

REVIEWS

The Canadian Musical Heritage / Le Patrimoine Musical Canadien. 3: Songs I to English texts/Chansons I sur des textes anglais. Frederick A. Hall, Editor/Directeur de l'ouvrage. Ottawa. 1985. (xxx, 235 p., \$34.95)

Last month I had the pleasure of reading Robertson Davies' new novel, What's bred in the bone, and this last weekend of watching the television broadcast of Harry Somers' opera Louis Riel. Up Canada! It is no surprise then to find this songbook published by the Canadian Musical Heritage Society a real treasure in both songs and historical background. That Edward B. Shuttleworth, who wrote the words for the romantic serenade, "I am waiting for thee," (p.154) was an "acknowledged authority on the study of microbes," is interesting, but even more fun to discover is that the song's composer, Edwin Gledhill, was the son of a tenor who toured with Jenny Lind, under the name "Signor Salvi". Some of the earlier songs are primarily of historical interest, though the 1805 "A Canadian boat song" of Thomas Moore has a good swing to it; it was written on Moore's trip homeward from the U.S.A. and Canada, and inspired by the voyageurs' music.

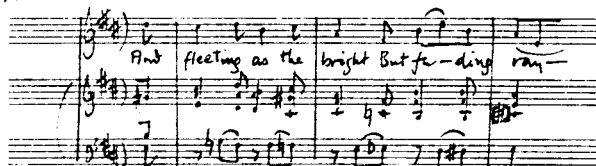
Since so many 19th-century song lyrics are cloyingly sentimental, it is a pleasure to find one as delicately teasing as "Oh! No, we never talk in French" (p.34). Considering the passions that still run high over the subject, its tone is even more remarkable. J.C. Chandler's "You can never be a girl of mine again" (p.146) is a real tear-jerker; its main difference from the American product seems to be that instead of dying of the usual broken heart, poor Nell actually drowns herself. One of the few of these songs by women composers or lyricists, Hattie Stephens' "Ma belle canadienne" (p.163), would make a charming encore piece for tenor or soprano.

-Joan Morris
University of Michigan

The natural question a Stateside composer and/or musicologist acquainted with 19th-century American music will ask is, How different is contemporaneous Canadian music from it, at least insofar as any generalizations can be made? In this limited field of commercial sheet-music, which really became big business first around the American Civil War, then again in the 1890s, the most immediate differences between the American

product of the time, and the Canadian one, seem to be on the level of presentation. The American publishers were bound to be richer, and could afford showier formats, fancier covers and the like. Also, some of the Canadian choices for engravers were perhaps injudicious (see pp.18-19, where clearly someone from the old school was wrestling with the new-fangled steel-type machine). But the overall physiognomy of the material is virtually indistinguishable from the American product in many details. A song like "The Ottawa fire" (p.151) is a clear imitation of the Charles K. Harris- Monroe Rosenfeld school of reportage songs that flourished around 1895, and it is just as good and gory as the best of them, albeit lacking a bit of the old journalistic polish of, say, the purpler Rosenfeld gems. Nearly every genre popular in English or American home-music has its counterpart here, although there are manifestly fewer war songs than in the U.S. product of any period. Many are quite nice of their types, and it's a wonder that so few were familiar to me, with the notable exception of Ambrose's "One sweetly solemn thought" (words: Carey; pp.110-112), which still graces Emmett Foxian Sunday devotional meetings like my departed aunt's Science of Mind Church of thirty years ago. It's fun to find out that the original version of "The maple leaf" (p.83) had a less felicitous first line in the chorus.

I was actually delighted more with the genteel songs than the others. Interesting musical turns in "Love is light" (Arthur A. Clappé, words: Wicksteed) set it apart from the mold, for example:



(p.173)

On this page, be it noted, is an example of the volume's editorial policy, that of bracketing engraver's corruptions, often relegating the correct reading to a footnote.

On the end of the third brace a missing eighth-note flag is not-too-silently corrected. This sort of thing distracts from the reading of the music on a performance level when, as in this case, it would have been much less fussy to restore the tail, and only footnote when there is legitimate question as to the correct reading of the passage. Popular music from both sides of the Atlantic is full of such corruptions, and there is scant need to remind us of it, when such meticulousness might scare away the general

reader at home at a piano, which is where a volume like this belongs. For, with my editorial caveat, I found it delightful to look through. (It was a joy, for example, to come upon another Henry Russell I hadn't seen.) Our 19th centuries are interesting periods, those of Canada and the United States, and studying this excellent volume could yield rewarding comparisons between aspects of our close but separate cultures.

-William Bolcom
University of Michigan

Medieval and Renaissance Music: a Performer's Guide. By Timothy J. McGee. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985. (xxx, 273 p., \$27.95)

Medieval and Renaissance music is a book which will be of particular interest to professional and amateur performers of early music; however, teachers of music history and music theory will find much useful information about style and compositional techniques from about 900 to about 1600, and undergraduate students will undoubtedly find the book a good source of topics for term papers and projects.

The book is written with the performer in mind, and musicological and theoretical "jargon" is avoided. Many different kinds of readers will use this thought-provoking book. The amateur recorder player will be delighted by the step-by-step directions for performing a variety of early music well, by the guidelines for improvising embellishments (and entire pieces!) and by the suggestions for adapting music to the resources at hand. The professional player will find McGee's tables for "orchestrating" medieval and renaissance music helpful, and his ideas on how to cope with good and bad editions of music indispensable.

McGee's approach to his subject is in its own way very much like Ralph Kirkpatrick's Introduction to the Scarlatti sonatas. (Kirkpatrick encourages the performer to think carefully about everything he is doing, and he makes the reader aware that music and enlightened performance are two sides of one coin.) McGee's book is thoughtfully written and well organised, and his lucid discussion of every aspect of performance is enhanced by practical, common-sense guidelines and clear suggestions.

The information McGee presents is based, where this is possible, on historic documents. The documents are not used anachronistically or indiscriminately; however, where documentation is wanting (as is the case with text-underlay before 1475), McGee suggests various possible approaches to the problem and clearly identifies the solutions as his own.

One of the major difficulties confronting the performer of early music is the 20th-century edition. While some editors are conscientious and furnish all the information the performer will need to have, others are not. How should the performer approach various editions? How far can they be trusted? Has the editor made faulty judgements about musica ficta or text-underlay? McGee has devoted considerable space to discussing these and other important questions, and shows the performer how to cope with some of the arbitrary editorial practices that make life so difficult. Among other things, McGee presents some useful guidelines for interpreting triple proportions in renaissance polyphony when the edition is unclear. His "rule-of-thumb" procedure will help many a performer to make a reasonable decision.

The question of determining a suitable tempo when working from a modern edition is a difficult one at best, and at times is almost hopeless. McGee stresses (p.41) that "there really is no totally satisfactory way to determine an early tempo without looking at the original," yet his common-sense suggestions will undoubtedly be of great help to the many performers who do not have

access to the original. His brief discussion of some of the main features of original notation (p.41) will be lost on many readers, although he points out (p.10) that the original notation tells us something about the music that a modern edition cannot. Since this is not a handbook of notation, but rather a handbook for the performer, McGee refers those who are interested in notation to the standard works on the subject.

McGee's directions for "ignoring the barlines" in a Dufay chanson -- and by extension in much music of the renaissance -- (p.21) are wonderfully well conceived and very clearly presented. They should be required reading for every performer of music. The directions demonstrate how very difficult it is to work from a modern edition barred regularly in

³/₄ and not be tempted to accent the first beat of each bar; McGee shows us exactly how to proceed, and the good performer will find it rewarding to work his way through the music using McGee's process discovering for himself how to supply the rhythms of a Dufay chanson can be once he learns to ignore the barlines.

Medieval and Renaissance music should be on the shelf of every public library in Canada, even if the music collection is a small one. University libraries will order it as a matter of course. It is to be hoped that all those who are interested in early music will, no matter how much they already know, read McGee's book from cover to cover.

-Erich Schwandt
University of Victoria

Student's Dictionary of Music. Compiled and edited by Wayne Gilpin. Oakville, Ont.: The Frederick Harris Music Co. Ltd., 1985. (299 p., \$11.95)

When I first saw it, I took an instant liking to this volume. The cover design is attractive and colourful, the type large and easy to read, Canadian coverage is impressive and representative (The Leslie Bell Singers and "New Zealand composer" Ronald Tremain, a Canadian resident since 1970, should be added to the Canadian index on pages 297-298), and almost any musical term or name I could think of at random has an entry. The scope is wide, including musicians, forms, instruments, technical terms, nicknames and distinct titles such as Manzoni Requiem and Das Marienleben. The number of French, German and Italian terms given definition or translation is astounding, and I had a vision of the compiler poring over symphony after symphony by Mahler and opera after opera by Verdi, extracting every last direction or instruction.

I reflected that the compiler of any short dictionary has two choices: deal with a limited number of entries at some length, or include a vast number of entries with very brief comments. Gilpin has chosen the second approach, offering an estimated 6,500 entries with an average length of perhaps three lines. (The longest entry I could find is on Mozart, with 117 lines). I am willing to support his choice since something is to be said

for quick "first-aid" answers, for a text uncluttered by pedantic ifs, buts, excepts, and other qualifications when all you want is to check Niels Gade's dates or who wrote An Oxford Elegy. No advanced student will expect a 10-word definition to suffice as an aid to writing a thesis, but will turn to MGG or The New Grove.

The horizon of music students undoubtedly has widened since my undergraduate days 1946-1949, thanks to the ever-expanding literature available in printed or recorded form and to the introduction of musicology as a subject of instruction. The mere thought of having need in my student time for information about Bernart de Ventadorn, a troubadour, or Diego Pisador, a Spanish vihuelist, is hilarious. On the other hand, even in that remote past students and teachers had outgrown the habit of labelling Mendelssohn Songs without words with such tags as "The bee's wedding." Surely no student needs that bit of information in 1986! But seemingly superfluous entries can lead to discoveries.

Who, I wondered, was "Schnyder zu Wartensee" to interest the modern student. (Grove, Baker, and MGG call him "Schnyder von", The New Oxford Companion to Music "zu"). My curiosity aroused, I looked at MGG and to my astonishment

I learned that Furtwängler had high praise for the Swiss composer's symphonies, that Schnyder was an extraordinary orchestrator and contrapuntalist and that his Goethe choruses deserve a place next to Schubert's best. By now I was almost ready to found a Canadian Schnyder von Wartensee Society: I was going to invite Gilpin to be honorary president. Alas, a few days later, in the Percy Scholes files at the National Library, I came across a clipping from a 1940 Swiss radio schedule announcing a performance of the Symphony no. 2. Scribbled Scholes: "Beethoven imitated? until rubbishy last movement." My dream was shattered.

Poor proof-reading plagues most Canadian publications and they jump at one's eyes when the print is so bold. Errors are especially unfortunate when the book is a dictionary to which people turn to check spellings and when the compiler is the general manager of the publishing house. Misspellings disfigure many a heading, such as "Boosey & Hawes", "I Purtiani", "Metramorphosen" or "Ousely" (instead of Ouseley). Some printing errors are entertaining, however. Johann Walter was not only the oldest musician ever, but probably the oldest human being, when he died in 1670 at the age of 174; Schubert wrote the "Wanderer" Fantasia 54 years after his death, in 1882, and Quesnel Colas et Colinette 70 after his. Of course we all know the famous singer "Louis Marshall" (p.298), and who hasn't heard of "Berstein" (p.11), "Back" (p.25), or "Shostavich" (p.249).

Editing German terms requires a specialist. In many German words, umlauts, articles and endings come and go as the context changes. Take the word "Symphonie" away from Haydn's Die Schulmeister Symphonie, and you are caught in a trap, writing "Schulmeister, Die" when it should be "Der". There is no word spelled "Todt": as a noun (death) it is Tod, as an adjective (dead) tot. A person familiar with German could have corrected over 20 missing, misplaced or superfluous umlauts.

And then I came across the entry "Walze". In a flash, my own definition appeared in my head: a barrel, as in Mozart's Fantasias for Orgelwalze, or a cylinder, as in Edison's wax cylinder recordings. Then I went on reading:

- Walze (Ger.) 1. Organ swell pedal.
- 2. 18th c. term for musical figures like the Alberti bass.

To me both definitions were new. So I checked the Harvard Dictionary of Music (1969 ed.):

- Walze [G.]. (1) Crescendo pedal of the organ. (2) An 18th-century term for stereotyped undulating figures, such as an *Alberti bass.

And then The New Oxford Companion to Music (1983):

- Walze (Ger.). 1. Crescendo organ pedal. 2. 18th-century term for conventional musical figures, such as the *Alberti bass.

I continued comparing entries in the Student's Dictionary with those in The New Oxford Companion to Music. Apart from a misspelled entry "Waltzer (Ger.) Waltz" (and as such in the wrong alphabetical spot) in Gilpin, both works continue with "Wanderer' Fantasia" and "The Wand of Youth" -- Gilpin's being abbreviated versions of the NOCM -- and after a useful cross-reference in Gilpin "Wanhal, see Vanhal", both carry on with identical entries for "Wankend (Ger.) Wavering, shaking", and similar ones for "War and Peace" and "Ward, John".

I compared three or four other pages and the coincidences were similarly frequent, especially with regard to the foreign-language terms. My vision of our compiler leafing through Mahler and Verdi scores was shattered; his work was much simpler. One may argue that once there is a good definition, there is no use trying to improve it, and that a German word keeps the same English equivalent, no matter what dictionary one turns to. But it so happens that my Cassell's Compact translates "Wankend" as "staggering" rather than "wavering" or "shaking". And when three music dictionaries overlook the meaning of "Walze" as barrel or cylinder, two editors have failed to do original research.

Condensing has dangers of its own. Under "Spanisches Liederbuch" NOCM makes it quite clear that 1852 is the year when the Spanish poems were published in their German translation. However, SD's summary, "Wolf's 44 songs on Spanish poems translated into German(1852)" may lead the innocent reader to accept 1852 as the year of composition. Something also went wrong with 'second species' under "Species counterpoint" which NOCM describes as "two against each note", meaning two successive half notes against one whole note. Gilpin wrongly interprets this as "two

parts are added to a given melody". "Pathetic Symphony may be British usage for Tchaikovsky's Sixth; in North America I have never heard anything but "Pathétique".

A few other errors, presumably unique to the SD should be mentioned. This is not done in the spirit of fault-finding, but in order to advocate an improved second edition, an edition in which Gilpin should assert far more independence of judgement and scholarship and drastically reduce the number of entries, omitting even "Schnyder von (or zu) Wartensee". He should make it clear that the words for "O Canada" are by A.B. Routhier, in French, and that R.S. Weir only provided an English text. The "Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde" should be identified as Austrian, not German. (Curiously, as if to make amends, Richard Strauss is identified as an Austrian composer in the same publisher's new volume Careers in Music (p.30)). Boris Hambourg was only a co-founder, with his father Michael and brother Jan, of the family's conservatory.

The relatively long entry on Mendelssohn requires extensive revision, and the statement that the composer's philosopher-grandfather Moses sponsored his educational trips is pure fantasy -- after all, Moses died 23 years before Felix's birth!

Though I am disillusioned by the sparseness of original work in this book, and by some sloppy editing, I still stand by the recommendations given at the beginning of this review. At the end of the book an announcement for the May 1986 publication of a Student's Dictionary of Canadian Music by Wayne Gilpin is printed. Let me trust that this time my vision of the compiler-editor poring over primary sources of information and distilling facts and figures into new observations will come true. We could do with such a work.

-Helmut Kallmann
National Library of Canada

Look at the record: an album of Toronto's Lyric Theatres 1825-1984. Compiled and annotated by Joan Parkhill Baillie. Oakville, Ont.: Mosaic Press, 1985. (298 p., \$39.95.)

The presence of a book on Toronto's lyric theatres is cause for celebration. And indeed, the publication of Look at the record happily coincides with the thirty-fifth anniversary season of the Canadian Opera Company.

Joan Parkhill Baillie, archivist of the COC since 1974,, has chosen the documentary method to present her fascinating survey of the fifty locations in which Torontonians have heard opera since 1825. Over the years these have included taverns, hotels, temperance halls, churches, a mechanics' institute, skating and curling rinks, sports arenas, zoological gardens, art galleries, high school auditoria, university theatres, outdoor pavilions, concert halls and a number of large, beautiful theatres --three bearing the designation "opera house", two of which opened in September 1874.

The basic plan of the book has been to give each venue a separate chapter. All are introduced by annotations locating each hall in time and space. At the conclusion of most chapters a chronological list is given of the various ensembles who appeared in a

particular hall. The format is that of a scrapbook, capturing at once the spirit of nostalgia, of which this book is surely born, and offering free rein as to material presented, much of it reproduced in facsimile.

And the compilation is impressive. Included are maps of the city, railway track layouts, exterior and (less frequent because less obtainable) interior views of the halls, and a few house plans showing the shape of the hall, size of the stage and seating capacity. Of particular interest are those of the Royal Lyceum, Grand Opera House, Toronto Opera House, Princess Theatre and Shea's Theatre -- all demolished or non-operative establishments now. There are pictures of singers, composers, conductors and impresarios, reproductions of programs, advertisement, tickets, letters and petitions, as well as articles from newspapers and magazines. These latter describe the halls, and where applicable, offer reports of their destruction.

Of the fifty locations surveyed, eleven were destroyed by fire due to illumination by gas,

and after 1889 due to faulty electrical wiring. The last theatre fire took place at the Princess in May 1915. Baillie astutely includes pictures of the emergency exit staircase at the Majestic (Regent) Theatre circa 1910. The fact that such a picture was taken (and preserved) indicates that theatres were still considered fire hazards at the turn of the century and that precautionary measures were necessary. The newspapers also furnish us with first hand accounts of performances by visiting or by Canadian artists and ensembles. Reviews chosen for presentation range from the typical pre-and post-performance puffery pieces to the more balanced and occasional scathing commentary. Of the latter type, two somewhat amusing examples are reprinted -- one from The British Colonist in September 1839, and another from Belford's monthly magazine in December 1876, from which I quote the following excerpt describing compromised operatic performance practice:

The musical season, which may now be said to have commenced in Toronto, was inaugurated by the performance of Max Strakosch's Operatic Company at the Grand Opera House just a month ago. It is, perhaps, too late now to enter into any detailed criticism...but we may be permitted to say that the general style of the performance was no great compliment to the critical or appreciative powers of a Toronto audience...The imperfect acquaintance with their parts which some of [the soloists] evinced, and which necessitated constant and audible prompting, was the more inexcusable. The mise en scène was poor and inadequate. Although the practice of omitting a scene or a song here and there is too general to be denied sanction, yet the indiscriminate elimination which was adopted in the performance of "Martha" is slovenly, and is greatly to be deprecated...

There are a few items which I believe would easily find accommodation in Mrs. Baillie's book. Perhaps there could have been room for one of several By-Laws issued by the City of Toronto, stipulating that theatrical managers had to pay a license fee for their engagement before any alcoholic beverages could be sold. And where is that lovely family portrait of the Holmans which is available in William H. Crane's Footprints and echoes (New York,

1925, p.22)? And speaking of photos, Mrs. Baillie has been prone to too much repetition. Anna Bishop appears no less than seven times in the same guise, and the "big fat tenor" Pasquale Brignoli pops up five times. At least Emma Albani returns in three quite different poses. I would have liked to see a portrait of another Canadian soprano, Beatrice Lapalme, who, with Louise Edvina, appeared with the Montreal Opera Company (1910-13) in Toronto's Royal Alexandra Theatre. There are good photos of LaPalme in Romain Gour's LaPalme-Issaurel: biographie critique (Montreal, 1948). And in general, there are numerous portraits of the singers, conductors and impresarios who visited Toronto in George C.D. Odell's 15-volume Annals of the New York stage (New York, 1927-49). The portraits are indexed separately: there is a gorgeous one of Sallie Holman in v.IX, p.44. Incidentally, the numbered composite portrait of the Holman English Opera Company, reproduced from the Toronto Telegram of July 10, 1926, which appears in Baillie's book on p.43, is incorrectly annotated. Baillie claims that Frank Tannenill, number 7 in the portrait, is really George Holman and is unnumbered. Mr. Tannenill returns as George Holman several times thereafter, and each time the number 7 on his right lapel becomes more sharply focussed. Is it Holman or Tannenill?

The book includes four illustrations in graph or chart form of various aspects of operatic activity in Toronto between 1825 and 1984. I almost wish that these had not been included, for three of them are incomplete and inaccurate. Figure 3 lists all operas presented in Toronto during those years. Baillie's rather stiff criterion for inclusion here is a "minimum of five full or part performances". Thus her chart only begins in 1850. What of all those comic opera's such as Reeve's The Purse; or The benevolent tar, Braham's The Devil's bridge, Storace's No song, no supper and Samuel Arnold's The Mountaineer, presented at Frank's Hotel Assembly Room in December 1825-January 1826 by the strolling players from Albany? Does the fact that they were performed just once or twice jeopardize their rightful place in our operatic annals?

The same argument may be applied to the performances in Toronto of the Montreal Opera Company between 1910 and 1913. The following works were each presented at least twice and

ought to be included in Mrs. Baillie's list: Delibes' Lakmé, Mascagni's L'Amico Fritz, Charpentier's Louise, and Massenet's Le jongleur de Notre Dame, Thäïs, and Hérodiade.

And what of the many Canadian première performances given by Stuart Hamilton's Opera in Concert since 1975? Works such as Massenet's Tnérèse, Bizet's Djamileh, Berlioz' Béatrice et Bénédicte, Verdi's Il Corsaro, Mozart's La clemenza di Tito, Bellini's I Capuletti e I Montecchi, and a dozen others were all heard twice. Has there been distortion for the sake of brevity? Also, I do not know to which 1875 performance of Mozart's The marriage of Figaro (listed in Figure 3) Mrs. Baillie refers. The earliest production that I have found of this opera in Toronto was given by Vladimir Rosing's American Opera Company in November 1929 at the Royal Alex.

The 1890-1910 period as shown in Figure 1 suggests that operatic activity practically came to a halt, and then picked up tremendously during the mid-1930's. Surely this was not so. There is much work yet to be done to unravel the 1890-1910 period, and my own suspicion is that it was a particularly eventful time in the lyric theatre -- a kind of golden age of opera. The tours were far from over; but by the 1930's it was common wisdom that the road was "shot to pieces" (rising costs, the Depression, the talkies and declining standards are all reasons commonly cited.)

Figure 4 lists opera composers whose works have been presented in Toronto from 1825 to 1984. The only Canadian composers listed are Somers and Pannell: conspicuously absent are Healey Willan (Deirdre, MacMillan Theatre, 1965; O'Keefe Centre, 1966), John Beckwith (Night blooming cereus, Hart House, 1960; The Shivaree, Town Hall, 1982), Maurice Blackburn (Une mesure de silence, Eaton Auditorium, 1956), Charles Wilson (Héloïse and Abelard, O'Keefe, 1973, The selfish giant, Town Hall 1975), R. Murray Schafer (Loving, MacMillan Theatre, 1973), Graham George (A king for Corsica, Hart House, 1981). With the exception of Schafer's Loving, these all fall within the criterion for inclusion, namely "a minimum of three full or part performances".

Though the reader is referred to the Encyclopedia of music in Canada, the Dictionary of Canadian biography, David Sale's thesis

on pre-Confederation music societies in Toronto, and my own thesis on opera in Montréal and Toronto, the omission of a bibliography is glaring. And may I suggest for the next edition that there be a thorough overhaul of the Index, where at present, the editorial policy is inconsistent. Welcome also would be an introductory essay where discussion might focus on patterns of growth in operatic performance, and where description and critical comment might be given on the various operatic associations formed over the years in Toronto.

When all is said and done, however, Look at the record must be regarded as an important contribution to the iconography of musical life in Canada. It is a handsomely-produced volume, and in its own special way makes an eloquent plea for the establishment of a proper opera/ballet house in our midst and for our time.

-Dorith Cooper
Institute for Canadian Music

CAML PUBLICATIONS de l'ACBM

1. **Musicians in Canada; a bio-bibliographical finding list / Musiciens au Canada; index bio-bibliographique.** 2d. ed. Ed. Kathleen M. Toomey, Stephen C. Willis. 1981. 185 p. \$18.00 + postage.

2. **Union list of music periodicals in Canadian libraries / Inventaire des publications en série sur la musique dans les bibliothèques canadiennes.** 2d. ed. Ed. Larry C. Lewis. 1981. 293 p. \$10.00 + postage.

3. **Répertoire bibliographique de textes de présentation générale et d'analyse d'oeuvres musicales canadiennes (1900-1980) / Canadian musical works 1900-1980: a bibliography of general and analytical sources.** Direction Lucien Poirier. 1983. 96 p. \$7.00 + postage.

Also available:
Canadian music: a selected checklist 1950-1973 / La musique canadienne: une liste sélective 1950-1973. Ed. Lynne Jarman. 1976. 170 p. \$10.00 + postage.

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