respond, to indulge the senses with "the privilege of inner spontaneity" (Wind 233) belonging to the Romantic child.⁵⁵ In the ode Wordsworth turns to the doctrine of pre-existence in order to deal with and explain the painful loss of his imagination.⁵⁶ Although Mitchell connects Brian's loss with the process outlined in the ode, he does not offer pre-existence as a valid explanation for that loss. The forces working on Brian, bringing about a change of perception, are concrete and identifiable in the form of his family, friends and community.

Although nature is central to Wordsworth's philosophy of the child, his concern with the human mind renders that external environment secondary to the imagination. Mitchell, on the other hand, is just

as concerned with depicting the environment as he is with the character and development of Brian. That environment, both the prairie and the town, is seen in terms of its relationship with Brian, as are the characters in the novel. Thus the environment and characters are judged according to the manner in which they affect Brian and the way in which he responds to them.⁵⁷

The reference to the ode instills a sense of loss into the conclusion of the novel. Digby's thought--"Intimations of Immortality" (Wind 290)--is inspired by the looks on the faces of Brian and the Young Ben: "maturity in spite of the formlessness of childish features, wisdom without years" (Wind 290). Wordsworth maintains that the ode is based on recollections of childhood, on "a splendour in the objects of sense which is passed away."⁵⁸ Mitchell is also concerned with that loss, but instead of accepting it as a natural process, he attempts to identify the reasons for the decline of sensitivity and mysticism. He finds those reasons within the community in which Brian is brought up. Thus, at the end of Who Has Seen the Wind Brian parts company with the young Wordsworth of The Prelude. Wordsworth, as a "chosen Son" (Prel. III, 82), as a poet, is able to retain and develop his poetic spirit, whereas Brian, as part of a community rather than an outcast like the Young Ben, must temper his poetic spirit. Brian must be moderate and practical rather than indulgent as far as sense impressions and the imagination are concerned. Although Brian is an exceptional child, he channels his talents towards a practical, community-oriented activity in his decision to become a "dirt doctor." The sense of loss pervading the conclusion of the novel is transcended,

however, as Brian manages to conform without relinquishing the idealism and sensitivity derived from his childhood experiences. The professed optimism of Wordsworth's ode, with its emphasis on compensation and continuity, pervades the conclusion of the novel:

We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be.⁵⁹

Brian's decision to help Uncle Sean's cause is positive. A contrast of the two brothers reveals Sean as a Wordsworthian lover of nature, in tune with the land and displaying a love for natural objects. Sean has attempted to minister to the prairie, and although he has met with failure and frustration, he has thrived on a personal level. Gerald, on the other hand, in his attempts to supply the needs of the town, has met with apparent success, but personal hardship.

Individuals associated with the prairie are outcasts in an extreme sense, often approaching madness, if not already insane. Brian, however, plans to bring education and rationality to that realm, while simultaneously upholding the ideal harmony and vitality associated with the prairie and the wind. The forces which have drawn Brian to the prairie, including Uncle Sean, Young Ben, and Saint Sammy, have instilled in him the need for harmony, justice and productivity in that area. The town, which intrigues Bobby (Wind 76-77), holds no magic for Brian. The fascination for the prairie remains with Brian as he dedicates himself to healing it and bringing it back to life. The many deaths associated with the prairie become an impetus for new life, as decay results in rebirth and regeneration. Brian is now on

the side of creation rather than destruction, and he will work with the wind in an attempt to use its power to invigorate the prairie rather than disperse it. Brian understands the wind in a literal sense, and is struggling to comprehend the full implication of its power.

In the final chapter of the novel Brian has "the feeling that his grandmother [is] not dead" (Wind 291). Similar to the mystical feeling, this feeling is sudden and familiar, and leads to an extended contemplation of mortality: "His own father had died and his father, and his father, and his father before him" (Wind 291). Obviously, Brian is experiencing an "intimation of immortality" in his feeling about his grandmother, but not in a Wordsworthian sense, for Mitchell provides an explanation. Unlike the child in "We Are Seven," who does not understand death, Brian understands its finality all too well, and yet still feels that his grandmother is not dead. Brian's thoughts-- "From each person stretched back a long line--hundreds and hundreds of years" (Wind 292)--concentrate on immortality through the generations, the new generation inheriting a legacy from the old, and thus upholding the new cycle of life derived from the old. Such a cycle is implied in the relationship between Brian and his grandmother-- "his grandmother had come to meet him spiritually in her declining years" (Wind 244)--and in Brian's complicity in her death. Brian understands the need for the open window, for like the child, the old woman indulges her senses: "Her mind took out the sensory fragments, handled them briefly, then laid them away again" (Wind 97). The child uses his senses to perceive, while the grandmother uses hers to remember. The link between the generations is also obvious on a physical level:

"He held his head back and upright with a sureness that was also his grandmother's" (Wind 64).⁶⁰

Part of Brian's inheritance is clearly displayed in his grandmother's room:

He looked up at John Knox with his beard cascading to the opened Bible in his knotted hands, a staring John Knox unaware of Mary, Queen of Scots beside him. (Wind 290)

Another part of his inheritance is aroused by the picture of his grandfather:

He thought of Telesphore Toutant, a bobcat with tassels on his ears, a buckboard creaking over wide and rustling prairie. (Wind 290)

Still another aspect of his inheritance is apparent in the prairie to which he escapes: "High above the prairie, platter-flat, the wind wings on, bereft and wild its lonely song" (Wind 293).

The Presbyterian practicality and puritanism of Brian's heritage prevent him from becoming a Saint Sammy or a Young Ben, outcasts separated from society. The bravery and survival of a pioneer grandfather and a farming uncle are inspirations to work with the wilderness rather than against it, as do Mrs. Abercrombie and Mr. Powelly. Finally, the mysticism and vision of the sensitive child, associated with the prairie wind, take Brian away from the society his father served to the environment which taught him about death, and thus about life:

There was the prairie; there was a meadow lark, a baby pigeon, and a calf with two heads. In some haunting way the Ben was part of it. So was Mr. Digby. (Wind 292)

To combine Mr. Digby and the Young Ben is to take the nobility and intelligence of the town and combine it with the freedom and harmony

of the prairie. Thus Brian's heritage demands a union of practicality and vision. The Romantic child cannot become the Romantic poet. Such a development would be indulgent and selfish on the Canadian prairie of the depression years. However, the experiences of the Romantic child can provide vision and idealism to temper the limitations and intolerance of the Canadian prairie community, isolated and struggling against the drought and depression.

The balance which Brian finds is similar to the "innocence of experience," which Mitchell identifies as "the artist's innocence, a sort of inner balance between spontaneity and discipline which must never tip too far in either direction."⁶¹ Henry Kreisel's comment that Brian will "subdue the Young Ben within himself," the "free spirit,"⁶² is much too bleak a view. Brian assimilates that free spirit, taking advantage of its lessons and associations, retaining a degree of spontaneity. Brian is no longer a Romantic child, but neither is he a cynic, as Ronald Sutherland maintains.⁶³ Although there is some irony involved in the portrait of Brian, as Laurence Ricou points out in his identification of the "ironic view of the strength, and the implicit limitations, of the child's perspective,"⁶⁴ Mitchell is more concerned with celebrating the innocence of childhood, which necessarily passes, as well as with criticizing "a society too eager to put away childish things."⁶⁵

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

¹ David O'Rourke, "An Interview with W.O. Mitchell," Essays on Canadian Writing 20 (1980-81): 152.

² O'Rourke 152.

³ W.O. Mitchell, Who Has Seen the Wind (1947; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart-Bantam Ltd., 1982) 290. All further references to Who Has Seen the Wind are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Wind.

⁴ O'Rourke 152.

⁵ The term Romantic child in this thesis refers specifically to the view of the mystical and transcendental child established by Wordsworth. Unlike Blake, who uses the child primarily as a symbol to promote social reform, Wordsworth is genuinely interested in the child for his or her own sake. Although influenced by eighteenth-century poets, such as Blake and Beattie, and by philosophers, such as Locke, Hartley and Rousseau, Wordsworth's view of the child is uniquely his own. The value of Wordsworth's Romantic child lies in his or her imagination and vision--two creative powers which are especially strong during the years of childhood, according to Wordsworth.

⁶ William Wordsworth, The Prelude or Growth of a Poet's Mind, ed. E. de Selincourt, 2nd edition revised by Helen Darbishire (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959) Title. All further references to The Prelude are from the 1805 text of this edition unless otherwise indicated, and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Prel. References to the 1850 text of this edition will be clearly indicated within the text.

⁷ "Mystical," The Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961) 6: 817.

⁸ "Mysticism," Oxford Dictionary 6: 817. Mitchell, in an interview with Cameron, actually uses the word "mystic": "Well, the prairie does create mystics." See Donald Cameron, "Sea Caves and Creative Partners," Conversations with Canadian Novelists, 2 Parts (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973) 2: 61. Although Wordsworth was not necessarily aware of the term "mystic,"

his experiences fulfill all of the conditions of mysticism. See R.D. Havens, The Mind of a Poet: A Study of Wordsworth's Thought, 2 Vols. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1941) 1: 167-68.

Warren Tallman's objection to Who Has Seen the Wind fails to take into account the power of Brian's mystical experiences: "It is all but impossible to accept Mitchell's inference that contact with these persons serves to reconcile Brian's consciousness to the 'realities of birth, hunger, satiety, eternity, death.'" Mitchell does not maintain that the characters are the sole, or even the main, influence on Brian. Surely, Brian's visionary and mystical experiences are just as important as characters in terms of influence. Tallman seems to have missed the import of the power of Brian's vision. See Warren Tallman, "Wolf in the Snow," Contexts of Canadian Criticism, ed. Eli Mandel (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971) 235.

⁹Transcendentalism is based on a "triumph of feeling and intuition over reason, the exaltation of the individual over society, the impatience at any kind of restraint or bondage to custom, the new and thrilling delight in nature"--all characteristics of the English Romantic movement. See Rod W. Horton and Herbert W. Edwards, Backgrounds of American Literary Thought (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1952) 116.

I use the term "transcendentalism" in the sense of "a doctrine of post-Kantian idealism that emphasizes what transcends sense experience as being fundamental in reality." See "Transcendentalism," Webster's Third New International Dictionary, ed. Philip Babcock Gove (Springfield, Mass.: G. and C. Merriam, 1965) 2426.

¹⁰See R.D. Havens' discussion of the mystical experience in Havens 1: 155-78. My present discussion of Wordsworth's "spots of time" is based on, and derived from, my earlier discussion of a Wordsworthian "spot of time" in my M.A. thesis. See Margaret Oliver, "The Unconscious Response of the Child to Nature in Wordsworth's Prelude," M.A. diss., McMaster University, 1980, 62-88.

¹¹For example, Brian experiences isolation (not necessarily physical), fear and uncertainty while on the prairie for the first time (Wind 11-12), during the gopher incident (Wind 124-25), when he sees the two-headed calf (Wind 172-73), when he listens to Saint Sammy (Wind 192) and when he remembers his mother while contemplating his father's death (Wind 239-40). Each of these events culminates in the "feeling."

¹²Laurence Ricou compares Mitchell with Wordsworth, saying that "Mitchell's basically romantic outlook is that meaning is somehow to be detected in the prairie itself." Ricou continues, stressing that both Brian and Wordsworth must find the "spirit" of a particular place, through intuition and sense impressions. Ricou does not emphasize, however, the part played by the child's mind in actually creating that spirit, as well as in apprehending it. See Laurence Ricou, Vertical

Man / Horizontal World: Man and Landscape in Canadian Prairie Fiction
(Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1973) 101.

¹³Geoffrey Hartman, Wordsworth's Poetry 1784-1814 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964) 215.

¹⁴Hartman 215.

¹⁵William Wordsworth, "The Sublime and the Beautiful," The Prose Works of William Wordsworth, ed. W.J.B. Owen and J.W. Smyser, 3 Vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974) 2: 351.

¹⁶Wordsworth, "The Sublime and the Beautiful" 353.

¹⁷Wordsworth, "The Sublime and the Beautiful" 351.

¹⁸The fragility of these mystical moments is explained by Wordsworth. An individual is only "visited by a sense of sublimity, if personal fear & surprise or wonder have not been carried beyond certain bounds" for "if personal fear be strained beyond a certain point, this sensation is destroyed." See Wordsworth, "The Sublime and the Beautiful" 353-54.

¹⁹Ronald Sutherland, in his article, "Children of the Changing Wind," connects the guilt of the Canadian literary child with the "Puritan ethos, Jansenist in Québec and Calvinist elsewhere," which pervades the Canadian consciousness. Such an observation is probably true, but it is not true that Brian "develops a cynical attitude," nor that "the typical child in Canadian literature seems to be born disillusioned." Sutherland seems to be thinking primarily of French Canadian rather than English Canadian literature when he makes these statements which stress the gloom and original sin associated with the child. See Ronald Sutherland, "Children of the Changing Wind," Second Image: Comparative Studies in Québec/Canadian Literature (Don Mills: New Press, 1971) 106, 98, 92.

²⁰Although Wordsworth describes the "sublime" in great detail, he does not offer a definite idea of what he means by the "beautiful." He does say, however:

But it may be confidently affirmed that, where
the beautiful & the sublime co-exist in the
same object, if that object be new to us, the
sublime always precedes the beautiful in
making us conscious of its presence--

See Wordsworth, "The Sublime and the Beautiful" 350.

²¹William Blake, "Auguries of Innocence," Blake: Complete Writings, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966) line 1.

²²See Wordsworth, The Prelude I, 613-24; II, 331-32; II, 365-70, for examples of his emphasis on the fragility of mystical moments.

²³Wordsworth talks about the transition between childhood and youth in Book VIII of The Prelude:

Nature herself was at this unripe time [childhood],
 But secondary to my own pursuits
 And animal activities, and all
 Their trivial pleasures; and long afterwards [during youth]
 When those had died away, and Nature did
 For her own sake become my joy, (Prel. VIII, 476-81)

and in "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey":

For nature then [in youth]
 (The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
 And their glad animal movements all gone by)
 To me was all in all.

See Wordsworth, "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey," The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth, ed. E. de Selincourt, 2nd edition, 5 Vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952) 2: lines 72-74.

In view of Wordsworth's sharp distinction between childhood and youth, which occurs in "the seventeenth year" (Prel. II, 405), it seems strange that Laurence Ricou would use Wordsworth's description of youth in "Tintern Abbey" to "illuminate" Brian's experience with the dew drop, which is clearly an experience of childhood rather than youth. See Ricou, Vertical 104.

²⁴W.O. Mitchell, of course, uses this idea of the wind controlling the kite as an extensive symbol in his novel, The Kite. The idea of the child helping to create the universe by responding to the wind, is similar to Mitchell's concept of the "creative partner" participating in the creation of art: "If the artist allows a creative partner to complete the art experience, that is where the real magic happens." See Cameron 2: 53.

²⁵Mitchell stresses the importance of the senses. In one interview he says:

An illusion of actuality is best created
 through provocative appeal to the sense of
 smell and sight and so on, taste and touch
 and the world of the specific, the individual,
 and therefore the regional, both geographically
 and in time.

See Cameron 2: 51.

In another interview Mitchell says that the artist must attempt "the 'conning' of the creative partner, the reader, into smelling, touching, tasting, hearing, seeing." See O'Rourke 150.

²⁶The idea of perception is a central concern in Who Has Seen the Wind. Hislop, for example, studies the dilemma:

Self and not-self; what was the relationship?

He had separated himself from the phenomena of his experience. He could say to himself, "I see the yard--John Hislop sees the yard and the lawn mower." But--who was John Hislop? What was seeing? (Wind 26)

The discussion of Berkley in Chapter Thirty-One continues to explore the question of perception.

²⁷Jean Jacques Rousseau, Emile, trans. Barbara Foxley (London: Dent, 1911) 31. For the influence of Rousseau see Coveney 45-49.

²⁸Rousseau 97.

²⁹Rousseau 90. John Locke, whom Rousseau identified as one of his teachers, [See Arthur Beatty, William Wordsworth: His Doctrine and Art in Their Historical Relation (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1962) 135], also places great emphasis on the function of the senses during childhood:

Children, when they first come into it
[the world] are surrounded with a world of new
things which, by a constant solicitation
of their senses, draw the mind constantly to them.

See John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, ed. John W. Yolton, 2 Vols. (London: Dent, 1961) 1: 80.

David Hartley, also a probable influence on Wordsworth (See Coveney 73-74), concentrates on the senses, defining sensations as "those internal Feelings of the Mind, which arise from the Impressions made by external Objects upon the several Parts of our Bodies." See David Hartley, Observations on Man, His Frame, His Duty and His Expectations, 2 Vols. (London: S. Richardson, 1749), 1: ii. Facsimile (New York: Garland Publishing, 1971). Spelling has been modernized.

³⁰Wordsworth also emphasizes sound and its symbolic significance in The Prelude. See Havens 2: 292-93.

³¹In "Anecdote for Fathers," Wordsworth depicts the child's dependence on intuition rather than rational logic. See Wordsworth, "Anecdote for Fathers," The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth, ed. E. de Selincourt, 5 Vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940) 1: lines 45-60. Mitchell, in his interview with O'Rourke, sets up an opposition between intuition and reason: "what is the way to truth? What is the way to reality? Or God? Is it through reason or is it through--I like intuition better--but is it through revelation?" See O'Rourke 152.

In the interview with Cameron, Mitchell says: "I had not the faith in reason as the way to truth without an appreciation of the intuitive route." See Cameron 2: 61.

Mitchell's preference for intuition is unmistakable:

"A person can do it by feeling?"

"That's the way," said Digby. (Wind 287)

³²It is interesting to note that Mitchell begins the novel when

Brian is four years old, which is approximately the time when Wordsworth becomes involved in physical activity (Prel. I, 291), and which marks the division between infancy and childhood.

³³ Wordsworth also differentiates between sight and other senses, calling the eye "that which is in every stage of life / The most despotic of our senses" (Prel. XI, 173-74).

³⁴ Some critics claim that Brian never "sees" the wind, while others maintain that the point of his development is his eventual ability to "see" the wind. Ricou, for example, says:

It is worth remembering that Mitchell's title omits the question mark, so that, although it contains the echo of a cosmic question, it also stands as a description of someone-- Brian—who has seen the wind.

See Laurence Ricou, "Notes on Language and Learning in Who Has Seen the Wind," Canadian Children's Literature 10 (1977-78): 13.

Ken Mitchell, on the other hand, suggests that "Brian's accomplishment has been to feel the wind," rather than "see" it. See Ken Mitchell, "The Universality of W.O. Mitchell's Who Has Seen the Wind," Lakehead University Review 4.1 (1971): 40.

Such differences arise from different interpretations of the verb "see" and also from different views of the extent to which Brian reaches a level of understanding.

³⁵ The image of the Aeolian lute, used by the Romantic poets, best illustrates this idea of the external world working on the individual who subsequently responds to it. For examples of the concept, see Coleridge, "The Eolian Harp," and "Dejection: An Ode," Coleridge: Poetical Works, ed. Ernest Hartley Coleridge (London: Oxford University Press, 1967).

³⁶ Ken Mitchell, in his article, "The Universality of W.O. Mitchell's Who Has Seen the Wind," traces the development of the motif of death through the four sections of the novel. See Ken Mitchell 27-34.

³⁷ I.F. Note to "Ode: Intimations of Immortality," The Poetical Works Of William Wordsworth, ed. E. de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire, 5 Vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947) 4: 463.

³⁸ Wordsworth, "We are Seven," The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth 1: lines 1-4.

³⁹ Wordsworth, "Seven" lines 31-32.

⁴⁰ Wordsworth, "Seven" lines 37-40.

⁴¹ Wordsworth, "Seven" lines 51-52.

⁴²William and Dorothy Wordsworth, The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth. The Middle Years 1811-1820, ed E. de Selincourt (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937) 619.

⁴³The Authorised King James Version of The Holy Bible (London: Collins, 1953) Ps. 103, 15-16.

⁴⁴Ps. 103, 14.

⁴⁵Ps. 103, 19.

⁴⁶Wordsworth, "My Heart Leaps Up When I Behold," The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth 1: line 7.

⁴⁷This lack of respect and love is apparent in Brian's treatment of the caterpillar and spider in Chapter One. Wordsworth's poem, "To A Butterfly," reveals the same type of cruelty and lack of thought:

A very hunter did I rush
Upon the prey—with leaps and springs
I followed on from brake to bush;
But she, God love her! feared to brush
The dust from off its wings.

See Wordsworth, "To A Butterfly," The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth 1: lines 14-18.

⁴⁸Cameron 2: 52.

⁴⁹Many critics have commented on Mitchell's success at writing from a child's point of view. For example, McCourt states:

Mitchell, whose understanding of the child's
mind is extraordinarily sensitive, at all
times avoids the mistake of interpreting the
child's environment in terms of adult reaction.

See Edward McCourt, The Canadian West in Fiction (Toronto: Ryerson, 1970) 106.

Ronald Sutherland, in "Children of the Changing Wind," also comments on the unique quality of Mitchell's creation. See Sutherland 92. These comments lead to a study of Mitchell's style. Michael Peterman says that Mitchell "familiarized himself with the work of child psychologists like Jean Piaget." See Michael Peterman, "W.O. Mitchell," Profiles in Canadian Literature 2, ed. Jeffrey M. Heath (Toronto: Dunndurn, 1980) 10.

Laurence Ricou, in his article on language, studies the development of Brian in terms of language and the influence of Piaget. See Ricou, "Notes on Language and Learning."

Gingell-Beckman pursues the relationship between music and prose, which Patricia Barclay discusses with Mitchell in "Regionalism and the Writer: A Talk with W.O. Mitchell," Canadian Literature 14 (1962): 56.

Finally, Desmond Pacey states:

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the novel is the style: it is poetic and evocative without ever seeming pretentious or contrived. See Desmond Pacey, Creative Writing in Canada (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1961) 225.

⁵⁰W.O. Mitchell, "Debts of Innocence," Saturday Night March 1973: 36.

⁵¹O'Rourke 155. John Ditsky argues that the innocence of Who Has Seen the Wind is lost in How I Spent My Summer Holidays. He maintains that this loss of innocence is Mitchell's and also Canada's. Childhood innocence is, however, lost in Who Has Seen the Wind, Mitchell's first novel, and thus this statement is invalid. The loss of the innocence of childhood results in the acquisition of the innocence of experience in both novels. See John Ditsky, "The Fiction of W.O. Mitchell," The Hollins Critic 10.2 (1983): 8.

⁵²Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" lines 198-99.

⁵³Wordsworth, "Ode" line 164.

⁵⁴Wordsworth, "Ode" line 187. William New talks of Brian's movement from senses to emotions to intellect. See William New, "A Feeling of Completion: Aspects of W.O. Mitchell," Articulating West: Essays on Purpose and Form in Modern Canadian Literature (Toronto: New Press, 1972) 55.

⁵⁵New sees this movement as a shift from an "egocentric" to a "sociocentric" society. See New 52-56.

⁵⁶The views of the child presented in The Prelude and the ode are very different. Wordsworth wrote the ode in a much more negative and pessimistic state of mind (1802-1804) than that in which he originally wrote the first two books of The Prelude (1799).

⁵⁷Peterman says that "the reader can often distinguish between the 'good' and the 'bad' characters in his [Mitchell's] novels on the basis of whether or not they stimulate or defeat the growth of a boy's imagination." See Peterman 10.

⁵⁸William and Dorothy Wordsworth, The Middle Years 619.

⁵⁹Wordsworth, "Ode" lines 180-83.

⁶⁰In the interview with O'Rourke, Mitchell says that he writes about the very old and the very young because "There's a dreadful limbo between, say, adolescence and age. It's easier to write about vivid people who are older or vivid people who are younger. See O'Rourke 157. This cycle established between the very old and the very young is the basis of what Dick Harrison sees as the comic resolution of the novel:

What his comic resolution offers is a new beginning in hope, sparked by a moment of ritual reaffirmation of the good in man and nature. The habit of beginnings, of starting again, is deeply ingrained in the western consciousness, and comedy is its necessary expression.

See Dick Harrison. Unnamed Country: The Struggle for a Canadian Prairie Fiction (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 1977) 179.

⁶¹Mitchell, "Debts of Innocence" 37.

⁶²Henry Kreisel, "The Prairie: A State of Mind," Contexts of Canadian Criticism 265.

⁶³Sutherland 98-99.

⁶⁴Ricou, "Notes on Language and Learning" 16.

⁶⁵Ricou, "Notes on Language and Learning" 15.

CHAPTER TWO

ERNEST BUCKLER'S ROMANTIC CHILD: A WORDSWORTHIAN "CHOSEN SON"

i

Robert Chambers refers to Wordsworth's Prelude in his analysis of Buckler's Ox Bells and Fireflies:

Buckler takes us again into the territory of experience which Wordsworth recalled so magnificently in The Prelude, when the world of nature becomes a live presence, when the boy immerses himself in it as though capable of existing totally apart from mundane human beings.¹

In his novel, The Mountain and the Valley, and in his fictional memoir, Ox Bells and Fireflies, Buckler, like Wordsworth and Mitchell, explores the Romantic² child's relationship with nature and the community.

Again, there is a tension between the natural world and the human world, as Chambers notes in his observation of the separation between the boy's communion with nature and with human beings. In both The Mountain and the Valley and Ox Bells and Fireflies nature seems to draw the child away from society. David Canaan's Romantic sensibility, like Wordsworth's, separates him from others and identifies him as a "chosen Son."³ Unlike Brian O'Connell, he never manages to function effectively within his society, and unlike Wordsworth, Buckler's child does not become the fulfilled artist, who can continue to develop his Romantic temperament in adulthood. Rather, the Romantic child remains an outcast, alienated by his sensitivity and intellect. He must either relinquish

his Romantic temperament or remain apart from his community, misunderstood and maligned by "common" people.⁴

Like Wordsworth and Brian, David and the narrator of Ox Bells and Fireflies possess "secret extra senses"⁵ which they cherish and nurture. They also experience mystical moments and are both receivers and creators in their relationships with the universe. The similarity between Who Has Seen the Wind and The Mountain and the Valley should not be surprising, as Buckler has made clear his admiration for W.O. Mitchell. After saying that Canadian writing "is turning out stuff of real flesh, blood, bone and spirit," Buckler notes, "Witness Bill Mitchell."⁶ In his advice to Canadian writers, he says "Don't try to write like anything--except yourself. Again, witness Bill Mitchell."⁷ D.O. Spettigue maintains that Buckler is "anti-intellectual in the sense that he sees the fundamentals of life as being instinctive, intuitive, beyond reason."⁸ Such a description also fits W.O. Mitchell, as he would be the first to acknowledge.⁹

In The Mountain and the Valley, as in Who Has Seen the Wind, the struggle between the landscape and the community is illustrated through the presence of the imaginative child, who is associated with the landscape and pitted against the society. Buckler, like Mitchell, is commenting on the limitations of a society which has no place for imagination and vision. Mitchell's optimistic conclusion, in which he fuses nature and society through Brian's vocation, is not possible in David's world. The ideal of union is implicit in David's attempt to relate the mountain to the valley, but is never achieved.

Although Buckler views the Romantic child with some irony,¹⁰

he also criticizes the community which does not administer to the needs of all of its inhabitants. Although not overtly antagonistic, as is Mitchell's community, Entremont does repress imagination and vision. Unlike Who Has Seen the Wind, which deals with childhood alone, The Mountain and the Valley explores youth and early adulthood, as well as childhood, and also concentrates on the Romantic child as a potential artist. Despite this wider focus, Buckler's portrait of the Romantic child and his position in the community is similar to Mitchell's, both being related to, and inherited from, the Romantic child of Wordsworth's Prelude. Both Mitchell and Buckler associate the imagination and vision of the Romantic child with nature. Although the two novels have different resolutions, the natural world and the imagination of the child are celebrated in both. The forces which repress the child's imagination and vision are revealed as emanating from, and typical of, the communities in which Brian and David are forced to function.

Buckler's concern with time, memory and a retrospective viewpoint is reminiscent of Wordsworth's thematic interests, as well as his narrative technique. Brian O'Connell, with his "feeling" and "intimations of immortality," is perhaps a more obvious Wordsworthian child than David Canaan or the child in Ox Bells and Fireflies. However, the child's mystical communion with nature and the use of memory and retrospective narration render Buckler's children "Romantic" in a truly Wordsworthian sense.

the Romantic child's perception is based on intense sense impressions which distinguish him, setting him apart from others. Even as a young child, David Canaan realizes that his intense sensuous responses are unique, alienating him from others:

Sometimes when all three [Joseph, Chris and David] worked together, David would try to imitate their sober speech. He'd wish his thoughts could just move along with the pace of the day, as theirs did. But this morning he wouldn't part with his secret extra senses for anything. (Mountain 28)

Like Mitchell, Buckler repeatedly attempts to describe the world from a child's sensuous point of view.¹¹ These acute senses are at the basis of the Romantic child's alienation from the community, as R.E. Watters notes:

He [David] is sensitive because his senses are keen in a community where sensory response is blunted by utility and erased by custom. He is sensitive because he is intellectually discriminating--capable of keen analysis or thought, aware of subtleties of feeling and human interrelationships--and capable, too, of exact expression of those thoughts, feeling [sic] and relationships.¹²

As do Wordsworth and Brian, David indulges all his senses, not just the "despotic" (Prel. XI, 174) sense of sight. The world is perceived in terms of sound and touch: "The only sound would be the soft undulant hush of darkness. He could feel the touch of the road in his feet, like a kind of dancing" (Mountain 19); as well as smell: "The sharp, sweet, reminding, fulfilling, smell of the oranges was so incarnate of tomorrow it was delight almost to sinfulness" (Mountain 61); and taste: "He broke the skin of the first orange and felt the first incarnate taste of its sharp juice" (Mountain 69).¹³

Similarly, in Ox Bells and Fireflies the narrator's childhood memories encompass all five senses at the end of the chapter entitled "Memory."¹⁴ Within that chapter he also includes a paragraph which deals with all the senses:

I listened--and I heard the stroke of the first settler's ax on the first astonished trees, which would give him both his home and his heat. I could see the lynx eyes smoldering at night at the edge of the tiny clearing he had made in this midnight of strangeness. I could taste the faint trace of smoke in the burntland potatoes that gave him his strength. I touched the first blade of grass that brought the first living smell where there had only been the closed forest breath of endlessness and secrecy. (Ox 23)

Such rich and varied descriptions imply the intensity and breadth of the child's sensuous responses to his environment.

Not only does Buckler employ sensuous descriptions in a literal context, but he also uses sense impressions in his extended similes in order to describe and convey a particular emotion or action. Such a technique is apparent in the introduction of David: "Then something jumped in his heart the way water flashed right through your bare-free body when you took the first plunge into the Baptizing Pool" (Mountain 19). Sense impressions also play a role in later list-like descriptions in the novel.¹⁵

For Wordsworth and Brian, sensuous impressions induce mystical experiences, and the same process is apparent in Buckler's Romantic child. Immediately following David's admission of "secret extra senses," (Mountain 28), Buckler describes the stream in a sensuous manner, suggesting that the view is David's: "Glinting and leap-frogging, in the sun. Cool and smooth, under the scooped-out banks" (Mountain 28).

Following this response to the stream, David adopts a passive and receptive attitude, as he consciously forces his mind to become blank in order to allow his spirit to escape from his body and become part of nature:

He looked at the bubble-coins on the surface
of the water and let his mind not-think. He
seemed to be floating along with the brook. (Mountain 28)

As in Wordsworth's case, a receptive mind invites an infiltration of nature: "He felt the sun through his jacket" (Mountain 28-29).

The sun, in this situation, is a manifestation of the spirit of the natural world. The energy of the sun represents the vitality of nature; the sun's properties become physical examples of the abstract spirit of the natural universe. In Ox Bells and Fireflies, as in The Mountain and the Valley, the sun is used to demonstrate the way in which the receptive child invites the influence of nature:

I open my shirt and let the sun touch my
chest. I listen to the brook and there is not
a cavity of any kind within me. I fit into
myself like the brook to the bank. (Ox 12)

Buckler's sun plays a similar role to Wordsworth's breeze and water and Mitchell's wind. The importance of the sound of the running brook in Buckler's passage also recalls parts of The Prelude, while the sense of "fullness" is reminiscent of the height of repletion in Wordsworth's "spots of time" and Brian's "feeling." The receptivity of the child and the combination of sound and touch inspire this sense of fulfillment. The subsequent union of flesh and spirit, and communion with nature, are described not only in terms of the sun, but also with respect to wind and water:

I listen to the brook, and my own flesh and
 I are such snug and laughing brothers that I
 know we are forever mingled with the sun's
 pulse (or the wind's or the rain's) and forever
 unconquerable. (Ox 12)

The concepts and language recall Wordsworth's poem, as well as Mitchell's novel.¹⁶

As in The Prelude and Who Has Seen the Wind, the relationship between the child and nature in Buckler's novel involves the child's participation as well as the powerful presence of nature: "Whenever he looked at the mountain and made the sun-shiver in his mind into a conscious thought, he knew this was the best time he'd ever had" (Mountain 29). The child is initially passive, but must look at the mountain or the external world in a certain manner in order to initiate the desired response in his mind. David's participation in his relationship with his environment is clearly delineated in the first scene of the novel: "A confirming glow flashed back from everything he looked at in the room" (Mountain 20). His own excitement imbues the external world with a radiance which is reflected back to him. Like Wordsworth and Brian, David invests the universe with vitality, creating as well as receiving. It is this active participation in perception which distinguishes David as a Romantic child and alienates him from the rest of the community.

The active participation of the child and subsequent animation of the universe are repeatedly examined in Ox Bells and Fireflies. The child's point of view is clear in the following observation: "Father takes a twist of rein around each wrist to hold him steady, but our speed surprises a breeze from the air" (Ox 8). To some extent the

child realizes that it is the combination of his own movement and the environment which is responsible for the breeze or the vitality of the universe, and that he plays a part in animating the world around him. The incident contrasts with the boat-stealing episode in The Prelude, in which Wordsworth fails to see his own movement in the boat as being responsible for the changing shape of the cliff. In both cases, the physical movement of the child is representative of the more abstract sensuous, emotional and spiritual responses of the child, which similarly "surprise" an animated reaction from the natural world.

In Ox Bells and Fireflies the child's detailed examination of his environment, along with his capacity for wonder, results in a sense of discovery: "We stared, infact, into the eye of everything. Flesh or plant or matter. And wondered" (Ox 45).¹⁷ Obviously, the wonder emanating from the child invests the world with a radiance, so that the child's wonder is reflected back to him: "The most ordinary one [morning] we woke to seemed to be burnished with a sense of wonder" (Ox 43).

The retrospective adult acknowledges that "it didn't really matter whether anything happened or not" (Ox 51), as he realizes that the joy of childhood originates from within rather than without. He uses the image of the firefly in order to convey the way in which the child's wonder is reflected back to him: "The days, just in themselves, seemed to glint with unexpected fireflies of what could only be called pure joy" (Ox 51). These "unexpected fireflies" recall both "spots of time" and the "feeling" in that the light of the firefly is sudden, unexpected, quick and impossible to recapture or control. In The

Mountain and the Valley this firefly seems to be referred to as a "sun-shiver,"¹⁸ which again suggests the qualities of a "spot of time."

The narrator's cumulative list of unexpected fireflies (Ox 51-52) is followed by an attempt to describe the process involved in these "spots of time." Like Wordsworth and Brian, the narrator attributes the power of the experience to the external world rather than to himself:

It was a kind of instant Zen, come by with
no effort at all. Perhaps in the most humdrum
hour it would strike you right out of the blue,
and for the length of one dazzling pulsebeat
lift you higher than a June of kites into that
sky of skies where the glass between inside and
outside melts completely away. (Ox 32)

The experience is more powerful when viewed in this manner, but the child has failed to take into account his own sense of wonder and the fact that the world itself is "ordinary." Interestingly, this particular experience involves the brook, and again nature is infiltrating the child in the form of the sun--"The sun would be drowsing on your back" (Ox 52)--while sound also plays its part: "Sounds themselves would have a little pocket of stillness around them like rocks have" (Ox 52). The child responds to the surge of the trout, resulting in a mystical and intuitive knowledge, obviously disassociated from reason: "and all at once your heart would seem to spread out like a fan and you would know exactly what troutness was. And brookness. And leafness. And, yes, worldness and lifeness itself" (Ox 52). The final stage of this "firefly" is a transcendence of the physical self and subsequent union with the natural world: "You would move right out--and gloriously--into everything around you" (Ox 52).

This separation of the self, central to the mystical experience, is apparent in David's dream early in The Mountain and the Valley. Relating his dream about the camp to Chris, David says: "And then it was like there was two of me. I was walkin with you and still I was walkin by myself on this other road that didn't have any trees on it" (Mountain 21). The dream obviously refers to the two Davids: the David who wants to be part of his family, and the sensitive David, who is alienated from that family and the other inhabitants of the valley. As well, however, the dream of the two selves suggests the mystical experience, the "other road" being a more spiritual plane which provides the visionary perspective for David: "I saw the camp on this other road and went and told us on the log road, but when we come back to the other road the camp was gone" (Mountain 21). The intrusion of the others, of the "valley" people, into David's world destroys the mystical experience. Only he is able to "see" the camp in a moment of vision.¹⁹

The use of the word "translated" in association with the words in the play also suggests a movement to another level: "He'd think of them [the words] then, and be doubly translated" (Mountain 58). The words are obviously the medium through which the imagination leaps beyond the real world: "He had the whole world of make-believe to go to. They had only the actual, the one that came to them" (Mountain 80). The italicized word "came" emphasizes the lack of participation on the part of the valley people in the perception of their world. They are completely passive, whereas David is receptive and responsive, both receiving impressions from, and creating, the world around him.

This concept of the Romantic child as creator is central to Buckler's work. In "Fireflies and Freedom," the final chapter of Ox Bells and Fireflies, the child becomes a discoverer and creator through his active participation in his own perception:

My eyes followed the sky's single cloud, the
shape of a wing. I see creation in it. I don't
move. I see a squirrel moving on the ground.
A partridge. A snail. There is no one there
to see them but me. I have created them. (Ox 295-96)²⁰

This concept **of the child** as creator is based on the child's intense response to sensuous impressions, and **culminates in an intuitive** knowledge of nature and life: "My two strokes of luck have stretched my senses to the limit, laid everything wide open to them. I see the entire Mystery in the crows" (Ox 297).

Similarly, in the epilogue of The Mountain and the Valley the "childlike" David²¹ perceives and remembers in very sensuous terms, employing the synesthesia of childhood: "A shape could be like a sound; a feelinglike a shape; a smell the shadow of a touch . . . His senses seemed to run together" (Mountain 287). Although not realized, the subsequent desire to create through art would supposedly result in transcendence and an accompanying discovery of wisdom: "He went out into them [the voices of all things] until there was no inside left. He saw at last how you could become the thing you told" (Mountain 298). This artistic process is based on the mystical transcendence experienced during childhood.

Thus Buckler's Romantic child, like the young Wordsworth and Brian O'Connell, experiences a process beginning with sensuous responses and culminating in intuitive knowledge. The child's mind, receptive

to sensuous impressions, invests the external world with an inner wonder and delight, and experiences a subsequent transcendence of the physical world, accompanied by a gleam of innate and intuitive wisdom. The power of the situation lies in the child's lack of awareness of his participation in the experience; he is to a large extent oblivious to the part played by his own Romantic temperament. The Wordsworthian phrases--"unconscious intercourse / With the eternal Beauty" (Prel. I, 589-90), "creator and receiver both" (Prel. II, 273), and "hallow'd and pure motions of the sense" (Prel. I, 578)--reverberate throughout Buckler's work. Also, the Romantic concept of the Aeolian lute, with its receptive responses to the natural world, is intrinsic to Buckler's Romantic child. Nature's reflection of that response back to the child is central to Buckler's view, and is found throughout Wordsworth's poetry.²²

iii

The death motif, so central to Who Has Seen the Wind, is also an integral part of Buckler's work. Both The Mountain and the Valley and Ox Bells and Fireflies begin with the intrusion of death into the child's world. For David, the deaths of Spurge and Peter cause personal disappointment, as they prevent his ascent up the mountain. However, they bring him closer to the living, especially Effie, and fill him with an appreciation and reverence for life: "He felt an awful guilt, to be without suffering himself, to have his own father so wonderfully safe beside him" (Mountain 41). As in Brian O'Connell's case, confrontations with death increase the child's understanding of life and

force him to mature. For example, the death of Effie, with its accompanying guilt, marks the end of Brian's pure childhood--"He was never, even for a moment, all child again" (Mountain 152)--and elicits Buckler's interesting definition of childhood: "The essence of childhood is that the past is never thought of as something that might have been different" (Mountain 152). The feelings of guilt, remorse and regret destroy childhood as perceived by Buckler, and contact with death certainly instigates and enforces those feelings.

In Ox Bells and Fireflies Jim Stedman's death prevents the narrator from communicating with nature; the social world overpowers the natural world: "I look at things. And look at them. But they don't tell me anything" (Ox 13). Obviously, the child's internal wonder and glow are absent and are thus not reflected back to him. The child blames the absence of communication on the "things" of the external world: "They've retreated inside themselves, inside that ring of deafness, where they only talk to each other" (Ox 13). He fails to realize that the "ordinary " world is partially animated by his own response, and it is the absence of his response which accounts for the lack of radiance.

Although not as developed and consistent a motif as in Who Has Seen the Wind, the exposure to mortality does seem to draw Buckler's child away from his indulgent relationship with nature and force him into an alien world of responsibility. David feels a tension and contradiction between the deaths of the rabbits and the sensuously indulgent magic of Christmas, epitomized by the kaleidoscope: "But David couldn't bear--not tonight, especially not when he turned

the glittering kaleidoscope--to think of the rabbits strangling somewhere in the moonlight" (Mountain 69). Obviously, the most wondrous childhood occasion, Christmas, and the state most foreign to a child, death, are not compatible. David's conscious efforts in the graveyard to pursue death philosophically fail to yield answers: "But the thing had no language for him. The inaccessible mystery itself, coming physically from the ground, kept brushing away the thought that was seeking to touch it" (Mountain 91). Like Wordsworth, David feels the incongruity of youth and death: "They had made the stain brightest of all by their very unconsciousness of having put together the shiveringly matchless words 'died' and 'young'" (Mountain 93).

David's philosophical curiosity about death cannot be satisfied, and it seems to be the unexpectedness of the deaths of those close to him which sobers him and moves him away from the sensuously rich nature of childhood. In the epilogue, David's return, through memory, to the day of the attempted climb to the camp is described by him as being "like a flash of immortality" (Mountain 289). The phrase itself echoes Wordsworth's ode and associates the concept of immortality with childhood. Buckler's definition of childhood is again apparent as the excitement of returning to that early moment consists of the fact that "nothing behind you is sealed, you can live it again" (Mountain 289). The permanence and finality of death, once it penetrates the child's consciousness, destroys any innate sense of immortality, and certainly tinges the past with remorse and the futile desire to change what has happened.

Buckler, like Mitchell, explores the concepts of immortality

and mortality through relationships between the very old and the very young. In The Mountain and the Valley the relationship between Ellen and David frames the retrospective action of the novel. For Buckler, the union between the young and the old is partly based on contrast:

He [David] asked her [Ellen] a string of questions; not for information, but because he was young and she was old. To let her feel that she was helping him get things straight was the only way he knew to give her some of the splendid feeling he had so guiltily more of. (Mountain 60)

The relationship, however, is also based on similitude, for Ellen, like the child, depends on her sensory impressions to transcend the physical world:

Memory could bring back the image of the others, but not the tune of them. These pieces of cloth which had lain sometime against their flesh could bring them right into the room. (Mountain 224)²³

Moreover, her sensitive and intuitive understanding of the spirit and needs of the young, epitomized by her gift of the locket to David, establishes a spiritual rapport between these two extreme generations:

This locket had something to do with what had happened today. She'd sensed somehow what had happened. She'd sensed it because she too knew what it was like when the moonlight was on the fields when the hay was first cut and you stepped outside and it was lovely, but like a mocking . . . like everything was somewhere else. (Mountain 172)

The communication between the grandmother and the child is also emphasized in Ox Bells and Fireflies, for the grandmother could "with her gift of story write picture books in a child's mind clearer than ink" (Ox 22). Similarly, the intuitive understanding between the two is apparent in the incident involving the narrator's curiosity

about the grandmother's wrinkled face: "And when I want to do something they can't see why I want to do it, you know why, the very first one, don't you" (Ox 200).

The linear stages of life are formed into a circle, comforting in its completion and perfection, through this union of the grandmother and the child. Like Wordsworth, Buckler divides life into distinct stages. David's secrecy and guilt about Effie's death mark the end of childhood at the approximate age of fourteen. The end of youth seems to occur at the age of twenty:

But until you were twenty, you were not marked.
If one day was lost, the others closed over it
so quickly that, looking back, there was a
continuous surface. Everything was this side
of the future. (Mountain 172)

Childhood, however, can still be recaptured through mystical experiences: "Yet the conduit to childhood wasn't entirely sealed over. A child's visionary enthusiasms still surprised you at times, trapped you into delight without judgement" (Mountain 173). Thus the stages distinctly set out by Wordsworth and Buckler are not rigid, for they can be recaptured in various ways. The old, for example, re-experience childhood through intuitive communion with the young, while the gifted adult can recapture childhood through combinations of sensory memory, mystical transcendence and visionary wisdom.

iv

Buckler's concern with time, memory and retrospect as themes as well as narrative devices is reminiscent of Wordsworth's focus in The Prelude and other poems. Both writers are concerned with

recapturing and expressing the essence of childhood, a process which involves leaping into the past by transcending time through memory. In Ox Bells and Fireflies Buckler asks: "What triggers these leaps?" (Ox 21), and his answer recalls the nature of Wordsworth's "spots of time": "You never know beforehand. No pressure of will can force them-- but a slat of light surprising the dust on an empty chair can do it" (Ox 21). Obviously, the transcendence is triggered by an appeal to the senses in the manner of the Proustian "involuntary " memory, which results in sudden and unwilled revelations.²⁴ Also, the leap involves the heart or intuition rather than the mind or intellect.²⁵ Buckler is aware of the danger of sentimentality when " a writer's mind dives back into his country childhood" (Ox 21), and cites the heart, which is "far less misty-eyed than the mind, despite its sentimental name" (Ox 21) as being a "far sounder witness" (Ox 21) than the mind. The heart leaps "straight back to the pulse of another time, and takes all of you with it" (Ox 21), so that "you are standing right there" (Ox 21). The transitory nature of the experience--"Not long enough to take it all down, but long enough to give memory a second chance" (Ox 21)--contributes to its power. The child, of course, has no need to leap into the past: "But the past was only reading then [during childhood]. Whenever I closed its book, everything was always and forever Now" (Ox 23); but for the adult writer, such a leap is the only means of re-experiencing and describing the sensuous and visionary intensity of childhood: "Yes, the slat of sunshine surprises the dust on the chair--and I am suddenly back in the slant-roofed bedroom, to which the wind and the rain gave an added snugness" (Ox 25). Buckler

iterates the anti-intellectual nature of this type of memory and reminiscence:

Who needed books--when all their plots and
all their wisdom might be had, for the looking,
in a cloudburst or a smile?
Who needed books, when he had memory? (Ox 195).

Similarly, Wordsworth's Prelude is a leap into the past which reinvigorates his childhood, taking him back to

Those recollected hours that have the charm
Of visionary things, and lovely forms
And sweet sensations that throw back our life
And almost make our Infancy itself
A visible scene, on which the sun is shining. (Prel. I, 659-63)

Wordsworth consciously and methodically probes his childhood in the hope of fetching "Invigorating thoughts from former years" (Prel. I, 649), and fixing "the wavering balance of [his] mind" (Prel. I, 650). For Wordsworth, childhood holds the potential key to understanding himself: "I am lost, but see / In simple childhood something of the base / On which thy [man's] greatness stands" (Prel. XI, 330-32). His poetic and philosophical return to the past is structured; the attempt to "analyze a soul" (Prel. II, 232) is a rational exploration of the origin and development of the poetic imagination, which will expose and explain the present state of mind of the poet. The poem begins and ends in the present, with the chronological memories in between making up the history of the present mind.

Similarly, The Mountain and the Valley is framed by a prologue and epilogue dealing with the present. Like The Prelude, the text is concerned with probing a past which will provide an explanation for the present. Buckler controls the story of David's past in a manner

similar to Wordsworth's organization of his own memories. The omniscient narrator presents the past in chronological order, and like Wordsworth, forms the work into separate, coherent sections, even attempting to divide the subject's life into stages. In both works the retrospective viewpoint underlies the narrative, closely connecting the past and the present.

However, despite the careful structure of The Prelude and The Mountain and the Valley, the mystical leap of "involuntary" memory described in Ox Bells and Fireflies seems to be the basis of inspiration in both works. These leaps also form the sensuous details of the extended reminiscences. The narrator simply organizes the leaps into a chronological and coherent sequence. The second stanza of Wordsworth's poem, "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey," describes how the transcendental leaps into the past sustain and nourish the mind of the present. The description includes the attempt to articulate the visionary moment:

we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.²⁶

In the fourth stanza of this poem, Wordsworth traces his development, dividing his past into stages, based on his relationship with nature.²⁷ The close connection of these two stanzas suggests that the analytical and philosophical observations of the second passage are derived from the mystical and transcendental memories of the first. This retrospective organization of the past is based on the present interpretation of the transcendental glimpses of memory. Like The Mountain and the

Valley, "Tintern Abbey" begins and ends in the present. In between we see glimpses and flashes of "spots of time," as well as an attempt to organize those glimpses into a logical and progressive development. Such a process, more extended and elaborate, is found in The Prelude.

Wordsworth proposes his aim clearly in The Prelude. After having "revived" his mind by recalling his early years, he states: "I will forthwith bring down / Through later years, the story of my life. / The road lies plain before me" (Prel. I, 666-68). The material for that story has been recaptured through mystical experiences, as described by Wordsworth at various points in the poem. The childhood "fits of vulgar joy" (Prel. I, 609) can be valuable when they occur, but they can also be potentially valuable even if the child does not realize their power at the time. Even if "doom'd to sleep" (Prel. I, 622), "Maturer seasons [call] them forth / To impregnate and to elevate the mind" (Prel. I, 623-24). In Book II Wordsworth clarifies the means by which the mind calls forth these moments:

I deem not profitless those fleeting moods
Of shadowy exultation: not for this,
That they are kindred to our purer mind
And intellectual life; but that the soul,
Remembering how she felt, but what she felt
Remembering not, retains an obscure sense
Of possible sublimity. (Prel. II, 331-37)

The process is vague and does not seem to be controlled by reason or the will. Wordsworth also says "I see by glimpses now" (Prel. XI, 338) with respect to "the days gone by" (Prel. XI, 334) and the effort to "enshrine the spirit of the past / For future restoration" (Prel. XI, 342-43). The effect of these glimpses into the past is described in "Tintern Abbey":

I have owed to them [beauteous forms of nature]
 In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
 Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
 And passing even into my purer mind,
 With tranquil restoration.²⁸

These sensuous memories overpower the adult, instigating a transcendence of the body—"we are laid asleep / In body, and become a living soul"²⁹--and a visionary wisdom which allow him to "see into the life of things."³⁰

By recalling the past, the retrospective poet not only traces his imagination, but invigorates his present state of mind by inviting these transcendental and mystical leaps. Wordsworth celebrates the power of the mind, not only to recall these incidents, but also to inspire the accompanying emotions and thoughts:

-Unfading recollections! at this hour
 The heart is almost minewith which I felt
 From some high hill-top, on sunny afternoons
 The Kite high up among the fleecy clouds
 Pull at its rein, like an impatient Courser. (Prel. I, 517-21)

The vividness of the recollection prolongs the transcendental leap.

The narrator of Ox Bells and Fireflies constantly makes reference to these Wordsworthian leaps backward in time:

Yes, the winter sun burns cold behind that
 cloud island in the west where the dead are--
 and in one translocation after another, changing
 as swiftly as one sense can grasp the lead
 from another, I am back where . . . (Ox 38-39)

The memoir itself is a "medley of fragments" (Ox 197) of the mystical moments of childhood and adulthood:

And there were all those times when, almost
 as with the children, the moment would suddenly
 petal back in a beautification of itself: so
 that being exactly as you were, at the very
 focus of it, would send the breath of life

flashing through you like a shooting star. (Ox 103)

The narrator's use of the metaphor of the book draws attention to **these** "fragments of occasion" (Ox 196), which provide the subject matter for Ox Bells and Fireflies: "These moments were only sentences, and scattered ones, in the book of your life--but added up, they formed its vital core" (Ox 103).

Although The Mountain and the Valley is not written in the first person, its composition is similar to that of The Prelude and Ox Bells and Fireflies. In each case the narrator is omniscient because he is writing from experience in retrospect or because he is a third person narrator. The narrator of The Mountain and the Valley has the advantage of looking back at the past from the knowledge of the present, like the other narrators, and can thus manipulate and organize the moments of the past, commenting on their composition and effect: "They [Charlotte and Effie] were congested with the intensity of child-sadness that nothing can help--until the next hour, merely with coming, takes it entirely away" (Mountain 44). As well, he distances his observation through the use of similes:

They laughed at the bobbing of their own
appendages as they ran, at the sun, at the water,
at the afternoon, at just the feeling (never
dreaming what it was) of being young. Summer
impregnated their flesh like the flesh of Early
Transparents. (Mountain 103)

However, the narrator also tries to reproduce the spontaneity of childhood through evocative sensuous passages:

He went into the pantry and smelled the fruit
cakes that lay on the inverted pans they'd been
cooked in. He opened the bag of nuts and rolled

one in his palm; then put it back. He put his hand deep down into the bag and rolled all the nuts through his fingers: the smooth hazelnuts . . . the crinkled walnuts . . . the flat black butternuts . . . (Mountain 61)

He also makes distinctions between his present methodical description and the vitality of the actual events: "None of all this was consecutive and time-taking like thought. It was glimpsed instantaneously, like the figures of space. And orchestrated in the subliminal key of memory" (Mountain 81).

Buckler's narrator in Ox Bells and Fireflies repeatedly draws attention to his retrospective stance, to the extent of analyzing the nature and function of memory in his second chapter. He attempts to return to a child's perspective, but acknowledges in the second paragraph of the first chapter: "I did not think about any of it with these words, but this is the way I remember it" (Ox 3). Thus he draws an important distinction between the perspective of the child and the adult. The experiences are expressed and interpreted by the mature adult, who has the benefit of experience and a retrospective viewpoint.

Similarly, in The Prelude Wordsworth is describing his childhood as he "remembers" it. However, like the narrator of Ox Bells and Fireflies, he attempts to describe these experiences from a child's point of view--a difficult task because the child is unable to articulate his feelings and is unaware of their origin and significance. The composition of The Prelude reflects the adult's attempt to express in words those indistinct and fleeting moments of childhood. Such an attempt results in vague and complicated language as well as an obvious struggle with general terms.³¹ The narrator of Ox Bells and Fireflies

also struggles to express the intensity of childhood; his struggle is manifested in the large accumulative lists scattered throughout the novel.³² The adult is interpreting and illuminating experiences which were almost incomprehensible when they actually occurred. The deep and indistinct emotions of the child defy concise and simple language. The difficulty with language reflects the complexity of the retrospective stance, as well as the vagueness of the original experience.

The intent of each author also affects the way in which the childhood experiences are presented. Wordsworth is tracing the importance and significance of his childhood experiences with respect to his overall development. In many philosophical passages of summation he is distanced from the child he describes, and he endows the child with qualities and attributes obviously coloured by his adult perception and his retrospective consciousness of growth and development. For example, he refers to himself as "a naked Savage" (Prel. I, 304) and "a fell destroyer" (Prel. I, 318) in exaggerated self-portraits. The terms and images obviously belong to the adult, and effectively describe specific stages and qualities of the child, who would certainly not think of himself in this way. Wordsworth's use of similes and metaphors in order to describe himself also emphasizes the distanced perspective of the narrator, who is observing himself from an external point of view, and thus can compare himself with other entities. For example, in the skating episode he refers to himself as "an untired horse, / That cares not for its home" (Prel. I, 459-60), while in the boat-stealing episode he describes the movement of the boat from

an external vantage point: "my little Boat mov'd on / Even like a Man who walks with stately step / Though bent on speed" (Prel. I, 386-88). This simile serves the purpose of reflecting the mood of the child. His guilt results in his attempt to adopt dignity and composure to disguise the sin, but also forces him to escape quickly. Because the child is not fully aware of his emotions, Wordsworth cannot state directly what the child thinks and feels, but must convey these emotions indirectly by interpreting the incident on the basis of his subsequent knowledge and experience.

It is dangerous for the reader to lose sight of the retrospective stance. To do so is to endow the child with an awareness and understanding which he simply does not possess. Like Wordsworth, the narrator of Ox Bells and Fireflies has a purpose in recalling childhood. He looks at it nostalgically, its loss being comparable to, and synonymous with, the loss of a rural, idyllic life. Claude Bissell says that what Buckler "has tried to do is to give the very feel and pressure of the life that he knew and loved before the commercial revolution destroyed the small, self-contained farm and banished forever the rural Eden."³³ The celebration of this particular way of life, now lost,³⁴ tinges the descriptions of childhood with an idealism and timelessness which were obviously not perceived by the child himself. Many of the descriptions seem to be governed by a time which is "held and motionless, in a trance of benignity" (Ox 293). The contrast between the past and the present is accentuated by the use of parentheses in Chapter Two:

To chance on small wonders like that [the

revelation of the relationship between the alphabet and words] makes a fine sparkle in blood.

(Not yet the compulsion to think hard. Not yet the discovery that too much thought about things stirs them up, until they dismay you with their infinite clamor.) (Ox 37)

This technique not only attracts attention to the retrospective stance, and the distance between childhood and adulthood, but also renders childhood a pastoral paradise, while presenting adulthood as an extremely unattractive state of "ache," "worry," "doubt," "rivalry," "crying," and "screaming" (Ox 28-29). As in The Prelude, the narrator distances himself and exaggerates in order to convey his theme and effectively reproduce the "fragments" of the past. The contrast between past and present is part of this theme, but again the opposition is observed and interpreted by the retrospective adult: "Unhappiness was only a parenthesis, as happiness is only a parenthesis now" (Ox 84). Only through experience can the narrator appreciate the sensuous richness and mystical perfection of his rural childhood, and celebrate its existence while mourning its loss. This celebration and mourning are imposed onto these experiences; the child did not appreciate and analyze, but merely accepted. Both Buckler and Wordsworth warn the reader of the discrepancy between past and present, and repeatedly refer to the retrospective viewpoint:

I did not think about any of it with these words, but this is the way I remember it. (Ox 3)

A tranquillizing spirit presses now
On my corporeal frame: so wide appears
The vacancy between me and those days
Which yet have such self-presence in my mind
That, sometimes, when I think of them, I seem
Two consciousnesses, conscious of myself
And of some other Being. (Prel. II, 27-33)

The inadequacy of language is also apparent in the third person narrative of The Mountain and the Valley:

The smell of the tree grew suddenly and the memory of the smell of the oranges and the feel of the nuts. In that instant suddenly, ecstatically, burstingly, buoyantly, enclosingly, sharply, safely, stingingly, watchfully, batedly, mountingly, softly, ever so softly, it was Christmas Eve. (Mountain 65)

The extravagance of language in this passage reflects the difficulty of attempting to recapture the sensuous richness of childhood, and also conveys the inarticulate condition of the child. The distancing effect of the omniscient narrator eliminates to some extent the problem of losing sight of the retrospective stance and thus attributing to the child more understanding than he possesses. However, the narrator's attempt to recreate David's childhood from David's point of view sways the reader to understand and sympathize with this central character. In extended passages dealing with David's thoughts and emotions³⁵ it is possible for the reader to become immersed in the character, forgetting that the point of view is not only external and retrospective, as in The Prelude and Ox Bells and Fireflies, but is distanced and objective to the point of being an outside observer rather than an older and wiser self. John Orange observes that "Buckler narrates the story as though we are observing David from the outside, yet at the same time we are made to feel and think what David felt and thought at various times in his life."³⁶

The narrator does enter the minds of other characters, but the novel is primarily the story of David, and as such, the reader

becomes involved in David's dilemma. Recent criticism by critics such as John Orange, Alan Young, Douglas Barbour and Bruce MacDonald, which stresses the irony of David's character, fails to take into account the sympathy and admiration aroused by the portrait of the child.³⁷ Comments, such as Claude Bissell's, that The Mountain and the Valley is "a magnificent paean to the wonder and innocence of youth"³⁸ become lost in the more recent emphasis on Buckler's irony and disillusionment. If the adult David is childish and deluded, the fault lies as much with the shortcomings of his society as with his own Romantic temperament and character. David's failure to integrate obviously marks him as an outcast, a Herb Hennessey figure, and yet the reader does not fault David for his inability to conform to his rural society. Surely the qualities which set this child apart are admirable, and it is the stifling of these qualities which leads to their perversions and limitations. The nurture and development of the sensitivity of the young David would result in a perceptive and artistic adult. The tension, however, between David and the community of Entremont submerges his Romantic tendencies. The community instills fear and guilt in him as he allows himself to submit to its values and judgements. D.O. Spettigue postulates that "one detects in David--perhaps in Buckler himself--that sense of guilt on the part of the very articulate person that an anti-intellectual society fosters."³⁹ The irony is not concentrated on the figure of David, but on the extreme and absurd situations in which he is placed with respect to the community. The Romantic child cannot flourish or even adapt; he must deny his vitality or at least internalize it so that it affects nobody but himself.

John Orange and Alan Young's conviction of the presence of irony in the portrait of David, based on Buckler's comment that David's death on the mountain involves his "final transport of self-deception" and is thus "the crowning point of the whole dramatic irony,"⁴⁰ has become an accepted and popular critical stance⁴¹--one which often focuses on David's immaturity and his failure to leave childhood. Such views, however, seem unnecessarily harsh on the character of David. Earlier critics have criticized David's character; Warren Tallman, for example, talks negatively of David's "arrested, his childish and childlike"⁴² attitude in his article, "Wolf in the Snow" (1960). However, such criticism and judgements are more common in recent articles. J.M. Kertzer maintains that "our admiration for him [David] decreases, especially on second and subsequent readings of the novel, as his shortcomings become evident, as he proves incapable of developing his obvious talents."⁴³ Kertzer concedes that David "always engages our sympathy and often our admiration,"⁴⁴ but criticizes David's "regression," as through memory he chooses "immaturity" and becomes "childlike."⁴⁵ Douglas Barbour refers disparagingly to the childishness of the adult David,⁴⁶ and L.M. Deorksen identifies David's inability to leave childhood as the basis of his tragedy.⁴⁷ Interestingly, the studies on style by Laurence Ricou and D.J. Dooley both argue that David's language on the final journey up the mountain reveals and accentuates his childish nature.⁴⁸

Yet, why should it be assumed that this "regression" to childhood, along with its delusions, is necessarily controlled by David and is thus reprehensible? To focus the irony on the figure of David

is to fail to take into account the import of the external forces which have influenced him. Kertzer's willingness to "judge" David is perhaps unfair, or at least lacks a coherent view of the situation. Tallman states that "what is an advantage during his [David's] early years becomes a disadvantage later,"⁴⁹ raising the question as to the reason for that advantage becoming a disadvantage. The values and norms of David's community⁵⁰ transform those advantages to disadvantages and prevent David from maturing. Kertzer argues that "David's memory is not his salvation, but his undoing"⁵¹ and that David "has chosen not to develop, not to go forward."⁵² However, the community of Entremont has played its part in channelling David's energies toward the past and memory; the choice has not been left to David alone.

To shift some of the "blame" for David's dilemma onto the community certainly lessens the irony of David's portrait; implicit in the criticism of the stunted David is criticism of the society which has admired, but never attempted to understand, the Romantic child, and consequently rejected the natural development of that child. Marilyn Chapman maintains that during "the night of the play David's imagination begins a twenty-year period of self-inflicted exile from the idyllic world of his 'mind's shining population.'"⁵³ Certainly the school play marks the first devastating assault on David's imagination, as Chapman recognizes: "David is offering his 'mind's shining population' to the community for the first time, but the community rejects that offering."⁵⁴ It is, however, difficult to view the exile of his imagination as "self-inflicted," when Jud's shout of mockery and derision--"That's it, Dave. Slap em to her" (Mountain

82) reverberates throughout the novel, taking on symbolic significance as a manifestation of those elements of society which repress and destroy the imagination.⁵⁵ Jud's shout marks the gap between David and the other inhabitants of Entremont, and essentially eliminates the possibility of David communicating with his society through artistic creation. Surely, Jud's thoughtless words instigate the initial "exile" of David's imagination and his subsequent "regression"; the impetus is external rather than internal or "self-inflicted," and it is such assaults from the community which, for David, widen the gap between reality and the imagination. The feeling of perfection attained during the play is based on the artistic union of reality and fantasy: "He was creating exactly the person the words in the play were meant for" (Mountain 80). The loss of both that feeling and the gratitude for a sensitive temperament is accompanied by a need to repress and hide, rather than indulge, a Romantic sensibility. The child's sensitivity and weakness are responsible for the change, but the original impetus is unmistakably external, as epitomized by the intolerant and crude comment of Jud Spinney. As in a mystical experience, the receptive Romantic child responds intensely to the atmosphere and influence of the external world.

David's determination to climb the mountain reflects his need to unite the real world and the imaginative world, as he so briefly managed to do during the play. The mountain, and more particularly the ascension of the mountain by an individual, has its symbolic prototypes in Romantic poetry. The importance of Wordsworth's Prelude is apparent in the episodes involving the Alps and Mount Snowden.

However, it is perhaps Shelley's magnificent "Mont Blanc" which is immediately brought to mind by the conclusion of The Mountain and the Valley. The power and mystery embodied by Mont Blanc--"The secret Strength of things / Which governs thought, and to the infinite dome / Of Heaven is as a law, inhabits thee [Mont Blanc]"⁵⁶--are also invested in Buckler's mountain. Mont Blanc, like Buckler's mountain and universe, only acquires meaning through the creative participation of the individual:

And what wert thou [Mont Blanc], and earth, and stars, and sea,
If to the human mind's imaginings
Silence and solitude were vacancy?⁵⁷

Shelley's "Alastor" is also evoked by the epilogue to The Mountain and the Valley. David's death on the mountain recalls the death of the poet in Shelley's "Alastor," even to the detail of the solitary pine.⁵⁸ The imaginative and creative responses of David, along with his rather desperate search for truth and meaning, are reminiscent of the temperament and plight of Shelley's poetic figure. Indeed, Shelley's description of the poet in his preface to "Alastor" could apply to David Canaan as well:

It ["Alastor"] represents a youth of uncorrupted feelings and adventurous genius led forth by an imagination inflamed and purified through familiarity with all that is excellent and majestic, to the contemplation of the universe. He drinks deep of the fountains of knowledge, and is still insatiate His mind is at length suddenly awakened and thirsts for intercourse with an intelligence similar to itself Blasted by his disappointment, he descends to an untimely grave.⁵⁹

The death of Shelley's poet is triumphant and peaceful in its emphasis on the mystical union of poet and nature: "The poet's blood /

That ever beat in mystic sympathy / With nature's ebb and flow"⁶⁰ grows feeble, but does not stop moving until the last ray of moonlight has disappeared. David Canaan's death seems to have its origins in this ambiguous, and yet celebratory, demise of the youthful artist. The solitary setting of David's death, the top of a mountain, carries with it these associations of vision and mysticism; Wordsworth's ascent of Mount Snowdon inspires in him the recognition of

a mind sustained
By recognitions of transcendent power,
In sense conducting to ideal form,
In soul of more than mortal privilege. (Prel. XIV, 74-77)

David's search for a synthesis of reality and the imagination is obviously symbolized by his repeated attempts to climb the mountain and thus unite the mountain world of vision and imagination with the valley world of reality.⁶¹ The eventual achievement of this union in David's final triumphant ascent is clearly ironic and futile, and yet it is difficult to believe that Buckler directs his irony at the Romantic temperament that is celebrated so joyously in the early parts of the novel. On the mountain David recaptures the child's rich, sensuous perception: "A shape could be like a sound; a feeling like a shape; a smell the shadow of a touch" (Mountain 287). As a result of this sensuous perception, David experiences a mystical transcendence:

It was the thing that comes only once or
twice ever, without hint or warning. It was
the complete translation to another time. (Mountain 289)

This leap back to childhood is a return to a Romantic perception into which the external world does not intrude: "It is like a flash of immortality: nothing behind you is sealed, you can live it again"

(Mountain 289).

David, like others in similar situations, is overpowered, and does not use his will or have control of the situation:

He [David] halted suddenly.
 "Stop." he cried. Aloud.
 But the voices didn't stop. (Mountain 297)

Once the "breaker of exaltation [rushes] through him" (Mountain 289), he is at the mercy of its power: "He was almost running now, as if in escape. But the faces pursued him, with the relentless challenge of exactly how each one was" (Mountain 293). The valley world assaults David until he has to respond to it. His response involves an integration with that external environment--"He saw at last how you could become the thing you told" (Mountain 298)--as well as a need to find a "single core of meaning" (Mountain 298) among the diverse objects of that world. The passing of the "sun-shadow" (Mountain 299), associated with the valley people, through David's mind suggests the external impulse of this final mystical moment: "The translation was utter. It lasted and spread in him like the swimming exaltation of wine" (Mountain 299). As in other mystical experiences, the transcendence is initially triggered by the spirit of the external world, which often involves a sense impression instigating memory:

As then, the air softened now, all at once,
 as he stood there.
 And, without warning, suddenly again, the
 translation came. (Mountain 298)

The person involved is receptive and responsive, but cannot manipulate the effect of the transcendence on him, even if his responses and reactions played a part in its inception. Thus David lacks control

over much of his thought in this final section. Granted, his conscious responses are deluded, but to see the irony as being directed at David's temperament is to miss the import of the mystical experience, by investing David with more control and choice than he actually possesses. David does not "yield" to the fate of "non-being" as Tallman suggests.⁶² The events on the mountain, particularly David's death, are essentially beyond his control.

The completion and perfection of the final transcendental moment and the use of the word "translation" recall the exaltation of the school play, when reality and vision were united through art. Again, through the art of writing, David is planning to strive for that union. There is no doubt that the plan is naive and deluded, but the reason for David's inability to carry it out can be traced back to the school play. David's creativity has been submerged by the fear of ridicule and misunderstanding from the community which would form his subject matter and audience.⁶³ Although partially responsible for his naiveté and delusion through his sensitive response to Jud's comment, David is forced into an impossible situation because of the combination of his temperament and the society in which he is forced to function. D.G. Jones maintains that David, among other characters in Canadian fiction, "is intimidated by the world around him; he lives with reference to an external order that is not his own."⁶⁴

David's "regression" to a childlike state is as much a comment on the society as on the character. Although deluded as to his artistic ability, David is triumphant as he finally achieves a visionary integration of the mountain and the valley worlds.⁶⁵ The irony lies

in the fact that nobody will benefit from this vision, not because of the shortcomings of David, but because of the community which stifles David's Romantic temperament. Surely, David's intensity is based on the type of "feeling" praised by Buckler:

But I think the only thing in this world that
saves us at all is feeling, and it seems to me
you bloody well go the hell ahead and feel.
And never mind what people say.⁶⁶

David, however, does "mind what people say." Only in early childhood and on the mountain is he free to "live by the heart," as prescribed by Buckler:

Heart is what we live by; I don't think we
live by mind, I think we live by heart. And
I like people with heart.⁶⁷

Buckler's praise of "feeling" and "heart" makes it difficult to believe that he is seriously criticizing a character who manifests those positive qualities so strongly, especially when contrasted with the other inhabitants of his community. That Buckler "wants the reader to stand back and make judgements about David's overwhelming romanticism"⁶⁸ seems doubtful, and to say that it is David's romanticism which "leads finally to his alienation and solitude"⁶⁹ is to consider only half the issue. As D.G. Jones argues, David's isolation does not merely comment on David as a character, but "reflects the disintegration of the old rural ways of life and the final failure of the cultural community of the previous generations."⁷⁰ Even Margaret Atwood, whose view of David is fairly bleak, places the onus for David's failure on the community: "A great writer, an artist of any kind, is not imaginable in Entremont."⁷¹ To look at David's dilemma in this larger

context is to make Buckler's portrait of David consistent throughout the novel; the reader retains sympathy for the thwarted Romantic temperament, as does the author. Ian A. Atkinson argues that "Buckler's tone is neither bitter nor harsh"⁷² as far as David is concerned. Such a view is contradicted by more recent criticism which focuses on the ironic intent of Buckler with respect to his major character.

In the leap backwards to the vivid language, sensuous richness and mystical joy of childhood, Buckler suggests that only by regressing to a state untouched by, or at least unaffected by, the censure and values of the external world can reality and imagination be joined. That the synthesis takes place in a spot as far removed from the valley as possible, and in David's mind alone, intimates the irrelevance of the moment for the valley world. Indeed, the movement of the partridge "down, between the trees, down, swoopingly, directly, intensely, exactly down over the far side of the mountain" (Mountain 302)⁷³ takes David's triumphant integration of the mountain and the valley far beyond Entremont. David's death is triumphant, for he actually becomes part of the natural world: "the two outlines [David's and the fallen log's] were as one" (Mountain 301). This union recalls similar fleeting sensations from his mystical childhood: "He seemed to be floating along with the brook" (Mountain 28).

The death on the mountain and the return to childhood distance David's triumphant moment from the Entremont world of the present. The need for that distance, however, is understandable. The receptivity and vision necessary for the transcendence are only possible for one who has a child's perspective, not yet tainted by the knowledge of

"Jud-like" values and judgements. Moreover, the vision, although concerned with the valley world, does not touch it in any way. The irony of the situation does not involve the figure of David alone, for his death is a personal triumph as it culminates and completes a visionary revelation for which he has been striving. The irony and futility become apparent in the relationship between David and the community, in the manner in which each has misunderstood and yet sympathized with the other. The conclusion is bleak only insofar as David and Entremont continue to fail to meet; such a failure, however, seems inevitable. Buckler does not reject David or criticize him for his temperament. If he is deluded, such delusion is understandable, and the reader, along with the author, sympathizes with the Romantic temperament which is given no chance to function in a constructive manner.

Unlike Wordsworth and Brian O'Connal, David Canaan fails to use his visionary experiences of childhood to benefit the community. Brian O'Connal manages to adapt to the adult world and take on his responsibilities in the community to which he belongs.⁷⁴ This adjustment involves the realization that the visionary gleam of childhood is something which passes, but within Brian's community there are certain ideals and vestiges of that gleam in the form of Digby, Milt Palmer and Uncle Sean. These links with the visionary world of the prairie and the Young Ben help to ease Brian's transition as there is some familiarity in their attraction. For David, however, the separation between the mountain and the valley is complete and only widens with time. Although Ellen at times shows promise of bridging

this gap,⁷⁵ she ultimately fails to communicate this possibility to David. Like David, any unusual vitality she once possessed is now suppressed, due to her submission to appearances and propriety. It is thus difficult for David to leave behind the visionary gleam of childhood, as there is no apparent substitute or even compromise in the adult world of Entremont or the alternative urban setting. The resultant dilemma is one of isolation and alienation.

In both Who Has Seen the Wind and The Mountain and the Valley the Romantic child vies with an unsympathetic society. Although W.O. Mitchell exposes the hypocrisy and insularity of the small prairie town, especially in the exaggerated portraits of Mrs. Abercrombie and Mr. Powelly, the final impression is fairly moderate, as sympathetic characters offset the oppressive ones. More significantly, Brian's fairly smooth transition into that community renders it less hostile than Mitchell at times suggests; Brian can even retain the sensitivity and vision of childhood, despite the necessary relinquishment of the "feeling." Buckler, on the other hand, paints a much bleaker picture simply by portraying a society which will not accommodate the Romantic child in any way. Although the repressive forces of Entremont are not as obvious or aggressive as those of Brian's community,⁷⁶ the final outcome on the mountain is devastating. Distanced from the community by time and place, the Wordsworthian "chosen Son" is an outcast, retreating from society rather than acting as its prophet or spokesperson. The Romantic child's vision is curtailed and wasted as no adjustment or transition is offered by the community. Rather than accepting the mysticism of childhood as something which necessarily

passes or is modified, David clings to it because of an absence of alternatives and a lack of any means of development.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

¹Robert D. Chambers, Sinclair Ross and Ernest Buckler (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1975) 94.

²David Canaan and the narrator of Ox Bells and Fireflies are unquestionably "Romantic" in a Wordsworthian sense. Their early years are dominated by imagination and vision. John Orange, for example, assumes David's Romantic temperament when he refers to The Mountain and the Valley as a "novel about the life and early death of a romantic." See John Orange, "Ernest Buckler, Profiles in Canadian Literature 2 19.

³The phrase is from The Prelude III, 82. Warren Tallman says that David "moves among others with the aura about him of the chosen person, the mysterious Nazirite who is motioned toward an unknowable destiny by unseen gods." See Warren Tallman, "Wolf in the Snow," Contexts of Canadian Criticism 237.

⁴I use the word "common" in the sense of "ordinary" to refer to those people who are not "chosen," and in whom the poetic spirit is "abated and suppressed" (Prel. II, 278)

⁵Ernest Buckler, The Mountain and the Valley (1952; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1970) 28. All further references to The Mountain and the Valley are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Mountain.

⁶Ernest Buckler, "My First Novel," Ernest Buckler, ed. Gregory M. Cook (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972) 26.

⁷Buckler, "My First Novel" 26.

⁸D.O. Spettigue, "Reminiscent Sketches," Ernest Buckler, ed. Cook 130-31.

⁹In his interview with Donald Cameron, Mitchell says that education "never did really make me a rational animal. At least I had not the faith in reason as the way to truth without an appreciation of the intuitive route." See Cameron, "Sea Caves and Creative Partners," Conversations With Canadian Novelists 2: 61.

¹⁰Buckler's ironic treatment of David will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter. In this context, I refer to irony in its gentlest form, as Buckler exposes the intensity and excesses of the Romantic child.

¹¹Like Mitchell, Buckler seems to follow the tradition of Rousseau in his emphasis on the senses as the basis of the child's perception.

¹²R.E. Watters, "The Mountain and the Valley," Ernest Buckler ed. Cook 45.

¹³Note the use of synesthesia--"felt the first incarnate taste"--in this quotation. The richness and intensity of these sensuous impressions of childhood are often conveyed through synesthesia by Buckler.

¹⁴Ernest Buckler, Ox Bells and Fireflies (1968; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1974) 40-41. All further references to Ox Bells and Fireflies are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Ox.

¹⁵Examples of these list-like descriptions are found in the attempt to describe the effect of the words in the play and the attempt to describe the "shine" experienced in the play itself (Mountain 59, 81-82).

¹⁶Wordsworth speaks of the "influence" of the sun: "I pursued / My way beneath the mellowing sun, that shed / Mild influence . . . (1850 Prel. I, 101-03). For examples of references to the sun and childhood, see The Prelude I, 295, 663; II, 97-98, 184, 387-389. For examples of the references to the wind and childhood, see The Prelude I, 348, 479; II, 116-17. For examples of references to water and childhood, see The Prelude I, 272, 292-94, 605; II, 177. Brian's world is also affected by the sun--"rimed trees and hedges twinkling in the sunlight" (Wind 96)--and, of course, the wind.

¹⁷The word "wonder," used repeatedly by Buckler, is also used by Wordsworth. Wordsworth maintains that the sensation of "sublimity" is dependent upon "personal fear or upon wonder." See Wordsworth, "The Sublime and the Beautiful," The Prose Works of William Wordsworth 2: 353

¹⁸For references to the "sun-shiver," see The Mountain and the Valley 29, 93. For references to the "sun-shadow," see The Mountain and the Valley 298-99.

¹⁹Marilyn Chapman begins her article, "The Progress of David's Imagination," by referring to David's dream of the two roads. She speaks of the difficulty of bringing together the imaginative world and the social world as suggested by the dream. She does not, however, connect the two selves with the concept of transcendentalism. See

Marilyn Chapman, "The Progress of David's Imagination," Studies in Canadian Literature 3 (1978): 186-87.

20This Berkeleian idea of the senses of the individual creating the object recalls Palmer's conversation with Digby in Who Has Seen the Wind:

"Just the way I figgered--same thing--a little cleaner, that's all--nothin' outside--all sensations."

"That's right," said Digby.

"All insidea me," went on Palmer (Wind 284)

21This concept of a "childlike" David in the epilogue will be studied in detail later in the chapter.

22The skating episodes in The Mountain and the Valley and The Prelude are strikingly similar, in that in each case the excitement and movement of the child animate the external world, so that the glow of the child is reflected back to him by the natural world (Mountain 72-73 and Prel. I, 460-73).

23The passage recalls Brian's grandmother, who also associates memory with the senses: "Her mind took out the sensory fragments, handled them briefly, then laid them away again" (Wind 97).

24Buckler has indicated his admiration for Proust. See Buckler, "My First Novel" 24.

25D.O. Spettigue makes the following comment: "Specifically, memory is seen as a function of the active mind and so its recollections are less real than those inexplicable translations by which the present and the past momentarily unite." See Spettigue, "Reminiscent Sketches," 131.

26Wordsworth, "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey," The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth 2: lines 45-49.

27Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey" lines 58-111.

28Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey" lines 26-30.

29Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey" lines 45-46.

30Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey " line 49.

31See, for example, The Prelude I, 428-51.

32See, for example, Ox Bells and Fireflies 40-41, 51-52.

³³Claude Bissell, "Return to Innocence and Wonder," Ernest Buckler, ed. Cook 119.

Alan Young also concentrates on the theme of the loss of the pastoral world in Buckler's work. See Alan Young, Ernest Buckler (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1976). Also, see Alan Young, "The Pastoral Vision of Ernest Buckler in The Mountain and the Valley," The Dalhousie Review 53 (1973): 219-26.

In his introduction to the NCL edition of Ox Bells and Fireflies, Young praises Buckler's evocation of the pastoral:

What chiefly matters, I feel, is the way
Buckler manages to evoke that universal human
desire to return to some lost paradise world,
the memory of which appears to lie within our
collective subconscious, providing a model
against which the spiritual poverty of our
present existence may be evaluated. (Ox xii)

³⁴Buckler says of Ox Bells and Fireflies: "This way of life, with all its distinctive customs, institutions, values, tasks, recreations, idioms of speech and behavior, atmospheres and textual variety, has now vanished forever." See Ernest Buckler, "My Third Book," Ernest Buckler, ed. Cook 117.

³⁵See, for example, The Mountain and the Valley 27-29.

³⁶John Orange, "Ernest Buckler," Profiles in Canadian Literature 2 19.

³⁷John Orange took this view as early as 1970, in his dissertation. See John Orange, "Ernest Buckler: The Masks of the Artist," Phil. M. diss., University of Toronto, 1970. Also, see Alan Young's Ernest Buckler (1976), and the following articles published in 1976:

Douglas Barbour, "David Canaan: The Failing Heart," Studies in Canadian Literature 1 (1976) 64-75.

Alan Young, "The Genesis of Ernest Buckler's The Mountain and the Valley," Journal of Canadian Fiction 16 (1976): 89-96.

Bruce F. MacDonald, "Word-Shapes, Time and the Theme of Isolation in The Mountain and the Valley," Studies in Canadian Literature 1 (1976): 194-209.

Alan Young, "A Note on Douglas Barbour's 'David Canaan: The Failing Heart,'" Studies in Canadian Literature 1 (1976): 244-46.

³⁸Claude Bissell, Introduction to The Mountain and the Valley xii.

³⁹Spettigue, "The Way It Was," Ernest Buckler, ed. Cook 107.

⁴⁰ Ernest Buckler, Letter to Dudley H. Cloud, May 15, 1951, in the Buckler Manuscript Collection, University of Toronto Library. Cited in John Orange, "Ernest Buckler," Profiles in Canadian Literature 2 23.

⁴¹ Early critics have often stressed the negative aspects of David's character. The "discovery" of Buckler's ironic intent, however, has definitely led to criticism which emphasizes David's failure, presenting him as a character to be pitied and even held in contempt for his "weakness."

⁴² Tallman 238.

⁴³ J.M. Kertzer, "The Past Recaptured," Canadian Literature 65 (1975): 85.

⁴⁴ Kertzer 85.

⁴⁵ Kertzer 85.

⁴⁶ Barbour 67.

⁴⁷ L.M. Deorksen, "The Mountain and the Valley: An Evaluation," World Literature Written in English 19.1 (1980): 47.

⁴⁸ Laurence Ricou, "David Canaan and Buckler's Style in The Mountain and the Valley," The Dalhousie Review 57 (1977-78): 684-96. D.J. Dooley, "Style and Communication in The Mountain and the Valley," The Dalhousie Review 57 (1977-78): 671-83. Rpt. revised "The Mountain and the Valley: The Uncreated Word," D.H. Dooley, Moral Vision in the Canadian Novel (Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1979) 49-59.

⁴⁹ Tallman 237.

⁵⁰ Anthony B. Dawson claims: "Despite the village milieu, there is little sense of community. See Anthony Dawson, "Coming of Age in Canada," Mosaic 11.3 (1978): 52. Although the community is not as prominent as Mitchell's community, for example, the spirit of the community is conveyed in an unobtrusive and effective manner. The inarticulate family is part of the larger inarticulate community. The behavior and attitude of many of the characters, such as Rachel, Bess, Herb and Steve, are manifestations of the larger, more general attitudes of the society in which they live.

⁵¹ Kertzer 85.

⁵² Kertzer 85.

⁵³ Chapman 198.

⁵⁴Chapman 187.

⁵⁵Chapman also identifies the interruptions of Rachel (Mountain 196-98) and Toby and Anna (Mountain 263) as serving the same oppressive function as Jud's intrusion. See Chapman 189-90.

⁵⁶Percy Bysshe Shelley, "Mont Blanc," The Complete Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, ed. Thomas Hutchinson (London: Oxford University Press, 1943) lines 139-41. All subsequent references to Shelley's poetry are from this edition.

⁵⁷Shelley, "Mont Blanc" lines 142-44.

⁵⁸See Shelley, "Alastor" lines 561-70 and Buckler, The Mountain and the Valley 297.

⁵⁹Shelley, Preface to "Alastor."

⁶⁰Shelley, "Alastor" lines 651-59.

⁶¹Many critics have, of course, commented on the significance of the mountain. The symbol, in its powerful and general manner, suggests diverse literary archetypes. William Arthur Deacon speaks of the mountain in very general terms as "representing vision, achievement and power." See Deacon, "Every Little Movement Has A Meaning All Its Own," Ernest Buckler, ed. Cook 31.

Margaret Atwood turns to Tennyson and the Bible to emphasize the specific aspect of vision associated with the symbol of the mountain. See Atwood, Survival (Toronto: Anansi, 1970) 186.

D.G. Jones is even more specific in his biblical references to "Adam on the first hill that ever was" and the inability of Moses to "enter the promised land." Like Atwood, Jones concentrates on the vision afforded by the mountain. See D.G. Jones, Butterfly on Rock (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970) 23-25.

The visionary aspect stressed by Deacon, Atwood and Jones concentrates on the relationship between the mountain and the valley, and how the valley can be illuminated by the vision achieved on the mountain. This view seems to be Buckler's intent. Alan Young's comment that the mountain is the "world beyond the Valley" seems to impose a separation and division which Buckler did not intend. See Young, Ernest Buckler 31. Two critics refer to Wordsworth while discussing Buckler's symbol of the mountain. Warren Tallman comments:

That the male mountain and the female valley
of the title loom up so prominently in the
novel is surely a sign, here as with
Wordsworth, that natural objects have been
endowed with all the seeming numinousness of
their inaccessible human equivalents.

See Tallman 237. It is, of course, the human element which endows these natural objects with "numinousness." Clara Thomas refers to

two "literary prefigurations" of David's mystical experience on the mountain: Wordsworth's "On Crossing the Alps" passage and Thoreau's description of the summit of Mt. Ktaadn. See Thomas, "New England Romanticism and Canadian Fiction," Journal of Canadian Fiction 2.4 (1973): 85. Thomas goes on to explore the Thoreau reference, but Wordsworth's view of mountains, as expressed in his prose writings, is interesting in this context. The importance of mountains to Wordsworth is obvious in his description of their forms, surfaces and colours in "A Guide Through the District of the Lakes." See Wordsworth, "A Guide Through the District of the Lakes," The Prose Works of William Wordsworth 2: 175-79.

In his essay, "The Sublime and the Beautiful," Wordsworth uses the example of the mountain to illustrate his concept of sublimity, based on form, power and duration. See Wordsworth, "The Sublime and the Beautiful" 351. Wordsworth's extended discussion of mountains and sublimity concentrates on the idea of unity:

For whatever suspends the comparing power of
the mind & possesses it with a feeling or image
of intense unity, without a conscious contemplation
of parts, has produced that state of mind
which is the consummation of the sublime
the head & the front of the sensation is
intense unity.

See Wordsworth, "The Sublime and the Beautiful" 353-54.

It would seem that this unity stressed by Wordsworth is relevant to Buckler's mountain. David's vision is certainly based on unity in a general sense; of himself and nature, of himself and the valley people and of imagination and reality. As in Wordsworth's case, the mountain provides a sublimity which prevents the vision of the world as disparate parts. True sublimity unites these parts into a harmonious whole.

⁶²Tallman 248.

⁶³Cook comments on Watters' implication that Entremont "is a community that may not deserve the literature it gets." Cook observes that "David Canaan's death then at the moment of his realization of his function is the epitome of that irony, that myth of Canadian and human society." See Watters, "Unknown Literature," Ernest Buckler, ed. Cook. See Cook, Introduction to Ernest Buckler, ed. Cook. Entremont does not "deserve" the literature because it fails to recognize and nurture the Romantic temperament at the basis of the creation of that literature.

⁶⁴D.G. Jones 158. Similarly, Claude Bissell comments that the "study of human community threatens to become a study of human isolation." See Bissell, Introduction to The Mountain and the Valley xii.

⁶⁵Clara Thomas, for example, maintains that "At this moment,

David Canaan is complete." Thomas objects to Atwood's emphasis on David's death as a failure. See Thomas 85.

⁶⁶Cameron, "A Conversation With An Irritated Oyster," Conversations With Canadian Novelists 1: 11.

⁶⁷Cameron 1:11.

⁶⁸Orange, "Ernest Buckler," Profiles in Canadian Literature 20.

⁶⁹Orange, "Ernest Buckler," Profiles in Canadian Literature 20.

⁷⁰D.G. Jones 23.

⁷¹Atwood 187.

⁷²Ian A. Atkinson, "Imagery and Symbolism," Ernest Buckler, ed. Cook 134.

⁷³Spettigue interprets this passage as being a portrayal of the partridge flying into the valley:

But the unity of the mountain and the valley
is completed as a partridge flies from the
mountain to the valley.

See Spettigue, "The Way It Was" 106. Surely, the word "far," however, indicates a movement away from the valley and the action of the novel.

⁷⁴Laurence Ricou contrasts Brian O'Connal and David Canaan, stressing that Brian learns from spots of time, whereas David retreats into them. See Ricou, "David Canaan and Buckler's style in The Mountain and the Valley" 694.

⁷⁵The most obvious gesture to bridge this gap occurs when Ellen gives David the locket. Ellen's feeling of a lack of communion between a visionary world of freedom and the everyday world of reality is similar to David's. She fails, however, to provide David with any help or guidance as far as this problem is concerned.

⁷⁶The darker forces of David's inarticulate community are submerged and suppressed rather than displayed and exaggerated, as in Who Has Seen the Wind. The community is obviously not evil, but its insularity, intolerance and lack of communication are manifested in the acts and attitudes of its characters.

CHAPTER THREE

BRIAN O'CONNAL AND DAVID CANAAN'S PREDECESSORS AND CONTEMPORARIES

i

Brian O'Connal and David Canaan obviously have Canadian predecessors, who form the transitional link between the child of Wordsworth's Prelude and the children created by Mitchell and Buckler. The source of these links is the large group of early twentieth-century regional idylls, the majority of which are dismissed by Desmond Pacey as "forgotten" and not "worthy of revival."¹ Pacey does discuss these works, but only because they are "interesting as a collective phenomenon,"² not because they display any literary merit. This vast production of regional idylls has always elicited harsh criticism, which merely concedes that it comprises a large, and thus significant, stage in Canada's literary development.³ To some extent, a distrust of popularity seems to be responsible for the general critical consensus that these novels are trivial works. However, the appreciation of, and admiration for, the work of writers such as L.M. Montgomery and Ralph Connor even in countries outside Canada⁴ perhaps suggests an overly eager condemnation and shame on our part of a literature which is indeed "popular," but not necessarily "common." In any case, the importance of this phenomenon in the development of Canadian fiction cannot be denied, and its contribution to the establishment of the Canadian Romantic child is crucial. L.M. Montgomery and Ralph Connor

provide a transition from the Wordsworthian child of the Lake District to the Canadian child of the Annapolis Valley and the prairie. Furthermore, these writers anticipate many of the central themes and concerns of later novels dealing with the child.

Two other works, however, focusing on the child and the wilderness, serve to illustrate the receptivity and appropriateness of nineteenth-century Canada to the basic associations and philosophy surrounding the Romantic child, and perhaps explain to a certain extent the reasons for such an intense and extended interest in the Romantic child in Canadian literature. In these works, Catharine Parr Traill's Canadian Crusoes: A Tale of the Rice Lake Plains and Ernest Thompson Seton's Two Little Savages, we see in the wilderness and the farm the natural division and opposition between nature and society. This separation of nature and society, central to Romanticism, is seen in Wordsworth's distinction between the Lake District and London, between a rural way of life based in nature and a social existence dependent upon people and institutions. This opposition between nature and society is also apparent in the use of exotic settings in Romantic literature, such as Coleridge's Antarctic and Mary Shelley's Arctic,⁵ which provide an extreme opposition and removal from the institutions and normalcy of society. For Wordsworth, London embodies the horrors of civilized society, while the Lake District possesses the freedom and vitality of the natural realm.⁶ The difference between the two settings during Wordsworth's time is striking in its extremity.

Similarly, the density and immensity of the Canadian wilderness result in its extreme opposition to society. In Canadian Crusoes,

for example, nature, in the form of the wilderness, is far removed from the domestic setting. The Canadian landscape and lifestyle introduce two contrasting settings, and the Romantic child, appropriately placed within nature, is forced in his or her development to contend with the obvious void between nature and society. This "void" or opposition, with which so many Romantic writers are concerned,⁷ exists in an exaggerated and highly perceptible form in nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canada.

The children in Canadian Crusoes display Romantic tendencies, and Catharine in particular seems to be cast in a Wordsworthian mould. She approaches an almost mystical relationship with nature at times, and Traill's language often contains Wordsworthian echoes. The phrase, "holy calm,"⁸ for example, is used to describe Catharine's response to the beauty of nature: "Never had Catharine looked upon a scene so still or fair to the eye; a holy calm seemed to spread its influence over her young mind, and peaceful tears stole down her cheeks" (Crusoes 64). Significantly, Wordsworth uses this phrase when attempting to describe a transcendental experience:

Oft in those moments such a holy calm
 Did overspread my soul, that I forgot
 That I had bodily eyes, and what I saw
 Appear'd like something in myself, a dream,
 A prospect in my mind. (Prel. II, 367-71)

Traill does not describe Catharine's response to nature in the definite and detailed terms used by Wordsworth, but the Wordsworthian phrase "holy calm," and the description of Catharine "gazing on the calm beauty of nature, and communing with her own heart" (Crusoes 64) suggest a conventional Romantic relationship between child and nature.⁹

Catharine and Louis respond to the natural scene with their senses--"to all such sights and sounds the lively Catharine and her cousin were not indifferent" (Crusoes 28)--and Traill stresses the appreciation of nature for its own sake: "she loved the flowers for their own native sweetness and beauty, not because poets had sung of them" (Crusoes 41). Catharine is set apart from Louis and Hector, not only because of her sex--"You boys are always so unfeeling" (Crusoes 62)--but also because of her sensitive nature and receptivity to external impressions: "Upon Catharine, in particular, these things made a deep impression" (Crusoes 75). In these often religious communions with nature, Wordsworthian language again appears: "A peaceful calm diffused itself over her mind" (Crusoes 76).¹⁰

Like the young Wordsworth, Hector and Catharine respond to both the sublime and the beautiful: "These children were not insensible to the beauties of nature, and both Hector and his sister had insensibly imbibed a love of the grand and picturesque" (Crusoes 70). Also, like Wordsworth, Catharine feels regret for the animals that are killed: "in spite of hunger, [she] could not help regretting the death of the mother bird" (Crusoes 45-46). Despite significant differences from Wordsworth's situation--these animals must be killed for the children's survival and Catharine does not actually take part in their destruction--Traill stresses the same theme of the child's guilt and regret for destroying the harmony and union of nature.¹¹ Clara Thomas points out that Traill is concerned with the "conviction that, according to God's will, man is designed to be an ordering agent, and not a conqueror in the world of nature."¹²

Again, death is incompatible with childhood, and it is Catharine's confrontation with the potential sacrifice of Indiana which marks the end of her childhood and her entry into the realm of responsibility:

she communed with her own heart in the still
watches of the night--it seemed as if a new life
had been infused within her. She no longer thought
and felt as a child; the energies of her mind
had been awakened, ripened into maturity as
it were, and suddenly expanded. (Crusoes 283-84)

Again, the language of the passage recalls Wordsworth, in the use of such verbs as "communed," "infused," "awakened," and "ripened," as does the emphasis on the end of one stage of life and the beginning of another.

The Romantic influences and echoes stand out in Canadian Crusoes, but so does its particular Canadian setting and situation, as Agnes Strickland emphasizes in her preface.¹³ The wilderness provides a setting alien to that of the family and society and, in its untouched state, is appropriately associated with the "lost children."¹⁴ The unique and novel aspect of the Canadian wilderness suggests that Canadian Crusoes is more than what Clara Thomas terms "a pleasant adaptation and transposition of one of the most powerful fables in western literature to a Canadian setting."¹⁵ If the society has to somehow contend with the wilderness of the new world, then the Romantic child is an obvious device to bridge the gap between the rationality and decorum of civilization and the freedom and energy of the natural realm. Even though Traill does include the reality of the terror of the wilderness (the "holy calm" description is followed by the intrusion

of the wolf), the effect of nature on the children seems to be positive and healing in the true Romantic fashion. As Carl Ballstadt argues, Canadian Crusoes "expresses the myth of Canadian virtue deriving from contact with the immense wilderness. Her [Traill's] children are not brutalized by the experience, but made whole."¹⁶ Consequently, the children manage to return to civilization and help to establish a society which Ballstadt terms a "new order."¹⁷ Like Brian O'Connell, they bring together the realms of nature and society in a constructive manner.

The Canadian wilderness is also conducive to the Romantic motif of the noble savage. In his study, The Noble Savage, Hoxie Fairchild notes that there is "an affinity between the unblemished forests and the pure heart of childhood."¹⁸ Traill manages, in *Indiana*, to combine two basic aspects of the noble savage--the Indian and the child--who, according to Fairchild, share "simplicity, instinctive goodness and seclusion from evil influences."¹⁹ *Indiana* definitely conforms to Fairchild's definition of a noble savage and child of nature as one "who is born and grows to maturity in the heart of some wild region untouched by civilization, and who imbibes beauty, innocence and an unerring moral sense from the scenery which surrounds her."²⁰ The fact that Catharine, Louis and Hector are thrown into the wilderness forces them to become children of nature and acquire to some extent the conventional benefits of such a position, identified by Fairchild as contact with

great physical beauty; love of the scenes amid
which they live; a sense of kinship with all

living creatures; exquisite sensibilities; and
 a moral instinct independent of, and often
 hostile to, analytical reason.²¹

Although Traill does reveal this moral instinct, she does not develop in any detail its opposition to reason and "civilized" society.

Ernest Thompson Seton in Two Little Savages, however, pits his trio against civilization and, to use Fairchild's words, sees his children of nature as figures of "primitive simplicity and intuitive virtue meant to teach a lesson to sophisticated society."²² Since the children in this novel are only "playing" at being lost, there is communication between the worlds of the woods and the farm; the relationship between the two settings, as well as the role of the children, is more explicit than in Canadian Crusoes. Again, the child of nature and the noble savage are united as Yan, Sam and Guy "go Indian":

This was where he [Yan] would lead his ideal life--the life of an Indian with all that is bad and cruel left out. Here he would show men how to live without cutting down all the trees, spoiling all the streams, and killing every living thing.²³

Essentially, Yan wants to live in harmony with nature in the style advocated by the idealistic Romantic philosophy of the noble savage. The wilderness and presence of the Indian invite Canadian writers to embrace this Romantic figure of the noble savage, which includes, according to Fairchild, "the Indian, the child, the dalesman, the Wanderer and the poet of nature."²⁴

Like the young Wordsworth, the boys in Two Little Savages feel guilt and remorse for thoughtlessly destroying nature:

Now the boys felt very guilty and sorry. By thoughtlessly giving way to their hunting instincts they had killed a harmless mother Squirrel in the act of protecting her young, and the surviving little ones had no prospect but starvation. (Savages 339)

Yan particularly feels guilty because of his idealistic desire to commune with nature. At an earlier point he attempts to explain to his mother this boyish lack of respect and reverence for the natural realm, which often results in death:

I didn't mean to kill it [the Shore-lark], only to get it. You gather flowers because you love to keep them near you, not because you want to destroy them. They die and you are sorry. I only tried to gather the Shore-lark as you would a flower. It died, and I was very, very sorry. (Savages 98)

Although Yan, like Wordsworth, longs to respect nature, he cannot control the energy, curiosity and carelessness which often result in its destruction. Seton's description of the child's behavior is realistic. Despite his capacity for destruction, Yan sincerely loves nature, and displays an open receptivity similar to Wordsworth's: "In the woods, the silent watcher sees the most" (Savages 345).

Yan's other Wordsworthian characteristics include his sensitivity and isolation as an artist. His "brilliant gifts" (Savages 87) consist of sketching and writing poetry--the former results in punishment at school (Savages 82) and the latter sets him apart as an outcast, or at least as "different" from his friends: "Yan's face was burning with shame and anger. He had a poetic streak, and was morbidly sensitive about anyone seeing its product" (Savages 235). Yan suffers ridicule for his poetry, and like David Canaan, is "tormented with

the knowledge-hunger" (Savages 43), using language and information which place him in awkward situations because of their "unchildlike" nature:

"Well, that shows what you know," retorted Yan, "for those exquisite winged gems are at once the most diminutive and brilliantly coloured of the whole feathered race." This phrase Yan had read somewhere and his overapt memory had seized on it.

"Pshaw!" said Sam. "Sounds like a book"(Savages 232)

The realm of mystery and wonder is Yan's province, as it is Wordsworth's, and Yan's relationship with nature is obviously different than the adult's or even the less perceptive and sensitive child's:

Evidently this man considered the Glen--his Glen--as an ordinary, well-known bit of bush, possibly part of his farm--not by any means the profound mystery that Yan would have had it. (Savages 94)

The boys' conscious efforts to shed all the trappings of "civilization"--"Let's be Injuns and do everything like Injuns" (Savages 118)--accentuate the difference between the woods of the children and the farm of the adults. The romance and challenge of the forest obviously help to set it up as a realm superior to a society which produces criminals such as Bill Hennard. Seton stresses the simplicity and justice of the forest, even when it involves violence and danger, and the complications and deceit of the established society. Caleb and Granny de Neuville, the two characters associated with the woods, are ostracized by society. Sam judges them by society's standards, saying of Caleb: "He's a queer old duck" (Savages 130) and of Granny: "But she's awful queer" (Savages 133). These two characters, however, like "the collarless stranger," who shares Yan's love of nature,

provide the sympathy and wisdom which Yan craves, but cannot find in his familiar society: "He was in a dream, for he had found at last the greatest thing on earth--sympathy--broad, intelligent, comprehensive sympathy" (Savages 43).

Seton's nature figures, whether they be children, hermits or witches, live in a realm far removed from society, and depend upon their understanding of, and respect for, nature in order to survive. These outcast characters, in their isolation and eccentricity, are reminiscent of the Wordsworthian solitary figure, living in harmony with nature. The mystery surrounding them contrasts sharply with the ordinary dreariness of the accepted members of society. The association of the children with these characters is similar to Catharine, Louis and Hector's association with Indiana; in both cases the trio of children is pulled away from society and immersed in the wilderness. The association with the hermit or the Indian seems to cultivate and develop the characteristics of the child of nature, the Romantic child, which have been suppressed until this point.

Yan's sojourn in the wilderness as a "noble savage" is, of course, only temporary. Seton, however, does make explicit the effect of the wilderness on the temperament and future of the child. Yan has no choice but to return to his family--"Yes! He would go back" (Savages 536)--but he returns with some insight concerning himself: "his was the kingdom of the Birds and Beasts and the power to comprehend them" (Savages 536). Yan plans to function within society as a naturalist, and will obviously benefit from his wilderness experience: "in his hours of freedom he would keep a little kingdom of his own"

(Savages 536). His situation is not unlike Brian O'Connal's, in that he manages to bridge the two worlds, and as a naturalist will teach society the necessary reverence and respect for nature. Yan's almost mystical joy concerning this recognition of his "purpose" in life—"And he seemed to float, happy in the fading of all doubt, glad in the sense of victory" (Savages 536)—results in the extended presence of "the uplift of his vision" (Savages 536), allowing him to display the trust that invites the affection of Old Turk. Old Turk's acceptance of Yan symbolizes a larger acceptance of Yan by the lifestyle and environment associated with Caleb.

Two Little Savages is pervaded by humour and the practical facts of woodcraft.²⁵ As well, however, Seton gives Yan a central position as a sensitive and receptive character, whose artistic talents and love of nature distinguish him as a Romantic child. Yan's feelings of affinity with strange outcasts, his own alienation and distrust of society, as well as his dedication to nature, are reminiscent of Wordsworth, and anticipate Brian O'Connal and David Canaan. Both Seton and Traill use the Romantic child as a link between nature and society; the child is "lost" by society and is only restored to that society when his or her Romantic temperament has been strengthened and developed in the wilderness. As in later pieces of Canadian fiction, the child transfers the wisdom and integrity gained in the natural world to society, usually benefitting society to some degree. The sensitive and receptive attitude of the Romantic child thus becomes the vehicle through which nature unites with, or at least affects, society.

Ralph Connor's Glengarry School Days immediately associates the child with nature, while disassociating him or her from the school-house erected and controlled by society. While in school, the boys look through the cracks and holes in the walls in order to catch glimpses of:

the outer world--glimpses worth catching, too, for all around stood the great forest, the playground of boys and girls during noon-hour and recesses; an enchanted land, peopled, not by fairies, elves and other shadowy beings of fancy, but with living things, squirrels and chipmunks, and weasels.²⁶

The natural realm of the forest in this regional idyll still embraces aspects of the wilderness, but because the children are not "lost," they function within both the forest and society, often attempting the type of immersion enjoyed by Traill's and Seton's characters. The forest provides an escape from the prison of the schoolhouse, and is the environment longed for and associated with the child in later years of retrospection: "A wonderful place this forest, for children to live in, to know and to love, and in after days to long for" (Days 14).

Like Wordsworth, the boys are not consciously aware of the beauties of nature; they pursue their activities while the atmosphere of the scene is secondary to the sport, or so integrally a part of the experience that it is not noticed:

Not that the boys made note of all these delights accessory to the joys of the Deepole itself, but all these helped to weave the spell that the swimming-hole cast over them. (Days 30)

The sensuous atmosphere of the Deepole is responsible for the powerful impressions left in the memory, and the emergence of sensuous longings in later years:

Without the spreading elms, without the mottled,
golden light upon the cool, deep waters, and
without the distant roar of the little rapid,
and the soft gurgle at the jam, the Deepole
would still have been a place of purest delight,
but I doubt if, without these, it would have
stolen in among their day dreams in after years,
on hot, dusty, weary days, with power to waken
in them a vague pain and longing for the sweet,
cool woods and the clear, brown waters. (Days 30)

The recurrence of the swimming hole in Canadian fiction is noteworthy. Although Wordsworth skates, climbs and rows with the same vigour and enthusiasm as a Canadian child, he does not remember and cherish the activity of swimming, as do the characters created by Connor, Mitchell and Buckler, among others. The detailed and celebratory accounts of swimming in the works of these authors imbue the activity with more than merely a literal or physical significance. The sensuous delights of the cool, wet swimming hole provide a striking contrast to the dust and desiccation of the prairie, town or farm during the summer. The immersion seems to involve a shedding of the dryness and lifelessness of the land in favour of the vitality and energy of the water. The embracement of this sensuous richness also suggests an exploration of feelings beneath the surface--the subconscious, the unconventional, the sexual, the creative--areas basically ignored or repressed by society. The act of swimming involves a freedom from normal physical restraints; symbolically, it suggests an escape from the limitations and formality of society.

Hughie, in his sensitive response to the forest, is set apart from the other children: "To Hughie, the early morning invested the forest with a new beauty and a new wonder" (Days 108). His reverential attitude--"Hughie felt as if he were in church" (Days 108)--is communicated to the others, for whom "the mystery and wonder of the forest" (Days 109) have never been apparent. Hughie's viewpoint becomes the exemplar of the responsive and sensitive mind: "But today he [Billy Jack] saw it [the forest] with Hughie's eyes, and felt the majesty of its beauty and silence" (Days 109). Hughie, who is "sensitive at every pore" (Days 194), is drawn towards the sensuous richness of the woods: "the sympathetic silence of the trees, the aromatic airs that breathe through the shady spaces, the soft mingling of broken lights" (Days 194).

The separation between the forest and the school, introduced in the first paragraph of the novel, is developed in the truancy scene. Hughie's problems with the negative aspects of society, namely Foeie, result in his hatred of school and, appropriately, he is the instigator of the truancy. Hughie cannot cope with the wiles of society, and yearns for the values embodied by the natural world. Fusie, Davie and Hughie peer "out through the balsam boughs at the house of their bondage with an exultant sense of freedom" (Days 194), and feel pity and contempt for the "unhappy and spiritless creatures who were content to be penned inside any house on such a day as this, and with such a world outside" (Days 194). Society, represented by the schoolhouse, becomes associated with limitations and restrictions, whereas the natural world is an open realm of freedom and sympathetic influences.

When Hughie is forced to contend with the bear in the wilderness, he passes from childhood to manhood: "During the thrilling moments of that terrible hour he had entered the borderland of manhood, and the awe of that new world was now upon his spirit" (Days 151). On a literal level, the act presages manhood simply because it is a "man's deed" (Days 252), and thus requires manly courage and intelligence. On a more symbolic level, Hughie's transition is the result of confronting the possibility of his own death and the actual mortality of Fido. The alien condition of death forces a change in outlook. Connor uses the Wordsworthian word "sober"--"it was chiefly this new experience of his that was sobering him" (Days 252)--to explain the shift in Hughie's attitude.²⁷ The word suggests a taming of a lively and fanciful spirit, resulting in a much more serious outlook than that held previously.

The value of the child's view, however, is not lost. Craven's description of his rapport with nature while driving to the Finch's house is reminiscent of Hughie's mystical relationship with nature:

At any rate, during that drive nature seemed to get close to me. The dark, still forest, the crisp air, the frost sparkling on the trees--it all seemed to be part of me. (Days 335-36)

Craven's admission that "there are times when one is more sensitive to impressions from one's surroundings than others" (Days 335), and that at certain times he seems "to have a very vital kinship with nature" (Days 335) recalls the sensitive and responsive mind of the child. When Craven states that "It was Hughie sent me there [to the scene of Mrs. Finch's death]" (Days 335), he is obviously talking about more

than just the physical location. Hughie's general attitude seems to be responsible for Craven's state of mind, which provides a receptivity to nature and a powerful response to Mrs. Finch's death: "All through the night and next day the glory lingered round me. I went about as in a strange world" (Days 339). The influence of the Romantic child is not lost; its effect on Craven, which inspires the change bringing about his decision to enter the ministry, is an indirect influence on society. The wilderness is submerged by society as the boy enters manhood, but a sense of "childlike" communion with nature remains and is associated with those men set apart from society by moral superiority.

L.M. Montgomery's Anne of Green Gables and Emily of New Moon are also concerned with the division between nature and society, but the lack of the wilderness setting forces the Romantic child into an even more prominent position than the children in Traill, Seton and Connor's work. The hazier distinctions between nature and society necessitate the internalization of the division within the child, so that the frequent movement of the child between the two realms on a physical level is accompanied by the mental and emotional conflict of the values inherent in each setting.²⁸ The settings essentially become secondary to the character of the child, within whom the tension between nature and society plays a decisive role in the development into adulthood. The progress of the Romantic child comments indirectly on the society responsible for her development. The tension in Montgomery's novels results from what Mollie Gillen identifies as "the plight of sensitive children under the authority of uncompromising adults,"²⁹ which is based on what Mary Rubio sees as "the difference

in perception between the adult and the child."³⁰

As far as Wordsworthian echoes and influences are concerned, they are so apparent and appropriate in Montgomery's work that Elizabeth Waterston automatically uses the term "spots of time" for Montgomery's own childhood recollections,³¹ and says that Emily of New Moon

is an intriguing though unpretentious version of Wordsworth's Prelude, a careful recreation of those "spots of time" in which the creative imagination is nurtured.³²

Emily and Anne's transcendental experiences immediately link them to Wordsworth, whose poetry, according to Michael Pafford, "is generally regarded as the locus classicus of nature-mysticism and the transcendental in English literature."³³ In her autobiography, The Alpine Path, Montgomery expresses the very heart of Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality":

Hood wrote, in his charming I Remember that he was farther off from Heaven than when he was a boy. To me, too, the world seemed a colder, lonelier place when age and experience at length forced upon my reluctant seven-year-old consciousness the despairing conviction that Heaven was not so near me as I had dreamed.³⁴

Indeed, Montgomery writes to George Boyd MacMillan that she and Nora Campbell each quoted alternate lines of "the whole of Wordsworth's Ode On the Intimations of Immortality, lingering over the lines 'Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting'. . . .And we were perfectly happy in our perfect indescribable communion with some great Over-Spirit which seemed to take complete possession of us."³⁵

Anne of Green Gables begins with the figure associated with the oppressive and repressive elements of Avonlea society: Mrs. Rachel

Lynde. Mrs. Lynde's power and influence affect all elements of society and even extend to nature, for not even the brook can pass her door without the appropriate respect for society's norms and values: "but by the time it [the brook] reached Lynde's Hollow it was a quiet, well-conducted little stream, for not even a brook could run past Mrs. Rachel Lynde's door without due regard for decency and decorum."³⁶ Obviously, Mrs. Lynde's judgement on "everything that passed, from brooks and children up" (Anne 1) is going to have its effect on Anne, who is associated with the source of the river "away back in the woods of the old Cuthbert place" (Anne 1) where "it was reputed to be an intricate, headlong brook . . . with dark secrets of pool and cascade" (Anne 1).

Emily of New Moon begins with "the house in the hollow"³⁷-- . the world of nature and fantasy separated from the society of the village:

It [the house] was reached by a long, green lane and almost hidden from view by an encircling growth of young birches. No other house could be seen from it although the village was just over the hill. (Emily 1)

The house, like the source of the Avonlea brook, is far removed from the society in both location and atmosphere. Ellen Greene, a Mrs. Lynde type of figure, represents those elements of society opposed to the intricately mysterious and isolated aspects of the natural setting: "Ellen Greene said it [the house] was the loneliest place in the world and vowed that she wouldn't stay there a day if it wasn't that she pitied the child" (Emily 1).

The need of Montgomery's heroines to escape from the restraints

of society is apparent and central in the emphasis placed on Anne's imagination and Emily's "flash." Indeed, Montgomery's description of Emily's flash is a classic description of a transcendental experience, and is very similar to a Wordsworthian "spot of time", Brian O'Connell's "feeling," and David Canaan's "sun-shiver":

It had always seemed to Emily, ever since she could remember, that she was very very near to a world of wonderful beauty. Between it and herself hung only a thin curtain; she could never draw the curtain aside--but sometimes, just for a moment, a wind fluttered it and then it was as if she caught a glimpse of the enchanting realm beyond--only a glimpse--and heard a note of unearthly music. (Emily 7)

The unexpectedness, rarity and brevity of the experience are emphasized:

"This moment came rarely--went swiftly, leaving her breathless with the inexpressible delight of it" (Emily 7). The moment also defies description--"it couldn't be descibed"(Emily 7)--and the child lacks power or control over its visitations: "She could never recall it--never summon it--never pretend it; but the wonder of it stayed with her for days" (Emily 7). The external source of inspiration for the flash is associated with nature, religion or writing, and the effect of the flash is a feeling that life is "a wonderful, mysterious thing of persistent beauty" (Emily 8).

Anne's understanding of her mystical moments is not as articulate as Emily's: "anything royally beautiful" (Anne 20) inspires "a queer funny ache" (Emily 20). The beauty of the inspiration is usually that of nature, and although the transcendence of the physical world is often inspired by an external stimulus, Anne invites and aids the escape through the use of her well-developed imagination:

"'Do you never imagine things different from what they really are?' asked Anne, wide-eyed" (Anne 59). She is not only receptive to the external impressions which take her out of herself, but has developed those aspects of her temperament and imagination which allow her to escape from reality:

"I don't see how you can make up such thrilling things out of your head, Anne. I wish my imagination was as good as yours."
 "It would be if you'd only cultivate it," said Anne cheerfully. (Anne 223)

Emily, on the other hand, enjoys a much less "conscious" relationship with nature. The first sentence of her "description"-- "The hill called to me and something in me called back to it" (Emily 8)--recalls such basic Wordsworthian concepts as: "From nature largely he receives; not so / Is satisfied, but largely gives again" (Prel. II, 267-68), and "An auxiliar light / Came from my mind which on the setting sun / Bestow'd new splendour" (Prel. II, 387-89). The child's temperament is receptive and imaginative, but the impetus comes from an animate external world, and Emily, unlike Anne, does not make a conscious or cultivated attempt to escape. The active part played by nature in Emily of New Moon is epitomized by the Wind Woman, who recalls W.O. Mitchell's wind and Wordsworth's breezes in her ability to inspire a response in the child--a response which results in an escape from reality:

Her [Emily's] soul suddenly escaped from the bondage of Aunt Elizabeth's stuffy feather-bed and gloomy canopy and sealed windows. She was out in the open with the Wind Woman and the other gipsies of the night--the fireflies, the moths, the brooks, the clouds. (Emily 62-63)³⁸

Emily Byrd Starr, as a Romantic child, is definitely conceived of as an outcast and an eccentric, as Ellen, the voice of proper society makes clear: "The fact is, Emily Starr, you're queer, and folks don't care for queer children" (Emily 22). "Chestnut-curles," as spokesperson for the schoolchildren, articulates the reason for the ostracization of Emily: "because you ain't a bit like us" (Emily 84). Emily's "queerness," the fact that she is different from others, can be seen as positive or negative, depending on the viewpoint of the judgement: "Father said I [Emily] was a genius, but Aunt Elizabeth says I'm just queer" (Emily 157). Aunt Laura tries to describe Emily in terms that will be understood by those who have no knowledge or understanding of Emily's dream-like world: "she has what one might call an artistic temperament" (Emily 38). Society's reply is: "She's a spoiled child" (Emily 38). The most attractive explanation of Emily's isolation is provided by Dean Priest: "Stars are said to dwell apart, anyhow, sufficient unto themselves--ensphered in their own light" (Emily 280). Similarly, Father Cassidy delights in what he describes as Emily's association with "the Golden Age and the old gods" (Emily 203). Those who understand and love Emily are themselves not wholly accepted by society, and those who are antagonistic towards her conform to the very proper and traditional values held by the majority. Other outcasts in the novel include Jimmy, Ilse and Dean, all of whom possess their own share of artistic genius.³⁹ Jimmy, like Emily, dwells "in an ideal world of which none of them [the Blair Water people] knew anything" (Emily 147). Montgomery's characterization is such that the reader automatically sides with the more attractive outcasts and

condemns the insularity and limitations of the society, not to mention its lack of justice and tolerance, which are especially apparent to the child and the imaginative adult. Montgomery refers to Jimmy as "strong, and young and splendid and beautiful" (Emily 148), whereas the Blair Water people are "sensible" (Emily 148).

It is Emily, however, who as a Romantic child at odds with society, exposes the faults and false values of that civilized and established world. Moreover, her effect on others is seen as positive and beneficial, which brings out admirable qualities and values, previously repressed by the strict standards of society. She has a "humanizing" effect on those around her, counteracting those conventional forces which stifle imaginative and creative activity. Both Mary Rubio and Muriel Whitaker stress the importance of this influence of the imagination in its contribution to the vitality and interest of these child characters and their ability to control the environment.⁴⁰

The best example of Emily's effect on others is found in her relationship with Dean Priest, a character who, as an outcast, has been embittered by the censure of society. Emily's fancy and love of nature⁴¹ find an ally in Dean, who allows himself to be taken back in time to a point when he had not yet been adversely affected by society's judgements: "in her company he was not a cynic; he had shed his years and become a boy again with a boy's untainted visions" (Emily 283). Dean's emphasis on being young, and his association of youth with the imagination--"As long as you believe in fairies you can't grow old" (Emily 283)--reveal his view of the necessary

taming of the imagination by society as one passes out of childhood and youth into adulthood. In a sense Emily manages to instill life and energy into those she affects: "a certain secret well-spring of fancy that had long seemed dried bubbled up in him [Dean] sparkingly again" (Emily 283). The effect and extent of her influence depend on the character of the recipient, and range from amusement and diversion for Aunt Nancy to love and rejuvenation for Dean.

Emily's transcendental experiences clearly involve an escape from an oppressive society to an imaginary plane, and can occur in the most unlikely situations. A difficult position can be alleviated by a "flash," often inspired by an element of nature; the Wind Woman episode provides one example: "Her soul suddenly escaped from the bondage of Aunt Elizabeth's stuffy feather-bed and gloomy canopy and sealed windows" (Emily 62). Other difficult situations which result in the "flash" include the moment when Emily confronts her relatives for the first time and anticipates describing them in her account book, and when she declares herself to be a poet while being mocked by the schoolchildren. These mystical removals are inspired by the art of writing rather than nature. Similarly, the transcendental ecstasy inspired by the "Bugle Song" is a reaction to language, to poetry: "Emily trembled with delight. She was snatched out of herself. She forgot everything but the magic of that unequalled line" (Emily 94). The "flash" can also be inspired by an intense appeal to the senses: "Something in the haunting, mystical, elusive odour gave Emily the flash" (Emily 296).

Opposed then to the world of the flash--the realm of dreams,

visions, nature, literature, and sensuous indulgence--is the oppressive world of society, reflected in Aunt Elizabeth's stuffy bed, the reaction of Miss Brownell to Emily's passionate enthusiasm, the taunting of the schoolchildren and the critical appraisal of the Murray relatives. Emily's ability to transcend this realm does not take any effort on her part; her temperament and nature invite this mystical transcendence. The only evidence of an ability to encourage and train these visionary tendencies is seen in Emily's conscious attempts to "see the [wall]paper in the air" (Emily 57). "This odd knack" (Emily 57) seems to be closely associated with the "flash," for it invites a removal from ordinary perception and reality. Aunt Elizabeth, of course, disapproves: "Don't do it again. It gives your face an unnatural expression" (Emily 57). The visionary, the mystical and the dreamy are all "unnatural," according to Aunt Elizabeth and the staid society of which she is an exemplary member.

T.D. MacLulich introduces the valid point that Emily's writing, like her visionary experiences, is an attempt to escape from the restrictions of society. Looking at Montgomery in her "literary context," MacLulich concludes that "the writers of girls' books often used literary ambition as a clear sign of a heroine's reluctance to submit to all the restrictions imposed by her society."⁴² Aunt Elizabeth, of course, objects to Emily's writing, just as she objects to her looks of vacant and pensive dreaminess.

The resolution of the novel optimistically suggests in its idyllic fashion that society will benefit from Emily's gifts and "knacks." Indeed, certain characters, especially Aunt Elizabeth,

have already been "humanized" by her influence: "Elizabeth Murray had learned an important lesson--that there was not one law of fairness for children and another for grown-ups" (Emily 326). More importantly, Emily's vision and mysticism vindicate Ilse's mother and thus restore the emotion of love to Dr. Burnley. Although Emily's vision is based on delirium, it owes its origin to "a deep impression [made] on the mind of a sensitive child" (Emily 337). The tendency of society to view Emily's vision as madness perpetuates its own mistakes and misunderstandings; to attempt to use and understand her unusual viewpoint results in some degree of truth and regeneration for society. Obviously implied is the idea that Emily's positive effect on other characters and on the community will be broadened and intensified in her future influence, as a writer, on her readers.

The end of Emily's childhood is integrally connected with a knowledge and understanding of mortality. As usual, death is incompatible with the Romantic child, as Jimmy's words emphasize: "You've got enough life in you to carry you far. You aren't meant for death" (Emily 76). L.M. Montgomery herself expresses the idea that the knowledge of mortality marks the end of pure childhood: "At that moment the curse of the race came upon me, 'death entered into my world,' and I turned my back on the Eden of childhood where everything had seemed everlasting."⁴³ While still a child, Emily is unable to conceive of her father as actually being dead, and in a sense keeps him alive, granting him immortality by writing letters to him. As a child, she only has "glimpses" of the world of death beyond the curtain, which her father has entered: "he would slip into that world

of which the flash had given her glimpses" (Emily 19). The realm of death, as part of the world on the other side of the curtain, is associated with love and beauty, and in its mystery and exoticism is strangely attractive. Once Emily begins to become familiar with mortality, the mystery and beauty seem to be replaced by some type of wisdom and strength. Emily's illness marks the end of childhood, for the "grey shadowy eyes that had looked into death. . . hold in them some haunting, elusive remembrance of that world beyond the veil" (Emily 341).

The process has been gradual, beginning with the challenges at Aunt Nancy's and taking its most significant step in the long awaited confrontation and reconciliation with Aunt Elizabeth, in which both sides--the rigidity of social tradition and the passion of the Romantic child--relent and meet. Recognition and admission of guilt on both sides suggest the need for compromise and tolerance, as well as a union of the two stances in order for peaceful co-existence to be achieved. Significantly, Emily's recognition of the values of society destroys "the sense of reality--nearness--of close communion" (Emily 325) with her father. The ability to commune with an imaginary realm set apart from reality is outgrown at the moment Emily revises her letters with the explanatory footnotes demanded by the society represented by Aunt Elizabeth. Thus Emily will influence society, but not without being influenced and tamed herself to some extent by the judgements and expectations of that society.

Anne Shirley, like Emily, relents and concedes to society to some degree, although she also manages to have an effect on those

around her, and thus mould society as she herself is moulded. Her adversaries, like Emily's, are those who attempt to temper and curb her imagination. In Anne of Green Gables Montgomery emphasizes the shortcomings and dangers of an overactive imagination and a dependence on romanticism. Certain incidents and lessons result in changes within Anne which she herself recognizes and acknowledges. One obvious example of such a lesson is found in the "Haunted Wood" episode, which, to use Anne's words, "cured me of letting my imagination run away with me" (Anne 242). For Diana, the episode "blighted" (Anne 254) her imagination altogether.

The dichotomy and tension between romance and reality are present throughout Anne of Green Gables, the juxtaposition between the two being especially apparent in the chapter, "An Unfortunate Lily Maid":

For a few minutes Anne, drifting slowly down, enjoyed the romance of her situation to the full. Then something happened not at all romantic. The flat began to leak. In a very few moments it was necessary for Elaine to scramble to her feet, pick up her cloth of gold coverlet and pall of blackest samite and gaze blankly at a big crack in the bottom of her barge through which the water was literally pouring. (Anne 237)

The danger of the situation leaves no possibility of Anne's usual difficulty of differentiating between the real and the imaginary:

"Did you really say it? Or did I only imagine that you did?" (Anne 51).⁴⁴ Marilla's consistently rational voice points out the folly of such confusion: "I think you had better learn to control that imagination of yours, Anne, if you can't distinguish between what

is real and what isn't" (Anne 51). Even Anne can see the difficulty and suffering involved in the impossibility of reconciling the two realms: "But the worst of imagining things is that the time comes when you have to stop and that hurts" (Anne 35).

Anne's suffering in the "Lily Maid" incident forces her to practise some moderation, not because a Romantic temperament is wrong, but because it can only be developed and celebrated in certain environments, Avonlea not being one of them:

And today's mistake is going to cure me of being too romantic. I have come to the conclusion that it is no use trying to be romantic in Avonlea. It was probably easy enough in towered Camelot hundreds of years ago, but romance is not appreciated now. (Anne 242)⁴⁵

So the values of Marilla and Mrs. Lynde, who "don't believe in imagining things different from what they really are" (Anne 59), result in the limitation of Anne's imagination:

I just feel tired of everything sensible and I'm going to let my imagination run riot for the summer. Oh, you needn't be alarmed, Marilla. I'll only let it run riot within reasonable limits. (Anne 263)⁴⁶

The influence of characters such as Matthew, however, ensures that Anne's childlike vision will not be completely obliterated: "'Don't give up all your romance, Anne,' he whispered shyly, 'a little of it is a good thing--not too much, of course--but keep a little of it, Anne, keep a little of it'" (Anne 242). Thus the characters in the novel either fall on the side of encouraging Anne's Romantic temperament or attempting to curtail it. But those characters who try to control Anne's imagination are not portrayed as being evil

or wrong. Marilla, who "conceived it to be her duty to drill Anne into a tranquil uniformity of disposition" (Anne 190), and Rachel, who thinks Anne will change "now she's come to live among civilized folks" (Anne 79), are really just part of an inevitable process which would only be tragic if Anne were to lose her odd and unusual temperament altogether in favour of conforming to the rest of society. The process of growing up involves the loss of Anne's childlike charms and idiosyncrasies, such as talking too much and using big words (Anne 271). Obviously, some regret is present on the part of Anne and Montgomery, but it is merely the expression of the visions which has changed, not their actual existence: "It's nicer to think dear, pretty thoughts and keep them in one's heart, like treasures" (Anne 271). The retention of Anne's vision and Montgomery's assurance that "nothing could rob her of her birthright of fancy or her ideal world of dreams" (Anne 329) proclaim a triumph for the Romantic child. Despite society's condemnation and Anne's modification, the essence and basis of the Romantic child remain.

Society, or at least certain members of society, grow to appreciate the qualities of the Romantic child, as a result of being affected by Anne. Rachel Lynde describes the change in Marilla-- "Marilla Cuthbert has got mellow. That's what" (Anne 327), and Aunt Josephine is forced to employ an imagination that "is a little rusty" (Anne 168). Anne's influence on others is connected with a love and enthusiasm that are diametrically opposed to the strict, traditional values and manners of her society. T.D. MacLulich sees Anne as supplying "what Marilla and Matthew--and Avonlea in general--have

been missing," and functioning as "a healthy corrective to the overly sombre outlook adopted by most adults in Avonlea."⁴⁷ Marilla's resistance to Anne's influence makes this opposition clear:

Her love [of Anne] made her afraid of being unduly indulgent, indeed. She had an uneasy feeling that it was rather sinful to set one's heart on any human creature as she had set hers on Anne, and perhaps she performed a sort of unconscious penance for this by being stricter and more critical than if the girl had been less dear to her. (Anne 254)

Anne obviously inspires a tenderness and love in Marilla which are at odds with the restraints under which she normally functions. Anne also manages to take Marilla into the past through imagination and memory, thus eliciting sympathy and a new viewpoint on Marilla's part:

"An old remembrance suddenly rose up before Marilla. She had been a very small child when she had heard one aunt say of her to another, 'What a pity she is such a dark, homely little thing'" (Anne 72).

Marilla's growing tendency to laugh at Anne's surprising speeches--

"I do not believe that God himself can do very much with such an obstinate person as Mrs. Barry" (Anne 138)--thereby sympathizing with her viewpoint, also illustrates how Anne's presence and influence mitigate and soften the unyielding attitudes of the Avonlea society.

Perhaps Anne's effect on her society is best symbolized by her transformation of her room, which upon first encounter "was of a rigidity not to be described in words" (Anne 30), obviously conforming to, and reflecting, its time and place. The description of the appearance of the same room four years later (Anne 281-82), featuring beauty and softness, emphasizes its defeat of the original rigidity

and bareness.

As Anne brings life, in the form of flowers, to her room, so she adds a life and meaning to the staid and dry religion practised by the inhabitants of Avonlea. Anne's association of God with nature is steeped in an enthusiasm and candidness which shock Marilla:

Why must people kneel down to pray? If I really wanted to pray I'll tell you what I'd do. I'd go out into a great big field all alone or into the deep, deep woods, and I'd look up into the sky--up--up--up--into that lovely blue sky that looks as if there was no end to its blueness. And then I'd just feel a prayer. (Anne 55)

Similarly, Anne's imaginative and human response to the picture, "Christ Blessing Little Children" (Anne 60-61), is a more sincere response than that of the conventional Avonlea Christian, but Marilla reacts against it because "it doesn't sound right to talk so familiarly about such things" (Anne 61). Perhaps Anne's observation of Mr. Bell-- "I think he thought God was too far off to make it worth while" (Anne 86)--points out the difference between her religion and the attitude of the church. The accuracy of Anne's judgements and articulate explanations brings to the surface Marilla's own repressed criticism and honesty: "It almost seemed to her that those secret, unuttered, critical thoughts had suddenly taken visible and accusing shape and form in the person of this outspoken morsel of neglected humanity" (Anne 87). Anne fulfills what Elizabeth Waterston sees as a common role for the child in Canadian literature; she is an "'eye among the blind'; perceiver among a world of adult hypocrites" (Anne 147).⁴⁸

The popularity of Montgomery's "Anne" owes much to Anne's Romantic temperament, for it represents all that is opposed to the

strict and unyielding tenets of society. Anne's position in the novel as unsuspecting critic and modifier of society is an attractive one. In her characterization of Anne, Montgomery has carefully included the conventional characteristics of the Romantic child, which in themselves fight against repression. The characteristics and associations of the wilderness, diametrically opposed to the values and atmosphere of society, are no longer present; thus the Romantic child, traditionally linked with the wilderness, acquires those attributes of that setting which contrast with society. The associations of the "noble savage" are transferred to the child of nature. Anne's characteristics and idiosyncrasies combine to form a force which, in its vitality and energy, is similar to the freedom and "naturalness" of the wilderness. To limit Montgomery's social concerns to what MacLulich sees as a very specific interest in "the overly strict and repressive way that adults sometimes treated children"⁴⁹ is to minimize Montgomery's point. She uses the particular relationship of Romantic children and repressive adults to criticize a general attitude that pervades society on all levels and in all relationships. More to the point is the spirit and attitude represented by each side of the conflict. Anne represents certain qualities, as Joseph Sigman points out in his identification of her as "an externalization . . . of the spirit of joy, whimsy and fantasy repressed beneath the surface of a Calvinist society."⁵⁰

Anne is an original and extremely individual character, and yet she is familiar, and is almost a "type," who continues to appear in Canadian fiction. She is connected with nature rather than society:

Oh, it was good to be out again in the purity and silence of the night! How great and still and wonderful everything was, with the murmur of the sea sounding through it and the darkling cliffs beyond like grim giants guarding enchanted coasts. (Anne 289)

She goes so far as to express antipathy to an artificial lifestyle removed from the natural world:

It's nice to be eating ice-cream at brilliant restaurants at eleven o'clock at night once in awhile; but as a regular thing I'd rather be in the east gable at eleven, sound asleep, but kind of knowing even in my sleep that the stars were shining outside and that the wind was blowing in the firs across the brook. (Anne 250)

Anne displays an amazing intensity—"she sat and waited with all her might and main" (Anne 11)--possesses an enviable imagination and is overly sensitive: "All 'spirit and fire and dew,' as she was, the pleasures and pains of life came to her with trebled intensity" (Anne 189-90). Her strange nature is impenetrable, according to Marilla: "There's something I don't understand about her" (Anne 31). She is separated from other members of society in a way that suggests she is almost superior to them, using language which "people laugh at" (Anne 17) because it "sounds so funny in a little girl" (Anne 89), and looking "like them white June lilies she calls narcissus alongside of the big, red peonies" (Anne 265). She not only inspires dreams and visions in order to escape from reality--"Glittering castles in Spain were shaping themselves out of the mists and rainbows of her lively fancy" (Anne 235)--but also experiences mystical and transcendental flights: "while this odd child's body might be there at the table her spirit was far away in some remote airy cloudland, borne

aloft on the wings of imagination" (Anne 36). Anne is not only set apart from society, but is in a sense set above society: "no commonplace soul inhabited the body of this stray woman-child" (Anne 12). Anne's childhood ends when she confronts mortality in the form of Matthew's death, and her own sense of immortality and mysticism is appropriately modified.

iii

The Canadian Romantic child has his or her origins in the "noble savage" of the wilderness. Traill's Catharine and Seton's Yan are particularly suited to the wilderness and thrive under its influence. Both authors insinuate that the particular development and values provided by the wilderness setting will eventually have an effect on society when the child is re-integrated with the "civilized" world. The removal of the very distinct and distant wilderness from the works of Connor and Montgomery eliminates the position of the child as the link between the values of the wilderness and those of society. Instead, the "noble savage" child becomes simply a child of nature, who is set apart by an acute sensitivity and perception, rather than an association with the wilderness setting. The character and personality of the child gain importance as he or she embodies the obvious opposition to "civilized" values--an opposition previously held by the wilderness.

The development of the lost child in the wilderness is fairly predictable as far as characterization is concerned. The association with, and effects of, the wilderness dictate the acquisition of certain

techniques and attitudes, such as practical survival methods and a respect for nature. This process involves the enforcement of unusually sensitive and perceptive responses to nature.⁵¹ It is this highly developed sensitivity and awareness that are emphasized and studied by writers such as L.M. Montgomery, W.O. Mitchell and Ernest Buckler. Once this sensitivity and perception are divorced from the wilderness, there is no apparent source or reason for their strong presence. The only explanation then for the development of these faculties is that the child is "special" or "gifted" because of his or her unusual temperament--a temperament which is essentially Romantic in perception and outlook. Nature still plays a role in the growth of the child. The prairie, mountain or tree encourages an imaginative response, but such encouragement is the result of a relationship which has been chosen by the child rather than inflicted on him or her as in Canadian Crusoes. Thus the personality and character of the child are central because they are partially responsible for the relationship with nature which encourages and nurtures the imagination. The vitality and energy of this visionary and mystical child result in his or her character becoming important in itself. Attention is placed on the Romantic child as an individual, rather than just a figure who trails all the associations of the "noble savage" and the pastoral tradition. The novels of Montgomery, Mitchell and Buckler, like Wordsworth's Prelude, depend for their success upon eliciting the reader's interest in, and sympathy for, the mystical and transcendental child. The reader who responds positively is probably attracted by the qualities possessed by the child--qualities which are absent or

repressed in the reader and his or her society.

Depictions of the Romantic child were so common in Canadian fiction by the mid-century that in 1947 Paul Hiebert ridiculed the figure in Sarah Binks. Although most writers did not display the sustained interest of Mitchell and Buckler, many paid some attention to the Romantic child or emphasized some aspect of that character. Ethel Wilson's Hetty Dorval, for example, published in 1947, the same year as Who Has Seen the Wind and Sarah Binks, contains elements of the Romantic child in the character of Frankie Burnaby. Frankie's relationship with nature concentrates on the "confluence of the rivers"⁵² at Lytton. She invites the influence of nature--"we would stand and lean on the railing and look down at the hypnotizing waters" (Hetty 7)--and in her relationship with nature, as in the union of the Thompson and Fraser, she experiences a type of "marriage," in which "one [partner] overcomes the other, and one is lost in the other" (Hetty 7). The receptive Frankie accepts the energy and vitality of the river:

the sight of the cleaving joining waters
and the sound of their never-ending roar
and the feel of the frequent Lytton wind
that blew down the channels of both the
rivers were part and parcel of us, and
conditioned, as they say, our feeling. (Hetty 7)

Like Wordsworth's Derwent, Frankie's Thompson and Fraser mould and form her consciousness.

Mrs. Dorval is aligned with Frankie through her Romantic relationship with nature, epitomized in her response to the wild geese. Frankie's own response to the geese approaches the intensity

of a transcendental removal from reality: "as always I felt an exultation, an uprush within me joining that swiftly moving company and that loud music" (Hetty 15). Mrs. Dorval is able to describe the transcendental nature of the experience: "Oh Frankie, when we stood there and the geese went over, we didn't seem to be in our bodies at all, did we? And I seemed to be up with them where I'd really love to be" (Hetty 16). Mrs. Dorval surprises Frankie by articulating her own feelings: "That was so exactly how the wild geese always made me feel, that I was amazed" (Hetty 16). Mrs. Dorval's unconventional and emphatic use of the word "god" immediately sets her apart from the other women in Lytton. More importantly, her sensitivity, and her willingness and honesty to acknowledge and express that sensitivity, place her in a realm apart from the ordinary person: "somehow we would never never have said that to each other--it would have made us all feel uncomfortable" (Hetty 16). Like the Romantic child, Hetty Dorval is at odds with conventional society, hence the sympathy and mutual attraction between Hetty and Frankie.

The perfection of Frankie's framed, reflected mountains lies in the unity and completion of their circular shape:

This reflection, held in the circular frame,
had more unity and significance than when you
turned and saw its substance as only part of
the true, flowing, continuous line of the
mountains. (Hetty 42)

Essentially Romantic, this relationship with nature demands an effort and receptivity on the part of the observer, as well as a striking sublimity from nature. Unexpected, magnificent and isolated, this enclosed and contained image seems to capture the essence of form,

power and duration, the components of Wordsworth's sublimity. It is in this particular union of perspective and scene that significance and influence are endowed, rather than in the actual scene itself, while the emphasis on reflection obviously intimates self-exploration and self-knowledge. Similarly, the early relationship between Hetty Dorval and Frankie Burnaby contains beauty and magic because of the perspectives of the two individuals. The circumstances of timing and setting result in an enriched relationship which provides Frankie with insight and knowledge. Her own view of Hetty, like her view of the mountains, includes an enchantment and wonder which disappear when Hetty is seen in the ordinary context of society.

Interestingly, Frankie's decision to avoid and shed Hetty--"I did not want, now, to be enthralled by or involved with Hetty again" (Hetty 43)--coincides with her exposure to death in Ernestine's drowning:

When we are young we have, by nature, no concern with permanent change or with death. Life is forever. Then suddenly comes the moment when death makes the entrance into experience, very simply, inexorably; our awareness is enlarged and we move forward with dismay into the common lot, and the bright innocent sureness of permanency has left us. (Hetty 43)

The realization of mortality and subsequent movement into the "common lot" demand a rejection of Hetty's complicated and unconventional style and influence. Hetty Dorval is closely associated with the Romantic child, and only the pure and intense perspective of that child can respond to and value the positive attributes of the woman censured by society: "'She's so sweet and she rides well and she reads

books, French books too, and sings lovely songs, and plays the piano,--and she loved the wild geese.' I added as proof of Hetty's innocence" (Hetty 34). Frankie's discovery of Hetty's past and character coincides with her own entry into adulthood. Frankie's loss of innocence includes the loss of the innocent perspective which allows her to disregard superficial appearances and society's opinion.. Like Hetty, Frankie cannot remain unaffected and outside the society in which she is expected to function.

Edward McCourt's Music at the Close, also published in 1947, concentrates on the character of Neil Fraser, whose appreciation of literature stems from a Romantic temperament, and separates him from the community. The only character who shares Neil's enthusiasm for literature is the drunken outcast, Charlie Steele. Like Frankie's attraction to Hetty Dorval, Neil's sense of affinity with Steele is based on values and feelings which are unacceptable to society. Neil finds himself drawn to areas and interests that are alien to his community, and his realization and acknowledgement of his love of nature and literature certainly set him apart. His intense response to Tennyson's "Ulysses" appears transcendental in nature: "Inexplicably Neil experienced an emotion as profoundly disturbing as that accompanying an instantaneous religious conversion."⁵³ He later tries to describe the substance and effects of his transcendental "spots of time":

The trip to the mountains was a haunting and unforgettable experience Neil experienced the kind of emotion that had come to him only twice before--when he had heard

Minnie Whitaker read "Ulysses" aloud, and when he himself had first stumbled upon the jewelled passages of Conrad. It was an emotion that had in it pleasure and awe intermingled, and above all a strange, indefinable pain, a longing for something that had no concrete substance. (Music 136)

The desire for "something that had no concrete substance" involves a mystical longing for a removal from the physical realm.

Neil's death, like David Canaan's, comes as a relief to an individual who is so ostracized from his society that he cannot function successfully. Neil's romanticized idealism renders him ineffectual in the demanding and down-to-earth society of the prairies between the wars. Unlike David, however, Neil experiences no personal celebration or triumph in his death, but merely manages to justify it in an extremely bleak and self-deprecating manner: "Nothing that he had done in his life before this day had any meaning. His death was the only justification for his having lived at all (Music 217).

In Wolf Willow, published in 1955, Wallace Stegner contemplates the effects of a particular relationship between child and nature:

They [frontiers] are sometimes said to engender in people, by freeing them from artificial restraints and throwing them into contact with clean nature, a generosity, openness, independence, and courage unknown to the over-civilized. We were all sensuous little savages. Was that good or bad for us in the long run? Did it encourage depravity or promote natural goodness?⁵⁴

The importance of the childhood setting, Whitemud, as an influential force affecting the child's development and consciousness, is seen in Wordsworthian terms by the narrator, who refers to it as a "seedbed"

(Wolf 306)⁵⁵---"as good a place to be a boy and as unsatisfying a place to be a man as one could well imagine" (Wolf 306). The attraction and power of Whitemud for the impressionable Romantic child are aptly identified by the retrospective narrator: "the beauty of the geometric earth and the enormous sky brimming with weather, . . . the passion of loneliness and the mystery of a prairie wind" (Wolf 306). Again, the prairie is invested with the form, power and duration of Wordsworthian sublimity. Its influential importance for the individual is not to be underestimated: "It is a country to breed mystical people, egocentric people, perhaps poetic people. But not humble ones" (Wolf 8).

For the narrator of Wolf Willow, memory is not only used in the narration, but is also examined and analyzed: "But memory, though vivid, is imprecise, without sure dimensions, and it is as much to test memory against adult observation as for any other reason that I return" (Wolf 6). Memory is based on the prairie setting, as the narrator makes clear: "Even in drouth or dust storm or blizzard it [the country] is the reverse of monotonous, once you have submitted to it with all the senses" (Wolf 8). This Wordsworthian submission of the senses to the environment leads to self-knowledge: "You become acutely aware of yourself" (Wolf 8). The narrator of Wolf Willow emphasizes the evocative nature of the sense of smell and its close association with memory: "I can summon up other smells, too--it is the smells that seem to have stayed with me" (Wolf 16). Like Buckler, Stegner emphasizes the sensuous richness of childhood, and it is the smell of wolf willow, "pungent and pervasive . . . as evocative

as Proust's madeleine and tea" (Wolf 18), which re-establishes "an ancient, unbearable recognition" (Wolf 18) and thus brings the narrator home, providing him with the confidence to proclaim: "The sensuous little savage that I once was is still intact inside me" (Wolf 19).

Whitemud seems to nurture the Romantic child rather than repress him: "It [Whitemud] was blessedly free of most conventional restrictions, and its very liberations from the perspectives of time and place released our minds for imaginative flights into wonder" (Wolf 29). The importance of the child's environment lies in its ability to shape his perception: "Expose a child to a particular environment at his susceptible time and he will perceive in the shapes of that environment until he dies" (Wolf 21). This "susceptible time" occurs "between the ages of five and twelve which corresponds to the age ethologists have isolated in the development of birds, when an impression lasting only a few seconds may be imprinted on the young bird for life" (Wolf 21). The intensity of the impressionable child's response constitutes a "spot of time," and is also responsible for the later sensuous leaps into the past, experienced by the adult:

Only because I must have sung it to myself
in that spot, a few bars of that tune can
immerse me in the old sun and space, return
me to the big geometry of the prairie and
the tension of the prairie wind. (Wolf 21)

The narrator of Wolf Willow, like Wordsworth, explores the effects and influences of the surroundings on the development and consciousness of the child, and like Wordsworth, celebrates a "childhood of freedom and the outdoors and the senses" (Wolf 25).

The plethora of Romantic children in Canadian fiction during

the first half of this century would perhaps suggest that the figure had served its purpose and would be outgrown, especially as Canadian society shifted from rural to urban settings. The interest in this figure both as a character and an instrument of social criticism, however, had become so deeply engrained in Canadian fiction that it was developed and modified rather than discarded. The mystical and transcendental child holds a central position in the fiction of the first half of the century, and remains very much in existence in the novels of the sixties and seventies. Characters such as Christine in The Road Past Altamont (1966), Hooker in The Last of the Crazy People (1967), Vanessa in A Bird in the House (1970) and Del in Lives of Girls and Women (1971) owe their origins to the Wordsworthian tradition, and the modifications and development of that tradition by writers such as L.M. Montgomery, W.O. Mitchell and Ernest Buckler.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

¹Desmond Pacey, Creative Writing in Canada 102.

²Pacey 102.

³Even Sheila Egoff in The Republic of Childhood, her study of Canadian children's literature, seems to be affected by this critical attitude when she more or less dismisses L.M. Montgomery's Anne of Green Gables with the following comment:

But when we have mentioned the Prince Edward Island setting, which is lushly described, there is little else to comment on.

See Sheila Egoff, The Republic of Childhood (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1967) 252.

⁴Pacey comments on the "phenomenal popular vogue" of Connor's novels, which "resulted in the sale of over five million copies of his books." See Pacey 105.

The popularity of Anne is well documented. Montgomery's original surprise at its success--"It is a 'best-seller' and in its fifth edition--I cannot realize this. My strongest feeling seems to be incredulity"--would be greatly augmented by the knowledge that it "has been published in more than fifteen languages, including French, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Japanese, Icelandic and (in English) Braille." See Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston, eds., The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery, 1889-1910 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1985) 339 and Mollie Gillen, The Wheel of Things (Don Mills: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1975) 73.

⁵Coleridge uses the Antarctic in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," while Mary Shelley uses the Arctic in Frankenstein.

⁶This extreme opposition and difficult transition of settings in the contrast between the Lake District and London does not occur until later in Wordsworth's life, during adulthood.

⁷The story of Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, for example, is an attempt to bring together the realms of nature and society, as is the tale Victor Frankenstein relates to Walton. Both writers use the supernatural to create the wilderness setting.

⁸Catharine Parr Traill, Canadian Crusoes: A Tale of the Rice Lake Plains (1852; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1923) 64. All further references to Canadian Crusoes are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Crusoes.

⁹This "conventional Romantic relationship" is perhaps undercut to some extent by the intrusion of the "reality" of the Canadian wilderness. The "holy calm" description is immediately followed by the disturbance of the wolf.

¹⁰Forms of the verb "diffuse" are used by Wordsworth in a number of places. In The Prelude alone see 1850 V, 16, 28; VII, 737; VIII, 329, 764; 1850 IX, 316.

¹¹Part of Catharine's distaste seems to be based on the stereotypical view of the female figure of the time: "She will never make a huntress—her heart is cast in too soft a mould" (Crusoes 294).

¹²Clara Thomas, "Traill's Canadian Settlers," Canadian Children's Literature 5&6 (1967): 35.

¹³See Agnes Strickland's preface to Canadian Crusoes 10.

¹⁴For a discussion of Traill's treatment of the motif of lost children, see Carl Ballstadt, "Catharine Parr Traill," Canadian Writers and Their Works, ed. Lecker, David and Quigley (Downsview: ECW Press, 1983) Fiction Series 1: 170-75.

¹⁵Thomas 34.

¹⁶Ballstadt 173.

¹⁷Ballstadt 174.

¹⁸Hoxie Neale Fairchild, The Noble Savage (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928) 367.

¹⁹Fairchild 385.

²⁰Fairchild 366.

²¹Fairchild 374.

²²Fairchild 384.

²³Ernest Thompson Seton, Two Little Savages (1903; New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1927) 56. All further references to Two Little Savages are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Savages.

²⁴Fairchild 190.

²⁵Perhaps the classification of children's literature should be added to George Altmeyer's claim that "In its rude beginning, Canadian writing--explorers' diaries, natural histories, guide books, immigration tracts and essays on hunting and fishing--centred upon the practical aspects of man's relationship with the wilderness." See George Altmeyer, "Three Ideas of Nature in Canada 1893-1914," Journal of Canadian Studies 11.3 (1976): 21.

²⁶Ralph Connor, Glengarry School Days (1902; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1975) 13. All further references to Glengarry School Days are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Days.

²⁷For Wordsworth's use of the word "sober," see The Prelude III, 448; IV, 134; V, 566; VI, 485; X, 959.

²⁸David Stouck discusses the condition of the "divided self" of the artist; the situation is similar to that of the Romantic child:

From the troubadour onwards the artist has been traditionally identified as an outsider.

The artist's struggle is never really with nature, but with his own divided self and with the society from which he is separate.

See David Stouck, "Notes on the Canadian Imagination" 11.

²⁹Gillen 173.

³⁰Mary Rubio, "Satire, Realism and Imagination in Anne of Green Gables," Canadian Children's Literature 3 (1975): 29. Muriel A. Whitaker makes a similar observation: "Much of the interest in Anne and Emily results from the tension between the adults, with their rigid view of how a child should act, and the children, with their strong sense of justice and clear-eyed awareness of adult shortcomings." See Muriel A. Whitaker, "'Queer Children': L.M. Montgomery's Heroines," Canadian Children's Literature 3 (1975): 55.

³¹Elizabeth Waterston, "Lucy Maud Montgomery," The Clear Spirit, ed. Mary Quayle Innes (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966) 199.

³²Waterston, "Lucy Maud Montgomery" 212.

³³Michael Pafford, Inglorious Wordsworths (London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1974) 38.

³⁴L.M. Montgomery, The Alpine Path (1917; Don Mills: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1974) 19-20.

³⁵Francis W.P. Bolger and Elizabeth R. Epperly, ed., My Dear

Mr. M: Letters to G.B. MacMillan from L.M. Montgomery (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1980) 165.

³⁶L.M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables (1908; Toronto: Ryerson, 1942) 1. All further references to Anne of Green Gables are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Anne.

³⁷Montgomery, Emily of New Moon (1925; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973) 1. All further references to Emily of New Moon are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Emily.

³⁸The escape from reality inspired by the Wind Woman can also involve a removal to another time, usually the past:
 And yet the first time I heard her [the Wind
 Woman] tonight the flash came--I felt as if I
 had just seen something that happened long,
 long ago--something so lovely that it hurt me. (Emily 217)

³⁹Jimmy is compared with a child; the accident "made him more or less a child for life" (Emily 316), and "his large, brown eyes were as kind and frank as a child's" (Emily 28). These "childlike" qualities remove him from the regular society in the same way in which they remove Emily.

⁴⁰Mary Rubio claims that "In an intellectual climate where people were presented as helpless either because of their own biological make-up or because of the social atmosphere in which they lived, novels such as Anne of Green Gables suggested that one's imagination could influence the external world." See Rubio, "Satire, Realism and Imagination in Anne of Green Gables" 35.
 Muriel A. Whitaker, in her article, "'Queer Children': L.M. Montgomery's Heroines," argues that Anne and Emily are more memorable than Valency and Pat partially because in Anne and Emily there is such genuine interaction between children and adults that the adults themselves are changed."

⁴¹It is interesting that Emily and Dean both feel "at home with 'nature's old felicities' of which Wordsworth so happily speaks" (Emily 282).

⁴²T.D. MacLulich, "L.M. Montgomery and the Literary Heroine: Jo, Rebecca, Anne and Emily," Canadian Children's Literature 37 (1985): 9.

⁴³L.M. Montgomery, The Alpine Path 45-46. Montgomery refers to the devastation of that same incident (the poisoning of her kitten) in a letter of March 7, 1905, to Ephraim Weber. See Wilfred Eggleston, ed., The Green Gables Letters (Toronto: Ryerson, 1960) 24.

⁴⁴ Anne tries to infuse the reality of her own background with some romance when she asks to be called Cordelia (Anne 26) and prepares to tell Marilla about herself:

"Oh, what I know about myself isn't really worth telling," said Anne eagerly. "If you'll let me tell you what I imagine about myself you'll think it ever so much more interesting." (Anne 41)

⁴⁵ Commenting on this passage, Muriel Whitaker observes that Anne learns by experience "in the tradition of Rousseau's Emile." See Whitaker 52.

⁴⁶ David Stouck maintains that the "Canadian imagination has traditionally been obsessed with the limitations rather than the possibilities of human experience," and that Canadian art "accepts life's limitations and finds ascetic pleasure within their circumference." See Stouck, "Notes on the Canadian Imagination" 9.

⁴⁷ MacLulich 12.

⁴⁸ Elizabeth Waterston, Survey: A Short History of Canadian Literature 147.

⁴⁹ MacLulich 16.

⁵⁰ Joseph Sigman, "Pierre Berton and the Romantic Tradition," Canadian Children's Literature 7 (1977): 23.

⁵¹ George Altmeyer contends that nature study was seen as "a way of sharpening blunted senses" which "society had atrophied or stunted." See Altmeyer 26.

⁵² Ethel Wilson, Hetty Dorval (1947; Toronto: Macmillan, 1967) 6. All further references to Hetty Dorval are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation, Hetty.

⁵³ Edward McCourt, Music at the Close (1947; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1966) 48. All further references to Music at the Close are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Music.

⁵⁴ Wallace Stegner, Wolf Willow (Toronto: Macmillan, 1977) 292. All further references to Wolf Willow are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Wolf.

⁵⁵ Wordsworth refers to childhood as a "seed-time": "Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew up / Foster'd alike by beauty and by fear" (Prel. I, 305-06).

CHAPTER FOUR

GABRIELLE ROY'S CONCERN WITH THE INDIVIDUAL: WORDSWORTHIAN COMMUNION, UNITY AND HARMONY

i

Gabrielle Roy's fervent and sincere wish that "the children of these regions [will] never tire of listening to their planet Earth"¹ recalls the Wordsworthian image of the child open and receptive to the animated universe. The Romantic children in Gabrielle Roy's work are vividly and exquisitely unique, and yet originate in a conventional and pure Romantic tradition established by writers such as Wordsworth and Proust. M.G. Hesse, for example, finds that Roy's fictionalized memories bring "to mind Proust's reflections,"² while Phyllis Grosskurth observes that "Gabrielle Roy shares Wordsworth's conviction that human beings need nourishing contact with Nature for emotional well-being."³ Allison Mitcham comments that Roy's view of childhood contains "certain echoes of nineteenth-century Romantics on both sides of the Atlantic such as William Wordsworth and Ralph Waldo Emerson."⁴ Finally, Roy herself refers to Wordsworth's Romantic theory of artistic creation--"emotion recollected in tranquility"--in her essay, "Man and His World,"⁵ and cites Proust and his work at least three times, according to Marc Gagné's documentation.⁶

Although Romantic children appear in almost all of Roy's work, they are given a central position in Street of Riches, The Road Past

Altamont and Children of My Heart. Perhaps the "purest" example of the Romantic child in Roy's fiction appears in "My Whooping Cough" in Street of Riches. In this story circumstances allow Christine to discover the sensitive and responsive characteristics of her own temperament. The wind chimes, or glass song, which lead Christine into a realm that caters to and develops her Romantic tendencies, are reminiscent of the pastoral lute which appears in so many Romantic poems.⁷ Both the chimes and the Aeolian lute are associated with the type of human soul that invites the influence of the external world and subsequently responds, creating harmony out of the union of inner and outer energy. Christine's receptive and responsive attitude to the music of the chimes echoes the response of the chimes themselves to the wind:

when they [thin strips of colored glass] moved,
gently striking each other at the least breath
of air, they made a strange and charming
tinkling sound Yes, my soul aspired to
listen to this soft music for children,
without complex notes, without the least melody,
but which I⁸ remembered as whimsical, silvery,
exotic too.

Christine, like the chimes, is acutely sensitive to the energy and spirit of the natural world, and in her response to nature, becomes a creator and participant, intensifying the beauty she has already perceived. The Romantic relationship between nature and the individual requires the union of the energy of the natural universe with that of the receptive and responsive mind. Such a union, like that of the wind and chimes, results in harmony. Donald Cameron refers to Gabrielle Roy's own "child-like openness"⁹; this Romantic quality

is obviously transferred to her literary portraits of children, and forms the basis of their sensitive and intense temperaments. Roy admits to Cameron that she herself possesses "a readiness, an openness, you might say,"¹⁰ in response to his query about her Jamesian "romantic readiness for experience."

Like Wordsworth and Brian O'Connell, Christine cannot help but respond to the movement and power of the wind, the animator of the universe: "All alone in my hammock, rocked only by the wind, I discovered other play [other than children's games] how vastly more rare and fascinating! The wind's play, for instance" (Street 40). Speaking of her own past, Gabrielle Roy refers to "the wind of my childhood,"¹¹ and evocatively connects the wind with childhood and mortality: "The place to which you go back to listen to the wind you heard in your childhood--that is your homeland, which is also the place where you have a grave to tend."¹² The effect of the wind on the world surrounding Christine inspires a permanent love of nature: "During that interval I discovered almost all the things I have never since ceased to hold dear" (Street 40). The direct effect of the wind on Christine herself in the hammock activates her imagination: "The swaying of my hammock helped the thread of my tales. Is it not curious? A slow, soft motion and the imagination is on its way!" (Street 41). Annette Saint-Pierre attaches symbolic importance to this movement of the hammock in the wind: "Ce mouvement en cadence symbolise la vie et la liberté."¹³ The culmination of all these influences is a surprising discovery of the marvels and wonders of solitude: "Why does one not learn sooner that one is, oneself, one's

best, one's dearest companion" (Street 40).

The perfection of this particular childhood situation, involving nature and solitude, and inspiring imagination and wonder, has made it an ideal to be recaptured in later years, not in a conscious and planned way, but in the spontaneous leap backwards experienced in Proustian and Wordsworthian memory: "And basically all my life's voyages ever since have merely been going back to try to recapture what I had possessed in that hammock--and without seeking it" (Street 40). Gabrielle Roy herself is susceptible to a sensuous and involuntary Proustian memory:

The bell pealed loudly, very close. And why did it suddenly waken a memory--that I had believed dead--of the time in my childhood when I used to spend summer holidays with my uncles on their farms in Manitoba? (Summer 36)

Roy's Proustian stance is obvious, and numerous critics refer to the similarities of Remembrance of Things Past and Street of Riches and The Road Past Altamont. Réjean Robidoux, for example, explores the Proustian element of Roy's fiction in his articles, "Gabrielle Roy à la recherche d'elle-même" and "Le Roman et la recherche du sens de la vie."¹⁴ M.G. Hesse sees Christine's memories, like Proust's, extending "beyond the purely personal experiences to profound insights"¹⁵ and thus inviting readers, who, to use Proust's words, are "readers of themselves, my book merely serving as a sort of magnifying glass."¹⁶ Phyllis Grosskurth refers to Street of Riches as a recherche du temps perdu,¹⁷ as does Annette Saint-Pierre: "Dans Rue Deschambault et La route d'Altamont, Gabrielle Roy est de nouveau à la 'recherche du temps perdu.'"¹⁸ Gerard Tougas maintains that "the great shadow of

Marcel Proust hovers over the composition of Rue Deschambault to the extent that one chapter, La Voix des étangs, recalls irresistibly A la recherche du temps perdu.¹⁹ Allison Mitcham rather refreshingly refers to other writers, including Wordsworth: "In her concern with innocence, Roy, like such diverse writers as Henry Vaughan, William Wordsworth, and Dylan Thomas, suggests that a considerable part of the secret of life lies in finding one's childhood again."²⁰

Roy, like Proust and Wordsworth, is fascinated by memory, as well as the interdependency of past, present and future. She refuses to see time as strictly linear and progressive; such a system is not only conventional and dull, but artificial and imposed in its failure to take into account the power of memory and vision. Marc Gagné, in his discussion of Roy's view of time, says: "Le passé et le futur; deux infinis qui se conjuguent en ce point de jonction qu'on nomme le present."²¹ Gabrielle Roy's fascination with time is apparent in Christine's excitement about her physical regression: "As for me, I found this backward movement an interesting business. Moving in reverse, would I not return to whence I came?"(Street 41). Such a "backward movement" would probably attract Wordsworth as well. A return to the early years of childhood and the child's origins would pose a better and simpler solution for Wordsworth's disillusionment than the rather forced and ambiguous compensation proclaimed in his "Ode: Intimations of Immortality." The mysterious and promising past always beckons, but is inaccessible on a conscious and intellectual level. For Wordsworth, Proust and Roy, valuable journeys to the past are involuntary, and their unexpected and mysterious nature comprises

their power and effectiveness.

Roy's view of time is circular, as she herself has repeatedly emphasized in her work. Referring to the cyclical experience in The Road Past Altamont, she says that it is like the seasons, "or the sea or the tide, any of the great cycles. Life is built in cycles like that, and learning and experience are in cycles."²² There is no absolute division or separation between past, present and future--they overlap in the most surprising and profound ways. Roy's love of circles and distrust of straight lines extends to a general acceptance of fluidity and interdependence and a rejection of opposition and exclusion. Since Alan Brown's comment in 1956 that Roy's first four novels "might be said to form a dialogue of experience and innocence,"²³ critics have tended to stress the opposition and polarities of Roy's philosophy. The title of Hugo McPherson's well-known article, "The Garden and the Cage," is based on the apparent gulf between Roy's concern with pastoral themes, such as the Romantic child, and the social issues and themes implicit in depictions of urban existence. Based on the premises that "Gabrielle Roy endorses the values of the past and the frontier,"²⁴ but is "unflinchingly aware that there is no real escape from the present,"²⁵ McPherson concludes that "there can be no return to the garden, but meekness and love can plant flowers in the cage and the wasteland."²⁶ Connection and continuity, rather than opposition, are stressed.

Roy is not so much concerned with the setting, with the garden or the cage, as with the attitudes and perspectives embodied by that setting, her primary interests being the individual and humanity rather

than the differences between pastoral and industrial, rural and urban. Alan Brown's conclusion that Roy is offering one situation or setting as superior to another reduces her work to a concern with time and place. Brown's emphasis on place (Roy is surely not trying to upset her readers by making the futile suggestion that they live in the "wrong places"²⁷) results in his observation of a separation and opposition between certain novels, based on setting: "whether it is rural Manitoba or the Garden of Eden would seem to be immaterial, so long as it is not a twentieth -century city."²⁸ It is this type of distinction between rural and urban that McPherson objects to, simply because an evaluation of setting is not Roy's intention at all. Urban Montreal is not completely without promise, as McPherson points out, and pastoral retreats and rural landscapes are by no means idyllic or wholly "favourable" to "joy, love and generosity."²⁹ The simplicity of duality--innocence versus experience--is to be avoided in evaluations of Roy's work.³⁰ If indeed Roy is concerned with innocence and experience, she addresses their union and interdependency rather than their separation and exclusion. She sees them as connected parts of the circle rather than the beginning and end of a line.

ii

Rather than concentrating then on the "dialogue between innocence and experience" and the linear perspective of their mutual exclusion and replacement of innocence by experience, I prefer to look at the connections and continuity between the two, concentrating on the influences and interdependencies inherent in the circular view

advocated by Gabrielle Roy. The Romantic child, part of the pastoral tradition of innocence, is not relegated to a position anterior to, and superseded by, experience; he or she is a much more pervasive influence and entity than such a view can possibly suggest. The attitudes and vitality of Roy's Romantic children are not associated with any particular time or place, but consist of an exquisite and precious candour and intensity that potentially can be rediscovered and recaptured throughout adult life, regardless of setting or situation.

Roy's children are associated with nature, as Paula Lewis points out: "Children are . . . seen as being close to nature, and, therefore, it is symbols of nature that essentially depict their world."³¹ The lack of the traditional tension between nature and society in Street of Riches, The Road Past Altamont and Children of My Heart means that the Romantic child in Roy's work cannot possibly attempt to be the conventional mediator between the two realms. Although interested in social issues, such as the shift from a rural to an urban lifestyle, and the insularity of modern existence, Roy does not use the figure of the child to comment on society's limitations and failures. Her work does not concentrate on this very obvious opposition between the Romantic child and a repressive society. Instead, Roy uses the Romantic child to identify and emphasize the weaknesses and frailties of the individual. The tone is one of compassionate sympathy rather than condescending criticism; the focus is on the potential of the individual instead of the failure of the group. This shift to a concern with the individual changes the

traditional associations and position of the Romantic child, as established by Mitchell and Buckler. Instead of being placed in an isolated position opposed to society, the Romantic child is seen as a positive source of desirable and valuable qualities. The onus is not on the ability of the Romantic child to offset and mitigate the hypocrisy and superficiality of society, but on the potential of the individuals to retain or rediscover a "childlike" vision and honesty.

As in Anne of Green Gables, Who Has Seen the Wind and The Mountain and the Valley, the sense of loss in Roy's work is pervasive. Unlike these other works, however, Roy's novels celebrate the possibility, and indeed the joy, of rediscovering or retaining a Romantic and childlike wonder and intensity. Anne Shirley and Brian O'Connell find it necessary to modify their Romanticism to some extent, while David Canaan's failure to do so leaves him an outcast. For Gabrielle Roy, it is not a matter of modification or conformation, but a question of integration. The child does not stand in opposition to society, but at the beginning and end of the circle--in a sense, in the centre of the circle, embodying all the qualities which give meaning to an individual's life: love, honesty, simplicity, intensity, vision, sensitivity, and curiosity, to name but a few. Gabrielle Roy's characters attempt to retain or repossess those "Romantic" and "childlike" qualities; their happiness and peace depend upon their ability to do so. Thus Roy is not only interested in the child as such, but also in those "adults who have not lost the endearing qualities of childhood," as Allison Mitcham notes.³²

Gabrielle Roy, as an artist, seemed to feel compelled to return

again and again to the Romantic child. According to Marc Gagné, childhood as depicted by Gabrielle Roy holds the promise of universal and intangible truths:

L'enfance n'est pas d'abord l'âge de la pureté,
mais celui de la plénitude et de la vérité. A
cause de ces qualités, l'enfance du rêveur
devient cosmique.³³

It is interesting to note that the original publication dates of the three autobiographical works in which this figure holds a central position occur in three different decades, separated by intervals of eleven years: Street of Riches (Rue Deschambault, 1955), The Road Past Altamont (La Route d'Altamont, 1966) and Children of My Heart (Ces Enfants de ma vie, 1977). The figure of the imaginative and creative child appears throughout Roy's work, but in each of Street of Riches, The Road Past Altamont and Children of My Heart Roy concentrates on a particular aspect of the character, and thus stresses appropriate corresponding points about the individual and humanity. It is as if Gabrielle Roy strikes only one rich note at a time in the scale which makes up the Romantic child. The reverberations of each note are manifold; the result is a rich and unique tone and theme in each of the three works.

In Street of Riches Christine repeatedly reveals an insight and wisdom for which the adults fail to give her credit. She possesses an understanding and tolerance which elude the other characters, not simply because they are older, but because they have relinquished, or perhaps never possessed, the sensitivity and receptivity with which Christine is endowed. Although this sensitivity and responsiveness

are associated with the child, and specifically the Romantic child, they are not restricted to that realm alone. For example, the retrospective writer, as an artist, has obviously been able to retain and profit from these qualities.

Perhaps the episode, "The Titanic," best illustrates the way in which Christine questions and invalidates the viewpoints and judgments of the adults. Her query: "Is there something wrong . . . about building a sturdy ship?" (Street 46), is strikingly appropriate, and the reader, like Christine, is stupefied by Monsieur Elie's reply, in which he seems "so pleased about God's wrath" (Street 46). Christine's questions and comments, in the revelation of her own values and points of view, expose various aspects of human nature, not evil or particularly harmful, but regrettably familiar and common. In this particular situation, Christine's very humanistic and personal response to the story undercuts the distanced, sensationalized and puritanical response of Monsieur Elie. Her intense concern for "the happy people, the Vanderbilts" (Street 47) and the children certainly casts doubt on Monsieur Elie's interpretation of the event: "None the less it [the Titanic] hastened to its downfall, for God always punishes pride" (Street 44). Christine's reaction to the grandeur and absurdity of the conditions on the Titanic is one of sadness rather than moral superiority--"sadness at the thought of people plunging into the water of a swimming pool contained within a vessel itself afloat upon infinite water" (Street 45). Her sensitive identification with the actions and fates of the victims leads to sympathy rather than judgement.

Maman's ability to clear up some of the confusion of language and concept, as seen in her description of "fog," as well as in her interest in the victims, disassociates her from Monsieur Elie and allies her with her daughter. Similarly, Uncle Majorique's objections to the complacent view that God punishes "human presumption" (Street 48), his description of a honeymoon, and his imagination and curiosity about human progress attract the young Christine. Christine obviously shares Majorique's enthusiasm and curiosity, but is already confused by the more cautious opinion that man should accept his limitations rather than strive to overcome them: "God the Father, though, was in the clouds. Would airplanes climb as high as that? Would God let them by?" (Street 48). Her open and thoughtful attitude, based on integrity, sincerity, curiosity, tolerance and sympathy, provides a striking contrast to Monsieur Elie's judgemental and condescending stance.

The intensity of Christine's response to the Titanic story is a result of her active imagination: "So then I had a vivid picture of the graceful, sturdy white ship. With all its **portholes** brightly aglow, it slipped along our kitchen wall" (Street 46). The retrospec-
tive Christine notes that she "had an imaginative eye" (Street 33). It is this ability and desire to envision the unknown which typifies the Romanticism of the child in the hammock, listening to the glass chimes. The descriptions of the imaginative wanderings and dreams in "My Whooping Cough" are extremely vivid: "I even flinched at a drop of the holy water being sprinkled on my lifeless face" (Street 40). Annette Saint-Pierre, in her study, Sous le signe du rêve,

maintains that "Le rêve est une constante qui traverse l'oeuvre de Gabrielle Roy."³⁴

Like Montgomery's Anne, Christine possesses the awareness and ability to cultivate and develop her dreams and vivid imagination. Christine's flights of imagination and vision, however, are sometimes beyond her control as they often approach the mystical and transcendental, especially when inspired by nature. In "Petite Misère" the sight of the elm trees swaying in the wind leads to a feeling that nature has been created for Christine alone: "and that, too, must have been for me alone, since I was the only person perched high enough to espy the upper branches of our elms" (Street 16). Paradoxically, however, this sense of special communion with nature inspires a desire to transcend, rather than enjoy, the surrounding universe: "Then, more than ever, I wanted to die, because of the emotion that a mere tree was able to arouse in me" (Street 16). The intensity of Christine's sorrow has obviously opened her mind and senses to the external universe--"sorrow has eyes the better to see how lovely is this world" (Street 16)--establishing a communion with nature, similar to that described in "My Whooping Cough." As is often the case, the type of nature responded to, a sky of wind and clouds, is animated and energetic, embodying the power and vitality of the natural universe. Such a communion with nature seems to lead to an understanding of humanity; in this case, the sorrow which opens Christine's mind and senses to the sky allows her to glimpse her father's pervasive sadness: "And how keenly then, through my poor child's sorrow, did I gain a notion of my father's so much weightier sadness, the heaviness of

life itself" (Street 20). Even more profound, however, is her resistance to the consequences of the sadness she is experiencing, the fight against the intimation of an "adult-like" feeling within herself of "enough cowardice to resign [herself] to life as it is" (Street 18).

Christine's sensitivity allows her to delight the Italian, perform the momentary miracle of bringing Alicia out of her madness and ultimately succeed as a writer. Both the source and result of this sensitivity is the responsive openness of the child. Christine's receptivity and response to the natural world result in a tolerance and love for the human realm. In both environments she displays an understanding and sympathy for the element or individual with whom she is communicating. The attitude demanded of a writer--"cutting yourself in two, as it were--one half trying to live, the other watching, weighing" (Street 132)--is similar to that of the Romantic child, who both gives and receives, observes and participates. The artist, like the child, feels the need to "come to the attic, [to] listen for a long, long while to the intermingling voices" (Street 132)--to welcome and invite a situation in which the "voices" of the world infiltrate the receptive mind, inspiring understanding and sympathy.

Christine, as an artist, is capable of retaining the wonder and freshness of the Romantic child's perspective: "Was not all the world a child? Were we not at the day's morning?" (Street 158). Street of Riches is not so much concerned with oppositions and obstacles to the perspective as with the insight afforded to the

individual who possesses or is affected by it. Roy does not indicate any need for modification or a "toning down" of the Romantic sensibility. Indeed, she suggests the need for an immersion into, and dedication to, such a sensibility. Roy's acceptance of the values and qualities of the Romantic child in a pure and powerful form, rather than a subdued and modified version, is refreshing. The limitations and resistance of society seem to be transcended, or at least rendered ineffectual, as the Romantic sensibility appears strong enough to deal with or rise above objections and opposition. The wisdom and vision afforded by such a sensibility offset the pain of personal sacrifice necessitated by the retention of this Romantic stance. Christine achieves what David Cannan was unable to attain--the privilege of using a Romantic sensibility to both participate with and observe the individuals and environment surrounding her. Unlike David, she is not defeated by her temperament, and unlike Brian O'Connell, she does not modify her childlike Romanticism.

The retrospective adult is obviously distanced enough to impose interpretations on the childhood events; but even so, Christine, at the time, recognizes the illogical nature of many of the adult's perspectives. Her constant questioning--"So in real life it's wrong to get married?" (Street 26); "Odette . . . is going to leave us all her things?" (Street 33); "Have you locked Alicia up?" (Street 92)--reveals not only her perceptiveness, but also the failure of the adult to communicate with the child or give her credit for her intelligence and insight. Christine, who is receptive to the wind and the sky, is also responsive to the intricacies of human behavior and emotions.

Love, tolerance and understanding result from this very open attitude to experience. These are qualities which are obviously lacking in the limited and provincial perspective of Madame Guilbert in the initial story, "The Two Negroes," and they are qualities which are clearly necessary to the vocation of writing.

Street of Riches then provides a very general view of the receptive and sensitive child, particularly emphasized in "Petite Misère," "My Whooping Cough" and "The Voice of the Pools," but evident in Christine's actions and outlook in all of the episodes. In Roy's own assessment of the book she tentatively posits that she attempted to convey "the spellbinding powers of childhood, which can put the whole world inside the tiniest locket of happiness."³⁵ Roy, like Mitchell and Buckler, does emphasize the alienation and solitude of the Romantic child, but it is a separation which can eventually be used in a positive manner to benefit others. The gap between Christine and the adults who make up her society is one which is to be retained in order to provide a unique and fresh perspective of humanity. Her willingness and desire to live in two worlds, like the frogs whose voices inspire her, allow her to accept the loneliness of the Romantic world because it provides insight and wisdom concerning the human world. A true Wordsworthian child, Christine accepts a temperament which demands that her mind be "creator and receiver both, / Working but in alliance with the works / Which it beholds" (Prel. II, 273-75).

Several themes touched upon or introduced in Street of Riches, Christine's feelings of affinity with the older couple in "My Pink Hat"

and her relationship with her mother and father in "The Gadabouts," "The Well of Dunrea" and "By Day and By Night," anticipate the subject matter of The Road Past Altamont. A much more focused and less traditional work, The Road Past Altamont explores the possibility of characters other than the child and artist possessing or being affected by the Romantic receptivity and vision which result in love, tolerance and understanding. While Street of Riches depicts the contradictions between the perspectives of child and adult, The Road Past Altamont concentrates on the connections and continuity between the two views. In both works, however, Roy is interested in how the qualities and temperament of the Romantic child can be intensified and developed in order to benefit others. Obviously, in Street of Riches the writer, as an artist, fulfills that function of retaining Romantic sensitivity and receptivity, and thus presents a positive and constructive outlet and function for the qualities of the Romantic child. In The Road Past Altamont the influence of the Romantic child--Christine's effect on others--is presented on a personal rather than artistic level, as Roy explores special relationships between the child and the adult.

Like Brian O'Connal and David Canaan, Christine discovers a special affinity for her grandmother, based on the imagination and creativity which they share. The superficial difference between Christine and Mémère is apparent in their use of language, and yet it is this difference, in its extremity, which brings them together. Mémère's "different vocabulary,"³⁶ a "rather curious way of speaking" (Road 3), fascinates Christine, just as Christine's strange expressions--

"It's written in the sky" (Road 4)--are "precisely the sort of language to amuse and beguile" (Road 4) Mémère. The difference in exterior belies the shared characteristics within.

Mémère's physical and emotional regression to childish dependence and helplessness obviously allies her with Christine, who responds to such a reversal with confusion: "I felt such an unutterable confusion about ages, about childhood and old age, that it seemed to me I would never get myself out of it. It was rather as if Maman were taking care of a baby" (Road 27). Surely this demeaning regression, however, is suggestive of a more positive process which returns to Mémère a belief in creatures such as goblins. Although confusing to Christine, who has herself outgrown a belief in goblins, Maman's explanation for Mémère's acceptance contains several implications: "Maman explained that this was a belief from the time of Grandmother's childhood and that such beliefs had a tendency to be reborn in extreme old age" (Road 24). This "belief" in goblins obviously requires a use of the imagination and a glimpse of a realm removed from reality.

This ability to use the imagination and transcend present reality is indeed a skill which Christine shares with Mémère. Unlike the middle generation, the young and the old are not overly concerned with the cares and activities of the real world. Christine's visionary and imaginative temperament allows her to picture Grandmother's Assumption River (Road 26) and invites the appearance and analysis of symbolic images: "Then an odd picture came to me. I seemed to see, lower down, some young trees, which were perhaps born of the old tree

on the hillside but, still decked in all their leaves, sang in the valley" (Road 28-29). Her actively imaginative response to the old photograph brings a wisdom which clears up to some extent her confusion about age and generations: "I think I began to understand vaguely a little about life and all the successive beings it makes of us as we increase in age" (Road 30). Christine's conclusion that "we all play perhaps, throughout our lives, at trying to catch up with one another" (Road 30) stresses the attempts to bridge the gaps. The most successful meeting, the only meeting in fact, is between the old and the young, who share the Romantic characteristics discarded or forgotten in the interim. Wordsworth's "shades of the prison-house"³⁷ do exist, but Roy seems to suggest the possibility of a circular return to the "clouds of glory"³⁸ rather than a straightforward and linear journey away from them.

It is the presence of Christine which prompts grandmother's "discovery that the infinite and ingenious resources of her imagination, at least, were all intact" (Road 9). Christine's respect and wonder for Mémère as the creator of the doll are based on her observation of "the sense of exalted and mysterious solitude that surrounds all those who are busy with creation" (Road 11). Her powerful response to Mémère--"'You're like God,' I wept into her ear" (Road 14)--seems to be based on some type of recognition of a duplication of her own condition, and her tendency toward "exalted and mysterious solitude," already depicted in Street of Riches. If imagination is, as the retrospective Christine notes, "our family gift" (Road 9), then she, like Grandmother, has been given her share, and will also, as a writer,

"make things out of nothing" (Road 14), as God does.

Grandmother, speaking to Maman, claims that her life at this point is "a dream, my daughter, not much more than a dream" (Road 25). For the Christine of the hammock and attic, much of her life is also a dream--in fact the most important and meaningful aspects of life are derived from images and dreams removed from reality. Grandmother's dream is obviously associated with her impending death and transcendence of the physical. The actual physical condition of death is alien to Christine: "I didn't know what death was. To my mind it was simply a simple matter of disappearance" (Road 29).³⁹ Her intense sympathy and imaginative response to Mémère's plight, however, allow her a glimpse of immortality through regeneration, which transcends the limitations of her understanding of the physical aspects of mortality.

Christine's special relationship with Monsieur Saint-Hilaire, like her relationship with Mémère, is based on an ability and propensity to use the imagination. The old man's acceptance of, and participation in, Christine's games of "pretending" make him a rare companion. He, like Mémère, is a catalyst for Christine's understanding of mortality and, by implication, of life. Like Brian O'Connell and David Canaan, Christine is fascinated by death, despite her confusion and lack of understanding. Her interest in death and its ramifications is evident in her fondness for "playing funerals" (Street 17). Her curious and passionate nature forces her to contend with the overwhelming "sense of lassitude" (Road 37) associated with Mémère's death. At the time there is no understanding, but simply

"an inkling that old wrinkled faces were closer to this [death] than I was myself" (Road 37). In an attempt to explain her affinity with older people, the retrospective writer asks: "Then was it this, a sort of prescience I had of their approaching disappearance, that made them so dear to me?" (Road 37). Roy appears to shy away from an attempt to explain these intense relationships, which clearly defy words: "But there again, who can explain a phenomenon that is itself as full of mystery as that of life, or of death in a coffin?" (Road 37).

It is from nature that Christine attains a degree of wisdom and understanding; her attitude towards Lake Winnipeg involves the Romantic receptivity advocated by "that old child" (Road 53), Monsieur Saint-Hilaire: "it's best to keep very quiet if you wish to hear the lake" (Road 48). In true Wordsworthian fashion, Christine invites and welcomes the infiltration of a spirited and animated universe: "All this time the deep song of the lake penetrated me" (Road 66). Although the powerful and magical sound of the lake is pervasive, Christine must make an effort to establish an attitude in which she can receive its influence:

I was still struggling to distinguish the
slightly melancholy sound of the water as
it came to spread itself upon the sand. When
the shouts and the joyful uproar of the crowd
diminished slightly, I could hear it, tranquil,
always the same. (Road 68)

As is often the case, the power and spirit of nature are manifested in sound; the receptive and sensitive child cannot help but be overpowered by its force: "in spite of myself I surrendered to the same

little phrase [the sound of the lake] whose meaning I should have so much liked to know" (Road 69). François Ricard attempts to explain the symbolic significance of Lake Winnipeg:

Globalement, il est une image de l'étrangeté absolue. A la fillette éloignée de la maison familiale, ce décor révèle un ordre totalement différent l'envers du monde qu'elle a connu jusque-là.⁴⁰

Christine's most provoking thought in this episode is contained in the question she asks herself: "Was it [the lake] speaking particularly to me or would it have spoken to others too if they had listened?" (Road 69). Such an inquiry raises the issue of whether Christine is a "chosen Son," singled out by the spirit of nature for special treatment, or whether the impetus for the relationship comes from Christine herself. It would seem that, like Wordsworth, Christine experiences this valuable and fulfilling relationship with nature precisely because of her Romantic temperament, which consists of an open and patient attitude, as well as an intense and passionate response to the influences of the external world. The stance is not one of passivity, but of receptivity--"the lake penetrated me" (Road 66)--and active participation: "All this time I was straining my eyes" (Road 67). Roy implies that it is not a matter of simply choosing to listen, but of possessing the particular temperament and attitude which allow that "listening" to be invested with meaning beyond the physical and temporal. Others "hear" the sound of the waves, but do not intensely and passionately "listen," as Christine does. Neither do they possess the respect and reverence for nature which make the day by the lake analogous to "a day in church with its organ music

and jubilation" (Road 66).

Christine's internal struggle with mortality, time and relationships finds a context within the larger framework of nature. The lake inspires the question: "Is that the end or the beginning?" (Road 67), which leads to the old man's observation that "the end and the beginning had their own way of finding each other" (Road 68) and that "Perhaps everything finally forms a great circle, the end and the beginning coming together" (Road 68). Although Christine does not completely understand the implications of these statements on an intellectual level, she intuitively enough to find herself with "one last important question to ask him, which had to do with what passes and what remains" (Road 86). Again, the pursuit of mortality leads to an intimation of immortality. The effect of this "dream-like" day--"one might think that what we've seen today is only a dream" (Road 85)--is extremely powerful, and in its association with profound truths and wisdom, seems to mark the end of Christine's pure innocence of childhood: "I seemed to have passed a frontier today, an actual boundary, and to have gone farther than I should" (Road 81). The word "should" suggests Christine's precocious development, as well as the dangers inherent in the realm of adulthood.

In true Wordsworthian fashion, Christine carries the intensity and passion of the experience within herself--"we had brought the sound of the water back with us" (Road 85)--as the music of the lake takes on a kind of immortality associated with the range and intensity of human emotions: "Then the splendour and the strange sadness of all I had seen today came to me, like an imperishable song that I

would never perhaps cease to hear a little" (Road 86). The freedom and movement of the animated lake are necessary elements in this Wordsworthian communion with nature, as is the receptive openness of the human mind:

We sat down side by side in the sand before
Lake Winnipeg. The gentle waves came almost to
our feet, to whisper perhaps that they were
happy to see us here at last. I began to look
for gulls on the waves, but there were none
as yet. A marvelous freshness constantly touched
our faces. For a long moment--a half hour perhaps--
we wanted nothing else but to give ourselves
up to watching and listening to the lake. (Road 64)

The actual structure and operation of the relationship between nature and the Romantic child are addressed in Christine's observation: "It had seemed to me that its [the lake's] words changed as my own feelings changed. But had they not changed because of the lake?" (Road 81). The question addresses the dilemma of who or what has the power and ability to influence and affect the other--where the source and impetus of the relationship resides. Christine notices that she projects her own emotions onto the landscape, thus playing a part in its presentation. Conversely, however, she is also aware of the ability of the lake to change and affect her emotions and thoughts. Christine, then, like Wordsworth, finds herself in a relationship in which she is both receptive and active, receiving the influence of nature, but also participating by responding to that influence. Wordsworth's phrase, "unconscious intercourse" (Prel. I, 589), best conveys the inadvertent and mutual participation, exchange and benefit of this relationship. The lake changes as Christine's feelings, projected onto the lake change; similarly,

Christine's feelings and thoughts are influenced by the power inherent in the lake and nature.

Although Christine's relationship with her mother is obviously integral to the stories, "My Almighty Grandmother" and "The Old Man and the Child," this relationship is the central focus of "The Move" and "The Road Past Altamont." It is as if the extreme relationship between the very old and the very young must be probed and understood before the more subtle, and indeed complicated, relationship of mother and daughter can be explored. The joining of the circle in Christine's relationships with Mémère and Monsieur Saint-Hilaire provides a sense of completion and satisfaction at the conclusions of the first two stories, as Christine gains some wisdom and understanding of the cycle of life and death. Although somewhat elusive, this knowledge of mortality and immortality--of "what passes and what remains" (Road 86)--marks a distinct and premature removal for Christine from the pure innocence of childhood, a move which she regrets: "For these large things I had learned today exhausted me suddenly and made me wish to be no more than a little child" (Road 81). The relationship with Maman, however, is not as complete or clear as the relationships with Mémère and Monsieur Saint-Hilaire. Not being at the extreme ends of the circle, Christine and Maman do not experience the satisfaction of completion and communion.

Like Mémère and Monsieur Saint-Hilaire, Maman shares Christine's imagination and vision as well as her passion for the natural world. She explains that upon her arrival on the prairie she was "attracted by the space, the great bare sky, the way the tiniest tree

was visible in this solitude for miles" (Road 94). In "The Move" Christine's desire to experience such an adventure, such a journey, is focused upon a similar attraction and passion for nature, as she imagines herself lying "on the floor of the wagon, watching the prairie stars--the most luminous stars in either hemisphere, it is said--as they journeyed over her head" (Road 95). Christine's attempt to recover Maman's "wagon" perspective, from which "the world seemed renewed, different, and so beautiful" (Road 106) results in Maman's diagnosis that she also has "the family disease, departure sickness" (Road 106). The failure of Christine's planned and calculated attempt to witness a "transformation of the world and everything in it" (Road 96) in "The Move" is not a complete loss. It results in an identification between mother and daughter which is consistent with the sympathy depicted between the two in the earlier stories. As well, it leads to the shared journey of "The Road Past Altamont"--the most challenging and difficult journey in the book, in which the world is indeed "transformed" in a mysterious and transcendental fashion.

Christine and Eveline's experience in the Altamont Hills involves the qualities and characteristics typical of the Romantic child's relationship with nature, which is not surprising, given that one character is leaving behind the realm and associations of childhood, while the other is gradually returning to it as she approaches the end and closure of the circle. Particularly stressed in this incident is the inability of the individual to seek mystical and transcendental leaps from nature in a conscious manner. Such moments depend upon the union of a particular type of universe and mind, which

obviously cannot be predetermined and planned. The prepared mind, full of expectations and preconceptions, is bound to be disappointed, as in "The Move" and the third journey to the Pembina Mountains. The unprepared mind, which is open and receptive to the universe, is capable of being surprised and influenced by external stimuli, and can thus participate in the mutual exchange demanded by the relationship. Roy puts a great deal of emphasis on the random chance of this type of mystical communion, which must be guided by "caprice and intuition" (Road 113) rather than "our own judgement" (Road 113).

Christine's own experience is initiated by the combination of an open and receptive attitude, an unusually perceptive sensibility and a universe of movement, power and grandeur. Christine's relaxed receptivity is apparent in her submission to caprice and whatever the road happens to offer her; her sensitivity leads to a transcendental escape from reality:

However, the motor was puffing a little, and, if this hadn't been enough to tell me, I would have realized from the drier, more invigorating air that we were gaining altitude, sensitive as I have always been to the slightest atmospheric variation. With closed eyes, I think, I would recognize from the first breath the air of the ocean, the air of the plane, and certainly that of the high plateaus, because of the delightful feeling of lightness it communicates to me, as I shed weight as I climbed--or mistakes. (Road 115-16)

In this passage Roy attempts to portray the transcendental nature of the prairie landscape, identified by Richard Chadbourne in his discussion of Gabrielle Roy and Willa Cather:

To all of us, whether children of the Prairies

like themselves or not, they succeed in communicating a sense of the immensity of the prairie landscape, its transcendent quality, its strange, harsh beauty, its unique way of testing the strength of men and women.⁴¹

The movement of the natural world complements Christine's state of mind. The animation of the prairie is apparent in the interplay between the roads and the ever-present wind, which "lightly playing with them, raises dust from their surfaces and makes it turn in a lasso" (Road 113-14). Christine even wonders if the road, in its ability to influence and guide her, possesses a will and intellect of its own: "Can it be that one [of the roads], similar as it was to the other, gave me a sort of intelligible signal?" (Road 113). The power of the prairie wind reveals itself in its apparent aggressive movement, as Christine drives into the hills. This process, during which the observer's own movement is responsible for the animation of the universe, is reminiscent of the boat-stealing episode in The Prelude. For Christine, the prairie

exploded in swellings, in crevices, in eroded cracks; boulders broke the surface. Then it split more deeply; ridges sprang up, took on height and came rushing from every side as if, delivered from its heavy immobility, the land was beginning to move and was coming towards me in waves quite as much as I was going toward it. (Road 116)

Sound, as well as movement, plays a role. Coupled with the familiar wind is the flow of water: "From time to time as we passed, a liquid voice, some flow of water over the rocks, struck my ear" (Road 117). Christine's response to this energy is the investment of her own emotions and excitement onto the landscape, so that the dirt road rises "with a sort of elation, in joyous little bounds, in leaps like

a young dog straining at the leash" (Road 117). Although there is no obvious transcendence, there is a fusion of the energy of nature and that of the individual. Obviously, Christine invests the road with her own desire for freedom. She is the "young dog straining at the leash."

The tendency of the prairie to tease through mirages and illusions lends a mysterious, dream-like and magical atmosphere to the episode in the Pembina Mountains, especially since the presence of the mountains on the traditionally flat prairie is surprising. The vagueness of the description of the hills is the result of, and consistent with, the mysterious quality of Maman's joy, which can never be described in words. Christine's description of Maman on the hill, beside the tree, captures the solitude and isolation of the mystical experience and also embodies the Wordsworthian requisites of sublimity: form, power and duration:

When she reappeared a short time later, she was right on top of one of the steepest hills, a silhouette diminished by the distance, completely alone on the farthest point of the rock. Beside her leaned a small, twisted fir tree, which had found its niche up there among the winds. (Road 118)

Maman's sensuous and imaginative response to the hills obviously results in a removal from the present to the past, and Christine perceptively sees that the relationship is two-sided: "What did they say to each other that day, Maman and the little hills?" (Road 119). Christine realizes that Maman's desire to recapture "her joyous childhood heart" (Road 119), finding the moment when "childhood and old age come together" (Road 119), means that "the round must be almost finished, the festival

over" (Road 119).⁴² Christine's subsequent grief at this discovery is not only for her mother's mortality, but also for the fact that she herself, as an outsider, plays no part in the closure of this circle and can have no influence or input into her mother's emotional interlude.

This episode in the Altamont Hills becomes symbolic of the mystical and transcendental moment experienced by the Romantic child, or the mind which possesses the properties of the Romantic child. In the words of Ernest Pallascio-Morin, Altamont is "peut-être Shangrilla, ou Champigny, ou Daume-la-Rivière, ou même ce petit coin qui n'a pas de nom, mais qui vous invite à retrouver des images que vous avez créés autrefois dans votre imagination fertile."⁴³ The characteristics of the original visit to the Pembina Mountains are those of a Wordsworthian "spot of time." The contact with the hills is sudden and unexpected, and obviously the experience is elusive in that it is difficult, if not impossible, to explain or describe. In addition, the attempt to re-experience this powerful moment fails because such a moment entails a happiness that will not "come at our bidding" (Road 141), as "it belongs to a different world from that of the will" (Road 141). Although the actual act of communion between Maman and the hills is not described, it is fairly obvious that Maman's state of mind, as well as the scene, is responsible for the powerful transcendence to the past. The failure of the hills to please on the third visit lies not in any fault of the hills, but in Maman, who seems resigned to Christine's comment that "perhaps we're only seeing them [the hills] today as they've always been" (Road 140).

Obviously, what is missing is not "something in the hills themselves" (Road 141), but something "in the way we looked at them" (Road 141). The hills are constant, but the mind which receives their influence and impression is variable, and thus cannot receive and respond in a consistent manner. The relationship, therefore, is unpredictable. When Maman possesses an open and receptive mind, she is able to respond to the hills in an intense and uncalculated manner, investing them with her own emotions and rising above their physical presence.

In each of the relationships explored in The Road Past Altamont Christine not only displays a Romantic mind and imagination, but inspires such an attitude in others. This celebration of the Romantic imagination, emotion and intuition is emphasized in Christine's "capricious" and "random" attitude towards "the rectilinear and inflexible narrow roads that crisscross the Canadian prairie" (Road 112). Only such an unstructured and fanciful approach can lead to an imaginative transformation and transcendence of these logical and rational surroundings, initially and ostensibly ordered and regular. Christine's imaginative approach not only benefits herself, but also affects the perception of the individual with whom she is involved, providing an enlightenment and insight which cannot be attained through logic and reason. Significantly, each of the individuals influenced by Christine is approaching or in the midst of old age, and is thus susceptible to her influence because he or she is completing the cycle, returning to the vision and wonder of childhood. As well, Mémère, Monsieur Saint-Hilaire and Maman all possess splendid imaginations. The relationship between Christine and Maman, however, is poignant

and bittersweet. Because Christine is no longer a child and Maman is not yet at the end of her life, there is no completion of the circle, no fulfillment of union and communion. The space between the two does not have enough breadth to provide a clear perspective and a reciprocally satisfying relationship. As Maman notes: "We come together We always do finally come together, but so late." (Road 130).

Children of My Heart is also concerned with the effect and influence of the child on others. Unlike Street of Riches and The Road Past Altamont, however, the narrator is the young adult rather than the child. Again, the relationship between the very old and the very young is depicted with the same emphasis and observations as in The Road Past Altamont. In Children of My Heart, however, Roy also concentrates on the less extreme interaction between a young teacher and her pupils. Like the relationship between Christine and Maman, these affinities take place on different points on the circumference of the circle, rather than the point where the end joins the beginning. The teacher's relationship with her pupils is tinged with the poignancy and regret typical of attempts at communication between individuals who never manage to catch up to one another.

The relationship between the teacher and her pupils involves a mutual sharing and influence:

My pupils, with their joy, brought back
my own childhood. To complete the circle, I
tried to magnify their joy so that it would
go with them all through their lives.⁴⁴

Again, the Romantic stance of receiving joy and subsequently returning

and reflecting that joy is emphasized. The initial source of beauty and inspiration, in this case the children, is imbued with additional radiance and joy through the participation of the observer, who interacts with that source. Whether applied to nature or other humans, this Romantic posture of a receptive and responsive mind is obviously central to Roy's philosophy.

The children described in Part One of Children of My Heart share an almost paradoxical intensity and delicacy. The narrator describes the school child as "the most delicate, the newest, the easiest thing to break in the whole world" (Heart 81), but also notes her discovery that "it could be harder to change the mind of a loving child than that of a grown man armed with all his strength" (Heart 19). The intensity of the child, "overexcited by too much joy and emotion" (Heart 34), combined with an inability to effect a "revolt against the adult world" (Heart 39), perhaps explains to some extent "the vulnerability, the fragility of the children of the world" (Heart 81). The energy and vitality of the children obviously leave them open to disillusionment and disappointment. They seem to display every indication of a promise which will not be fulfilled, for the deep emotion and intensity will inevitably be eroded as the years pass.

The power and ability of the child to perform the miracle of transferring an individual to another world or plane is indeed phenomenal. For example, the narrator's mother, inspired by Clair's appearance, is delighted by a removal into the past to the days of her own children: "did he not bring back a little of the childhood

of so many of her own children now grown old, ill or vanished into death?"(Heart 33). Similarly, the old people in the home rediscover their younger selves, as they listen to Nil's singing:

And the tragic spectacle of the audience ended in a kind of parody, with old men as excited as children, some on the verge of laughter, others of tears, because they were rediscovering so vividly in themselves the traces of what was lost. (Heart 48)

Roy emphasizes the transcendental and visionary nature of these journeys. The narrator's mother watches Nil sing, "and with his help she too was away, taking flight far above life, on the wings of a dream" (Heart 45). Indeed, the child himself seems to focus on a world far removed from the real one: "He ended with that gesture of his hand that I never tired of, pointing to a happy road, far away at the end of this world" (Heart 50).

The richness of Roy's fictional reminiscences is obviously the result of a Romantic intensity and openness which she and the narrator share with the sensitive children described in the portraits. In Part Two of Children of My Heart the teacher and André respond to the meadowlark's song with the same joy: "When the song ended, André turned his eyes toward mine, and I saw a delight that was equal to my own" (Heart 91). Not all the children possess the narrator and André's desire and ability to concentrate on the external world. André's response to the meadowlark contrasts with Lucien and Lucienne's superficial attention, which can only take into account the somewhat irrelevant sense of sight:

Lucien and Lucienne pretended to listen,

looking all over to find the bird; but André listened from within, his head tilted, not caring from what point might come such an expression of joy that perhaps no one has sung it better than this bird. (Heart 91)

The teacher, for whom the "hour that hesitates between night and day has always seemed enchanted" (Heart 90), obviously shares André's sensitive response to nature; dusk, for example, "calls [her] still like a dream" (Heart 90) and, "in the last flush of the horizon" (Heart 90), seems to hold "the answer to the question that haunts us from birth" (Heart 90). Gabrielle Roy emphasizes the power of nature and its ability to attract those who are receptive to its influence: "It has happened that without realizing it I would walk for two hours in a row under the darkening sky toward the last flush of the horizon" (Heart 90). The transcendental element of this type of experience, during which nature overpowers and overwhelms the individual, strikes the narrator as she walks through the woods with Lucien, Lucienne and André: "And it seemed to me that we were climbing infallibly, the three children and I, toward happiness, still out of sight but certain to be waiting for us before too long" (Heart 90).

The influence of the children, particularly, André, encourages the teacher to commune with nature and give way to dreaming. Roy suggests that André is no ordinary child, but a Romantic "chosen Son": "André received it [an arrow of sunlight] full in his face, and I discovered with astonishment the strange and splendid colour of his eyes: a spring leaf traversed by sunlight" (Heart 90). Essentially, André is like that spring leaf, young and fresh, infused by sunlight

or the spirit of the animated universe. Hardly passive, however, both the green leaf and André reflect the radiance they absorb, thus inspiring those who come into contact with them.

In the third part of Children of My Heart Gabrielle Roy examines an intensely Romantic child making the painful transition from childhood to adulthood. Médéric displays many of the characteristics of the Wordsworthian child, despite his cynical and hardened exterior (Heart 114). Interestingly, his Indian mother provides him with the characteristics of the "noble savage" and an explanation for his affinity with nature. The teacher refers to Médéric's mother in terms of the "primitive innocence he had partly inherited from her" (Heart 159). Typically Romantic, Médéric indulges in "a solitude that is never so profound as in the very last days of childhood" (Heart 116), and a solitude from which the narrator herself has only just emerged:

I was on the point of reproaching him with a taste for solitude that I found exaggerated at his age, but I recalled in time that I had just emerged from a period during which I had practically lived with my back turned to other people. (Heart 126)

Obviously, the eighteen-year old teacher is only a few steps ahead of the thirteen-year old pupil, and while Médéric is trying to catch up with mamzelle, she is longing to return to the realm of childhood:

Although I had crossed the border of the kingdom where only yesterday I, like Médéric now, had been at home, I longed to return there with him as guide, imagining that it would be possible in his footsteps to regain access to the lost frontier. (Heart 127)

This rather close connection on Roy's circle is novel indeed when viewed in the context of so many simpler and more straightforward relationships between the young and the old.

Médéric, like other Romantic children, depends on all of his senses for guidance and gratification: "At times Médéric would stop, sniffing the air, which seemed to guide him as much as sight itself" (Heart 129). Such sensuous awareness and sensitivity result in his submission to "a grave, peaceful joy, rare at his age" (Heart 132) when he looks down on the plain, and the emergence of "the inner light of joy and elation" (Heart 132) when the trout touches his hand. Like Wordsworth, Médéric experiences "the first burgeoning of love, in adolescence" (Heart 125), an affinity for "the small, free creatures of the earth and its waters" (Heart 125). Médéric's devotion to, and immersion in, nature certainly approach the intensity of Wordsworth's dedication during youth, when he describes himself as "a roe" who "bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides / Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams, / Wherever nature led."⁴⁵

The teacher's reaction to Médéric's plain is implicitly the reaction of Médéric himself. Obviously, the narrator cannot provide a description of the internal process which takes place within Médéric, but an account of her own response, coupled with an emphasis on the shared and united aspect of the experience, provides much the same effect. Roy emphasizes the union of the two figures "so happy together, joining in the rare and marvellous understanding between two people that makes words or gestures unnecessary" (Heart 131).

It is the attitude of each observer to the scene that provides

this union, for both are "attentive to the landscape that united" (Heart 131) them. This attentiveness results in a Romantic receptivity and openness which invite the influence of the external world. The plain is, paradoxically, both still and moving--"motionless, but nonetheless endowed with an irresistible, sweeping movement" (Heart 130). The animation of nature is emphasized through its apparent action: "the blocks of stone . . . [draw] back" and "the slice of sky [pushes] through" (Heart 130). The narrator imposes her own emotions and interpretations onto the plain, seeing it as "awesome in all its breadth, its fullness, its noble sadness, its transfigured beauty" (Heart 130)--beauty partly transfigured by the height of the vantage point, but also by the intense emotions felt by the observer at her new "discovery." The teacher projects her own sense of introspection and isolation onto the single stone's "solitary fall, amid that profound and meditative silence" (Heart 130).

Although a shared experience, the initial reaction is enjoyed in solitude, and that solitary joy and reverence are only increased or doubled when the "shared" aspect of the moment becomes evident. In retrospect, the narrator emphasizes the pair, the couple--not just Médéric and herself, with "eyes that must have been filled with the same splash of joy" (Heart 131), but even the "two horses standing side by side" (Heart 130). Typically Wordsworthian, this moment provides "tranquil restoration"⁴⁶ in later years: "Even today when that moment returns, my soul swells with contentment and happiness" (Heart 130). The teacher's reference to a "reverie that had overtaken" (Heart 132) them suggests the presence of a power stronger

then themselves, as well as a dreamlike and visionary atmosphere. Glimpses of transcendental wisdom are evident: "How long did we stay there, almost without moving, still in our saddles so as to see a shade farther and perhaps glimpse the future unfolding before our eyes?" (Heart 132).

Médéric's reverence for the mystery of the natural world is obviously threatened by the passage of time and the end of childhood. Roy refers to the way in which society and time wear away the freedom of the child, who on "reaching adulthood, loses a living part of his soul, its spontaneity partially destroyed" (Heart 146). Roy also emphasizes the child's "haughty contempt for the adult world" (Heart 128), and the pain felt by the child "at separation from childhood" (Heart 148). In the story of Médéric, the depiction of this "transitory linkage between child and man" (Heart 161) concentrates on the pain and nostalgia involved in the process:

Why is it that the appearance of the man in the child is a painful sight, whereas the loveliest thing in the world is the fleeting rediscovery of the child in a man? (Heart 162)

Médéric, obviously aligned with the fish, is a wild creature to be tamed, or "an innocent animal that will perhaps end up allowing itself to be trapped" (Heart 117).

School and education are part of the taming and imprisoning process, as already demonstrated by writers such as Connor and Mitchell. As part of that system, the young teacher experiences some confusion:

I had barely recovered from those reveries

myself, had just passed beyond my adolescent dreams, and was so little resigned to my adult life that sometimes, when I saw my small pupils appear in the early morning on the prairie as fresh as the dawning of the world, I wanted to run toward them and place myself forever on their side instead of waiting for them in the snare of school. (Heart 117-18)

Attracted to the childlike world, she feels that she should save the child in Médéric, that she "should go to the rescue of that part of Médéric that was threatened" (Heart 164). The narrator does learn, however, "that in order to advance one step, one must tear oneself away from some possession perhaps even more precious" (Heart 166). Progression and development necessarily involve sacrifice. The teacher can neither nourish the child in Médéric nor accept the obviously sexual advances of love from the emerging adult. The promise and intensity of the early relationship are complicated by the difficulty of communication and communion. The source of the difficulty can be traced to the restraints of society and the inability of the two characters to retain the childlike vision and wisdom which formed the basis of their original relationship.

As a type of elegy to the poignant and painful experience, Roy concludes Médéric's story with an appeal to the senses and a reference to the cycle of life and death: "It [the bouquet] gave off a delicate odour. It spoke of the young and fragile summer, barely born but it begins to die" (Heart 171). The bouquet, however, also embraces the Romanticism of love and nature: "It was an enormous bouquet of field flowers, light as a butterfly, barely holding together its fragile stems with their awkward grace; . . . its corollas still

fresh with dew" (Heart 170-71). The final view of Médéric is indeed triumphant and hopeful: "He raised his hand high, high in the bright sky, with a gesture that seemed to be for now and forever" (Heart 171).⁴⁷ Once again, Gabrielle Roy celebrates the childlike vision and Romantic love associated with nature. Although painful, the wisdom and insight afforded by the relationship transcend the temporal and practical limitations.

Gabrielle Roy's Romanticism, like L.M. Montgomery's, W.O. Mitchell's and Ernest Buckler's, emerges from her dependence on emotion and intuition and her distrust of intellect and reason. M.G. Hesse maintains that Roy "may be characterized essentially as an intuitive rather than an intellectual artist,"⁴⁸ and goes on to link intuition with memory: "The importance of the intuitive aspect of her art accounts for the significance of memory as the artistic impulse of much of Roy's imaginative writing."⁴⁹ Similarly, Hugo McPherson, looking at Roy's "existential concern for the individual,"⁵⁰ argues that

she does not wield the scapel of intellect with their [contemporary French existentialists'] clinical vigour. Gabrielle Roy feels rather than analyzes, and a sense of wonder and of mystery is always with her. She is a "witness" to the aches of her century and her culture rather than a reformer; and she believes that only Love can redeem the time.⁵¹

Gabrielle Roy, like Ernest Buckler, uses the firefly as a symbol of the most delicate, fleeting and exquisite moments in life: "Their existence is fugitive. Perhaps fireflies live only long enough to give forth their fleeting light" (Summer 108). The firefly, like

the Romantic child and artist responding to nature, receives and reflects the beauty and grandeur of the natural world and its creator: "Fortunate are those who at least once before they are extinguished shine with their full light. Caught in God's fire" (Summer 109). The child and those with childlike vision are closer to the firefly than the ordinary individual.

More powerful and pervasive than Roy's firefly, however, is her circle, epitomized in the Manitoba horizon. Roy distinguishes between the loves of the child and the adult by remarking on the fact that adult loves are "reflected on and sought after,"⁵² unlike the surprising and unplanned loves of childhood. Roy's most memorable childhood love is that of the circular horizon and sky:

My childhood love is the silent sky of the prairie, fitting the soft, level earth as perfectly as the bell cover on a plate, the sky that could shut one in, but which, by the height of its dome, invites us to take flight, to fly to freedom.⁵³

The circle of completion and fulfillment is also the circle of flight and transcendence, inspired by its perfection and immensity. For the child, the horizon is not beyond reach: "You know how it fools us, this Manitoba horizon! How many times, as a child, have I set out to reach it."⁵⁴ For the adult, such a journey is marred by discouragement, suspicion and the belief "that we will never reach the horizon's perfect curve."⁵⁵ Gabrielle Roy, however, with her characteristic sincerity, warmth and hope, offers the childlike vision and assertion "that this horizon, still so far away, is the circle of mankind, full and united at last."⁵⁶

David Stouck's observation that "the Canadian imagination has traditionally been obsessed with the limitations rather than the possibilities of human experience"⁵⁷ is applicable to some extent to the work of Montgomery, Mitchell and Buckler, in which society places boundaries around, and limitations on, the Romantic child. Such limitations crush David Canaan, while Montgomery's heroines and Brian O'Connell basically accept "life's limitations and [find] ascetic pleasure within their circumference."⁵⁸ Gabrielle Roy, however, with her humanistic love for the individual, explores and celebrates "the possibilities of human experience."⁵⁹

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

¹ Gabrielle Roy, Enchanted Summer, trans. Joyce Marshall (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972) 107. All further references to Enchanted Summer are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation, Summer.

² M.G. Hesse, Gabrielle Roy (Boston: Twayne, 1984) 41.

³ Phyllis Grosskurth, Canadian Writers and Their Works: Gabrielle Roy (Toronto: Forum, 1969) 14.

⁴ Allison Mitcham, The Literary Achievement of Gabrielle Roy (Fredericton: York Press, 1983) 32.

⁵ Gabrielle Roy, "Man and His World," The Fragile Lights of Earth, trans. Alan Brown (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982) 195.

⁶ Marc Gagné, Visages de Gabrielle Roy, l'oeuvre et l'écrivain (Montreal: Librairie Beauchemin Limitée, 1973), 277, 279.

⁷ Coleridge's poems, "The Eolian Harp" and "Dejection: An Ode," contain good examples of this Romantic convention of the Aeolian harp or lute. See Coleridge: Poetical Works, ed. Ernest Hartley Coleridge (London: Oxford University Press, 1967).

⁸ Gabrielle Roy, Street of Riches, trans. Henry Binsse (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1967) 39. All further references to Street of Riches are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation, Street.

⁹ Donald Cameron, "A Bird in the Prison Window," Conversations With Canadian Novelists 2: 129.

¹⁰ Cameron 2: 139.

¹¹ Gabrielle Roy, "My Manitoba Heritage," The Fragile Lights of Earth 147.

¹² Roy, "My Manitoba Heritage" 147.

¹³ Annette Saint-Pierre, Gabrielle Roy: sous le signe du rêve (Saint Boniface: Les Editions de Blé, 1975) 105.

Paula Gilbert Lewis connects the rocking motion with the movement of a cradle. See Paula Gilbert Lewis, The Literary Achievement of Gabrielle Roy (Birmingham, Alabama: Summa, 1984) 29.

¹⁴ Réjean Robidoux, "Gabrielle Roy à la recherche d'elle-même," Canadian Modern Language Review 30 (1973-74): 208-11.

Réjean Robidoux, "Le Roman et la recherche du sens de la vie. Vocation: écrivain," Mélanges de civilisation canadienne-français offerts au professeur Paul Wyczynski (Ottawa: L'Université d'Ottawa, 1977) 225-35.

¹⁵ Hesse 41.

¹⁶ Hesse 41.

¹⁷ Grosskurth 37.

¹⁸ Saint-Pierre 91.

¹⁹ Gérard Tougas, History of French-Canadian Literature, trans. Alta Lind Cook (Toronto: Ryerson, 1966) 154.

²⁰ Mitcham 14.

²¹ Gagné 87.

²² Cameron 2: 142.

²³ Alan Brown, "Gabrielle Roy and the Temporary Provincial," Tamarack Review 1.4 (1956): 61.

²⁴ Hugo McPherson, "The Garden and the Cage," Canadian Literature 1 (1959): 49.

²⁵ McPherson 49.

²⁶ McPherson 55.

²⁷ Brown 70.

²⁸ Brown 70.

²⁹ Paul Socken comments on the fact that "the rural environment is not a magical and automatic panacea for all human problems." See Paul Socken, "Gabrielle Roy as Journalist," Canadian Modern Language Review 30.2 (1974): 100.

³⁰ David Stouck, for example, maintains that Street of Riches is Roy's "songs of innocence" and The Road Past Altamont is her "songs of experience." His identification of a "darker dimension" in The Road Past Altamont, however, does not seem viable. Both works are concerned with the mixture of innocence and experience, joy and pain. See David Stouck, "Notes on the Canadian Imagination" 19.

³¹ Lewis 31.

³² Mitcham 28.

³³ Gagné 152.

³⁴ Saint-Pierre 130.

³⁵ Gabrielle Roy, "My Manitoba Heritage" 149.

³⁶ Gabrielle Roy, The Road Past Altamont, trans. Joyce Marshall (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1976) 22. All further references to The Road Past Altamont are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation, Road.

³⁷ Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" line 67.

³⁸ Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" line 64.

³⁹ Gabrielle Roy explores the relationship between the child and death in "The Dead Child" in Enchanted Summer.

⁴⁰ François Ricard, Gabrielle Roy: Ecrivains canadiens d'aujourd'hui (Montreal: Fides, 1975) 122.

⁴¹ Richard Chadbourne, "Two Visions of the Prairies: Willa Cather and Gabrielle Roy," The New Land: Studies in a Literary Theme, ed. Richard Chadbourne and Hallvard Dahlie (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1978) 115.

⁴² Paula Lewis comments that "Trips into nature and, in particular, nature itself often stimulate a renewed sense of youth for Royan characters. See Lewis 28.

⁴³ Ernest Pallascio-Morin, "Gabrielle Roy sur la route d'Altamont," Gabrielle Roy: dossier de presse 1945-1980 (Sherbrooke: Bibliotheque du Seminaire de Sherbrooke, 1981) L'Action, 9 septembre, 1966.

⁴⁴ Gabrielle Roy Children of My Heart, trans. Alan Brown (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979) 27. All further references to Children of My Heart are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation, Heart.

- 45 Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey" lines 67-70.
- 46 Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey" line 30.
- 47 This gesture is reminiscent of the gesture Nils makes as he sings.
- 48 Hesse 88.
- 49 Hesse 88.
- 50 McPherson 48.
- 51 McPherson 48.
- 52 Gabrielle Roy, "My Manitoba Heritage" 154.
- 53 Roy, "My Manitoba Heritage" 154.
- 54 Roy, "My Manitoba Heritage" 155.
- 55 Roy, "My Manitoba Heritage" 155.
- 56 Roy, "My Manitoba Heritage" 155.
- 57 Stouck 9.
- 58 Stouck 9.
- 59 Stouck 9.

CHAPTER FIVE

TIMOTHY FINDLEY'S HOOKER WINSLOW: WORDSWORTH OVERTURNED

i

Mitchell, Buckler and Roy demonstrate a sustained interest in the Romantic child, which informs and inspires their work as a whole. The figure is an integral part of their philosophical outlook, providing a unique and sensitive viewpoint of insight and intensity. The inspired energy of Who Has Seen the Wind, The Mountain and the Valley and Street of Riches is the result of the authors' sympathetic understanding of the Romantic child. The Romantic child is more than simply a thematic concern; he or she provides the perspective and wisdom through which the world is examined. The sincerity and clarity of such a vision attract a reader who retains only vague glimpses of the viewpoint delineated so accurately and coherently by the writer.

These three writers--Mitchell, Buckler and Roy--stand out as successful disciples and advocates of the Romantic child. Mitchell's influence extends beyond the 1947 publication of Who Has Seen the Wind to the appearance of Jake and the Kid and The Kite in the early sixties and the more recent How I Spent My Summer Holidays (1981). Similarly, Buckler's Ox Bells and Fireflies carries some of his 1952 themes of The Mountain and the Valley into 1968. Roy's concentration on the Romantic child spans the years of 1955 to 1977, occurring at regular intervals in her career. Clearly, the interest

in the Romantic child, displayed in the forties and fifties, continues into the sixties and seventies.

Although no single "major" writer of recent years maintains the sustained emphasis on the Romantic child displayed by Mitchell, Buckler and Roy, Timothy Findley does devote an entire novel to the subject in The Last of the Crazy People. In this novel Findley uses the Romantic child in the traditional manner as a critic of society, but the exaggeration and perversion of the conventional figure indicate that this is no longer a Wordsworthian child pitted against an indifferent or hostile society. Hooker Winslow is a parody of Brian O'Connal; Brian's Romantic characteristics have been exaggerated and twisted in the characterization of Hooker. For Hooker there is no possibility of Brian's integration or David Canaan's personal triumph. He is, nevertheless, like Brian and David, a Romantic child tested and tried by his society. The situation is more than simply a matter of degree, and is not merely a depiction of an obsessively Romantic child or a wickedly hostile society. Rather, the exaggeration in The Last of the Crazy People parodies and questions the popular figure of the Romantic child in Canadian fiction. At the same time, the structure and tone of the work conform to the basic situations and conventions of the isolated and sensitive child, struggling with a sympathetic natural world and a society that does not understand or communicate with him.

Hooker Winslow seems in some instances to be a direct descendant of Brian O'Connal and David Canaan: "On the way home through the woods, Hooker opened his ears, and the noises everywhere were suddenly

wonderful to hear."¹ Findley appears to be describing the traditional Wordsworthian communion between child and nature, during which the open and receptive child responds to the action and energy of the natural world. In his interview with Findley, Graeme Gibson actually refers to the Wordsworthian concept of "a very open child"² when describing Hooker Winslow. Like other Romantic children, particularly David Canaan, Hooker senses his own unique nature, based on his overbearing curiosity: "He knew, too, that he was different and that his own particular and private inquisitiveness--that was what made him so" (Last 216). Hooker's predilection for solitude--"favouring a lack of companionship" (Last 74)--also characterizes him as a Romantic child.

Although the character is familiar, The Last of the Crazy People is not a traditional nostalgic pastoral. Hooker possesses a Romantic temperament and a sensitive nature, but fails to find suitable recipients (human, natural or creative) for his emotions and sympathies, because of an unprecedented alienation and lack of direction. The gap between the child and the adult results in more than the usual isolation of the child: "Always, it was assumed that Hooker was blind and deaf" (Last 49). Like David Canaan, Hooker is alienated from both his family and community; unlike the Canaan family, however, the Winslow family itself is ostracized from society, rendering Hooker even more removed from the norm than David.

Findley's novel recalls Who Has Seen the Wind in setting and tone. Hooker's field evokes Brian's prairie in its physical properties, its atmosphere and its associations with mortality. These echoes

of the classic Canadian Romantic child are not necessarily conscious allusions on Findley's part, but they do raise associations and expectations that are both fulfilled and repudiated. Findley's conformity to the traditional structure, conflict and characterization of this established form places The Last of the Crazy People within the Romantic and pastoral category, even if the associations and traditions of the genre are questioned and exposed.

Chapter Six of the novel presents what seems to be a perversion of the conventional communion between child and nature. The Winslows live on the edge of town, beside the field and countryside: "beyond their place the lane went on until it came to open country" (Last 73). This physical location obviously symbolizes the family's social position on the periphery of society. It also recalls Mitchell's distinction between the people of the town, who fit in and conform, and those of the prairie, who rebel, becoming outcasts, alienated and demented. The Winslows' position "in the last house" (Last 73) suggests neither town nor country, but instills a sense of belonging nowhere. The setting, with its heat and dust, is a sterile wasteland.³ Definitely cut off from the urban world by "a high rise of hill which obscured every view of the distant city" (Last 74), and to a lesser extent from the town, Hooker turns to the land of his family, Winslow's Field, for recreation and diversion. The betrayal of the child by the family and community invites the alternative relationship with nature.

Unlike Brian's prairie, however, Winslow's Field offers no companions or boyish games for Hooker. Instead, he occupies his time

with the burials of the dead victims of his cats. This pastime, which replaces the Wordsworthian sports and group activities, is indeed macabre and grotesque, especially in the obsessive interest and methodical approach displayed by Hooker. The graphic description of the dying squirrel and the plundering crows immediately contrasts with the lack of detail provided by Mitchell with reference to the dead animals which expose Brian to mortality. Although loath to kill the squirrel, Hooker is inured to death itself: "He was used to the mice and to the birds, probably because they were always dead" (Last 75).

Hooker's feelings of guilt and responsibility, that the burial is "something he owed the animals, as a debt" (Last 74), obviously stem from his association with the cats, and also from his own identification of himself as a victim, preyed upon by others. His feelings of affinity for the dying squirrel render its murder difficult; only the threat of the crows provokes Hooker to kill. Like the Young Ben, Hooker kills with mercy to put the animal out of its misery and to protect it from further harm and degradation. This sensitivity, which leads to the ability to empathize with a victim, depends on an active imagination, and is peculiar to the child, according to Findley, who maintains that "Compassion is one of the first things that people try to eradicate in children."⁴ This natural predilection to identify and sympathize with other individuals is discouraged in the child; Findley, for example, claims that "they tried to get it [compassion] out of me and I consciously refused."⁵

Hooker's actual relationship with nature in this scene seems

to be one of paranoia on his part and judgement on the part of nature:

Around him, in the trees, some birds were quietly watching. And other squirrels were watching. Even the insects seemed to be quiet, and watching or listening. (Last 78)

The contact with death renders Hooker ill at ease with the natural world. Death and mortality affect him intensely and continuously; there is no gradual and developed process, neatly outlined in progressive stages, as depicted by Mitchell and Buckler. This particular episode does not lead to acceptance and understanding, as Hooker's responses do not seem to extend much beyond the physical.

In Chapter Six Hooker comes into contact with dragonflies. These very strong and solid dragonflies seem to contrast with the delicate and fragile fireflies which fascinate the narrator of Ox Bells and Fireflies and Gabrielle Roy. The attraction of the dragonfly lies in its physical construction: "Their wings were blue, like netting made of silver and steel, and their bodies were thin and black" (Last 79). This concrete and realistic description of the dragonfly is far removed from that of the firefly, which emphasizes a delicate Romantic aura. The sexual activity of the dragonflies stresses their physical properties, at the expense of any spiritual or fanciful associations: "The eight wings began to beat and a low, resilient humming was produced, just before the two, 'glued into one, lifted themselves into the air" (Last 79).

Hooker's innocence with respect to sexuality--"He must be very weak," Hooker thought, 'to have to lie there like that and let

the other one carry him'" (Last 79)--is matched by his ignorance of killing: "'But I don't know how.' Hooker wailed" (Last 76). In a conventional fashion, Findley has yoked mortality and sexuality in the movement from innocence to experience. He also fulfills the reader's expectations by illustrating these processes through examples of animals and the natural world. Hooker senses, intuitively rather than intellectually, the enormity of the forces with which he has come into contact: "He wished that he had waved at them [the dragonflies], their journey seemed so vast" (Last 79). However, the wisdom and emotion derived from the natural world do not produce the typical Wordsworthian circle of harmony and unity. There is no transcendence or mystical glimpse of God and creation. Rather, the spirit of nature, in the form of the energy of the sun favoured by Buckler, presses upon Hooker, pushing him down into his physical self instead of raising him above it:

Around him, the field and the forest had begun to give off steam. He was aware of the heat of the sun. It burned his shoulder blades and made him thirsty. (Last 80)

This contact with nature, mortality and sexuality is a process which subdues rather than enlightens. Findley makes the point that "You have the intelligence as a child to perceive things and take things in--but you haven't the intellect--yet--to deal with whatever it is you're receiving."⁶ So if the perception of intelligence does not lead to some emotional or transcendental height endowing meaning, then the experience is meaningless, as the child cannot assimilate it on a logical level.

The natural world towards which Hooker is drawn is oppressive and overpowering: "He wanted to lie down. He wanted to go to sleep, but the stare of the crows prevented him" (Last 79). Although Hooker is open and receptive--"sitting very still" (Last 79)--there is no rising of his spirit to meet the energy of nature; there is only futile conflict, as demonstrated in his interaction with the crows:

"Go--go! Go! Go! Go--go! GO!"
But they only clattered in the air around
him, almost unafraid, shaking out the rags
of their wings in his face. (Last 78)

These are not the inspiring skylarks and nightingales of Romantic poetry; neither are they the invisible singing larks of Brian O'Connell's prairie. They are birds of prey, seeking victims.

Findley's own view of man and nature sheds light on his presentation of Hooker's relationship with the natural world. Findley, unlike many earlier writers, is primarily concerned with the conflict between man and nature, in which man has the power, the upper hand. In his interview with Donald Cameron, Findley states: "I really believe that we're at war with nature, and we have declared war on a defenseless enemy."⁷ It is no longer a partnership and communion; even the child, as part of the human race, inherits the struggle, which is far removed from Wordsworth's view of the child's eventual integration and harmony with nature at the conclusion of a "spot of time." Findley's intimation of the rift between man and nature obviously affects his fiction: "But you can't put an animal back, you can't put a tree back if you've cut it down, you can't put a bird back if you've shot it out of the goddamn sky."⁸ Even though Hooker

possesses Romantic tendencies, he cannot fulfill or develop his temperament in a world in which man is divorced from nature. The logical extension and result of this basic rift between man and nature is a breakdown of communication and communion among individuals: "What we have done to the human race is to brutalize it beyond all recognition."⁹ All elements of creation are isolated and at odds with one another.

When Hooker buries Clementine in the field, the sun and dragonflies reappear, motifs now associated with Hooker's contact with mortality and sexuality. Again, the sun causes physical, rather than emotional or spiritual sensations: "The early sun was already boiling hot, and Hooker felt wet all over" (Last 162). Hooker makes an effort to see the dragonflies--"Hooker had to squint to see them" (Last 164)--which are moving against, rather than with, nature: "All over the field, the dragonflies caught at the grass and blew in the breeze, with gestures of resistance, to and fro" (Last 164). The relief of Clementine's burial opens Hooker's mind to the motion of the earth: "With a rush, like fast water, came the loud and perfected outcry of all living things, spilling out in motion--wings and legs and tails and eyes--" (Last 164). The union of this movement with Hooker's own frantic activity results in disruption, Hooker's "crazy dragging of the wagon after him" (Last 164) causing changes in the woods, "thrashing up the old dust and shaking out the sparrows like leaves, into a windy air" (Last 164). The coming together of the child with mortality and nature results in urgency and chaos: "Seen from the hills, the wood, all pale, was lifted from its sleep by the explosion

of these [the sparrows'] urgent wings" (Last 164). Hooker is not only left with a lack of inspiration and transcendence, but an absence of purpose in a world in which he is both hunter and victim: "it [the wood] rang with the sound of Hooker running, in a hunt without a prey" (Last 164).

The characteristics of the Romantic child are paramount, but the interaction with the natural world, inspired by these characteristics, is depressing and chaotic. There is no pattern or plan to provide a feeling of completion or comfort. The contact with mortality is grotesque in its emphasis on lifelessness in the extreme: "He thought of her kittens. He did not even know how many there would have been" (Last 164). The guilt and violence associated with the deaths with which Hooker must contend--the deaths of "the baby . . . Gilbert . . . Clementine . . . the birds . . . the squirrel . . . mice . . . his grandparents . . . John Harris . . ." (Last 233)--make it difficult for him to view death as part of a natural process and cycle. The child is sensitive and receptive; the experience offered to him by his world, however, does not unite with his temperament to produce harmony, but instead conflicts with it, resulting in violence and an absence of meaning.

One of Findley's intentions seems to be to criticize the conventional portrait of the Romantic child in harmony with nature, developing from innocence to experience through a growing knowledge of sexuality and mortality. By concentrating on startling, minute and extreme elements of nature, and by rendering the death motif physical and omnipresent to the point of parody, Findley questions

and criticizes the simplicity of the traditional pastoral approach. Such an approach does not seem appropriate to a society in which man has lost touch with nature. The mockery of the archetypal Romantic poet in the figure of Gil is based on naive and glamorized interpretations of this character and his position in society: "I think, here's someone who will probably write someday, or paint--or create something, and is just waiting now, simply waiting it out" (Last 64). Nick, of course, is deluded. Similarly, it is the positive view commonly taken of the Romantic child and his or her harmonious relationship with nature that seems obsolete and naive. Nick's view of the potential productivity resulting from Gilbert's "poetic qualities" is unrealistic; equally deluded is the usual view of the Romantic child's eventual ability to balance and deal with both nature and society.

Hooker's society and family do not allow for integration or modification on the part of the sensitive and intuitive child. As Graeme Gibson observes, Hooker is "a very open child, and a child with great needs, none of which are being satisfied."¹⁰ Not only are his imagination and sensitivity not being satisfied, they are being warped and twisted, without actually being destroyed. Gil's imagination and wonderment have been curtailed and perverted by conventional society, represented by the institution of school:

He [the teacher] wanted obedience to fact, but to me all that meant was the guy had no imagination. I had to wonder. I had wonderment, which means I had all those little, tiny worries that whole days and days of wasted time are made of. (Last 198)

Imagination and wonderment are not valued by the educational system, which sets and reflects the standards of society: "I had those [imagination and wonderment], you see--and so, of course, we came to graduation, and I failed" (Last 198). Already, Hooker senses the danger of his own active imagination: "His mind, moving like the man's fingers over things in his imagination--this could betray him" (Last 216).

Iris' sense of Hooker's uniqueness--"This little boy, Hooker, is different, all right" (Last 90)--provokes Alberta to ask: "What is he? Some kinda saint?" (Last 90). Like Saint Sammy, who preaches in a manner similar to Alberta's, and like the Young Ben in Who Has Seen the Wind and Herb Hennessey in The Mountain and the Valley, Hooker lives on the periphery of society. These strange nonconformists, like Hooker, are often singled out as mad or insane, but at the same time they possess a visionary wisdom and perception not found in ordinary people. Findley himself refers to the "sanity" of the "insane" in an interview with Graeme Gibson:

The ultimate sanity comes from the insane, I believe. Now--be careful. What I mean is--we call the sane "insane." In fiction you have to heighten this, treat it symbolically.¹¹

The Romantic child has symbolic overtones and associations, and obviously the character of Hooker is used by Findley for symbolic purposes, as he himself concedes, when referring to the Winslow family's dilemma:

And it was a child who, you know, in the Biblical way of putting it, delivered them from their torment, and that has its obvious symbolic overtones too.¹²

This is a child of vision and wisdom, encompassing the life and vitality that is absent in his world. He suggests the paradoxes of wise innocence and mad wisdom or, to use H.J. Rosengarten's term, "irrational logic."¹³ Joan Coldwell emphasizes that it is a child's, rather than an adult's, "logic, intuition, and love" that lead to the "'insane' act of mercy-killing."¹⁴ These faculties are highly sensitive and perceptive; they are to be valued for their insight, even though, or perhaps especially because, they are at odds with the "sane world."

Instead of moving towards society, like Brian O'Connell, or withdrawing from, and transcending it, like David Canaan, Hooker Winslow makes a decision and takes action to destroy it. He is not an artist prepared to understand and interpret his dilemma; his sensitivity and understanding lack an artistic outlet, and thus his solitary experience is unbearable. Solitude can be productive and creative, but it can also have negative results, as Findley explains in his reference to Thomas Mann, who "shows how loneliness has its various sort of positive things, but that it also perverts."¹⁵ The type of solitude forced on Hooker does not have the positive effects associated with the Wordsworthian child: a love of nature which eventually leads to a love of man. Rather, Hooker's solitude consists of an alienation that gives him insight into the horror, rather than the beauty, of his world.

Hooker's hiding in the ditch recalls Brian O'Connell's overnight sojourn in the ditch at the side of the road. Hooker, however, does not experience a mystical or transcendental moment. Again,

Findley concentrates on the physical, which provides no visionary relief or transcendence:

The ants made a foray up to his trouser bottoms and then marched boldly inside his underwear. They sent patrols down the neck of his shirt; they drew up a parade on his shoulder blades. They chose sides and made a charge. He became a battleground. (Last 132)

The situation provides an antithesis to the typical Wordsworthian relationship with nature. Here we have a conflict and battleground rather than an identification and union. The fragmentary aspect of society and the lack of integration--"I just don't like the way everybody always walks away from things. Everything" (Last 172)--spill over into Hooker's interaction with nature, resulting in turmoil rather than harmony. Separation and alienation, instead of union and communion, characterize the relationship.

Findley's treatment of the emotions and imagination is anti-Romantic in his exaggerated and negative depiction. It is the indulgence and extremes of emotion, overripe and over-abundant, that lead the Winslow family away from the norms of society: "'Someone,' she [Rosetta] said, 'has got to come in here to this house without emotion and do something about this. I think we need help'" (Last 65). However, it is the expectations and values of society that warp and twist the emotions and imagination, as demonstrated in the example of Gilbert at school. Like David Canaan, Gilbert Winslow is profoundly affected by the standards and judgements of whatever community he is functioning in. His interaction with society, and its pressure on him, result in a submersion and perversion of his sensitive and

poetic nature. His attempt to protect Hooker from such influences is manifested in his desire to shield him from sexual knowledge, to keep him a true innocent: "I don't want you to know. Oh, Jesus--I don't want you to have to know things" (Last 203).

Hooker, however, has already been affected by his society and family to the point that he has a perverted view of sexuality: "he hurts her into being pregnant" (Last 53). The substance and style of his imaginative episodes, usually connected with death, are also based on his knowledge of society:

In the kitchen, he ran up out of the crowd
and poked his hand at Mr. Oswald, the ironing
board. He made his own shout and fell on
the floor. (Last 67)

The connection between sexuality and death, apparent in the death of Clementine and her unborn kittens, in the relationship between Nick and Jessica and their still-born baby, in the rumours about Janice and Gilbert and his subsequent suicide, and in the association of the dragonflies with the field, is based on the shared characteristics of pain and suffering. This association deeply affects Hooker's consciousness, to the extent that he considers becoming an agent of death to curtail suffering more effectively--a consideration he eventually acts upon:

He thought of the squirrel that Phoebe had
hurt and of killing it with the hatchet. He
thought of the crows and the dragonflies and
the field.

"If I had a gun, I could kill them without hurting them" (Last 97)¹⁶

This merging of sexuality and death enhances neither state, but renders both sterile and terminal. There is no movement to another

plane, no mystical experience of being taken out of your physical self. The movement is towards the earth, but even then there is no depth and certainly no suggestion of rebirth or regeneration: "When he made the graves, he made them quite shallow and never longer than a foot" (Last 74). Gabrielle Roy's cyclical view is not present here, for the beginning and end of the circle are too closely connected; the meeting of birth and death, innocence and experience, results in violence rather than communion and harmony. There is no ripeness, or even rottenness, that at least intimates a process, but only dry sterility and a lack of fulfillment and completion.

The significance of the only transcendental moment in the novel lies in its location, Hooker's field, and in its association with death. It is Gilbert, not Hooker, who experiences the intense moment, but it is induced by Hooker's actions and temperament. Gilbert actually is Hooker, in a sense, riding Hooker's bicycle and following Hooker's path. Gilbert reacts to the scene with his senses: "It was a pretty place. It smelled pretty, he thought—it had the smell of tall grass, grass that was dry now, and there was the smell of trees, too, and the smell of warm dust" (Last 125). Immersing himself in the dark woods, Gilbert removes himself from society and wonders at Hooker's actions:

"Bury the dead," said Gilbert out loud, looking down at the wagon tracks. "What a funny kid. Imagine. All this way just to bury a bunch of mice and a few screwed birds." (Last 125)

The experience involves loneliness and a loss of conscious thought, as Gilbert concentrates on the woods, "forgetting why he had come"

(Last 125), walking "quickly with just the vaguest memory of his direction and purpose, right out through the woods and the field" (Last 125-26). Gilbert is suddenly overpowered by a feeling that has no apparent source:

And then an unaccountable thought came to him. Suddenly, and with the prompting of a physical shiver which crossed over his shoulders, he thought, "Like a place to die." (Last 125)

The experience culminates in Gilbert feeling a "sense of consecration" (Last 126) as he witnesses the flight of the "furious figures" (Last 126) of the birds. The feeling is inexplicable and fleeting, eluding description or analysis:

It was there in the field. But he could not explain it. Not holy--not like that. But in some way consecrated to a purpose. (Last 126)

The extremity of Hooker's eventual reaction to his situation invites a symbolic interpretation. Findley has attached symbolic significance to the Winslow family, who "as individuals and collectively represented a lot of values and things that must go."¹⁷ Buckler, and even Mitchell, in depicting the negative aspects of society, seem to be expressing a desire to terminate certain values and standards perpetuated by the family and community. These shortcomings, made apparent through the actions and thoughts of the Romantic child, are too entrenched, however, to be dissipated or destroyed. The usual resolution seems to be the tempering and modifying of society's values through the influence, often artistic, of the Romantic child. In The Last of the Crazy People, however, there is no compensation, such as a union with nature or a creative energy. Hooker's destructive

action, the murder of his family, is his only course of relief. Findley maintains that "It was the only thing that he could do,"¹⁸ and it is a matter of destroying "what is destroying us."¹⁹ The event has overtones of a Christian paradox—to kill what you love in order to save it. Obviously lacking, however, is the renewal, a sense of rebirth or regeneration. This is not a cyclical or continuous action, but a gesture of finality and termination: "There's always violence, because you hate so strongly what is happening that it can only bring that It Must End sense."²⁰

It is the lack of alternatives for Hooker, the lack of a complementary partner to fulfill his Romantic and sensitive nature, that leads to his extreme alienation. And this lack is based on Hooker's sterile and violent relationship with nature. Hooker is obviously searching for harmony and meaning in his pursuit of knowledge concerning nature, sexuality and mortality. The sterility, emptiness and violence he discovers in these areas prevent him from experiencing Brian O'Connell's "religious" feeling, David Canaan's visionary transcendence or Gabrielle Roy's harmonious circle. Findley's belief in "the urgency with which we must wipe out the old order"²¹ is aptly conveyed through the portrayal of a Romantic child whose temperament yearns for a communion with nature and its subsequent understanding, but who lives detached from nature and that ideal relationship. The urgency and decadence of the situation are accentuated by Hooker's inability to contend with his dilemma. This Romantic child has no recourse of escape, no means of transcendence, but is pulled towards the ground, rooted to a horrific reality. His Romantic traits are

blunted and perverted, as they are never given an opportunity to be developed or fulfilled. Findley's belief in human brutality--"I'm afraid I really see nothing but that"²²--seems to necessitate the curtailment and perversion of the qualities of the Romantic child, which traditionally tend to mitigate and offset the lack of sensitivity and imagination found in society. The attempt to administer vision and imagination is not only futile and impossible, but does not seem to be worth the effort in a society in which the values and atmosphere are decrepit enough to deserve dissolution.

The Last of the Crazy People involves a reaction to the traditional Canadian Romantic child, questioning the idealistic view which usually provides some sense of eventual harmony, or at least an acceptable solution to the conflict. Society's unintentional and unconscious critic, the Romantic child, becomes its deliberate destroyer. The child's awareness is heightened to a point where he takes advantage of his insignificant position in order to effect change in a destructive, as opposed to constructive, manner. Like the rest of the Winslow family, Hooker reacts in an extreme and intense fashion; the exaggeration of his temperament indicates his decadence and perversity. The lack of the usual refuge and relief of nature for Hooker results in a tragic rather than regenerative situation.²³ Hooker's inability to control and direct his Romantic temperament with respect to his family and society demonstrates the need for destruction and reconstruction rather than mitigation and compromise. Once again, the position and eventual situation of the Romantic child comment on the state of society, which in Findley's view is decadent

rather than merely sterile, and thus past the point of influence and enlightenment.

ii

Marie-Claire Blais' Mad Shadows and A Season in the Life of Emmanuel are written in the same vein as Findley's more recent The Last of the Crazy People, even though the societies and situations described by these two authors vary greatly. Both Findley and Blais depict perverse and decadent societies which place the Romantic child in an impossible situation. Blais' characters, Patrice and Jean-Le Maigre, possess the exterior characteristics of the Romantic child, but the realistic terrors and horrors of their predicaments twist and limit their Romantic temperaments, rendering them impotent and incapable of action. The intensity and extremity of Blais' nightmarish vision are heightened by her use of the overturned and perverted Romantic perspective. Blais portrays the decadence and oppression of her society through this grotesque perception. Her tone does not suggest a parody or reaction against the pastoral form, but a mockery and negation of even the possibility of such a view.

Mad Shadows, like The Last of the Crazy People, is concerned with the necessary destruction of a society that offers nothing to the individual, a society that is virtually empty and wasting away. The Romantic child, like the society, is an empty shell, devoid of substance or meaning. Patrice's interaction with nature does not involve a spiritual or emotional Wordsworthian communion, but consists of a physical and narcissistic absorption of self: "He looked at his

reflection and then rose, very slowly, holding out his arms as though trying to drink of his own beauty, drop by drop until there was no more."²⁴ The active involvement and participation of the child with the natural world have obviously been perverted; nature merely reflects on a superficial, rather than a profound, level. The child contributes nothing, merely absorbing rather than giving and bestowing his own wonder onto the external world.

This reduction of the child's supposedly deep relationship with nature is accompanied by an attack on the usual celebration of the child's innocence and wonder. Patrice's "simplicity" does not lead to enlightenment or discovery, but to pain and destruction:

Patrice burst out laughing like a child,
wonder filling his large, trusting eyes.
"Could I? Could I really play with the
fire? Mother is afraid of fire." (Mad 94)

His insanity is not the wise "madness" of the eccentric and solitary figure, but is the confusion of the lost innocent, without direction or guidance.

The apparent fallacies of innocence, wonder and contemplation are exposed in the character of Patrice, while the associations of the "noble savage" and "child of nature" are questioned in the character of Michael, who is described as "wild and passionate, blessed with the same burning joys as a child" (Mad 63). Michael, who "spoke so knowingly of the life of the animals, of the wind, and of the seasons, that one could only marvel at his insight" (Mad 63), displays a cruelty which is shocking in its blatant brutality and its contradiction of the conventional Romantic stance of guilt and remorse for

killing: "'I'll kill what I feel like killing,' said Michael" (Mad 79). Even the sensuous awareness of the Romantic child is twisted in the character of Michael, who is forced to use his less "despotic" senses because of his blindness. The reliance upon senses other than sight-- "I can listen to it [the wind]. It smells so delicious" (Mad 63)-- is not quite as unusual or impressive when the individual is blind, and is thus robbed of choice. Michael's purity, nobility and creativity, like Patrice's innocence and simplicity, are exaggerated to the point of the ridiculous, in order to criticize the indulgence and extravagance of the Romantic tradition. Michael, who is "proud, poetic and full of illusions, for he lived only in dreams" (Mad 49), is an ineffectual character, who cannot function within society.

The decadence and perversity of Isabelle-Marie's society demand some type of decisive action from her, which she, like Hooker, is able to provide. The memory of her father, of a healthy and productive way of life (Mad 24, 39), contrasts with the sickness and degeneration of the present. Her recognition of this degeneration, and the part she must play, forces her to destroy not only her mother, but the land of her father and also herself. The perverted Romanticism of Patrice and Michael offers no regeneration or renewal, but plays its part in the degeneration and destruction of Isabelle-Marie and her society.

In A Season in the Life of Emmanuel certain attitudes and stances associated with the Romantic child are depicted in an exaggerated and perverse manner. The Romantic child as the sensitive and poetic artist is depicted as a consumptive individual, who is

actually "consumed" by his environment and those around him:

"Jean-Le Maigre is talented; Monsieur le
Curé said so," Grand-mère Antoinette replied.
"He's consumptive," the man said.²⁵

The Romantic child's usual concern with death seems indulgent and superficial in a novel in which the child actually dies. The insubstantial concern with the philosophy and abstraction of death is trivial and extravagant when placed beside the physical and bloody coughs of Jean-Le Maigre.

Jean-Le Maigre conforms to the stereotype of the solitary reader (Life 12-13) and poet (Life 52). These spiritual and elevated figures, however, are quickly deflated in the portrait of Jean-Le Maigre, through the intrusion of the physical:

From the day I was born, I have worn a crown
of lice on my head! A poet, my father cried,
in a burst of joy. Grand-mère, a poet A
brow crowned with lice and surrounded by
garbage! (Life 52) ²⁶

Blais' concern with the physical repeatedly deflates the Romantic figure or the Romantic philosophy and attitude divorced from reality. Sensuous awareness, for example, does not provide a transcendence of the physical, but directs the child to an actual concern with his body through "the sweet torture of the senses" (Life 103). The intelligence and curiosity that typify the Romantic child lead Jean-Le Maigre to death rather than enlightenment: "He wanted to know everything, poor child. It was his curiosity that killed him" (Life 113). The curiosity that distinguishes the Romantic child pulls Jean-Le Maigre down into his body rather than lifting him above the physical world.

Jean-Le Maigre's Wordsworthian memories focus on physical hardships instead of spiritual transcendence; he retains "a deep memory of his hunger and his fatigue--or a harsh winter, spent running through the woods" (Life 24). Similarly, the cycle of inheritance, recognized and predicted by Jean-Le Maigre, concentrates on the physicality of disease and death, rather than the usual spiritual inheritances and the possibility of immortality: "his brother Emmanuel now weeping the bitter tears of the newly born would end up in the Noviciat and succumb to the same honorable disease that Jean-Le Maigre had suffered from himself" (Life 102).

Findley and Blais' visions are bleak in their subservience to the physical, and particularly to death and decay. The concern with degenerate societies is aptly conveyed through the exaggerated and perverse Romantic child, who either acts in a destructive manner, or is destroyed by external forces. The extreme modifications and perversions of the conventional figure emphasize the desperate nature of the situation, and the reaction of the authors against the pastoral tradition. Blais and Findley discard the established union of the Romantic child with nature and society as a possible resolution. The conflict and opposition result in destruction and decay rather than harmony, as the gap between the Romantic child and society is far too great to be bridged by imagination and vision.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

¹Timothy Findley, The Last of the Crazy People (1967; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983) 164. All further references to The Last of the Crazy People are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Last.

²Graeme Gibson, Eleven Canadian Novelists (Toronto: Anansi, 1973) 137.

³Joan Coldwell notes that "heat is a recurrent image in Findley's work, suggesting a living hell and the build-up of unbearable tension before the cataclysmic storm." See Joan Coldwell, "Timothy Findley," The Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature, ed. William Toye (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1983) 258.

⁴Donald Cameron, "Make Peace With Nature Now," Conversations With Canadian Novelists 1: 58.

⁵Cameron 1: 58.

⁶William Whitehead, "Alice Drops Her Cigarette on the Floor," Canadian Literature 91 (1981): 18.

⁷Cameron 1: 50.

⁸Cameron 1: 58.

⁹Cameron 1: 58.

¹⁰Gibson 137.

¹¹Gibson 122.

¹²Gibson 133-34.

¹³H.J. Rosengarten, "Innocence Confused," Canadian Literature 36 (1968): 79.

¹⁴Coldwell 258.

¹⁵Gibson 127.

¹⁶ Findley, in his interview with Donald Cameron, explains Hooker's need to kill and destroy:

I think that Hooker has a lot to do with the Kennedy thing and also with the urgency with which we must wipe out the old order. We must destroy what is destroying us. We must kill what is killing us. We must violate the violators, it's all that, and it's a very tough road to walk on, because you're surrounded constantly by the knowledge that what you're asking people to give up is one of the strongest things inside yourself.

See Cameron 1: 62.

¹⁷ Gibson 133.

¹⁸ Cameron 1: 51.

¹⁹ Cameron 1: 62.

²⁰ Cameron 1: 62.

²¹ Cameron 1: 62.

²² Cameron 1: 59.

²³ If the final view of Iris on Hooker's field constitutes a rebirth and regeneration, it does not offset or overcome the tremendous sacrifice involved in the bringing about of the new beginning and the change of seasons.

²⁴ Marie-Claire Blais, Mad Shadows, trans. Merloyd Lawrence (1960; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971) 35. All further references to Mad Shadows are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Mad.

²⁵ Marie-Claire Blais, A Season in the Life of Emmanuel, trans. Derek Coltman (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1966) 11. All further references to A Season in the Life of Emmanuel are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Life.

²⁶ See also A Season in the Life of Emmanuel 14.

CHAPTER SIX
RECENT VIEWS OF THE ROMANTIC CHILD

i

Findley's overturning of the pastoral Romantic child does not necessarily mark a general downward trend or the disappearance of this figure in Canadian literature. In fact, several recent writers, in the traditional fictional memoir, continue to concentrate on the conventional Romantic child. These recent works introduce the slight modification and added complication of the effects of Canada's urbanization on the growth and survival of the traditionally rural Romantic child, a subject anticipated by Buckler in The Mountain and the Valley. This classification of "recent fictional memoirs" includes the works of Harry J. Boyle and Hubert Evans, who write of the child growing up on the farm and in the small town, in the tradition of Buckler and Mitchell; Alden Nowlan, who creates the more complex and artistic small-town child, Kevin O'Brien; and Robert Thomas Allen and Hugh Hood, who actually place their Romantic children in the city of Toronto, providing a setting and circumstances alien to those of the conventional Romantic child, and far removed from the wilderness and farm settings of Traill and Seton.

The influence and effect of urbanization comprise a necessary and inevitable theme in conjunction with the Romantic child, which results in a modification of the pastoral form. Although not as

extreme and unsettling as Findley's change of emphasis and tone, this concern with the shift from a rural to an urban setting challenges and questions the conventional pastoral perspective and emphasis. In keeping with the established form, the child is used to comment on society--in this particular case, the shift of Canadian society from the family farm to the impersonal city. Basic still to this social commentary is the criticism of a society which, in its rigidity and narrowness, lacks imagination and inspiration. In addition, the sense of nostalgia is intensified, as the child's communion with nature is no longer merely difficult or transitory, but is actually threatened with extinction.

W.O. Mitchell, the creator of the classic Canadian Romantic child, Brian O'Connell, provides a transition from the earlier work to the more recent fictional memoirs. Mitchell's continued interest in the figure of the Romantic child exemplifies the duration and survival of this character and its accompanying themes from the mid-century to the present. The themes of innocence, experience, time, death and memory, expanded upon in Mitchell's later novels, have for the most part, been introduced and dealt with to some extent in Who Has Seen the Wind. Both Jake and the Kid and The Kite concentrate on the relationships between the generations, using the Romantic child and the wind of the prairie to discuss the past, inheritance and mortality. How I Spent My Summer Holidays also focuses on time and memory, exploring the connections between the discovery of mortality and the loss of innocence.

The first person narration of "the kid" in Jake and the Kid

results in an immediate and effective delineation of the sensuous perception of the Romantic child:

In the loft above a pigeon flew some,
slapping his wings to beat anything. One of
the cats mewed. Stanchions clanked. Listening
to the cows munching away on their green feed,
I stood just inside the barn door with my throat
all plugged up like when Jake plays "The Letter
Edged in Black" on his mandolin, only worse.¹

Mitchell's ability to convey a child's emotions and expressions is still paramount: "Even with the milk humming 'some-fun, some-fun,' I was sad to my stomach" (Jake 1). The authenticity and immediacy of the young narrator connect the various incidents and provide the central focus and interest of the book.

"The kid," typical of the Romantic child, takes an anti-intellectual stance, which seems to accompany the Romantic alignment with nature: "All Miss Henschbaw knows came out of a book. Jake, he really knows" (Jake 3). Like Brian O'Connell, "the kid" experiences a correspondence between nature, especially in the form of the wind, and his own emotions: "The wind caught me full in the face, drove the dust clear into the corners of my eyes; I could taste her gritty between my teeth" (Jake 59). The wind seems to reflect, intensify and symbolize the more abstract forces pressing upon the child:

The sound [of the wind] was coming from a
million miles away, and she was after every
living thing. She was having your father
over in England; she was Jake letting Mrs.
Clinkerby talk about your baby like that,
and not having any time to drownd out
gophers; she was awful. (Jake 59)

The sensations of the wind give a physical substance to the less concrete external forces and powers. The wind's actual force and

drive result in a symbolic indulgence and catharsis, the physical suffering and sensations relieving and venting the spiritual pain and oppression. The chaos of the sky torn apart by the wind provides a situation with which "the kid" can identify; he feels an affinity for that untidy sky and fierce night: "The whole sky was blown untidy with torn, black pieces of cloud, and the night was real fierce with breathing" (Jake 59). The wind takes on symbolic importance in the race with Fever, investing the natural world with movement and energy, with life and, consequently, with death: "He [Fever] ran like the wind over the edge of the prairie coming to tell everybody they can't live forever" (Jake 142). Again, Mitchell's wind is nature's spokesperson, an animated spirit representing the energy that is responsible for both life and death.

Similarly, The Kite, as suggested by its title, is concerned with the power and ability of the wind to provide energy and movement. The novel attempts to address the issues of memory, time and mortality, but the rather obvious symbolism and awkward plot mar the overall effect. The passages devoted to the Romantic child, however, are distinguished by a richness and clarity that are lacking in other sections of the novel. Keith's sensuous appraisal of berry picking, for example, is effective in its connection between the energy of the sun and that of the imagination:

He had never admitted to other boys that he delighted in picking berries--the mesmerizing and vibrant stillness of an enclosing stand of high bushes with a late August sun streaming through dusty leaves tapping in a light breeze--encouraged the magic release of imagination.²

The sun, a vital force like the wind, demands a response to its activity and power--a reaction to its investment and invigoration of the universe. The relationship between the child and nature, in which the vitality of the natural world requires the child to respond, ultimately calling forth his imaginative powers, is truly Wordsworthian. The child's open and receptive attitude, combined with a particularly "mesmerizing" and sensuous scene, results in an imaginative escape from the physical world--a "magical" transcendence. The use of the imagination relies upon this dialogue and co-operation between the mind and the external world, leading to a harmonious union. The imagination is both called forth by, and invested in, the natural world.

How I Spent My Summer Holidays, like Who Has Seen the Wind, assumes the importance of the "first discovery of mortality,"³ which "is given early to a prairie child" (Summer 138), but the later novel concentrates on successive rather than the initial discoveries, as the retrospective narrator mourns "the loss of the age of innocence" (Summer 3). The narrator's fragile attempt to recapture the past is essentially Wordsworthian: "There have been times when I have almost caught it. I think. But always it has slipped away from me, leaving me with a feeling of loss and of sadness" (Summer 1). The prairie wind, which inspires the "time return" (Summer 5), is reminiscent of the breeze of The Prelude: "It was the same wind as the wind of boyhood, still careless in the prairie grass, like the braided whisper that sighed restlessly through our classrooms" (Summer 5). The setting, however, is Canadian; the Little Souris River has little in common

with the Derwent, except for its primary position of strategic importance for the child:

Most important to me and the others in our child world was the Little Souris River, a wandering prairie vein, dark with earth flour, rushing and swollen with snow run-off in early spring, shrinking and slowing almost to stillness by mid-August. (Summer 4)

Water and wind attract both the child and memory.

Harry J. Boyle, like W.O. Mitchell, incorporates the Romantic child into almost all of his writing. His collections of reminiscences, Mostly in Clover, Straws in the Wind, Homebrew and Patches and Memories of A Catholic Boyhood, rely on the young Romantic perspective and sensitivity. It is, however, in the novel, A Summer Burning, that the presence of the Romantic child is most strongly felt. Like How I Spent My Summer Holidays, this novel is concerned with the cessation of childhood and the transition into youth, but by necessity depicts the intensity of pure childhood in order to instill a sense of loss for that which is passing. The element which instigates the change from childhood to youth is the presence of Sammy, an urban "intruder" into Joe's innocent rural existence. Like David Canaan, Joe Doyle senses a tension and contradiction between his imaginative and Romantic lifestyle and the alien life of the city, but remains loyal to the farm and the world of his childhood. The conflict in the novel is not only between the child and the adult, but also between traditional and modern, and past and present. The city is allied with all that is sophisticated, whereas the country is depicted as rustic and pastoral. The movement of the individual from childhood to adulthood

is closely associated with a more general movement from rural to urban, pastoral to sophisticated and rustic to modern. This simplified and naive view is Joe's rather than Boyle's; such easy distinctions are understandable, coming from a boy of limited experience, whose loyalty is to the farm and family he loves.

Joe's ties to the land and nature are strong; for the farm itself he feels a special affinity: "In a way it [the farm] was shared by Mother and Father and Grandfather, but they didn't have the mystical sense of belonging to it. I did because I was born there. And my world was both physical and spiritual."⁴ Boyle describes this close relationship and the phenomenon of child and nature in Memories of A Catholic Boyhood: "A country boy of the 1920s was a creature of his environment. He adjusted to the seasons as easily as the natural, free creatures of the fields and forests."⁵ For Joe Doyle, nature is connected with God; "the suck-sough sound of the pine branches that seemed to breathe as they moved gently with the night winds" (Burning 67) is one of the noises of "a whispering night" (Burning 67) that has a "hidden message" (Burning 67). Joe realizes that the rather alien and foreboding God of his orthodox religion--"all powerful and omnipotent" (Burning 184)--is not the God of the natural world, for whom he feels an intuitive love. This God is found in the open grove, where the upward view consists of "a ring of sky, framed by the tops of the surrounding trees" (Burning 184). Nature is also closely aligned with human emotions, as Joe, the retrospective narrator recognizes: "Country-bred people will tell you that there is an affinity between the powerful emotions of people and the physical

elements" (Burning 254). In Mostly in Clover Boyle specifically refers to childhood as the period during which the emotions are most strongly associated with nature:

Days of childhood are often remembered as days of either light or shadow. Those days when a bubbling sense of happiness came to stay in my heart seem to be associated with sunshine and golden light streamers that creased in through the green of my window-shade in the morning and stayed with me all day. Days of unhappiness are associated with the grey days of mid-winter when the wind played icy fingers on my back-bone and the sky⁶ glowered at me with the face of a dark bully.

Joe's love for the farm is clearly a nostalgic longing for the locale where he experienced the smooth mystical and transcendental journeys of childhood:

By standing at the end of the stoop you would stare away off past the barn and let your eyes ripple to the natural flats, knolls and swales that were the kingdom extending even beyond the maple bush to the Maitland River. (Burning 76)

His mystical moments and imaginative wanderings and friends are closely associated with nature, especially the sky, and in Wordsworthian fashion, require the effort and energy of the child as well as that of nature. For example, in order to conjure up the old man from the clouds, Joe, "lying on the side of the grassy slope of pasture field . . . searched for the clouds that wisped by against a pale blue sky" (Burning 77), and would only discover the old man "if the right one [cloud] came along" (Burning 77). All elements instigating the use of the imagination are seen in terms of the natural world. The coals of a fire, for example, provide "a satisfaction that rivalled one derived from a perfect sunset or water and trees" (Burning 133).

These coals are consonant with the child's emotions--"they matched my mood" (Burning 133)--and inspire and guide if the child wills it: "if I chose they led me a merry chase of imaginations" (Burning 133). The external stimulus does not take control; neither is it controlled by the observer. Rather, it is a matter of co-operation between the child and nature, requiring the inspiration of nature and the open and receptive attitude of the child.

Joe, as a Romantic child, takes solitude for granted, never associating it with loneliness. He feels that it is "natural for a person to have a life of imagination apart from family living" (Burning 77), and treasures his "secret places" (Burning 16). In Mostly in Clover Boyle's search for his childhood immediately recalls the Romantic position of solitude, which is cherished rather than regretted: "Thinking about it now, I often try to remember what the world of a child was really like. There was always the matter of being alone, but somehow remembrance doesn't carry with it thoughts of loneliness."⁷ The memories of Joe, the mature narrator of A Summer Burning, seem to connect sound with solitude, offering an interesting correspondence and relationship between the inner sounds of emotions and thoughts and the outer sounds of nature. In an almost instinctive attempt to retain innocence and simplicity, Joe attaches himself to the farm and nature, trying to "drown out the inner sound by the outer ones" (Burning 76). Intellectual, physical and emotional questions and musings threaten to disrupt Joe's prolonged innocence (Burning 183), which is eventually shattered by Sammy's presence.

Sammy's broader urban experience destroys Joe's "brittle dreams

of imagination" (Burning 79), while his attitudes violate Joe's respect and reverence for nature, along with the accompanying virtues of truth and honesty. The tension of the conflict is epitomized in Sammy's desire to catch the chub, Old Tom, and Joe's subsequent panic. The irony of the situation and conflict lies in the obvious reversal of the traditional roles: Sammy, the Indian, living in the city, alienated from nature, and Joe, living on the land, in harmony with nature. The early twentieth-century "noble savage" sentiments of Ernest Thompson Seton are no longer valid, as Sammy himself explains: "The God damned noble savage is just a sucker in this world" (Burning 182).

Harry Boyle's sensuous descriptions of the farm are similar to those of Ernest Buckler, as this passage from Homebrew and Patches makes clear:

The pine needle cushion on the couch had soaked up summer fragrance and bathed me with it when I curled up to sleep under a sheepskin rug or a woolen blanket, and nothing compared with the spine-tingling deliciousness of the first bite from a very cold apple. The yeasty scent of baking bread was both comforting and tantalizing.⁸

The conflict between rural and urban, effectively depicted through the Romantic child's loss of innocence, also recalls The Mountain and the Valley. The influence of Mitchell, as well as Buckler, is apparent, and Boyle's admiration of Mitchell--"There's magic in the words and imagination of W.O. Mitchell"⁹--comes as no surprise.

Perhaps the most lasting and powerful impression left by Boyle's nostalgic works is a sense that he is mourning and celebrating the passing of a way of life, as well as his own childhood--indeed

the two are inextricably connected. The man searching for his childhood is comparable to the city dweller longing for the country. In Straws in the Wind Boyle maintains that in the autumn "Modern man, who seems preoccupied by buildings, briefly rediscovers the outdoors":¹⁰

He haunts parks, lingers on sidewalks, drives
in the countryside and reminisces about the
hills and fields of his childhood.¹¹

Boyle foresees the doom of the child and nature, as urbanization increases. Although "it is still possible for a boy to reach the edge of the city and find adventure in marshy spots where water runs free and willows grow in profusion,"¹² Boyle sees such activity as "a dwindling luxury as the suburbs engulf the surrounding areas."¹³ However, in 1969, when Boyle published Straws in the Wind, such a "luxury" was not yet obsolete: "the sight of a dishevelled boy bearing a bunch of pussy willows indicates that it hasn't completely vanished."¹⁴

Hubert Evans' O Time in Your Flight, a nostalgic fictional memoir like A Summer Burning, mourns for the small town rather than the farm. The two settings, however, are not mutually exclusive, but connected in spirit and time; Joe Doyle makes brief excursions into the town, while Gilbert Egan enjoys a holiday sojourn on the farm. Like Joe Doyle, Gilbert Egan conceives of the world in sensuous terms:

There was the woodsy, deep-down smell of the ground inside the tent which made you imagine the earth was breathing. And on top of these smells there was the fresh, sunny smell of the straw on which he lay.¹⁵

The sensuous immersion into the vitality of nature makes it difficult for Gilbert to relate to mortality, and like other Romantic children,

he finds it strange to envision death for one of his own age: "One [grave] was of a boy the same age as Chester. It made you think" (Time 36). The sensuous response to the world celebrates its life and immortality. It is an energetic and animated relationship which both intensifies the child's sensibilities and animates his surroundings.

Along with the child's sensitivity and sensuous perception goes an imagination; indeed, the imagination is dependent upon the ability to respond to the world through sense impressions. In church or at school, "the real Gilbert Egan was miles away doing whatever he felt like doing" (Time 31). At night Gilbert makes up stories in true Seton style: "I can be a boy on a backwoods farm" or be "living with Indians and running rapids away up north" (Time 8). The "noble savage" is very much alive in Gilbert Egan's Romantic milieu, and his preconceived notions seem consistent with Joe Doyle's naive views before they were exploded by Sammy's stories. Gilbert's Indian lives in a world of "birch-bark canoes pulled up on the shore and a big round moon . . . shining down" (Time 54), providing an antithesis to the lack of glory and romance in the life of a young boy on Blair Street. The "idea of living with the Indians" (Time 204) is connected with spring, with "the leaves coming out, the grass green, the robins back and all the rest of it" (Time 204). It is not merely an idle and unrealistic dream, but a longing inspired by the rebirth and regeneration of spring, for a lifestyle that ostensibly provides a communion and harmony with nature. The desire to be at one with the natural universe finds its ideal in the myth of the noble savage.¹⁶

Evans is concerned with a Proustian and Wordsworthian memory, evoked by, and consisting of, sense impressions: "His first memory, his very first, was a smell memory of carpet and a heavy sweet smell which he later knew was lilies of the valley" (Time 10). The desire for more than simply memory, for the opportunity to reverse time, is expressed by Gilbert's mother in the song which provides the title for the novel: "Backward, turn backward, O time, in your flight, make me a child again just for tonight" (Time 26). Gilbert finds himself overpowered by this sensation during the Watch Night Service: "suddenly without so much as a blink of his eye, the train seemed to be standing still and the poles were rushing backwards. Backward, turn backward, O time, in your flight" (Time 189). The desire to reverse time, to return to the "clouds of glory," is fairly universal for the Romantic child, but can only be achieved through those transcendental leaps into the past experienced by the adult. As the century ends, so does Gilbert's childhood, relentlessly, with a fury that cannot be reversed. The move to the western city of Vancouver is a move from rural to urban, from a pastoral world of innocence to an adult world of experience, which corresponds of course to Gilbert's own development, as well as the general movement of his society.

Alden Nowlan's various persons named kevin o'brien is also set in a small town, to which the retrospective narrator "returns" in order to rediscover his childhood. The "question" which concerns both the child and the man--"a dumb aching wonder at how strange it is to be here inside this body and in this world"¹⁷--seems closely connected with the type of issue that plagues Wordsworth and other

Romantic children: the nature of the relationship between the individual and the external world. Kevin's dilemma has transcendental and mystical properties--"It's somewhat as if I had awakened in a stranger's body on another planet" (Kevin 1)--as well as a visionary dimension: "it's as though I were dreaming and knew I was dreaming, but couldn't remember who I was or where I lived when I was awake" (Kevin 1). The elusiveness and intensity of this "question," which "by its very nature . . . refuses to be put into words" (Kevin 1), is reminiscent of a "spot of time," or the "feeling":

He [Kevin the child] would press his chin against his knees, screw his eyes shut and tighten his fists on his temples like the two halves of a vice; doing to his body what I, the man Kevin O'Brien did to my mind. (Kevin 1)

Nowlan's sensuous descriptions of a Maritime Christmas once again recall Buckler:

Oranges. We ate peel and seed as well as pulp, and it was like swallowing a piece of summer that had been rolled into a ball and preserved in honey. The pulp was as sweet as sunlight, the skin as acidulous as sunburn. (Kevin 81)

Kevin's sensitivity and dreaminess set him apart, isolating and alienating him, like David Canaan. Kevin's response to Buxton's initiation--"Kevin went behind the toolshed and vomited" (Kevin 22)--emphasizes his sensitivity and his ability to empathize with another individual, as well as his aversion to unthinking cruelty. These qualities, which depend on an active imagination, eventually result in Kevin becoming an outcast like David Canaan, alienated from a society which views him as a fool. The gap between Kevin and his community manifests itself in the form and substance of his ambitions and plans,

which are based in a world far removed from Lockhartville:

He had great and secret ambitions. He planned on being a famous and wealthy author and the lover of film stars, but that was in another world that existed in his imagination and in the endless future, like his earlier dreams of growing up to be a prophet or an emperor. That is not to say that he knew his aspirations to be fantasies; rather they existed on a different plane of reality in which they were so certain of fulfillment that it was as if they had already been achieved. (Kevin 118)

Like David Canaan, Kevin uses his imagination to escape from a society which mocks his sensitivity and intensity. Fraser Sutherland notes that "Boy or man, his [Kevin's] alienation from the village is almost complete."¹⁸

The self-conscious attention accorded to memory, time and recapturing the past in various persons named Kevin O'Brien provides an interesting commentary on the structure of the fictional memoir and the feelings that inspire it. Nowlan emphasizes the way in which the past is modified according to the present:

The childhood Kevin remembers at twenty-five is different from the childhood he remembered at twenty. The childhood that he will remember should he happen to be alive twenty years from now will be something else again. (Kevin 23)

The continuity, interdependency and exchangeability of time are apparent: "Kevin walks across the muddy yard to the house while bits of the past and the future bounce around in his mind as beads of cold water bounce about in a hot frying pan" (Kevin 38). If it is true that "we return to the past and change it" (Kevin 49), then the journey to the past can involve conscious manipulation and recreation. It is not as simple as it would appear, however, since the element of

control is absent, based on the implications of the phrase "happens to him" in the following passage:

What happens to him [Kevin] there [Lockhartville] is almost independent of calendars, so that there are frequent moments when it is as if he were a ghost returning into the past to spy upon one or another of his former selves. (Kevin 3)

Kevin's return has been a journey "largely imaginary" (Kevin 129) "through time as well as space" (Kevin 129); Lockhartville represents a realm where the "clock and the calendar and the map" (Kevin 51) have no jurisdiction. So although the past changes when revisited, the changes are not the type that can be calculated and measured. Rather, they are modifications of mood, tone and emphasis--changes instigated by the perception and state of mind of the individual, but not controlled and directed by him. Although there are some stable memories that "the brain has shaped into memoirs, those that have been mixed with oil and pressed on to the canvas with a palette knife" (Kevin 24), most memories are mutable, and seem to "float about in the mind like water colour on moist paper" (Kevin 35).

Kevin's childhood contains moments of intensity and beauty, comparable to "spots of time." Although not described in detail, the allusions to "the orchid he had brought home from a forbidden visit to the swamp" (Kevin 62) and "the falling star he had seen explode like a Roman candle" (Kevin 61-62) suggest the properties of a mystical experience. The orchid, obtained by stealth and associated with guilt and danger, recalls Wordsworth's childhood moments of sublimity. The falling star, in its transitory brilliance, is the type of sudden, unexpected, fleeting and uncontrollable experience associated with

the mystical child. The absence of a detailed explanation of these events implies that, although powerful and memorable, such moments defy description or definition. Both the orchid and the star are referred to as "visions" (Kevin 62), upholding and enforcing their transcendental and mystical qualities.

The vitality of Kevin's imagination is unquestionable. Like Nowlan, himself, who "wrote in the way that other lonely and imaginative children invent imaginary playmates,"¹⁹ Kevin enjoys an isolation that leads to creativity. His early creations during childhood are described as "sacramental," requiring "certain physical apparatus" (Kevin 38), while his more recent creations are "almost purely internal: visions" (Kevin 38). In either case, time is spent inhabiting a world other than the real one. As a child, Kevin's belief and vision allow him to see that which is not physically present: "When he was much younger she had shown him the threads of gold, holding up a dollar bill to the light. And he had seen them" (Kevin 58). Kevin's intensity, concentration and ability to commune with external objects result in that external world being imbued with a life of its own:

When I was so young that occasionally when
there was nothing else to do I simply stared
at something for as long as I could bear it,
I found that if I stared long enough at
Kathleen's mats they frightened me. (Kevin 101)

Kevin is afraid of the blue heron and yet fascinated enough to "stand sometimes for as long as thirty minutes, spying on it" (Kevin 54).²⁰ Although the bird is physically present, Kevin's concentration and communion are partially responsible for its creation: "he could imagine

it running after him--in his imagination it ran rather than flew--and beating him down with its great beak, legs and wings" (Kevin 54). The mind both receives and creates; the culmination of feeling that results is reminiscent of Wordsworth in its pantheistic overtones: "The wonder that he felt, watching it, was close to worship" (Kevin 54).

Kevin applies this same dedication and concentration to his study of the picture of the man with the skull: "Often, while looking at it, he had pressed his fingers against his face so as to feel his own skull under its thin jacket of skin" (Kevin 63). Like the heron, the skull is invested with a meaning and significance of which the child is virtually unaware. The picture inspires fascination, excitement and contemplation as Kevin becomes acquainted with mortality. Like other Romantic children, Kevin avoids the physical manifestations of death, and is not interested in acting as an investigator of death (Kevin 82). Rather, he is drawn to death on a very visionary and contemplative level. It is the concept rather than the reality of mortality that is fascinating. Similarly, the true experience of Christmas, in retrospect, is visionary and abstract, removed from the real world: "When I come to think about it, it was all very religious. Religious in the subconscious and mystical rather than in the liturgical and public sense" (Kevin 83). The intense sensuous response to the picture and to Christmas provides a transcendence of that physical world perceived by the senses.

Not all memories, however, are intense and mystical. Even as a child, Kevin revels in the ridiculousness of certain situations.

The "paradox" of hiding under a dangerous railway car in order to escape the harmless rain "enchants" (Kevin 6) him, while the necessity of aiming "at an imaginary target in order to hit the real one" (Kevin 73) is also attractive. Both involve the question of perception and a reversal of expectation. The child delights in the unexpected, in the strange demands made upon him by external circumstances.

Kevin O'Brien's return home is a return to the unsophisticated and rustic setting of his childhood and youth, now ostensibly seen from the vantage point of worldly experience, urban superiority and relative sophistication and success. Kevin's community lacks vision and tolerance, and although his early memories are not a pastoral idealization by any means, neither do they inspire the anticipated embarrassment or even contempt that the young adult expects to feel for his native village. Rather, even the most devastating and lonely of childhood memories are permeated by a sensuous richness and mystical atmosphere associated with this childhood setting, so integrally connected with the natural world. Like Gilbert Egan's development, Kevin's growth matches his progression of settings, childhood and rural life being replaced by adulthood and urban existence. These childhood scenes are from a rural lifestyle, now almost obsolete, or at least no longer the norm, and the setting, like the childhood, is depicted as being unique in its provision of inspiration and insight. The regret for the transience of the rural way of life is similar to the regret for the passing of childhood; the change is inevitable and necessary, but deplorable in its stripping away of innocence and simplicity. The negative and indeed perverse aspects of this particular

society are apparent in Nowlan's portrayal, but even in this realistic approach, the unique perspective and sensitive temperament of the Romantic child are celebrated. Far from a naive and idealistic pastoral, various persons named Kevin O'Brien still manages to find moments and instances of Romantic intensity and vision in the limited and insular village society of Kevin's childhood. These redeeming qualities are connected with the natural world, which provides the initial and most important refuge for the Romantic child.

Although the effect and influence of the city have been present in works by Buckler, Boyle, Evans and Nowlan, in Hugh Hood's The Swing in the Garden the Romantic child is actually "urbanized." Hood is, of course, consciously writing in the Romantic tradition, emulating Proust²¹ and Wordsworth,²² among others. His proposal of "the Wordsworthian account of the marriage of the mind and the thing as a model of artistic activity"²³ suggests his own ideas about perception, artistic or otherwise. Hugh Hood, speaking of Wordsworth, maintains that "he insists everywhere on the utter necessity of the sensory process, of seeing and hearing, of taking in the sensible world and transforming it."²⁴ Such a "sensory perception" is indispensable to the artist and the Romantic child. Hood claims such a Wordsworthian approach for himself; he also endows the young Matt Goderich with this Romantic outlook and temperament.

The Swing in the Garden begins with Matt's Wordsworthian imagination transforming a swing that "suffered many imaginary metamorphoses."²⁵ Matt Goderich's Romantic tendencies are understandable in light of his father's educational philosophy: "Free, full

and varied sensory experience was the rich soil out of which the tree of wisdom would ascend" (Swing 186). Interestingly, however, Matt's Romantic and Wordsworthian tendencies are more implied than demonstrated, as Hood often allows his retrospective narrator philosophical and informed commentaries to clarify and comment on the child's development. In the inevitable graveyard scene, for example, the narrator refers to one of Wordsworth's poems in order to clarify and justify the child's viewpoint. Hood assumes the presence of an educated and informed reader, familiar with Romantic philosophy and literature. The characterization of Matt involves more explanation and reminiscence than action.

In recounting this scene in Mount Pleasant Cemetery the narrator does not hesitate to interpolate his more recent experience and knowledge in order to provide enlightenment and contrast as far as the child is concerned: "Flowers meant less to me then than now" (Swing 106). Based on the use of such criteria, the inclusion of an adult interpretation of "We are Seven" is also admissible. Because the narrator lacks the actual physical manifestations of death provided in other cases by farm animals and prairie life, he finds himself depending on a literary allusion to convey his attitudes toward childhood. The narrator maintains that as a child he accepted death "in a perfectly unassuming and natural way, without morbidity" (Swing 106): "That plain small poem ["We are Seven"] makes an emblem for the realization that our dead brothers and sisters and parents and grandparents and so on, are beside us, continuous with us, sharing our existence, not to be forgotten" (Swing 106). Such an explanation

is slightly artificial and lacking in immediacy, the articulation and understanding being so definitely that of the adult rather than the child. Similarly, the metaphor of the tree growing rings, applied to individual growth, history and memory, although beginning in the child's consciousness, seems far removed from the child by the end of the discussion: "I could almost feel myself forming a new ring around my middle, the older wood deep in my guts compressing, turning a darker colour, while fresh, sap-oozing white fibre formed under the skin Schizophrenia is illusory; you can't break a person" (Swing 133).

Despite his dedication to Wordsworth, Hood does not endow Matt Goderich with the "spots of time" common to the Wordsworthian child. Hood implies that Matt Goderich is a sensitive, Romantic child, and yet the reader is not as convinced as in the cases of Brian O'Connell, David Canaan and Gabrielle Roy's Christine. This lack of conviction arises from the simple paucity of incidents demonstrating mystical or transcendental qualities. Hood himself may be the transcendentalist he claims to be: "A transcendentalist must first study the things of this world, and get as far inside them as possible That is where I come out: the spirit is totally in the flesh."²⁶ Matt Goderich, however, is ambiguous, tending towards Wordsworthian expectations and characteristics, but not fulfilling or demonstrating them.

The actual setting of the city, however, seems to have little to do with the ambiguity of Matt Goderich. Hood's ambitious and grandiose goals obviously preclude the composition of a traditional

fictional memoir, the primary purpose of which is to delineate the character of the child. The absence of a fully realized Romantic child is a matter of style and intention rather than setting. Although it is obviously not necessary for a child to be Romantic, Hood does make Wordsworthian claims for Matt which are not realized. The weakness of characterization lies in this failure to illustrate and convey the character Hood seems to be attempting to create. The novel is perhaps too ambitious, and Hood appears to avoid the conventional techniques used to characterize the Romantic child, while still trying to depict the traditional figure. Hood's rejection of the dichotomy between "dreamy" Romanticism and "down-to-earth" realism²⁷ is commendable, but the union of the two in the novel is questionable, and both seem to suffer.

Robert Thomas Allen places a conventional child within this same locale of Toronto and conveys "childhood magic and childhood joy,"²⁸ to use W.H. New's terms. In Allen's My Childhood and Yours the city becomes the Romantic child's environment, and the child interacts with that realm, demonstrating the same imaginative and sensitive responses as do the children of the farm and the small town. Allen's My Childhood and Yours, although presented as an autobiographical piece, has the structure and tone of a fictional memoir rather than a conventional autobiography. Beginning with the universality of the child's imagination, Allen emphasizes the sensuality of the child's world and the desire of the adult to "get into the way of recapturing your childhood."²⁹ The city offers sensuous delights in the form of diverse smells--"the scent of hot tar" (Childhood 14), "horse manure,

fresh bread and municipal gas tanks" (Childhood 4)--and even initiates mystical moments. Allen describes one girl who, upon counting a fifteenth volkswagen, "suddenly exploded with joy, apparently receiving one of those mystic messages we got when we were kids, when just being alive was a rare bit of luck" (Childhood 3). The cause of this mystical joy is far removed from Wordsworth's lakes and mountains, but the effect seems to be comparable.

Although the city does offer sensuous and mystical elements, the real attractions for the Romantic child seem to be contained in the natural realm, either in those elements of nature that are visible even in the city or in those that are removed and separated from the city. Within the city, aspects of nature, such as the sky, invite mystical flights: "It would be dawn, with the sky of such transparent blue you could look right through it into the future" (Childhood 24). Removed from the city, the energy of nature, concentrated in "the new warmth of the sun" (Childhood 4) is likened to "someone whispering my name, telling me of something mysterious and ancient happening out there in the quiet stillness of the woods" (Childhood 4). These woods come alive in the memories of the summer cottage (Childhood 158) and the evocative description of the Don River Valley on the outskirts of the city (Childhood 6). The valley's importance lies in its wilderness atmosphere and in its contrast to the city: "Nobody can get farther away from the city in a hard day's drive (or even flight) than we used to get when we disappeared into that small curve of valley" (Childhood 19). Allen stresses the child's ability to escape and immerse himself in nature; the distance and length of the journey

are not as important as the attitude and temperament of the individual initiating the escape. The flight from the city involves imaginative and mystical removals, along with physical displacement. As well, the natural environment inspires discussions of subjects such as infinity--"We'd just look up at the sky and wonder how far up it went" (Childhood 20)--and mortality--"We debated where a dog went when it dies" (Childhood 21)--which result in a removal from the everyday world.

Like nature, books stimulate the senses and co-operate with the surrounding world in order to introduce an alternative imaginative world: "the mood of our surroundings seeped into the books and merged into one magic world of sights, sounds, smells and visions of far-off lands" (Childhood 130). Allen's reading as a child centres upon a world opposed to an urban environment: "the stories of wildlife" (Childhood 49), "books by people like Charles G.D. Roberts and Ernest Thompson Seton" (Childhood 54), including Two Little Savages (Childhood 59). The innocence of the child means that the book "came to us clear through polished senses" (Childhood 135) and "stopped being a book; it became an enchanted world" (Childhood 135). The barrier between the adult and the book, identified by Allen as consisting of "debts, worries, irrelevant thoughts, and deadlines like dark angels" (Childhood 135), is the same barrier that separates the adult and nature. The child's relationship with the external world, whether book or mountain, is pure and unsullied, resulting in that harmonious and active communion associated with Wordsworth. The young Allen, like Wordsworth, derives emotion from the natural scene--emotion

which is partially perceived and partially created: "It was a melancholy time in a way, and sometimes I felt it strongly, on days when the whole world seemed lit indirectly by footlights and the trees looked silent and stricken" (Childhood 46). Nature, especially in the spring, actively works on the child, filling him "with strange agonies" (Childhood 10). The child, far from passive, explores nature, even varying his perspective in order to derive novel experiences: "You sit there [on the porch roof] looking down on all the back yards, nobody knowing you're up there, listening to the silence of outer space" (Childhood 8).

The child's imagination takes him to worlds removed from reality and "worked better than whiskey does now" (Childhood 115). Like David Canaan and Kevin O'Brien, the children in Toronto find that "dreaming ourselves into heroes was part of living" (Childhood 105). The lack of obligation to the real world in the very young renders the transcendence of that world natural and easy. For the adult, however, transcendence can only be induced through artificial means. The vivid imagination of the young Robert Thomas Allen creates a world more real and infinitely more attractive than the ordinary one: "I not only dreamt up the scene, I dreamt up the car, a magic vehicle with a sort of spiritual transmission I invented myself on a principle adults hadn't discovered" (Childhood 107). The loss of the creative imagination is to some extent inevitable, as ties to the real world are established. The adult mourns the loss of the imagination, along with its elusive nature: "And I sometimes wonder just where I lost it, and wish I could get it back. Life doesn't

become too tough; it just becomes dreamless" (Childhood 115). Allen identifies the transition from childhood to adulthood as being the "time I stopped thinking of events, like having my own pet racoon or living in a log cabin on Hudson Bay, and became aware of people and their complicated and baffling relationships" (Childhood 60)--essentially the moment when the real world overpowers the world of the imagination.

In these recent fictional memoirs, the character of the Romantic child remains fairly conventional, and is comparable to the figure found in earlier works. Indeed, once defined, the "Romantic child" is incapable of deviating too far from the limitations and bounds of its description and classification. Equally stable and established is the author's use of the child as an unconscious social commentator and critic. The change of emphasis, however, lies in the nature and intent of this social comment or criticism. Avonlea, Mitchell's prairie communities, Entremont and the Winslows' town are exposed as superficial, hypocritical and insular societies, lacking vision and imagination. The child, and more specifically the child in conjunction with nature, identifies and accentuates this absence of sensitivity in his or her community. Boyle, Evans, Nowlan, Hood and Allen, however, concentrate not on the make-up of the community, but on the changes and developments in that community, caused by the effects of moderization and urbanization. The changes manifest themselves either in the encroachments of urban influences into the rural community, or in the shift of the childhood setting to the city, hence the propensity for nostalgia and regret with respect to the pastoral

association of childhood and the small town or farm. The added complication of how to establish, sustain and nourish the child's traditional relationship with nature becomes a major theme. Thus the child no longer unconsciously criticizes the community through a contrast of his or her actions and values with those of society. Instead, the child is associated with a pastoral and mystical type of existence allied with a rural lifestyle which, like childhood, inevitably passes, but is remembered and recalled with nostalgia and regret. The Romantic child becomes synonymous with a lifestyle and existence closely associated with nature. The contrast is no longer with the rural community, but with the more alien urban society.

The original contrast of the wilderness with society is eventually replaced by the partnership of the Romantic child and nature opposed to society. When nature fades in its importance or actual presence, then the Romantic child is invested with those properties originally assigned to the wilderness and the natural world. In the general shift from the country to the city, the child automatically becomes associated with the rural farm and small town in the traditional opposition to society--a society now concentrated in the urban centre. The wilderness, the original contrast to society, is now replaced by the Romantic child in various guises and roles: as "noble savage," in communion with nature, in isolation, and in association with the transience of the rural lifestyle. In all cases, the opposition to society is based on vision, imagination, and an "openness," intrinsic to nature and the Romantic child. The depictions and treatments of the Romantic child differ, depending on the emphasis of the author:

the need for tolerance and vision, the inevitable breakdown of a society, or nostalgia and regret for a place and time in the past.

ii

A second "group" or "school" of Romantic children is apparent in recent Canadian fiction. This group, consisting of female children created by female writers, takes advantage of the traditional characteristics associated with the Romantic child, developing and modifying the conventional view in an innovative manner. The Romantic child, although not necessarily a consistent or sustained concern, appears in the work of writers such as Margaret Laurence, Alice Munro, Audrey Thomas, Marian Engel and Sylvia Fraser. The characteristics of the Romantic child--sensitive, alienated, at odds with the world--seem especially suited to these writers' female characters, and for these authors, as for Montgomery and Roy, the sensitive and solitary Romantic child seems to explain the beginnings and source of the woman. L.M. Montgomery's heroines experience isolation not only because they are children, but also because they are female. After all, Anne faces the possibility of rejection by Matthew and Marilla because she is not a boy. The evident connection between the Romantic child and the artist has long been acknowledged;³⁰ a second relationship between the Romantic child and the female character also seems to be valid.

In his introduction to Sylvia Fraser's Pandora, David Staines argues that this novel belongs in the "tradition of the modern novels which violently attack the romantic belief in the innocence of childhood."³¹ Pat Barclay also places it in an anti-Romantic position:

"In fact, the book is really an allegory, making it closer to Lord of the Flies than to Anne of Green Gables." ³² Granted, Pandora is an "incisive and honest portrait of childhood in its beauty and its horror" (Pandora xii), but its realism and rejection of innocence do not necessarily mean that the character of Pandora is not based on the archetype of the Romantic child. Indeed, Staines himself refers to "the imaginative leaps of Pandora's own mind" (Pandora xi), and describes Pandora as a "young girl of intelligence and imagination" (Pandora vii), while Barclay refers to her as "imaginative and sensitive." ³³ Like Hooker Winslow, Pandora Gothic retains, develops and rejects certain Romantic characteristics. The diversions from, and modifications of, the traditional Romantic child are not simply a rejection of the pastoral, but a comment on, and reflection of, changes in society which demand a renewed examination and interpretation of the pastoral viewpoint.

The effects of technology, urbanization and the war are strongly felt in Pandora, but the yearnings and dreams of the Romantic child remain constant:

The stars are very far away, too sharp, too bright, too beautiful to hold, like the twinkling of a distant Christmas you know will break your heart. And yet . . . and yet . . . If I could turn myself into a happy thought, I'd float up, and up, and up and maybe one day I could nibble at the moon. (*italicized in the original*) (Pandora 26)

The familiar desire to escape and transcend the real world is still present, and pervades the conclusion of the novel, as Pandora longs for what her mother terms "Another Sort of Life" (Pandora 252).

Pandora's situation and environment do not inspire visionary and mystical transcendences; Pandora does, however, seek and cling to elements that suggest another plane of existence, and a beauty and promise removed from life on Oriental Avenue:

Now, Pandora looks up at her stars, and then--
ooh! below! right in her own backyard!
Fireflies--like star-sparks--dart about the
garden. (Pandora 254)

The ubiquitous fireflies once again play their role as harbingers of a world of beauty and vision. Like the stars, the fireflies appear to emit their own light, depending on neither external nor artificial energy. The properties of the star and firefly excite Pandora, inspiring her with anticipation and celebration. Their presence in her world means that they play a part in Pandora's life; they are clearly capable of transforming her setting, as indicated by their illumination of "her father's cabbages to at least the status of pumpkins" (Pandora 254). Unlike traditional Romantic children, who participate with the natural world on an emotional and intellectual level, Pandora takes part in a physical manner:

Pandora steals downstairs, outside, into the balmy night. She runs, barefoot, through the squishy-grass. She drinks rain-splash from the throat of a lily. She dances, white nightie, under the rain-splayed stars, following the fireflies as they make fire-love, in checkmarks. (Pandora 254)

Although obviously symbolic, Pandora's union with the natural world is depicted in physical terms: "Pandora leaps high under the head/tail of Leo, the two-way lion. Aha! She nips a firefly by the tail-light" (Pandora 254). She seems to put more effort and energy into her active

participation than is generally anticipated and expected, perhaps because she has to, in order to offset the opposition and negation of such a relationship.

Fraser stresses the victimization of Pandora the child and Pandora the female. Like Hooker, Pandora is preyed upon by external forces, which she perceives and accentuates through her imagination: "They will squeeze the juice right out of me, and they will drink it, together, in the dark" (*italicized in the original*) (Pandora 54). The oppression of family and society is not merely based on a lack of vision and a limitation of the imagination, but on actions of cruelty and violence. The reasons for Pandora's desire to escape are clearly delineated in different forms of physical, emotional and spiritual oppression. Society is not merely indifferent or incapable of understanding the Romantic child, but, as in The Last of the Crazy People, has the power to warp the child as well as curtail the imagination. In Pandora's case, it is not merely a matter of moving from innocence to experience, but of retaining sensitivity and imagination, despite the lack of innocence and contact with nature in her childhood environment.

The absence of sympathetic partners, especially from the natural realm, forces Pandora to rely on her own resources. Her penetrating perception and sensitivity endow her with insight into her powerless position as a victim. As a child and a female, Pandora is overwhelmed by forces stronger than herself, as is made clear in her response to the breadman's attack: "Pandora makes herself very still, the way a small animal, cornered in a bush, humbly assumes

the posture of death as a sop to death" (Pandora 71). The world of Oriental Avenue, in its brutality and lack of inspiration, does little to encourage the growth and development of the Romantic child. The obstacles confronted by Pandora are nothing like the minor setbacks experienced by Anne and Emily, who have only to deal with individuals and communities that do not profess to the advantages of the imagination. Anne and Emily's societies are, at most, intolerant. Pandora, on the other hand, must fight against forces which prey upon her in an environment which has little to offer to the Romantic spirit. Anne and Emily's positions as females render them more likely to be misunderstood and ridiculed; for Pandora, being a girl leaves her open to all sorts of attacks: physical, sexual, emotional, intellectual and spiritual.

Fraser's choice of the name "Pandora Gothic" is obviously significant. The word "gothic" describes the type of environment in which the child must function--twisted, gloomy, evil--and places the novel at the opposite end of the spectrum to the pastoral. While the novel's epigraph from Bulfinch's Mythology emphasizes the presence of hope at the bottom of Pandora's jar, the name Pandora carries its more usual negative associations. Endowed with the name of the first woman, Pandora Gothic obviously represents woman in general, and her plight is that of all women rather than simply that of a particular individual. The situation criticized by Fraser is clearly more subtle and complicated than the common interpretation of the myth, which views woman as the source and cause of evil; nevertheless, Pandora's situation does stem from that mythological stance. The evil and

oppression in the novel are largely manifested in the dominance of male over female and adult over child. The incongruity of Pandora's name is apparent in her position as a victim rather than a perpetrator of evil; the original Pandora is also a victim, manipulated by Zeus. Fraser emphasizes "hope" in the epigraph and conclusion of her novel, but uses the name, Pandora, in order to question assumptions and attitudes about the position of women in her society.

These mythological allusions work in conjunction with the ideas and characteristics associated with the Romantic child. The Romantic child is vulnerable, and the Romantic child removed from nature is especially prone to victimization and disillusionment. Such feelings of helplessness and vulnerability are accentuated in the female figure, struggling for fulfillment and independence. The dilemma and temperament of the Romantic child are consonant with the situation of the woman; both struggle to establish and maintain a fruitful relationship with society, to play a role which will best develop and benefit from their gifts and abilities. Sylvia Fraser modifies the traditional and general view of the Romantic child in order to explore the more specific connections between the Romantic child and the female. She uses the established motif of the Romantic child in order to pursue and articulate the particular social problems of victimization and alienation, common to both this child and the woman. Her concern and interest focus mainly on the child herself rather than the environment, in a humanistic emphasis on the individual, reminiscent of Gabrielle Roy. The novel and the character are not "anti-Romantic" as such, but question some of the assumptions and

conventions of the pastoral child and the Romantic tradition, by introducing a new and specific area of social criticism, and thus a new role for the Romantic child--no longer a young boy on the farm, but a young girl in the city. The attention is turned inward to the child herself rather than diffused outward to the environment surrounding her.

Similarly, Marian Engel's Sarah Porlock is concerned with the effect of the external environment on her as an individual and a woman. Marian Engel's No Clouds of Glory is anti-Wordsworthian and anti-Romantic in its very title. Not only disparaging of Wordsworth--"There were also the impulses from the vernal wood; we got on that wavelength early and some of us never got off"³⁴--Sarah also mocks Anne from a retrospective viewpoint: "Anne of Green Gables wanted to be sweet, good and true, and I was impressed" (Clouds 19). Obviously writing in and against the Canadian tradition, the narrator is determined not to "get caught again in that romance, to tell again the story of everyone's blissful Canuck childhood" (Clouds 21). She facetiously, and yet automatically, associates the tradition with the landscape: "Give me the old, fictional virtues that belong to the land of spruce and pine" (Clouds 19). Sarah may be reacting against the tradition, but her knowledge of it--"Since I was a kid I've loved the puce-colored Boston L.M. Montgomery set" (Clouds 140)--has obviously influenced her to the extent that she has contradictory feelings about its effects. Engel suggests that a reaction against such a tradition is naturally part of its development in a continual process of modification and "moderization."

Sarah's childhood environment is oppressive on a personal level--"the family lived in a world that was as personal and physical as a Victorian parlor" (Clouds 87)--as well as a social level: "The culture gap had not shut far enough to let Canada be in any way 'modern' without guilt" (Clouds 87). The obvious escape, the pastoral retreat, is the cottage; "In our olden days this was paradise" (Clouds 17). Its contrast to the city lies in the simple fact that "it is north" (Clouds 16), in Sarah's words "the lyric north my countrymen write books about" (Clouds 17), which has "a strong seduction, and is meaningless" (Clouds 17). But is it? In retrospect, the lake is associated with various elements of nature: "leagues of summers, greenery, white farms, and cows; . . . lilacs, . . . water moccasins among the yellow lilies" (Clouds 16). Sarah finds diversion in the woods: "paradises of old sawlogs, whippoorwills' nests, cans of toads" (Clouds 16). Her assertion that "those of us who grow up in romantic scenery continue subject to its dangerous charm" (Clouds 19) suggests that "the lyric north," the setting of the cottage, is far from meaningless." It is the "lyric" interpretation of the north by Sarah's "countrymen" that lacks meaning, rather than the setting itself. The north is ostensibly presented in a negative light as the source of the automatic and conventional sentimentality against which Sarah is reacting: "We cannot describe our surroundings without encrusting them with sugar; we speak another generations's hyperbole and deny that there is evil in the happy land" (Clouds 19).

Sarah's analysis of the "romantic scenery" and "dangerous charm" of her north is quite different from that of her "countrymen."

The dangerous charm provides a means of escape from the suffocating world of family and society, and for Sarah, in particular, allows her to defy and transcend society's expectations of the female. Never co-operative or conventional, but in her mother's words "contrary and rambunctious" (Clouds 145), Sarah possesses a "diseased consciousness" (Clouds 19), which is a result of her contact with "grandeur and space" (Clouds 19). Such a consciousness "seeks the remote and exotic, there are always the mountains on the horizon, blinding us to extant reality" (Clouds 19). This yearning for the remote and exotic is a Romantic tendency, reminiscent of the mood inspired by Wordsworth's sublimity, which makes it easy to disregard and reject the precepts of society. The Romantic scenery then is actually sublime rather than beautiful--a distinction intimated by Sarah's comments and criticism of earlier writers' superficial treatment of the north. The Wordsworthian notion of being "chosen" if we are one of those "who grow up in romantic scenery" (Clouds 19) is connected with this concept of sublimity. Such "chosen" individuals attempt to attain the impossible--"we try instead to construct epics" (Clouds 19)--relinquishing the ordinary, and becoming "mad" in the sense of not prescribing to conventionality and the ordinary. The remote and exotic, rooted in the landscape, provide the escape from the real world, or at least a distanced perspective that makes the real world bearable.

Engel stresses the association of childhood with creative pursuits, and the tendency of adults to indulge basic appetites: "We forgo the childish pleasures of decoration, learning and creating in order to earn, spend and breed" (Clouds 21). Sarah, however, seems

to have retained her childhood pleasures, as well as her love for the unconventional, remote and exotic. An independent rebel, Sarah takes her cue from the Romantic child in the mountains, who does not join the annihilation, "where we have not time to create, subscribe" (Clouds 21). The Romantic tradition against which Sarah is reacting is the actual source of the inspiration which gives her the courage and determination to defy society's expectations of the role she ought to play. Sarah removes the "encrusted sugar" from the northern landscape in order to reveal the strength and truth in the sublimity beneath. She performs a similar process on herself. In both cases, a traditional and accepted view is challenged and negated. The landscape and female figure are closely aligned in a manner reminiscent of the situation in Gabrielle Roy's "The Road Past Altamont."

The titles of the sections of Audrey Thomas' Songs My Mother Taught Me, "Songs of Innocence" and "Songs of Experience," place the novel within the Romantic tradition. As in the case of Sarah Porlock, the pastoral paradise for Isobel is the "northern" cottage, "Journey's End." Significantly, the division between innocence and experience occurs during the summer when Isobel is seventeen, when Harry sells the cottage. The memories of the cottage are suffused with nostalgia: "Like a legendary drowning man, I began to relive it all again. Looking back, I saw what seemed to be an endless succession of golden summers."³⁵ These memories are based on a rich and sensuous perception:

The way we could rub the whitish bloom off
blueberries, and polish them with our fingertips.
The taste of wintergreen and wild strawberries.
The dusty-smelling buffalo rug in front of the
huge stone fireplace. (Songs 152)

The energetic communion of child and nature is conveyed through the heat produced by their contact, as well as the contrast of the refreshing coolness:

Felt myself running again through pine and
tamarack, running along the biscuit-colored
sand with Jane, running until the soles of
our feet were on fire and then, still running,
quenching our legs in the lake. (Songs 151-52)

The extremes and the range suggest the richness of the natural world for the child.

One obvious effect of urbanization then is the removal of the natural world from the everyday life of the child. Unable to walk to the prairie or climb the mountain, the "city child" must either forego the world of nature, as does Pandora Gothic, or depend on others in order to come into contact with it. The relationship is controlled by external circumstances, upon which the child cannot always rely. Isobel's excitement and anticipation concerning Journey's End suggest the lack of stimulation and inspiration in her ordinary urban life. Her senses are waiting to be excited and challenged.

Extremely aware of the implications of time in terms of past, present and future, Isobel says to herself: "Ten years from now you will remember this moment and it will be the past" (Songs 37). Also conscious of the connection between sense and memory, she attempts to retain important or unusual moments through her senses: "If something truly unusual happened I tried to impale the whole complex of sight/sound/touch/taste/smell on my consciousness and memory as though such an experience was like some rare and multicolored butterfly" (Songs 37). The presence of the midgets in the restaurant in Utica

is almost like a "spot of time" for Isobel, in the sudden, powerful and yet evasive significance attached to it:

I immediately felt that the presence of these midgets, the very first time we had ever stopped in Utica, was of the utmost significance. Perhaps I was to give birth to a midget at some later date? A little thrill ran down my back. (Songs 37)

As in a "spot of time," the impetus for the experience is external, but much of the meaning endowed is provided by the observer, who actively participates in the creation of the experience. The detail of Isobel's observation reveals the sensitivity and acuteness of her perception:

I shivered and began to try to memorize the afternoon: net curtains, tables covered with red-checked tablecloths, my father's cracked and dirty fingernails as he picked up a roll and buttered it, the hair that had started growing on my legs, the sunlight setting out a neat gold carpet by the door. (Songs 37-38)

After leaving the restaurant, Isobel is able to articulate at least one of the reasons for the attraction of the midgets--the teasing and shocking discovery that she would grow, while the midgets would remain the same: "They were locked into a relationship with tables, chairs, trees that seemed totally alien to my growing body" (Songs 38). The experience is partially inspired by an identification of the child with the midget, and the realization that time is fluid for one and static for the other.

Connected with this awareness of time is an awareness of death, as the retrospective narrator notes: "Perhaps the two things go together: If you are aware of death you are aware of the passage of

time; if you are aware of the passage of time you are aware of death" (Songs 38). The proximity and attraction of death are apparent: "Death was all around us and in some ways, like most children, we were attracted to it" (Songs 39). In the detailed cemetery scene, death is presented as both fascinating and terrifying, with the usual amazement for the death of youth: "'Look,' whispered Jane. 'Melissa, 1902-1920! She was only eighteen! I wonder what happened to her?'" (Songs 44). The release from the mausoleum inspires Isobel to immerse herself in the energy and life of nature: "I wanted to lie down and roll over and over in the good green grass, to take great swallows of fresh air and lie face upward in the sun" (Songs 44).

Isobel experiences a more traditional spot of time than the one inspired by the midgets when she sings Christmas carols at the school concert, and is obviously taken out of herself in a visionary and trancelike moment: "I was nearly unconscious with joy and well-being" (Songs 53). The sensuous attraction of the tree touches a chord within the child, producing the conventional union of outer and inner energy and spirit: "The great tree by the piano seemed to reach out its spicy fingers and enter into some very secret part of me of which, until now, I had been totally unaware" (Songs 53). A sudden awakening and inspiration are the result of the combination of Isobel's open and joyous mind and the beauty of the sound of the music and the smell of the tree. The return to the real world is abrupt—"It was with surprise and almost with physical shock that I realized the teacher had stopped playing" (Songs 53)—and the futile desire to remain in that other realm is strong: "I wanted to remain

with the music, within that strange enchanted semicircle, forever" (Songs 53).

The usual bond between the old and the young generations is clearly delineated in the first chapter of the novel: "the three of us, Harry, Jane and Isobel, would stand looking down in arrogant superiority at the superfluous couple below" (Songs 17). Rather clearly stated in this instance, however, is the hostility and contempt for the middle generation, so caught up in the ordinary concerns of the real world. Part of Harry's attraction--"Mythical at the top of the stairs in the lantern light" (Songs 95)--lies in his absence of concern for the things of this world, in his "wealth, his wisdom, his bottom drawer of superfluous unworn shirts, his magical roll of dollar bills, his lack of fear" (Songs 95). Harry's understanding and love, his ability to know what the girls value and appreciate, stem from his imagination: "And once he devised a marvellous map, aged it with heat spots of candle wax, indicated buried treasure on the beach" (Songs 97). His rejection of the conventional and ordinary endears him to his granddaughters: "Why don't you name it [a tree] yourself? Why take a name someone else has given it?" (Songs 98). And, of course, the link of inheritance plays its part once again: "('They said you looked like him. They said you had his eyes')" (Songs 104).

Like Hooker Winslow, Isobel Cleary is an outsider within a family that is itself disapproved of by society. Alienated and victimized, failing to live up to her mother's and society's expectations of a young girl, Isobel finds herself on the outside.

The mental hospital is obviously the antithesis of Journey's End, providing the experience which will offset the innocence: "if I couldn't have Journey's End, my Eden, I would sample the fruits of hell" (Songs 162). Isobel, unlike Hooker, eventually manages to immerse herself in a celebration of life, despite the indifference and sorrow: "life was cruel, people hurt and betrayed one another, grew old and died alone" (Songs 232). Referring to Isobel Cleary, George Woodcock comments that various forces "try and temper the heroine's character until she emerges, not unhurt indeed, but unspoilt, a being as well as a becoming."³⁶ As in the case of Harry, there is a sense that the Romantic temperament does not just alienate the individual, but enriches and intensifies his or her experience. Isobel, like Harry, will have "No regrets" (Songs 232) written on her tomb because her vision and sensitivity provide her with the insight and courage to assert her individuality.

The influence of the "golden thread of summer" (Songs 152)—"grandfather's woods, the cool mountain nights, the belching frogs, the liquid embrace of the lake" (Songs 157)—instills a quiet strength and inspiration that uphold Isobel through her trial of experience, distinguishing her from her sister, Jane, whose shallow assessment of Journey's End reveals her lack of appreciation for this valuable retreat from the city: "It was getting unhealthy anyway. Just you and me and no social life" (Songs 153). The contrast between Jane and Isobel is based on Jane's desire and need to be accepted by society, to conform and compromise, and Isobel's loyalty to her true spirit, strength and desires. Isobel's sensitivity, awareness of time and

embracement of life--"'Life!' said a sudden sharp voice in my ear. 'Life, Isobel!'" (Songs 158)--initially alienate her, but eventually provide her with insight and stability, establishing a character that contrasts with the conventional and weak characters of her mother and sister. Isobel's separation from society, induced by her family situation and her temperament, is essentially positive in that it prepares her to break away from the stereotypes and expectations of society, which enslave her mother and sister. The Romantic child resists allowing her values to be dictated by the standards and precepts of those around her.

Del Jordan, in Alice Munro's Lives of Girls and Women, lives on the Flats Road, which "was not part of town, but it was not part of the country either."³⁷ Like Hooker Winslow, she and her family belong to neither world, and like the Winslow, Porlock and Cleary families, the Jordans are regarded as unusual and queer. Del's alienation, like that of other Romantic children, seems to lead to a heightened perception and sensitivity, as the retrospective narrator notes: "It often seemed then that nobody else knew what really went on, or what a person was, but me" (Lives 38). The sense of being "special" or "chosen" pervades the novel, eventually manifesting itself in the emergence of the artistic temperament. Alice Munro maintains that for the writer "perhaps it helps to grow up feeling very alienated from the environment you happen to live in."³⁸ Munro traces her own childhood alienation and subsequent artistry to the fact that she "grew up in a rural community, a very traditional community. I almost always felt it. I find it still when I go back."³⁹

Del attempts to establish a meaningful communion with nature, and claims some kind of success: "In some moods, some days, I could feel for a clump of grass, a rail fence, a stone pile, such pure unbounded emotion as I used to hope for, and have inklings of, in connection with God" (Lives 140). She longs for and seeks a world removed from reality, whether the means be through religion or books: "Walls of printed pages, evidence of so many created worlds" (Lives 99). Ultimately, what Del learns is that meaning is derived from the real world, or more specifically, from the combination of her perception and imagination with the real world. The town she has been trying to transcend and transform is the very element into which she should immerse herself in order to achieve transcendence. Del discovers a process that is essentially Wordsworthian: meaning and creation are the result of an open and receptive mind actively and imaginatively responding to an external stimulus.⁴⁰ Bobby Sherriff's rising on his toes is imbued with meaning by a perceptive and imaginative Del--a meaning not easily explained or articulated, but in some way encompassing and epitomizing the human element in Jubilee: "it seemed also to have a concise meaning, a stylized meaning--to be a letter, or a whole word, in an alphabet I did not know" (Lives 211).

Del's understanding of mortality and its implications--"To be made of flesh was humiliation" (Lives 48)--results in a type of anti-Romantic vision--"the very opposite of the mystic's incommunicable vision of order and light; a vision, also incommunicable, of confusion and obscenity--of helplessness, which was revealed as the most obscene

thing there could be" (Lives 48). This chaotic vision contains the properties of a spot of time: "But like the other kind of vision this could not be supported more than a moment or two, it collapsed of its own intensity and could never be reconstructed or even really believed in, once it was over" (Lives 48). For Del, the suddenly meaningful and insightful moment is based in the physical rather than the spiritual. Her imagination and vision are rooted in the physical reality she cannot escape--the reality she eventually discovers must be delved into in order for meaning to emerge. The onus is on the everyday and the ordinary, rather than the exoticism of the mystical and transcendental. However, in conjunction with the everyday is the need for the artistic temperament to transform and endow that reality with meaning and significance.

Munro questions and invalidates certain assumptions and superficial views concerning the Romantic child. Her emphasis on the real world, epitomized in a realistic candour concerning the growing awareness of, and involvement in, sexuality, provides a contrast to the traditional pastoral setting and tone. Again, the child's alienation and victimization, caused by her Romantic temperament and accentuated by her position as a female, have positive results in the eventual establishment of an independent and nonconformist character. They not only distinguish and separate Del from the more conservative Naomi, who conforms, capitulates and becomes trapped, but set her apart from the rest of "ordinary" society, as an artistic interpreter of the meaning beneath the surface of an ostensibly ordinary environment, which she is capable of discerning because of

her Romantic sensitivity.

Similarly, Margaret Laurence's Vanessa MacLeod learns to look beneath superficial appearances for the essential meaning. Margaret Laurence allocates a special place for children in her philosophy, based on the conviction that we "never cease to learn from children."⁴¹ She identifies W.O. Mitchell as a strong influence on her writing, having read Who Has Seen the Wind as a teenager.⁴² Speaking of her childhood Christmases, Laurence reveals her own Romantic temperament: "I can't forget, ever, that the child, who was myself then, experienced awe and recognized it."⁴³ In A Bird in the House, which Laurence describes as being "based upon my childhood and my childhood family, the only semi-autobiographical fiction I have ever written,"⁴⁴ she creates Vanessa MacLeod, a Romantic and creative child, who has to contend with the same kind of "repressed community"⁴⁵ that Laurence had to deal with.

Vanessa MacLeod experiences a "spot of time," when she happens to glance at the horn on her Grandfather Connor's car:

There, in the middle, was the button which used to make the horn work. All at once I could hear that horn again, loudly, in my head, and I remembered something I didn't know I knew.⁴⁶

The sudden jogging of the unconscious mind instigates the involuntary memory of the drive with her grandfather when Vanessa was four years old. Like Del Jordan, Vanessa MacLeod discovers that her literary subject matter should be from the familiar world--from her family and her heritage rather than from "Quebec in the early days of the fur trade" (Bird 153). In both cases, the visionary and mystical

moment imbues the ordinary world with a radiance and significance hitherto unnoticed by the young girls. Paradoxically, it is the removal from reality, from time and place, that reinforces the value and need of that real world: "It was a memory with nothing around it, an unplaced memory without geography or time" (Bird 154). The added complication of this particular "spot of time" is its reinforcement through the memory of the memory:

The memory of a memory returned to me now.
I remembered myself remembering driving in it
with him, in the ancient days when he seemed
as large and admirable as God. (Bird 178)

The event is intensified and given added significance because of the unexpectedness of a memory of a memory--a memory once removed from the actual event.

Although this particular experience is not inspired by nature, Vanessa does demonstrate a close relationship with the natural world, and makes an effort to understand it: "I put my head down very close to the earth and looked at what was going on there" (Bird 49). She endows nature with her own imagination: "But in the bluff where I stopped and crawled under the barbed wire fence and lay stretched out on the grass, the plentiful poplar leaves were turning to a luminous yellow and shone like church windows in the sun" (Bird 49). Laurence, like Findley, is very concerned with man's relationship with nature, and is particularly distressed by the recent degeneration of that relationship:

But all the same it is true, I think, that
we are not yet totally alienated from the
physical earth, and let us only pray we do
not become so.⁴⁷

Her plea is for a Wordsworthian communion with the natural world.

While camping with Chris, Vanessa responds strongly to the lake, which seems to exist "in some world in which man was not yet born" (Bird 126). Nature in this instance is sublime rather than beautiful, and is admonishing in true Wordsworthian style: "I looked at the grey reaches of it [the lake] and felt threatened" (Bird 126). As well, nature is associated with God, although not in the usual optimistic fashion: "It [the lake] was like the view of God I had held since my father's death. Distant, indestructible, totally indifferent" (Bird 126).

Ewan and Vanessa's relationship with the loons has transcendental possibilities, based on the open and receptive attitude of the observers--"we waited, without speaking" (Bird 102)--and the mysterious and alien nature of the cry of the loon: "Plaintive, and yet with a quality of chilling mockery, those voices belonged to a world separated by aeons from our neat world of summer cottages and the lighted lamps of home" (Bird 102). The endurance and longevity of the sound tease the mind, as does the thought that the loons were crying even when there was nobody to hear them: "'They must have sounded just like that,' my father remarked, 'before any person ever set foot here'" (Bird 102).

Vanessa's cousin, Chris, like Gilbert Winslow, is a Romantic who cannot reconcile his temperament with the world around him. Creative and imaginative, he is unable to apply his gifts to his experience, and thus attempts to escape from reality, the attempt and result being insanity. His separation from his body--"He didn't

live inside it anymore" (Bird 131)--is not the visionary ecstasy of the transcendentalist, although it serves much the same purpose of removal from the real world--the one based on inspiration and the other on desperation. Chris is unrealistic in the sense of being unable to contend with his situation; he fails to base his imagination and creativity in concrete reality. Such an oversight results in the stagnation of his gifts, which cannot function in a vacuum, divorced from concrete experience.

If Chris is the "failed Romantic," then Piquette is the unrealized "noble savage." Vanessa, based on her reading of Pauline Johnson, sees Piquette as "a daughter of the forest, a kind of junior prophetess of the wilds" (Bird 100), who might reveal "some of the secrets which she undoubtedly knew--where the whippoorwill made her nest, how the coyote reared her young, or whatever it was that they said in Hiawatha" (Bird 100). However, "it became increasingly obvious that, as an Indian, Piquette was a dead loss" (Bird 102); Piquette does not live up to Vanessa's naive expectations of an Indian or noble savage. Nevertheless, Piquette does retain a type of special aura and gifted perception in the retrospective mind of Vanessa: "It seemed to me now that in some unconscious and totally unrecognised way, Piquette might have been the only one, after all, who had heard the crying of the loons" (Bird 108).

In exploring the relationship between childhood and mortality in A Bird in the House, Laurence emphasizes Vanessa's difficulty in dealing with the deaths of her grandmother and father, as well as the later death of her grandfather. Laurence, herself, who had to

contend with many deaths, claims that "most kids don't know that they are going to die. I certainly knew."⁴⁸ The deaths of Roderick and the baby sister pervade the beginning of the novel, while Piquette's death assumes importance later on. The deaths of Uncle Dan and Beth are also mentioned. Vanessa fails to see much justice or planning in the system and has no sense of continuity or completion; rather, she sees deaths as "accidents that might easily happen to a person--or, of course, might not happen, might happen to somebody else" (Bird 49) in a world in which whatever God loves, "it was certainly not order" (Bird 49). Vanessa the child, rejects the communal and conventional responses to death--"I wanted now to hold my own funeral service for my grandmother, in the presence only of the canary" (Bird 70)--and at twenty years old, refers to "the bizarre cruelty of such rituals" (Bird 176) as funerals. Despite her reactions against, and resistance to, death, Vanessa's eventual discovery of immortality through inheritance does provide a type of "order" and circular continuity, not readily apparent to the child. Such understanding and insight do not seem to be available to the child, for whom the injustice and finality of the random events of death are overwhelming and unacceptable.

The oppression of family and circumstances eventually wears down Chris' sensitivity and creativity until he can be described by doctors as "passive" (Bird 129). His insanity and inability to cope recall Findley's Gilbert Winslow. Vanessa, like Hooker, refuses to be passive, but acts in order to relieve and change the oppression of her situation. Unlike Hooker, however, she has external support,

even from the source of her oppression: Grandfather Connor. Grandfather Connor, who prevented Beth from attending college, helps to provide the means to send Vanessa to university. Laurence suggests a gradual evolution and modification of tradition and the family. The inherited past cannot be destroyed and reconstructed, but must be assimilated and modified. The Romantic child, as interpreter and creator, plays a role in the modification of that past. Like Del Jordan, Vanessa MacLeod finds meaning and value beneath an unpromising and ordinary exterior. The present and the past are not static, but can be recreated and interpreted by the mind which feels the need and inspiration for such a process. Once again, the alienation of the Romantic child provides the intensification and development of the sensitivity and insight which lead to the ability to derive meaning from ordinary facts and appearances. A major part of Vanessa and Del's modification and interpretation involves reactions against society's expectations and stereotypical views of the role of the female. Such views are responsible for much of their childhood victimization, and provide a basis and impetus for subsequent reactions, which are sensitive and inspired, providing insight and vision.

Pandora Gothic, Sarah Porlock, Isobel Cleary, Del Jordan and Vanessa MacLeod react against the alienation and oppression which typify the Romantic child's experience. The usual alienation and oppression are of course augmented and intensified by the child's awareness of her position as a female. The result of the girls' reactions against their society is the acquisition of an unusual

strength, accompanied by an independence and disregard for society's conventions, to which they refuse to conform. The Romantic child is traditionally depicted as a rebel, or at least a nonconformist, who is able to effect change and progress through her own convictions and actions. Such an impact is obviously aided by an artistic or creative vocation. In the struggle against the oppression and limitations of their society, these young girls do not give in or compromise their beliefs and positions, perhaps because there is a strong need for justice associated with their predicaments. It is not a matter of society and the child coming together to achieve some sort of reconciliation, but a case of the child maintaining her distanced and external viewpoint in order to bring about change and defy expectation. The realization of victimization and oppression demands a reaction against the external circumstances responsible for the situation, rather than an attempt to come to terms with the dilemma. The Romantic child, who is actively involved in her own perception and vision, carries that active participation into a social context of reform and progress.

The Romantic child becomes the inspired and confident adult, moulded by a society which, when combined with her sensitivity and insight, results in a celebration and application of those qualities which set her apart, rather than their submersion and modification. The power and triumph reside in the individual, in the Romantic temperament, rather than in society, which has forced Brian O'Connell and Anne Shirley to temper their Romantic spirits, compelled David Canaan to look inward for integration and pushed Hooker Winslow to

opt for destruction. Fraser, Engel, Thomas, Munro and Laurence, like Gabrielle Roy, believe in the ability of the individual not merely to mitigate or influence society, but to have a profound and permanent effect through the application and development of the Romantic temperament, which both alienates and strengthens the individual who possesses it.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

¹W.O. Mitchell, Jake and the Kid (1961; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Bantam-Seal, 1982) 1. All further references to Jake and the Kid are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Jake.

²W.O. Mitchell, The Kite (1962; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Bantam-Seal, 1983) 48. All further references to The Kite are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Kite.

³W.O. Mitchell, How I Spent My Summer Holidays (1981; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Bantam-Seal, 1982) 138. All further references to How I Spent My Summer Holidays are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Summer.

⁴Harry J. Boyle, A Summer Burning (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1964) 65. All further references to A Summer Burning are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Burning.

⁵Boyle, Memories of a Catholic Boyhood (Toronto: Doubleday, 1973) 9.

⁶Boyle, Mostly in Clover (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1961) 65.

⁷Boyle, Mostly in Clover 90.

⁸Boyle, Homebrew and Patches (Don Mills: General-Paperjacks, 1973) 7.

⁹Boyle, Straws in the Wind (Don Mills: General-Paperjacks, 1973) 7.

¹⁰Boyle, Straws in the Wind 116.

¹¹Boyle, Straws in the Wind 116.

¹²Boyle, Straws in the Wind 42.

¹³Boyle, Straws in the Wind 42.

¹⁴Boyle, Straws in the Wind 42.

¹⁵Hubert Evans, O Time in Your Flight (Madeira Park, B.C.: Harbour Publishing, 1973) 42. All further references to O Time in Your Flight are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Time.

¹⁶There is, however, no practicality or feasibility to Gilbert's dream, as Pat Barclay points out:

Gilbert's world is ordered, self-sufficient,
close to God and nature and sometimes confining.
Though he longs to run away from home to join
the Indians, Gilbert's place in the community
is already established at the age of nine.

See Pat Barclay, "Familiar Worthies," Canadian Literature 89 (1981): 134.

¹⁷Alden Nowlan, various persons named kevin o'brien (Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1973) 1. All further references to various persons named kevin o'brien are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Kevin.

¹⁸Fraser Sutherland, "A Lurking Devil," Canadian Literature 60 (1974): 119-20.

¹⁹Alden Nowlan, "Something to Write About," Canadian Literature 68-69 (1976): 8.

²⁰For other examples of this regenerative blue heron in Canadian literature, see T.G. Roberts, "The Blue Heron," and Douglas Le Pan, "Image of Silenus," The Book of Canadian Poetry, ed. A.J.M. Smith (Toronto: W.J. Gage and Co., 1948), as well as Margaret Atwood, Surfacing (1972; Don Mills: General-Paperjacks, 1973) 116-19.

²¹See J.R. (Tim) Struthers, "An Interview With Hugh Hood," Before the Flood, ed. Struthers (Downsview: ECW Press, 1979) 65-66.

²²Struthers 28-31.

²³Hugh Hood, "Sober Coloring: The Ontology of Super-Realism," The Narrative Voice, ed. John Metcalf (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972) 99.

²⁴Hood, "Sober Coloring" 100.

²⁵Hugh Hood, The Swing in the Garden (Toronto: Oberon, 1975) 5. All further references to The Swing in the Garden are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Swing.

²⁶Hood, "Sober Coloring" 98-99.

²⁷Anthony John Harding, "Field of Vision," Canadian Literature 94 (1982): 85.

²⁸W.H. New, "The Once and Future Past," Canadian Literature 76 (1978): 4.

²⁹Robert Thomas Allen, My Childhood and Yours (Toronto: Macmillan, 1977) 2. All further references to My Childhood and Yours are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Childhood.

³⁰See Richard N. Coe, When the Grass Was Taller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984) 139-204.

³¹David Staines, Introduction to Sylvia Fraser, Pandora (1972; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1976) ix. All further references to Pandora are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the title Pandora.

³²Pat Barclay, "Rationality in Mind," Canadian Literature 60 (1974): 109.

³³Barclay, "Rationality in Mind" 109.

³⁴Marian Engel, No Clouds of Glory (Don Mills: Longman, 1968) 19. All further references to No Clouds of Glory are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Clouds.

³⁵Audrey Thomas, Songs My Mother Taught Me (Vancouver: Talon-books, 1973) 151. All further references to Songs My Mother Taught Me are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Songs.

³⁶George Woodcock, "Twilight Zones," Canadian Literature 60 (1974): 97.

³⁷Alice Munro, Lives of Girls and Women (1971; Scarborough: New American Library, 1974) 5. All further references to Lives of Girls and Women are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Lives.

³⁸Gibson, Eleven Canadian Novelists 246.

³⁹Gibson 246.

⁴⁰Wordsworth, "1850 Preface to Lyrical Ballads," The Prose Works of William Wordsworth 1: 123.

⁴¹Margaret Laurence, "My Final Hour," Canadian Literature 100 (1984): 197.

⁴²Gibson 198.

⁴³Laurence, "Upon a Midnight Clear," Heart of a Stranger (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976) 194.

⁴⁴Laurence, "A Place to Stand On," Heart of a Stranger 16.

⁴⁵Cameron, Conversations With Canadian Novelists 1: 99.

⁴⁶Laurence, A Bird in the House (1970; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Bantam-Seal, 1978) 153. All further references to A Bird in the House are from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, accompanied by the abbreviation Bird.

⁴⁷Laurence, "Where the World Began," Heart of a Stranger 218.

⁴⁸Joan Hind-Smith, Three Voices (Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1975)

CONCLUSION

The circumstances and environment surrounding the Wordsworthian child in Canadian fiction have changed over the years. The image of the child as noble savage in the wilderness, or as pastoral innocent on the farm, has been adapted and modified as the years progress. In the general and traditional view, the grandeur and expanse of Canadian nature constitute a moving sublimity, inspiring fear and awe. Such examples of sublimity appear repeatedly in the prairie, the mountain, and the lake of ocean-like dimensions and character. The extremes of height, depth and breadth are emphasized, as well as movement. The universe is invigorated by wind and water, which operate on a large scale, in an expansive and energetic outward motion. The child's active and creative participation with this landscape uplifts and broadens his or her perspective.

In obvious contrast and opposition to this very open and expansive communion between child and nature is the restrictive emphasis on protection and isolation which characterizes the traditional "garrison" community. The first relationship results in a mystical and visionary transcendence of the real world, as the child moves from the physical to the spiritual plane. Relationships within the community, on the other hand, are characterized by insularity and intolerance as individuals turn to known and proven resources rather

than risk the unknown dangers of the unfamiliar and the unusual. The contrast is based on vision and imagination as opposed to a regard for rationality, decorum and stability. Imagination leads to insight and wisdom, inspired by, and transcending the physical world; rationality results in the reinforcement of established values at the expense of change or enlightenment. The imagination transforms the existing world, whereas reason entrenches it.

This traditional view sees the child as the instigator of change through the inevitable, even if negligible, influence he or she is likely to extend to the community. Different characters have varying degrees of success in this influential role. The most obvious and effective stance for the Romantic child to assume eventually is that of the artist, but an impact can also be made on an individual level, in relationships. In order to be effective and function within society, however, the Romantic child must usually tone down his or her Romantic temperament, although such a move should not be seen as a rejection or negation of the childhood characteristics that alienate and distinguish this figure. The imagination and vision of childhood, along with the resultant wisdom and insight, still constitute the temperament of the adult. The attitude of the author towards this "taming" and modification of the Romantic child seems to be one of regret, and yet acceptance, for the necessity of compromise in this situation. Such a process allows creativity and imagination to be channelled towards a positive and utilitarian end.

This description, however, is applicable to the simplest and most straightforward situations, and is based on a number of

assumptions concerning the child, nature and society: that the child and nature enjoy a harmonious communion; that tension exists between nature and society; that society is open or persuaded to be receptive, to the influence of the child and nature; that society is to some extent "redeemable" and capable of benefitting from the Romantic imagination; and that the child is willing to compromise to some extent in order to function within the community. Works which conform to these criteria include Canadian Crusoes, Two Little Savages, Glengarry Schooldays, Anne of Green Gables, Emily of New Moon, and Who Has Seen the Wind. In each of these cases, the child brings to society something of worth and value from his or her imaginative and creative relationship with the wilderness or nature. The child manages to continue to exist harmoniously with nature, and at the same time function effectively within society.

Complications with this formula arise, however, when the gap between nature and society is, for some reason, not bridged by the Romantic child. David Canaan, for example, lives and dies in communion and harmony with nature, but remains an outcast, alienated from society. David is completely isolated, unlike other Romantic children, who usually have at least one sympathetic mentor in the community. He is too distant to influence or be influenced by society. The process of growing up involves a movement away from society rather than an eventual integration, or at least acceptance, of it. The triumphant union of two entities, David and nature, is celebrated to the exclusion, and at the expense, of the relationship between David and his community.

A second difficulty arises when either society or nature is diminished in presence and importance, as is society in Gabrielle Roy's Street of Riches, The Road Past Altamont and Children of My Heart. Although present by implication, society does not play a clear and dominant role in the experience of the Romantic child. The optimistic hope and love associated with the Romantic and childlike vision imply its healing and insightful inspiration with respect to its inevitable influence on other individuals. The lack of emphasis on the gap or rift between nature and society, however, leaves the child without the clear and defined role of arbitrator or unifier. The celebration of the harmonious Wordsworthian communion with nature is not directly prescribed for society, but is upheld as an ideal which enriches the individual, and would, by implication and extension, benefit society as a whole. Gabrielle Roy expresses hope for a continued communion between man and nature, and bases her humanitarian optimism on the continuation of man's respect and reverence for the natural world and its cycles.

The inevitable movement away from nature in twentieth-century society is mourned by writers such as Margaret Laurence and Timothy Findley, who fear the implications of a separation and alienation of man and nature. Writers react in different ways to this modern disregard for the natural world. Findley and Blais seem to despair of any mitigation or alleviation of the rift, and depict the inevitable destruction and havoc of a society divorced from nature and the imagination. The authors of recent fictional memoirs express regret and nostalgia for the diminished sense of communion with nature, but

offer no solution or alternative to the present situation. Laurence and Munro suggest a modification of the focus of the imagination, which is not necessarily intrinsic to the natural world, but can be inspired by, and diffused over, the most commonplace and insignificant entities. The role of the Romantic child is of course modified, as the conventional relationships of child, nature and society are no longer valid.

In the case of Hooker Winslow, we see that the child does not enjoy a harmonious communion with nature, and that society is neither ready nor deserving of Hooker's visionary and imaginative gifts. Furthermore, Hooker does not even have the option of being able to compromise, as there is no effective society for which to prepare himself. Hooker's eventual action is assertive and positive in its attempt to exert control, but the process and outcome are far removed from the harmony and integration of the more conventional views. As society's critic, this Romantic child is driven to destroy rather than modify or correct. The extremity and devastation of the situation reflect the breakdown of the conventional relationships of child, nature and society.

In recent fictional memoirs, the child's role as "redeemer" of society is lost, as both nature and society change in composition and in relationship to the child. The child is still associated with nature, but in an urban world in which such a relationship is increasingly more difficult and unusual, or already belongs to the past. The sheer volume of the urban community suggests the inability of the child to affect or influence it to any great extent. The child

assumes importance in his or her association with a rural existence lived in close conjunction with nature, which provides a contrast to the city, but has no connection with it. The child, originally active and influential, replaces the absent realm of nature, and is now depicted as primarily symbolic--standing for a pastoral way of life, now lost and obsolete. Feelings of nostalgia and regret are diffused over these figures of recent fictional memoirs.

The absence of nature, or its removal to a distanced setting, is also apparent in the work of recent female writers, who are concerned with depicting and connecting the plights of the woman and the child. The removal of nature intensifies the child's alienation and oppression, to the point that she revels in her position as an outcast, in order to rebel against the conventions and stereotypes as they are unfairly applied to the Romantic child and the female. The energy and vitality, previously applied to nature, in attempts to sustain a fruitful relationship, are now directed towards the alteration of society's superficial evaluations and judgements of the imagination, vision and creativity of the Romantic child and the woman.

Apparent in this particular modification of the Romantic child is a tendency to opt for realism as opposed to sentimentality. For example, Vanessa and Del's eventual appreciation of the real world, indeed of the Wordsworthian "common" thing, suggests a rejection of the exotic, abstract and sentimental in favour of the concrete and realistic. This conscious move to realism is a reaction against the sentimentality and vagueness that have traditionally and mistakenly

been associated with the Romantic ideal of an imaginative and creative interaction with the external world. Alice Munro's theory of perception is very similar to Wordsworth's, which endeavours "to look steadily" at the subject, and chooses "incidents and situations from common life," which are met by "a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect."¹ The Romantic child's perception is not altered, but the initial stage of concrete interaction with reality is stressed in order to offset the common and stereotypical accusations of vagueness and sentimentality.

Along with this entrenchment of realism is a rejection of the neat and harmonious resolution of the pastoral form. The conclusion of Anne of Green Gables, provided by Browning--"God's in his heaven, all's right with the world"--is no longer acceptable or appropriate.² Even the finality and "justness" of David Canaan's death is slightly disturbing, not to mention Brian O'Connell's convenient decision to be a dirt doctor. Such neat and all-encompassing treatments suggest a pattern and order which simply do not exist in our chaotic society. Although most writers do not go as far as Timothy Findley in The Last of the Crazy People, many suggest that the integration and adjustment of the Romantic child is not easy or indeed possible. The more recent novels are open-ended in that the relationship between the child, nature and society is not clearly delineated or firmly established. The pattern and formula have been more or less disrupted in order to reflect the uncertainty of the modern situation.

Perhaps the most rewarding, and to some extent, surprising

aspect of this study was the way in which the actual relationships between the child and nature conformed so closely to the Wordsworthian ideal of open and creative "intercourse." The receptive and active participation of the child in The Prelude is reflected everywhere in Canadian fiction, and carries with it numerous associations and traditions. This Wordsworthian influence invites the acknowledgement and celebration of the "common" and concrete object, which is transformed and interpreted by the imagination. The Romantic child, the possessor of that imagination, assumes the central and important position of the interpreter of the external world for his or her society. Unforgettable characters emerge throughout the development and modification of the Romantic child in Canadian fiction; they attempt to provide the practical society with the vision, imagination and inspiration so desperately needed. The Romantic child perceives sublimity and experiences awe. He or she attempts to introduce the magical wonder of this imaginative perception into the everyday existence of the community. Such attempts, from David's death on the mountain to Del's response to Bobby Sherriff, are based on the Wordsworthian ideal of uniting vision and imagination with the concrete and common object.

NOTES TO THE CONCLUSION

¹ Wordsworth, "1850 Preface to Lyrical Ballads," The Prose Works of William Wordsworth 1: 123.

² L.M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables 329.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Primary Sources

- Allen, Robert Thomas. My Childhood and Yours. Toronto: Macmillan, 1977.
- Atwood, Margaret. Surfacing. 1972. Don Mills: General-Paperjacks, 1973.
- Blais, Marie-Claire. Mad Shadows. Trans. Merloyd Lawrence. 1960. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1971.
- . A Season in the Life of Emmanuel. Trans. Derek Coltman. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1966.
- Blake, William. Blake: Complete Writings. Ed. Geoffrey Keynes. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966.
- Boyle, Harry J.. Homebrew and Patches. 1972. Don Mills: General-Paperjacks, 1973.
- . Memories of a Catholic Boyhood. Toronto: Doubleday, 1973.
- . Mostly In Clover. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1961.
- . Straws in the Wind. 1969. Don Mills: General-Paperjacks, 1973.
- . A Summer Burning. New York: Doubleday, 1964.
- Buckler, Ernest. The Mountain and the Valley. 1952. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1970.
- . Ox Bells and Fireflies. 1968. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1974.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. Coleridge: Poetical Works. Ed. Ernest Coleridge. London: Oxford University Press, 1967.
- Connor, Ralph. Glengarry Schooldays. 1902. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1975.

- Engel, Marian. No Clouds of Glory. Don Mills: Longman, 1968.
- Evans, Hubert. O Time in Your Flight. Madeira Park, B.C.: Harbour Publishing, 1973.
- Findley, Timothy. The Last of the Crazy People. 1967. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983.
- Fraser, Sylvia. Pandora. 1972. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1976.
- Hartley, David. Observations on Man, His Frame, His Duty and His Expectations. 2 vols. London: S. Richardson, 1749. Facsimile Copy. New York: Garland Publishing, 1971.
- Hiebert, Paul. Sarah Binks. 1947. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1964.
- Hood, Hugh. The Swing in the Garden. Toronto: Oberon, 1975.
- Laurence, Margaret. A Bird in the House. 1970. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Bantam-Seal, 1978.
- Locke, John. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. Ed. John W. Yolton. 2 vols. London: Dent, 1961.
- McCourt, Edward. Music at the Close. 1947. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1966.
- Mitchell, W.O. How I Spent My Summer Holidays. 1981. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Bantam-Seal, 1982.
- . Jake and the Kid. 1961. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Bantam-Seal, 1982.
- . The Kite. 1962. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Bantam-Seal, 1983.
- . Who Has Seen the Wind. 1947. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Bantam-Seal, 1982.
- Montgomery, L.M. Anne of Green Gables. 1908. Toronto: Ryerson, 1942.
- . Emily of New Moon. 1925. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973.
- Munro, Alice. Lives of Girls and Women. 1971. Scarborough: New American Library, 1974.

- Nowlan, Alden. various persons named kevin o'brien. Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1973.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. Emile. Trans. Barbara Foxley. London: Dent, 1911.
- Roy, Gabrielle. Children of My Heart. Trans. Alan Brown. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979.
- . The Road Past Altamont. Trans. Joyce Marshall. 1966. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1976.
- . Street of Riches. Trans. Henry Binsse. 1957. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1967.
- Seton, Ernest Thompson. Two Little Savages. 1903. New York: Doubleday Page and Co., 1927.
- Shelley, Mary. Frankenstein. Three Gothic Novels. Ed. Peter Fairclough. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968. 257-497.
- Shelley, Percy Bysshe. The Complete Poems of Percy Bysshe Shelley. Ed. Thomas Hutchinson. London: Oxford University Press, 1943.
- Smith, A.J.M., ed. The Book of Canadian Poetry. Toronto: Gage, 1953.
- Stegner, Wallace. Wolf Willow. 1955. Toronto: Macmillan Laurentian Library, 1977.
- Thomas, Audrey. Songs My Mother Taught Me. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1973.
- Traill, Catharine Parr. Canadian Crusoes: A Tale of the Rice Lake Plains. 1852. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1923.
- Wilson, Ethel. Hetty Dorval. 1947. Toronto: Macmillan Laurentian Library, 1967.
- Wordsworth, William. The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth. Ed. E. de Selincourt. Vol I. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940.
- . The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth. Ed. E. de Selincourt. Vol. II. 2nd edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952.
- . The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth. Ed. E. de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire. Vol. III. 2nd edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954.
- . The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth. Ed. E. de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire. Vol. IV. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947.

Wordsworth, William. The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth. Ed. E. de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire. Vol. V. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949.

---. The Prelude or Growth of a Poet's Mind. Ed. E. de Selincourt. 2nd edition revised by Helen Darbishire. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959.

---. The Prose Works of William Wordsworth. Ed. W.J.B. Owen and J.M. Smyser. 3 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974.

Wordsworth, William and Dorothy. The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth. The Middle Years: August 1811-1820. Ed. E. de Selincourt. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937.

2. Secondary Materials

Altmeyer, George. "Three Ideas of Nature in Canada 1893-1914." Journal of Canadian Studies 11.3 (1976): 21-36.

Atkinson, Ian A. "Imagery and Symbolism." Ernest Buckler. Ed. Gregory Cook. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972. 132-36.

Atwood, Margaret. Survival. Toronto: Anansi, 1970.

Babenroth, A. Charles. English Childhood. New York: Octagon, 1973.

Ballstadt, Carl. "Catharine Parr Traill." Canadian Writers and Their Works. Ed. Lecker, David and Quigley. Downsview: ECW Press, 1983. Fiction Series 1: 149-93.

Barbour, Douglas. "David Canaan: The Failing Heart." Studies in Canadian Literature 1 (1976): 64-75.

Barclay, Patricia. "Familiar Worthies." Canadian Literature 84 (1981): 133-35.

---. "Rationality in Mind." Canadian Literature 60 (1974): 109-10.

---. "Regionalism and the Writer: A Talk With W.O. Mitchell." Canadian Literature 14 (1962): 53-56.

Beatty, Arthur. William Wordsworth: His Doctrine and Art in Their Historic Relation. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1962.

Bissell, Claude. Introduction. The Mountain and the Valley. By Ernest Buckler. 1952. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1970.

- Bissell, Claude. "Return to Innocence." Ernest Buckler. Ed. Gregory Cook. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972. 119-21.
- Boas, George. The Cult of Childhood. London: The Warburg Institute, 1966.
- Bolger, W.P. and Elizabeth Epperly, ed. My Dear Mr. M: Letters to G.B. MacMillan from L.M. Montgomery. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1980.
- Brown, Alan. "Gabrielle Roy and the Temporary Provincial." The Tamarack Review 1.4 (1956): 61-70.
- Buckler, Ernest. "My First Novel." Ernest Buckler. Ed. Gregory Cook. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972. 22-27.
- . "My Third Book." Ernest Buckler. Ed. Gregory Cook. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972. 117-18.
- Cameron, Donald. "A Bird in the Prison Window." Conversations With Canadian Novelists. 2 parts. Toronto: Macmillan, 1973. 2: 128-45.
- . "A Conversation With An Irritated Oyster." Conversations With Canadian Novelists. 2 parts. Toronto: Macmillan, 1973. 1: 3-12.
- . "Make Peace With Nature Now." Conversations With Canadian Novelists. 2 parts. Toronto: Macmillan, 1973. 1: 49-63.
- . "Sea Caves and Creative Partners." Conversations With Canadian Novelists. 2 parts. Toronto: Macmillan, 1973. 2: 48-63.
- Chadbourne, Richard. "Two Visions of the Prairies: Willa Cather and Gabrielle Roy." The New Land: Studies In A Literary Theme. Ed. Richard Chadbourne and Hallvard Dahlie. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1978. 93-120.
- Chambers, Robert D. Sinclair Ross and Ernest Buckler. Toronto: Copp Clark, 1975.
- Chapman, Marilyn. "The Progress of David's Imagination." Studies in Canadian Literature 3 (1978): 186-98.
- Coe, Richard N. When the Grass Was Taller. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984.
- Coldwell, Joan. "Timothy Findley." The Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature. Ed. William Toye. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1983. 257-59.

- Cook, Gregory. Introduction. Ernest Buckler. Ed. Cook. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972. 1-21.
- Coveney, Peter. The Image of Childhood. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967.
- Dawson, Anthony B. "Coming of Age in Canada." Mosaic 11.3 (1978): 47-62.
- Deacon, William Arthur. "Every Little Movement Has A Meaning All Its Own." Ernest Buckler. Ed. Gregory Cook. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972. 29-31.
- Deorksen, L.M. "The Mountain and the Valley: An Evaluation." World Literature Written in English 19.1 (1980): 45-56.
- Ditsky, John. "The Fiction of W.O. Mitchell." The Hollins Critic 10.2 (1983): 1-9.
- Dooley, D.J. "The Mountain and the Valley: The Uncreated Word." Moral Vision in the Canadian Novel. Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1979. 49-59.
- Eggleston, Wilfred, ed. The Green Gables Letters. Toronto: Ryerson, 1960.
- Egoff, Sheila. The Republic of Childhood. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1967.
- Fairchild, Hoxie Neale. The Noble Savage. New York: Columbia University Press, 1928.
- Fee, Margery. "Romantic Nationalism and the Child in Canadian Writing." Canadian Children's Literature 18-19 (1980): 46-57.
- Frye, Northrop. "Conclusion to A Literary History of Canada." The Bush Garden. Toronto: Anansi, 1971. 213-51.
- Gagné, Marc. Visages de Gabrielle Roy, l'oeuvre et l'écrivain. Montreal: Librairie Beauchemin Limitée, 1973.
- Gibson, Graeme. "Alice Munro." Eleven Canadian Novelists. Toronto: Anansi, 1973. 237-264.
- . "Margaret Laurence." Eleven Canadian Novelists. Toronto: Anansi, 1973. 181-208.
- . "Timothy Findley." Eleven Canadian Novelists. Toronto: Anansi, 1973. 115-49.
- Gillen, Mollie. The Wheel of Things. Don Mills: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1975.

- Gingell-Beckman, S.A. "The Lyricism of W.O. Mitchell's Who Has Seen the Wind." Studies in Canadian Literature 6 (1981): 221-31.
- Grosskurth, Phyllis. Canadian Writers and Their Works: Gabrielle Roy. Toronto: Forum, 1969.
- Harding, Anthony John. "Field of Vision." Canadian Literature 76 (1978): 85-94.
- Harrison, Dick. Unnamed Country: The Struggle For a Canadian Prairie Fiction. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1977.
- Hartman, Geoffrey. Wordsworth's Poetry 1787-1814. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964.
- Havens, R.D. The Mind of a Poet: A Study of Wordsworth's Thought. 2 vols. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1941.
- Hesse, M.G., ed. Childhood and Youth in Canadian Literature. Toronto: Macmillan, 1979.
- . Gabrielle Roy. Boston: Twayne, 1984.
- Hind-Smith, Joan. Three Voices. Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1975.
- Hood, Hugh. "Sober Coloring: The Ontology of Super-Realism." The Narrative Voice. Ed. John Metcalfe. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972. 95-101.
- Horton, Rod. W. and Herbert W. Edwards. Backgrounds of American Literary Thought. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1952.
- Jones, D.G. Butterfly on Rock. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970.
- Kertzer, J.M. "The Past Recaptured." Canadian Literature 65 (1975): 74-85.
- King James Version. The Holy Bible. London: Collins, 1953.
- Kreisel, Henry. "The Prairie: A State of Mind." Contexts of Canadian Criticism. Ed. Eli Mandel. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971. 254-66.
- Laurence, Margaret. Heart of a Stranger. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976.
- . "My Final Hour." Canadian Literature 100 (1984): 187-97.
- Lewis, Paula Gilbert. The Literary Vision of Gabrielle Roy. Birmingham, Alabama: Summa, 1984.

- Loughrey, Brian, ed. The Pastoral Mode. London: Macmillan, 1984.
- MacDonald, Bruce F. "Word-Shapes, Time and the Theme of Isolation in The Mountain and the Valley." Studies in Canadian Literature 1 (1976): 194-209.
- MacLulich, T.D. "L.M. Montgomery and the Literary Heroine: Jo, Rebecca, Anne and Emily." Canadian Children's Literature 37 (1985): 5-17.
- Mandel, Eli. "The Study of Canadian Culture." English Quarterly 4.3 (1971): 16-24.
- Marinelli, Peter V. Pastoral. London: Methuen, 1971.
- McCourt, Edward. The Canadian West in Fiction. Toronto: Ryerson, 1970.
- McPherson, Hugo. "The Garden and the Cage." Canadian Literature 1 (1959): 46-57.
- Mitcham, Allison. The Literary Achievement of Gabrielle Roy. Fredericton: York Press, 1983.
- Mitchell, Ken. "The Universality of W.O. Mitchell's Who Has Seen the Wind." Lakehead University Review 4.1 (1971): 26-40.
- Mitchell, W.O. "Debts of Innocence." Saturday Night March 1976: 36-37.
- Montgomery, L.M. The Alpine Path. 1917. Don Mills: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1974.
- "Mystical." Oxford English Dictionary. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961.
- "Mysticism." Oxford English Dictionary. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961.
- New, W.H. "A Feeling of Completion." Articulating West: Essays on Purpose and Form in Modern Canadian Literature. Toronto: New Press, 1972. 45-59.
- . "The Once and Future Past." Canadian Literature 76 (1978): 2-4.
- Nowlan, Alden. "Something to Write About." Canadian Literature 68-69 (1976): 7-12.
- Oliver, Margaret. "Wordsworth's Theory of the Child's Unconscious Response to Nature in The Prelude." M.A. diss. McMaster University, 1980.

- Orange, John. "Ernest Buckler." Profiles in Canadian Literature 2.
Ed. Jeffrey M. Heath. Toronto: Dundurn, 1980. 17-24.
- . "Ernest Buckler: The Masks of the Artist." Phil. M. diss.
University of Toronto, 1970.
- O'Rourke, David. "An Interview With W.O. Mitchell." Essays on
Canadian Writing 20 (1980-81): 149-59.
- Pacey, Desmond. Creative Writing in Canada. Toronto: McGraw-Hill
Ryerson, 1961.
- Pafford, Michael. Inglorious Wordsworths. London: Hodder and
Stroughton, 1973.
- Pallascio-Morin, Ernest. "Gabrielle Roy sur la route d'Altamont."
Gabrielle Roy: Dossier de presse 1945-1980. Sherbrooke:
Bibliothèque du Seminaire de Sherbrooke, 1981. L'Action,
9 septembre, 1966.
- Pattison, Robert. The Child Figure in English Literature. Athens:
University of Georgia Press, 1978.
- Peterman, Michael. "W.O. Mitchell." Profiles in Canadian Literature 2.
Ed. Jeffrey M. Heath. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1980. 9-16.
- Poulet, Georges. Studies in Human Time. Trans. Elliot Coleman.
Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1956.
- Ricard, François. Gabrielle Roy: Ecrivains canadiens d'aujourd'hui.
Montreal: Fides, 1975.
- Ricou, Laurence. "David Canaan and Buckler's Style in The Mountain
and the Valley." The Dalhousie Review 57 (1977-78): 684-96.
- . "Notes on Language and Learning in Who Has Seen the Wind."
Canadian Children's Literature 10 (1977-78): 3-17.
- . Vertical Man/Horizontal World. Vancouver: University of British
Columbia Press, 1973.
- Robidoux, Réjean. "Gabrielle Roy à la recherche d'elle-même."
Canadian Modern Language Review 30 (1973-74): 208-11.
- . "Le Roman et la recherche du sens de la vie. Vocation:
écrivain." Melanges de civilisation candienne-française offerts
au professeur Paul Wyczynski. Ottawa: L'Université d'Ottawa
1977. 225-35.

- Rosengarten, H.J. "Innocence Confused." Canadian Literature 36 (1968): 77-80.
- Roy, Gabrielle. Enchanted Summer. Trans. Joyce Marshall. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972.
- . The Fragile Lights of Earth. Trans. Alan Brown. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982.
- Rubio, Mary. "Satire, Realism and Imagination in Anne of Green Gables." Canadian Children's Literature 3 (1975): 27-36.
- Rubio, Mary and Elizabeth Waterston, ed. The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery 1889-1910. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Saint-Pierre, Annette. Gabrielle Roy: Sous le signe du rêve. Boniface: Les Editions de Blé, 1975.
- Sigman, Joseph. "Pierre Berton and the Romantic Tradition." Canadian Children's Literature 7 (1977): 21-27
- Socken, Paul. "Gabrielle Roy as Journalist." Canadian Modern Language Review 30.2 (1974): 96-100.
- Spettigue, D.O. "Reminiscent Sketches." Ernest Buckler. Ed. Gregory Cook. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972. 95-115.
- Stouck, David. "Notes on the Canadian Imagination." Canadian Literature 54 (1972): 9-26.
- Strickland, Agnes. Preface. Canadian Crusoes: A Tale of the Rice Plains. 1852. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1923.
- Struthers, J.M. (Tim), ed. Before the Flood. Downsview: ECW Press, 1979.
- Sutherland, Fraser. "A Lurking Devil." Canadian Literature 60 (1974): 119-20.
- Sutherland, Ronald. "Children of the Changing Wind." Second Image: Comparative Studies in Québec/Canadian Literature. Don Mills: New Press, 1971. 88-107.
- Tallman, Warren. "Wolf in the Snow." Contexts of Canadian Criticism. Ed. Eli Mandel. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971. 232-45.
- Thomas, Clara. "New England Romanticism and Canadian Fiction." Journal of Canadian Fiction 2.4 (1973): 80-86.

- Thomas, Clara. "Traill's Canadian Settlers." Canadian Children's Literature 5-6 (1976): 31-39.
- Tougas, Gérard. History of French Canadian Literature. Trans. Alta Lind Cook. Toronto: Ryerson, 1966.
- "Transcendentalism." Webster's Third New International Dictionary. Ed. Philip Babcock Gove. Springfield: G. and C. Merriam, 1965.
- Walsh, William. The Use of Imagination: Educational Thought and the Literary Mind. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1959.
- Waterston, Elizabeth. "Lucy Maud Montgomery." The Clear Spirit. Ed. Mary Quayle Innes. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966. 198-220.
- . Survey: A Short History of Canadian Literature. Toronto: Methuen, 1973.
- Watters, R.E. "The Mountain and the Valley." Ernest Buckler. Ed. Gregory Cook. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972. 41-48.
- . "Unknown Literature." Ernest Buckler. Ed. Gregory Cook. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972. 49-54.
- Whitaker, Muriel A. "'Queer Children': L.M. Montgomery's Heroines." Canadian Children's Literature 3 (1975): 50-59.
- Whitehead, William. "Alice Drops Her Cigarette on the Floor." Canadian Literature 91 (1981): 10-21.
- Woodcock, George. "Twilight Zones." Canadian Literature 60 (1974): 96-99.
- Young, Alan. Ernest Buckler. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1976.
- . "The Genesis of Ernest Buckler's The Mountain and the Valley." Journal of Canadian Fiction 16 (1976): 89-96.
- . Introduction. Ox Bells and Fireflies. By Ernest Buckler. 1968. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart NCL, 1974.
- . "A Note on Douglas Barbour's 'David Canaan: The Failing Heart'." Studies in Canadian Literature 1 (1976): 244-46.
- . "The Pastoral Vision of Ernest Buckler in The Mountain and the Valley." The Dalhousie Review 53 (1973): 219-26.