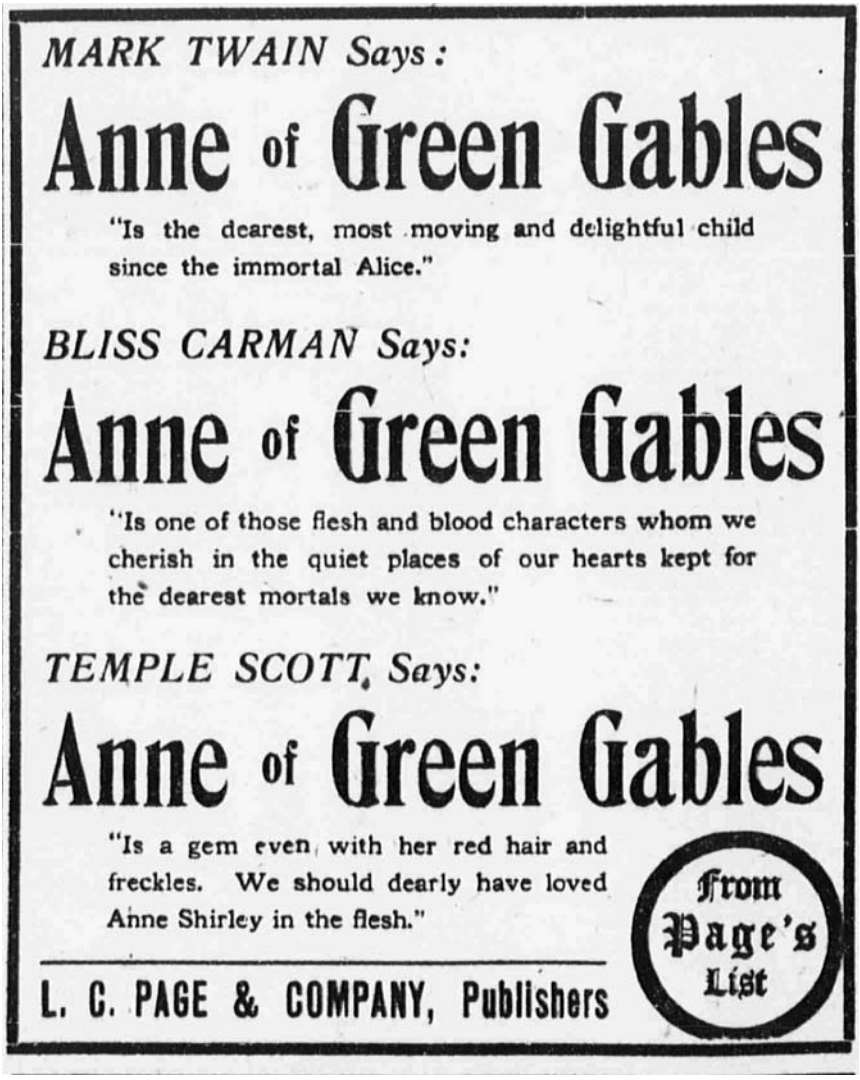
THE L.M. MONTGOMERY READER

Volume 1: A Life in Print



Advertisement for *Anne of Green Gables*, by L.M. Montgomery, *The Sun* (New York, NY), 21 November 1908, 7

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Edited by Benjamin Lefebvre

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50 YEARS OF ONTARIO GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OF THE ARTS
50 ANS DE SOUTIEN DU GOUVERNEMENT DE L'ONTARIO AUX ARTS

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations refer to sources attributed to L.M. Montgomery:

AA	*Anne of Avonlea*. 1909. Toronto: Seal Books, 1996.
AfGG	*After Green Gables: L.M. Montgomery's Letters to Ephraim Weber, 1916–1941*. Edited by Hildi Froese Tiessen and Paul Gerard Tiessen. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006.
AGG	*Anne of Green Gables*. 1908. Toronto: Seal Books, 1996.
AHD	*Anne's House of Dreams*. 1917. Toronto: Seal Books, 1996.
AIn	*Anne of Ingleside*. 1939. Toronto: Seal Books, 1996.
AIs	*Anne of the Island*. 1915. Toronto: Seal Books, 1996.
AP	*The Alpine Path: The Story of My Career*. 1917. Don Mills, ON: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, n.d.
AWP	*Anne of Windy Poplars*. 1936. Toronto: Seal Books, 1996.
BC	*The Blue Castle*. 1926. Toronto: Seal Books, 1988.
BQ	*The Blythes Are Quoted*. Edited by Benjamin Lefebvre. Toronto: Viking Canada, 2009.
CA	*Chronicles of Avonlea*. 1912. Toronto: Seal Books, 1993.
CJLMM, 1	*The Complete Journals of L.M. Montgomery: The PEI Years, 1889–1900*. Edited by Mary Henley Rubio and Elizabeth Hillman Waterston. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2012.

CJLMM, 2	*The Complete Journals of L.M. Montgomery: The PEI Years, 1901–1911*. Edited by Mary Henley Rubio and Elizabeth Hillman Waterston. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2013.
EC	*Emily Climbs*. 1925. Toronto: Seal Books, 1998.
ENM	*Emily of New Moon*. 1923. Toronto: Seal Books, 1998.
EQ	*Emily's Quest*. 1927. Toronto: Seal Books, 1998.
FCA	*Further Chronicles of Avonlea*. Boston: The Page Company, 1920.
GGL	*The Green Gables Letters from L.M. Montgomery to Ephraim Weber, 1905–1909*. Edited by Wilfrid Eggleston. 1960. Ottawa: Borealis Press, 1981.
GR	*The Golden Road*. 1913. Toronto: Seal Books, 1987.
MDMM	*My Dear Mr. M: Letters to G.B. MacMillan from L.M. Montgomery*. Edited by Francis W.P. Bolger and Elizabeth R. Epperly. 1980. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1992.
MM	*Magic for Marigold*. 1929. Toronto: Seal Books, 1988.
MP	*Mistress Pat*. 1935. Toronto: Seal Books, 1988.
RI	*Rilla of Ingleside*. 1921. Edited by Benjamin Lefebvre and Andrea McKenzie. Toronto: Viking Canada, 2010.
RV	*Rainbow Valley*. 1919. Toronto: Seal Books, 1996.
SG	*The Story Girl*. 1911. Toronto: Seal Books, 1987.
SJLMM	*The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery*, Volume 1: *1889–1910*; Volume 2: *1910–1921*; Volume 3: *1921–1929*; Volume 4: *1929–1935*; Volume 5: *1935–1942*. Edited by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1985, 1987, 1992, 1998, 2004.
SR	"Scrapbook of Reviews from Around the World Which L.M. Montgomery's Clipping Service Sent to Her, 1910–1935." L.M. Montgomery Collection, University of Guelph archives.
WOP	*The Watchman and Other Poems*. Toronto: McClelland, Goodchild, and Stewart, 1916.

THE L.M. MONTGOMERY READER

Volume 1: A Life in Print

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Introduction: A Life in Print

BENJAMIN LEFEBVRE

In the field of L.M. Montgomery Studies, the genesis story of Montgomery criticism goes something like this: although the novels of L.M. Montgomery (1874–1942) have been extraordinarily popular with all types of readers worldwide since the publication of her first book, *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), her work was virtually ignored by the academy throughout and beyond her lifetime, except for occasional disparaging comments by prominent male critics such as Archibald MacMechan (1862–1933), Arthur L. Phelps (1887–1970), William Arthur Deacon (1890–1977), E.K. Brown (1905–1951), and Desmond Pacey (1917–1975), all of whom tended to sideline popular and female authors in their quest to construct a canon of high modernism for Canadian literature and literary criticism. Finally, in 1966, Elizabeth Waterston contributed a pioneering chapter on Montgomery to the collection of essays *The Clear Spirit: Twenty Canadian Women and Their Times*. The tide continued to turn thanks to the founding in 1975 of the academic journal *Canadian Children's Literature*, which focused one of its inaugural issues on Montgomery's work and which, for the duration of its existence, continued to publish editorials, articles, and reviews pertaining to Montgomery's work and its afterlives.

According to this story, it was not until late 1985 that what Carole Gerson has called a "discernible turning point" occurred: the release of the first volume of *The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery*, edited by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston and published by Oxford University Press, a publishing venture that coincided with the Canadian premiere

of Kevin Sullivan's first *Anne of Green Gables* television miniseries.[1] While a range of television productions throughout the 1980s and 1990s ensured that Montgomery's name and characters remained anchored in popular culture both in Canada and worldwide, the publication of Montgomery's journals startled those who had known her personally, by reputation, or simply as the author of *Anne of Green Gables*. Not only have the journals proven to be a unique cultural document, providing a first-hand account of the daily life of a well-read and articulate woman during a period of profound social change, but the person who emerges from its pages comes across as a far more introspective, critical, irritable, and sometimes vindictive figure than readers of her primary work tend to expect. Moreover, this shift in tone had an unanticipated effect on her critical reputation, because scholars began to use her journals as a lens through which they reread Montgomery's fiction, finding what Rubio and Waterston later called "secret messages of rebellion and resistance against authority (especially patriarchal authority) in[] her sunny stories."[2] This reconsideration of Montgomery and her work occurred in the midst of disciplinary shifts throughout the 1980s and 1990s, which saw a gradual breakdown of the barriers between "high" and "low" culture and a reclaiming of authors who, like Montgomery, had been marginalized due to their gender, their popularity, and the genres in which they wrote.[3] Today, more than a century after *Anne of Green Gables* first became a best-selling novel, scholarship on L.M. Montgomery focuses as much on the primary work published within her lifetime as on the range of adaptations of that work and on the forms of life writing that have appeared since her death. These scholars, working from all over the world, continue to find new ways to study this body of work – in terms of empire and nation, sexuality and repression, performance and resistance, parody and allusion, space and place, memory and forgetting, nature and culture, authorship and legislation, and national and international appeal and reception.[4]

While this straightforward narrative of Montgomery criticism is familiar and compelling, it nevertheless pushes to the sidelines a surprisingly vast array of additional materials that originated beyond the walls of the ivory tower and that appeared in "middlebrow" venues such as trade books, newspapers, and popular magazines that valued popularity and accessibility.[5] *The L.M. Montgomery Reader* gathers a selection of these neglected materials in three volumes in order to broaden our understanding of the ways in which Montgomery's work has been received since *Anne of Green Gables* made her an international celebrity author. Most

of these items – from Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and the Netherlands – are reprinted in these volumes for the first time. They have been gathered together as a result of two streams of research: the work of scholars and collectors who have searched through libraries and archival repositories by hand for lost items related to Montgomery,[6] and the ongoing digitization and indexing of print materials, a project that is revitalizing humanities research in the twenty-first century. If these two streams have taught us anything so far, it is that there is always something new to discover about L.M. Montgomery.

This first volume, subtitled *A Life in Print*, gathers together ninety pieces published from the immediate aftermath of the publication of *Anne of Green Gables* to a few years after Montgomery's death. Among the highlights of this volume are a number of essays and letters by Montgomery as well as several interviews with her from across her career. These pieces show her at her best, discussing a range of topics with wit, wisdom, and humour: the natural landscape of Prince Edward Island, her wide readership, anxieties about modernity (including the figure of the "modern girl"), the role of minister's wives in rural communities, the future of Canadian literature, her methods and ambitions as a writer, and her career as a best-selling author with an international reputation. While Montgomery's published journals shocked readers by revealing a woman who at times could be depressed, agitated, ecstatic, livid, judgmental, and even malicious, the items in this volume show her to be in total control of herself: as a rising celebrity author, as a minister's wife, as a reluctant feminist, as an established authority in Canada and beyond. As evidence of a more public Montgomery, these pieces complement and complicate the poetics of self-representation that scholars have traced in past published sources, including ten volumes of journals and letters. Moreover, this public voice adds a new layer to a figure that Irene Gammel has aptly referred to as "Canada's most enigmatic literary icon."[7]

As a way to trace the critical reception and the perceived literary value of Montgomery's work throughout this period, this volume also includes a range of profiles of the author as well as early responses to her work. These materials follow her thirty-year public career and include extensive media coverage of her death and funeral. Joining MacMechan, Deacon, and their ilk are a range of additional voices whose detailed commentaries on Montgomery's work have fallen through the cracks of the dominant narrative of Montgomery criticism. Montgomery rarely lost the opportunity to respond to these items in her journals and letters, and

while her comments indicate that she did not always agree with these insights into her work, she nevertheless was careful to gather a vast range of these materials in scrapbooks for future generations to ponder.

Volume 2, subtitled *A Critical Heritage*, continues the story of Montgomery's critical reception in the seventy years since her death. It traces a number of milestones in the field, including the publication of Waterston's chapter on Montgomery in *The Clear Spirit* in 1966, the centenary of Montgomery's birth in 1974, the founding of *Canadian Children's Literature* in 1975, the publication of Montgomery's journals beginning in 1985, the founding of the L.M. Montgomery Institute at the University of Prince Edward Island in 1993, and the worldwide celebration of the centenary of *Anne of Green Gables* in 2008, and it includes a sample of twenty contributions to the field from 1966 to 2012. Volume 3, subtitled *A Legacy in Review*, considers another neglected forum for discussion of Montgomery's work in the mass media, namely, book reviews in newspapers, magazines, and journals – an additional treasure trove of materials that so far have rarely been part of the conversation.

It is my hope that the materials gathered here – most of which will be new even to longtime readers and scholars in the field – will add to the ongoing conversation about Montgomery's life and work and how they continue to be meaningful to readers all over the world. When I started digging through old reference books and periodicals as a graduate student for materials pertaining to Montgomery's work and legacy, I was motivated by a desire, shared by most of her readers, to keep on reading, to delay inevitably the final "the end" to her work. What I have found over the course of this research is that, even under the guise of absolute frankness, her journals and letters rarely tell the whole story. In a journal entry dated 6 March 1901, for instance, she reported that the day's Charlottetown *Patriot* contained an article on popular Prince Edward Island poets, but although she mentioned that the article offered "several paragraphs of compliments and quotations," she focused instead on her irritation that it referred to her by her full name, Lucy Maud Montgomery ("which I detest!") and on the self-pitying conviction, in her grief over the recent death of her father, that she had no one to share in her success.[8] What she omitted from her journal was that the article, entitled "Our Island Poets," was gushing in its praise for her: "Among the younger writers of to-day perhaps the name of first repute is Lucy Maud Montgomery, who is a frequent contributer [*sic*] to magazines of the first class. Miss Montgomery[,] although a young writer, shows marked ability and promise. She has an easy, graceful, charming

style, coupled with excellent descriptive powers, which make her poems so fascinating and make them linger in one's mind. She is impressed with the beauty of her native Province and delights to paint it in descriptive verse. The thought, too, is wholesome, for the writer has a correct understanding of life and its meaning." Moreover, although at the time Montgomery was more than seven years away from publishing her first book, the unsigned editorial added, "much is still expected of her."[9] The journal form allowed Montgomery to retain absolute control over the version of her life that she wanted preserved for posthumous publication, but at the same time, she saw these journals as "grumble book[s]" in which she "work[ed] off all [her] revolutionary tendencies."[10] The items presented in this volume were for the most part beyond her control: filled sometimes with praise and admiration, sometimes with misinformation and conjecture, but always demonstrating a shared conviction that Montgomery and her work were worth talking about.

"The Bare Facts" vs. "The Real *Me*"

Soon after the publication of *Anne of Green Gables* in mid-June 1908, Montgomery began to encounter four aspects of authorship that she had rarely before experienced, despite having published hundreds of poems and short stories in North American periodicals for nearly two decades: celebrity endorsements, reviews, requests for interviews and biographical information, and spite. Although she was pleased with the novel's warm reception – within two months of its publication she had received sixty-six reviews of the book, sixty of them "kind and flattering beyond my highest expectations" – she was dismayed when the public's attention started to shift away from her work and to focus on her. Confiding in her two principal correspondents, G.B. MacMillan in Scotland and Ephraim Weber in western Canada, that she was besieged with requests from tourists to meet the author, she reported that she made a point of turning them down: "I don't want to be 'met.'" By then, she had been living with her maternal grandmother in Cavendish for a decade (save for a nine-month stint in Halifax), and while the isolation had been a boon for her writing career, it made socializing with crowds of strangers a daunting prospect. To Weber, she added that she also had to contend with animosity within her own community: "If you want to find out just how much *envy* and *petty spite* and *meanness* exists in people, even people who call themselves your friends, just write a successful book or do something they can't do, and you'll find out!" Too diplomatic or embarrassed to

provide specific examples, she recorded in her journal that this kind of treatment made her feel "a sort of nausea with human nature."[11]

A private and pragmatic woman, Montgomery responded to this unwanted attention by seizing control of it where she could. Presumably she was also keen to correct misconceptions about her and her work, such as those appearing in a notice in the *Boston Herald* in late October 1908: "Miss Montgomery is a Canadian, her home being in the village of Cavendish, Prince Edward Island, where she teaches the village school. Many of the incidents in her delightful story are transcripts from her own experience, Avonlea being a picture of Cavendish."[12] Due to her remote location in rural Prince Edward Island, her earliest requests for interviews and personal information arrived in the form of letters: in November 1908, less than a month after getting a request from her publisher for "a personal sketch of how 'Anne' came to be" for the benefit of "inquisitive editors," she received a letter from a Toronto journalist who wanted details about "my birth, education, early life, when and how I began to write etc." for an article in preparation. Having already grown weary of this media attention, she wrote in her journal about how she planned to comply: "I'll give him the bare facts he wants. He will not know any more about the real *me* or my real life for it all, nor will his readers. The only key to *that* is found in this old journal."[13] She wrote nothing more about this request for information, but a short article published in the *Boston Journal* eleven days later and a second letter appearing in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* that December (see chapters 2 and 3 in this volume) show the author keeping the focus squarely on the "bare facts" of her writing life. In these two letters – her earliest known public responses to the media's interest in the author of *Anne of Green Gables* and the prototype for all future renditions of her "how I began" narrative – Montgomery responded politely and even amiably to this interest in her work while refusing to reveal even the most basic details about herself: her age, her location, her education, and her past writing credits. Indeed, one of these articles is entitled "Author Tells How He Wrote His Story."

In tandem with this initial refusal to open up about her personal life, Montgomery provided in such letters details about the creative process that she omitted from her journal: in fact, some of the most revealing details about Montgomery's strategies and methods as a writer are found in the essays, letters, and interviews published in her lifetime. At times, rather than reveal too much about herself, she resorted to sharing her fan mail with the press instead, as in a *Boston Herald* report that December:

> "When an old man falls in love with a young girl," wrote a correspondent to L.M. Montgomery, the author of "Anne of Green Gables," the other day, "it is usually evidence of his dotage, but there are exceptions: such as in my case. I don't mind confessing that I am an old man and that the girl is 'Anne of Green Gables.'" Miss Montgomery's mail is replete with similar epistles, coming from readers of all ages. A "red-headed" girl wrote that she "never expected to see her inmost thoughts put into print"; and at the other end of the scale is a woman of 61 who "though a grandmother understands exactly the feelings of Anne."[14]

E. Holly Pike has noted that Montgomery's "willingness to share information about herself shows that she had accepted and actively shaped her role as a celebrity,"[15] but as the items collected in this volume show, her willingness increased only as she gradually became more accustomed or perhaps simply more resigned to her fame. During a rare business trip to Boston in November 1910, she consented to several in-person interviews, and after her marriage and move to southern Ontario in 1911, she was in high demand as a public speaker. Yet, partly because she valued her privacy and partly because as a minister's wife she had to be especially careful about what was said about her in print, she presented herself as far more socially conservative than she did in her journals and letters and omitted even mildly controversial details about her life. For instance, after writing a 25,000-word memoir entitled "The Alpine Path: The Story of My Career" for publication in the Toronto periodical *Everywoman's World* in 1917, she noted in her journal that she had snubbed the editor's request for an additional thousand words on her romantic relationships: "The dear public must get along without this particular tid-bit … My grandchildren may include what they like in my biography. But while I live these things are arcana."[16] At the same time, as many of the items in this volume demonstrate, Montgomery was always careful to remain friendly and accessible to interviewers, no matter what drama was brewing behind the scenes: an article in the *Saskatoon Star–Phoenix* in 1930 mentioned that, "with her dignity and charm, her girlish slenderness and twinkly eyes," not to mention "a gracious manner and a pleasant smile," Montgomery came across to the unidentified reporter as "a friend of the family whom one had not seen for years and years."[17]

Montgomery's stance about the firm line between public and private pervades most of the items from the first decade of her career as a celebrity author. In an essay published in July 1912 in *The Editor: The Journal*

of Information for Literary Workers, she began by deploying the patina of feminine modesty that had already become central to her public persona: "There isn't really much to say regarding my literary career. It has been made up of two elements: 'hard work' and 'stick to it.'"[18] On several occasions, however, concerned that certain assumptions about her or her work would be repeated until they became fact, she did not hesitate to intervene in what was being written about her. In a letter published in the *Toronto World*, also in 1912, in response to a comment made in a review of her short story collection *Chronicles of Avonlea*, Montgomery was quick to correct the expectation that she would maintain the frantic publication schedule of her first five books:

> I don't want you to remain under the mistaken impression that I've been writing a book every year (although it may look that way from the road). *Green Gables* was written three years before it was published and *Avonlea* was written the last of those years. *Kilmeny* was a serial written a couple of years before *Green Gables* and the short stories in my latest book have been written at intervals in the past ten years. So, you see, that at least two years have intervened between the writing of all my books, tho [*sic*] not between the publishing of them. If I should bring out another book next year, it will be two years since the writing of *The Story Girl*. I take a year to write a book and a year to rest in.[19]

In this instance as well, she kept the focus squarely on her writing life and made no mention of the fact that recent changes in her personal life – which by 1912 included marriage, new responsibilities as the wife of a Presbyterian minister, and motherhood – understandably had an impact on her writing career. She quickly saw, however, that she could not control what was written about her or her work: a 1912 article in *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, a Montreal farm paper, claimed that Montgomery had submitted the opening chapters of *Anne of Green Gables* to a publisher "for use as magazine matter; but the head of the firm, after reading the proofs, communicated with her, advised her to elaborate the matter and to make a book of it, as it deserved." According to this article, her "near relative, Mr. D. Montgomery," testified to the fact that all her main characters were "drawn from life" and "could vouch for the accuracy of the delineation of them by his talented relative." Commenting on this clipping in her journal nearly three decades later, Montgomery was more amused than annoyed: "Poor Cousin Dan!"[20]

In many cases, too, direct quotations of Montgomery's words need to be met with skepticism, such as a reported "conversation" between her and an unidentified "well-known literary editor" that was also published in 1912, first in the *Boston Herald*, then in *The Writer: A Monthly Magazine for Literary Workers*, and then in slightly different form in the *Western Mail*, an Australian newspaper. Although it may have originated in a letter by Montgomery, as an actual conversation it is likely fictional, if only because she was seven months pregnant at the time it was first published:

> "Now, just how do you set to work at writing a book?" asked the literary editor.
>
> "Well," came the reply, "my stories are all thought out before I set them on paper. I write out the first chapter of a book, criticise it, twist and turn it a bit. Then, I write my second chapter. Immediately this is finished, I start back again at the first chapter and polish this up along with the new chapter. With the third, fourth and even the 18th chapter I work in just the same way, going over each and every chapter I have written as many times as a new one is added. So you see that when I had completed the 38 chapters in my *Anne of Green Gables*, the first chapter had been edited at least 39 times and perhaps a few more."
>
> "But what a tremendous amount of labor!" said the literary editor.
>
> "You think so?" was the questioned answer. "Well, it's only my way of writing a book."

Indeed, by the time this item appeared in abridged form in the *Los Angeles Times* less than a month later, it was the first chapter of *Anne of Avonlea* that had been edited thirty-nine times "and perhaps a few more."[21]

As Lorraine York observes in *Literary Celebrity in Canada* (2007), "Montgomery was unusually articulate about and aware of the conditions and ironies of her celebrity," and in fact "was well able to diagnose her own condition as a public commodity."[22] Now that we know so much more about the woman behind the legend, thanks to the publication of ten volumes of journals and letters, we are able to appreciate better the extent to which Montgomery strove to maintain a clear division between public and private. In an interview published in the Toronto *Globe* in November 1936, while vacationing in Prince Edward Island, she publicly stated her enthusiasm over the creation of a national park:

> "I'm having a good time and rest here. 'The Island' is very lovely in its autumn coloring. The farm where the scene of *Anne of Green Gables* was laid is part of the block of land being purchased by the Government for a National Park, so Anne's haunts will be preserved as they are and my dear old woods will never be sold to someone who might not care for them when the present owner passes on.
>
> "I had forgotten that my Island was so lovely. It is always a fresh revelation when I come back to it."

As Gerson has noted, however, privately Montgomery "mourned the desecration of her 'dear woods' by 'hordes of sight seers and by pleasure hunters.'"[23] Moreover, Montgomery's speeches during the 1930s also started to focus more and more on the importance of preserving the past: "Don't let the wonderful tales and legends told you by your grandparents and the old people of today die," she declared in a 1935 speech reported on in the Toronto *Globe*. "Even if you have no literary ability yourself, write them down and preserve them – they will give color to our native Canadian history and literature." In a similar speech two years later, also reported on in the *Globe* (which in 1936 merged with the *Mail and Empire* to become the *Globe and Mail*), she encouraged her listeners to record the "tremendous amount of literary material in Canada which will pass away when those who know the stories pass away." In this 1937 speech, she added that "when I came to Ontario – I was a minister's wife – I thought it was not safe to lay the scene in Ontario lest all my husband's congregation think they were in the book."[24]

Montgomery's self-awareness about her own celebrity is also evident in a number of letters published in the 1920s, at a time when she was taking advantage of the fact that her fame and her readership were at their peak to help her promote the importance of Canadian literature. In a letter appearing in *Successful Authorship*, a "handbook" for writers published by Shaw Schools in Toronto around 1922, Montgomery responded favourably to their invitation to join their advisory board: "Your letter came to-day, together with the synopsis of your Course in Story Writing and some lessons. I think the idea is an excellent one and, judging from the synopsis, your course should be of great value to beginners in literature. I am especially pleased with the lesson on 'Style.' I think that the greatest want in our Canadian writers, with sadly few exceptions, is style. If your Course did nothing more than teach young writers how to acquire a good and distinctive style, it would be of inestimable benefit to Canadian literature." In a 1923 article in the Regina *Morning Leader*

entitled "Do We Canadians Need a School of Manners?" Laura Mason noted that Montgomery's response, "which, amid the distractions of a double career, she has generously made time to send, carries the sanction of a close observer of life in one of our best-mannered provinces, supplemented by the experience of the mistress of an Ontario manse": "I can only say that, as far as my observation goes, I haven't noticed any special deterioration of manners. Of course we have not the 'finished' manners of older civilizations. But as for real kindness, courtesy and consideration I think the present generation has quite as much of it as any preceding one. I do not see that a 'school of manners' is required. The said verities of courtesy and consideration should be taught as a matter of course in our homes and schools. Compared with them mere conventional etiquette matters very little." Always keen to show off her literary prowess, Montgomery closed this letter with a quotation from Tennyson's "Idylls of the King": "Manners are not idle but the fruit / Of loyal nature and of noble mind."[25]

Furthermore, in *The House of Stokes 1881–1926*, a book of "letters from authors on the forty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the publishing house of Frederick A. Stokes Company," Montgomery's contribution not only reveals her gratitude to her second American publisher on her tenth anniversary with the firm but indirectly speaks volumes about the shabby treatment she had received from her first publisher, L.C. Page and Company, with whom she was still embroiled in a series of lawsuits: "In those ten years I have never once regretted our 'partnership.' Your unfailing courtesy, consideration, and 'square dealing' have made our connection one of pleasure as well as profit to me and I sincerely hope that this pleasant relationship will continue as long as I am afflicted with the incurable disease of *cacoethes scribendi*." Although the subtext of this letter would not be made apparent in her lifetime, she had already given a number of talks containing "some good advice born of my sorrows with the Page Co.," with whom she had parted company under bad terms in 1919. One clipping covers a speech in which she "told something of herself as a writer and the difficulties which she had earlier encountered."[26] And in one instance, Montgomery wrote a letter of inspiration to the Rainbow Club, a popular newspaper column for children by *Halifax Herald* reporter Laura P. Carten, who wrote under the pseudonym "Farmer Smith." In a letter dated 15 March 1927, Montgomery offered her readers a sentiment that would anticipate an observation she would make in her journals about herself more than two years later: "I like to leave people laughing":

> I had met a certain woman. She wasn't young, she wasn't beautiful, she wasn't clever. Not even very modern. She didn't say a brilliant thing all the time we talked together. But somehow, she made me feel so nice and cheerful and hopeful – as if the world were really a decent place full of nice people. After she had gone someone said; "Mrs. A. always makes you feel so much happier."
>
> Now, isn't that a lovely thing to have said about you – that you always left the people you had been talking to "feeling happier"? I don't think there could be a finer ideal for a Rainbow to have. And everyone does – or should – feel happier when he sees a rainbow. So please live up to your name.
>
> Here's wishing everyone of you luck and a pot of gold. You know there's always a pot of gold at the end of every rainbow. Only, it's fairy gold and folks aren't always wise enough to know it when they see it. So they throw it away and are sorry ever after.[27]

Letters reproduced in full in this volume – on anticipated outcomes of the Great War for Canadian women, on the future of Canadian literature, and on her six favourite novels in the English language and her three favourite Canadian novels (both of which involved difficult decisions, although for opposite reasons) – indicate that Montgomery's opinion was actively sought in the mainstream media of the time. Even letters to unidentified friends and fans made the news, as happened with a letter about the Canadian war effort published in an American newspaper prior to the involvement of the United States in the Great War (see chapter 26 in this volume) and a 1919 response to a fan letter (see chapter 32 in this volume). In a letter dated around 1932, Montgomery even mentioned that "this summer a party of Americans hunted all through the graveyard at Cavendish, P.E.I., for my monument! Isn't that gruesome?" As well, an unidentified clipping from around 1929 quotes what is apparently a letter from Montgomery written while she was vacationing in Prince Edward Island:

> Yesterday down at the beach I met an old Irishman, a grizzled old chap whom no one would ever suspect of reading a book in his life. He came up to me exclaiming, "Shure and it's meself never thought to have the honor of shaking hands wid ye. I've read every book ye ever wrote, and it's hoping I am ye'll live forever and go on writing books. Ye're the bright star of Prince Edward Island and we're all proud of ye, Lord bless ye."

> However, lest this should give me "swelled head," the next person we encountered looked very black when I was introduced as "L.M. Montgomery."
>
> "Have you ever read any of her books?" asked my introducer, a little dashed.
>
> "No!" said the lady. "Is she a Baptist?"
>
> I have not been able to puzzle out the connection. Had she registered a solemn vow to read nothing save what was written by a Baptist? Or did she believe that nobody but a Baptist could write anything worth reading? Or did she just think I looked like a Baptist? I shall never know.[28]

It is not always clear whether these letters were published with her consent or not: an article quoting Montgomery's letter in which she declined to enter a PEI literary competition on the grounds that it would "scarcely be fair to the other competitors for a professional writer to answer" added that Montgomery's "words, above quoted, although not intended for publication, are an inspiration also and we commend them to our readers."[29] But at least they are likely to be a more accurate transcript of her words than speeches that were covered in newspapers, for which reporters used longhand notes to reconstruct direct quotations after the fact. For instance, although part of the lore of *Anne of Green Gables* is that Montgomery typed her manuscript on an "old second-hand typewriter that never makes the capitals plain and won't print 'w' at all,"[30] in a 1935 speech at the Royal York Hotel this typewriter suddenly "wouldn't print the 'm's' at all, and had a crooked 'y.'"[31] As well, in her essays and interviews Montgomery frequently provided specific distances between Cavendish and the nearest railway, town, or telephone to emphasize the isolation of her rural community, but the exact figures were rarely consistent. Montgomery occasionally made corrections in her journals and scrapbooks – once even writing in her scrapbook in ink that a particular interview had never actually occurred (see chapter 18, "Interviews with Authors," by Anne E. Nias, in this volume) – so in the absence of a correction in her copies of these items, we can be reasonably sure that her words were reported accurately or, at the very least, that she was not sufficiently bothered by an inaccuracy to correct it. But while Montgomery continued to receive excellent coverage in the mainstream press till the end of her life, there was another form of media attention over which she had no control and little recourse – academic and journalistic criticism.

"A Good Deal of Nonsense"

Although it has been generally assumed that Montgomery's work was either ignored or denigrated by academic critics throughout her lifetime, such a statement tells only part of the story. An early sign of Montgomery's endurance as an author occurred in a report, published in the *Manitoba Free Press* in May 1910, of comments made about Canadian authors by Arthur Spurgeon, managing director of Cassels Publishing in London: the article reported his belief that "great things might be expected from Miss Montgomery," and that "she would be one of the powers that would count in the days to come." Twelve extracts from *Anne of Green Gables* and *Anne of Avonlea* appeared in *Canadian Days: Selections for Every Day in the Year from the Works of Canadian Authors*, a book compiled by the Toronto Women's Press Club and published around 1911. An entry on Montgomery appeared in Henry James Morgan's *The Canadian Men and Women of the Time* in 1912; although the entry appears under the name "McDonald, Mrs. Lucy Maud" and lists an erroneous birth date of 1877, it includes extracts from glowing reviews of her books. In Thomas Guthrie Marquis's *English-Canadian Literature*, published the following year, Montgomery is referred to as an author "who was to make Prince Edward Island, its inhabitants and external nature, known to the world as they never had been before … Sympathy with child life and humble life, delight in nature, a penetrating, buoyant imagination, unusual power in handling the simple romantic material that lies about every one, and a style direct and pleasing, make these books delightful reading for children and, indeed, for readers of all ages."[32]

The question of whether Montgomery wrote for children or for adults was never settled conclusively even during these early years (a matter that returns in the reviews collected in Volume 3 of *The L.M. Montgomery Reader*), but whether they saw Montgomery's books as intended for adults or for children or for both, commentators at the time were for the most part lavish with their praise. In an unidentified clipping from around 1918, a Miss Lillian Leveridge of Brighton, Ontario, contributed an article entitled "Some Canadian Women in Song and Story":

> L.M. Montgomery's work is quite unique, and literary critics eminently capable of judging, have praised it very highly. This young author, of whom we are justly proud, has been characterized as "the Jane Austen of Canada," in that her work, like that of the famous English author, is a truthful portrayal of rural domestic life. For she

> does not go abroad for her themes, but expends her rare gifts of imaginative and creative genius in revealing to us the beauty, humor and pathos of simple everyday life as she knows it. Her work is not strong in plot – it does not need to be – but because it so faithfully mirrors Canadian country life, with just enough idealism to make it a work of art rather than a photograph, it has a high value, not only in Canadian, but in wider fields of literature. A love of nature and of beauty in every form, and an overflowing spring of fresh enthusiasm and love of life are noticeable in all her work. Those readers who are overfed on romance and look for thrills on every page may find her books unsatisfying; but those who delight in simple literary beauty and the fresh, sweet spirit of youth – the beauty and spirit of Nature's own landscape garden rather than of the symmetrical city plot – will be grateful to our young author for the real pleasure she has afforded.[33]

An article on "Women in Canadian Literature" published in the Toronto *Globe* in 1919 offered a list of "characteristics" of Montgomery's fiction: "Delight in nature, buoyant imagination, and a direct and pleasing style. She makes us feel that Prince Edward Island is indeed an Island of the Blest, and that its young people are the most charming of the species to be met with anywhere on earth." Finally, in an article published in *The Canadian Bookman* that same year, E.J. Hathaway (1871–1930) declared that "there is perhaps no more winsome child in all fiction than Anne Shirley," and that while Anne had already appeared in three sequels by then, "the author has not even yet exhausted her infinite variety."[34]

In the 1920s, a number of critics, editors, and authors mobilized to disseminate Canadian literature, firstly by founding the Canadian Authors' Association in 1921 (Montgomery was active in the Toronto branch despite living in the rural community of Leaskdale),[35] and secondly by publishing several book-length studies of Canadian literature. Of the "six literary surveys" from the 1920s mentioned in W.H. New's *A History of Canadian Literature* (2003), Montgomery is mentioned in detail in five – and the sixth, by Ray Palmer Baker, ends at Confederation.[36] *Highways of Canadian Literature* (1924) was written jointly by J.D. Logan, who according to Montgomery had gone up to her at a social function the year before exclaiming "Hail, Queen of Canadian Novelists," and Donald G. French, who in 1921 had published a short article in the *Globe* commenting on Montgomery's "creative gifts in portraying the beauty, the humor and the pathos that lies about our daily paths" and praising *Rilla*

of Ingleside to the skies.[37] In addition to providing a biographical sketch and a summary of her books to date and including her on a list of authors who had produced "aesthetically satisfying poetry," Logan and French noted that, although "her life has been spent chiefly within the limits of the little island province and the bounds of an Ontario country parish," this fact "does not narrow her outlook although she confines herself to themes bounded by rural experiences, for her forte is the portrayal of what she has seen and knows. She has imaginative and creative gifts, but she uses these in enabling us to see the beauty, the humour, and the pathos that lies about our daily paths." Calling Anne "an entirely new character in fiction," they echoed the suggestion that Montgomery's novels were not big on plot, but added that "the community type of fiction does not demand thrilling plots. Other writers can write plot stories, but most other writers do not hold before us the mirror of Canadian country life."[38]

Montgomery's work also received attention in Archibald MacMechan's *The Headwaters of Canadian Literature*, published the same year. Montgomery had taken a course with MacMechan at Dalhousie College in 1895–96 (referring to him in her journal as "rather a weak man"), but his enthusiasm for Montgomery's work was decidedly more tepid than Logan and French's. After describing the character Anne and the book's popularity extensively, MacMechan concluded that "the Canadian book just misses the kind of success which convinces the critic while it captivates the unreflecting general reader. The story is pervaded with a sense of reality; the pitfalls of the sentimental are deftly avoided; Anne and her friends are healthy human beings; their pranks are engaging; but the 'little more' in truth of representation, or deftness of touch, is lacking; and that makes the difference between a clever book and a masterpiece."[39] Although Waterston relies on MacMechan's remarks to suggest that "critical respect for the work of L.M. Montgomery dimmed" by the 1920s, it is worth considering exactly what MacMechan actually had in mind by "little more." The same year that Montgomery praised Canadian literature for being "clean" (see chapter 39, "Proud That Canadian Literature Is Clean," in this volume), MacMechan vilified it – all of it – for being "tame. It bears everywhere the stamp of the amateur. Nowhere can be traced that fiery conviction which alone brings forth a masterpiece. Modern problems are as yet untouched, unapproached. Direct, honest realism is also sadly to seek, though subjects are crying aloud for treatment on every side … So far Canadian fiction is conventional, decent, unambitious, *bourgeois*. It has nowhere risen to the heights or plumbed

the depths of life in Canada."[40] MacMechan's criticism of Montgomery's "clever book" was thus not about her book at all; rather, it emerged out of his yearning for a form of Canadian realism that – in his view at least – did not yet exist. As for Montgomery, her only response to this commentary was to "raise[] a laugh" in her journal over MacMechan's suggestion that her writing was informed by her marriage to a Presbyterian minister: "Critics generally imagine a good deal of nonsense."[41]

Waterston adds that Lionel Stevenson's *Appraisals of Canadian Literature* (1926) "reinforced the patronizing tone,"[42] a stance certainly borne out by his remark that a "juster reflection of Canadian life, although tinged with sentimentalism of a conventional sort dear to numerous readers," could be found in Montgomery's depictions of "placid rural life of the older maritime provinces," not to mention his backhanded observation that the "passages of splendid farce" in her novels "give a very strong impression of being events from real life introduced arbitrarily into the narrative." Elsewhere in his book, he divided the "rest of Canadian fiction" into two groups, each "typified by the authors who have won the greatest success in practising them," naming one after Ralph Connor (1860–1937), the author of numerous popular westerns and adventure stories, and one after Montgomery (whose books "deal chiefly with character"). While this is hardly a shining endorsement of her work, it is worth noting that, unlike the more comprehensive *Headwaters* and *Highways*, Stevenson's study was "concerned only with literature that is inherently of some distinctive Canadian quality," so the very inclusion of Montgomery's work in his book is indicative of his positive view of its worth.[43] Moreover, Stevenson's mixed messages are certainly much more encouraging than Isabel Paterson's unambiguously negative comments in a 1922 article in the New York *Bookman*: "One does not foresee any further development for L.M. Montgomery. Her spun sugar creations are immaterial to the progress of the Canadian novel. Immensely popular though they are, they cannot even do any harm, because the peculiar kind of very real talent needed to confect such pleasant and pretty trifles is much rarer than the mechanical ingenuity and platitudinous piety required for a Bindloss or a Ralph Connor."[44] Here she is lumping Montgomery not only with Connor's popular westerns but also with those of Harold Edward Bindloss (1866–1945), an English author who wrote forty novels set in western Canada between 1902 and 1943. Even so, she later gave glowing reviews of Montgomery's *Emily of New Moon* and *Emily Climbs* (included in Volume 3 of *The L.M. Montgomery Reader*), indicating that her opinion of Montgomery's work evolved over time.

Montgomery received her most negative treatment in her lifetime from William Arthur Deacon, with whom she was active in the Toronto branch of the Canadian Authors' Association (CAA) and whose 1926 book *Poteen: A Pot-Pourri of Canadian Essays* compared Montgomery's "series of girls' sugary stories" to the "quick popularity" of Connor: "Canadian fiction was to go no lower; and she is only mentioned to show the dearth of mature novels at the time." Deacon's animosity toward Montgomery and Connor extended further when he even denigrated fellow critics who saw their work as worthy of study: "a critic who would divide between Ralph Connor and Lucy M. Montgomery … a quarter of the space devoted to the last 30 years, is not to be taken altogether seriously."[45] As Mary Henley Rubio has noted, Deacon's animosity toward Montgomery's writing emerged as part of his attempt to build for himself a reputation not only as a literary journalist but also as a powerful critic in the field of Canadian literature, first as literary editor of *Saturday Night* between 1922 and 1928 (Montgomery had published a number of poems in this periodical, although not between these dates) and later as book review editor of the *Mail and Empire* (later the *Globe and Mail*) between 1928 and 1961. As Rubio suggests, "Deacon enjoyed flying in the face of the prevailing public opinion (and most critical opinion) with his complete dismissal of Maud's books," and, moreover, his "ongoing hostility to her and her writing seemed more personal than professional," given that they knew each other through their work with the CAA. This animosity culminated in Deacon snubbing Montgomery publicly at Canada's National Book Week in November 1935 and elbowing her out of the CAA executive in April 1938.[46]

Yet it would be a mistake to assume that Deacon's pronouncements on Montgomery's fiction set the tone for what followed. In 1927, Lorne Pierce (1890–1961) made two positive albeit tentative comments about Montgomery's work in *An Outline of Canadian Literature (French and English)*, noting first that *Anne of Green Gables* was "deservedly a classic of its kind, not because of its excellence of style or plot, but because of the altogether charming character, Anne," and second, regarding Montgomery's *The Watchman and Other Poems* (1916), that her "long list of successful novels contain many passages of fine imaginative prose; while her poems are simple and sincere, it is as a storyteller that she will be remembered."[47] Also in 1927, Vernon Blair Rhodenizer (1886–1968) published a glowing overview of Montgomery's body of work in the "Who's Who in Canadian Literature" series of essays published in *The Canadian Bookman*, an official CAA publication (see chapter 47 in this volume).

Rhodenizer extended his admiration for Montgomery's work in a review of *Emily's Quest* (reproduced in Volume 3 of *The L.M. Montgomery Reader*) and in his 1930 book *A Handbook of Canadian Literature*, in which he added that "a reading of *The Blue Castle* … will convince the student of L.M. Montgomery's works that her future fame depends upon her stories of children."[48] That same year, a brief, descriptive entry for *Anne of Green Gables* ("The setting of this Canadian story is laid in Prince Edward Island") appeared in the first edition of *Books for Boys and Girls*, a compendium compiled by the Toronto Public Library. As Leslie McGrath notes, this brief entry was "a coded endorsement," because, as with Stevenson's *Appraisals*, the inclusion of the novel in this study "is itself indicative of the book's quality."[49]

Even Montgomery's poetry – largely unknown to today's readers and largely ignored by today's scholars – received high praise during her lifetime. In an article entitled "Sweet Singers of Canada" and published in *The Methodist Review*, a New York periodical, in July 1920, Rudolf A. Clemens profiled Montgomery alongside Charles G.D. Roberts (1860–1943), Wilfred Campbell (1860–1918), Bliss Carman (1861–1929), and Pauline Johnson (1861–1913), making her by far the youngest of the group. As Clemens noted in his opening remarks, "Canadian poets … are poets of Nature to a degree not often excelled in other literatures. 'Our Lady of the Snows,' as Canada is called, has impressed her people with the moods of her wonderful landscapes. Besides being simply the expression of nature in Canada the best Canadian literature has often sprung out of significant events in the country's history. Indeed, in a word, Canadian literature is a distinctly national literature." Quoting extracts from Montgomery's poems "The Old Home Calls" and "When the Dark Comes Down," the article continued:

> The last poet we consider here is Miss L.M. Montgomery, whom one could never leave out, for her fame is secure as the creator of Anne of Green Gables ... Knowing the novelist one is not surprised at her being a poet. One with her joyous outlook in [*sic*] life, vivid imagination, instinct for words and facility of expression could not help being a poet. More than that, she has lived nearly all her life in Prince Edward Island, where the fairies are said to live. In truth Miss Montgomery, or Mrs. MacDonald [*sic*] as she is now, was a poet long before she began to write prose. Indeed it is doubtful if she has ever been anything else, for Anne Shirley is essentially a creature of sentiment and imagination and of those qualities of heart and

> brain which are the product of the poetic mind. Her verse is quite as perfect as her prose, and her lyrics, especially those dealing with the smiling aspects of her native forest, its fragrant fields of red earth and the "blue sea coming up on every side," are of rare quality, delicate, lilting, and full of music.[50]

Two additional publishing patterns indicate further that Montgomery's critical reputation and popularity were not yet waning in the 1920s. As the academic and middlebrow conversations continued in Canada during this period, Montgomery's earliest books were being published in new, standard editions in England and Australia beginning in 1925; this marked a "turning-point in L.M. Montgomery's climb to fame" in those two countries.[51] In addition, Montgomery's work was still being widely anthologized. "Dog Monday's Vigil," a self-contained story adapted from a subplot in *Rilla of Ingleside*, appeared in *Our Canadian Literature: Representative Prose and Verse* (1922), compiled by Albert Durrant Watson and Lorne Albert Pierce. Montgomery's poem "Love's Prayer" appeared in *Canadian Singers and Their Songs: A Collection of Portraits and Autograph Poems* (1919) and in a revised edition, subtitled *A Collection of Portraits, Autograph Poems and Brief Biographies* (1925), both compiled by Edward S. Caswell. Four extracts from *Anne's House of Dreams* and the poem "Off to the Fishing Ground" were included in *Standard Canadian Reciter: A Book of the Best Readings and Recitations from Canadian Literature* (1921), compiled by Donald Graham French.[52] Her poem "Our Women," first published in John W. Garvin's *Canadian Poems of the Great War* (1918), was reprinted in *Songs of the Maritimes* (1931), edited by Eliza Ritchie. Garvin's anthologies *Canadian Poets* (1916) and *Canadian Verse for Boys and Girls* (1930) contain a total of eight poems by Montgomery.[53] An extract from the initial chapter of *Emily of New Moon* appeared in *The Voice of Canada: Canadian Prose and Poetry* (1926), edited by A.M. Stephen. Although academic critics were ambivalent about including Montgomery's work in their vision for a canon of Canadian Literature, the presence of her work in so many anthologies indicates that this ambivalence was far from consistent.

Montgomery's critical reputation in the 1930s is less straightforward to determine, primarily because the kind of survey of Canadian literature offered in *Headwaters* and *Highways* was not redone during this decade. Yet, as the materials collected in Volume 3 of *The L.M. Montgomery Reader* demonstrate, her work continued to be reviewed prominently and favourably throughout the final decade of her life, in

such periodicals as the *Globe*, *Punch*, the *New York Times Book Review*, *The Canadian Bookman*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *University of Toronto Quarterly*, *Saturday Night*, and the *Times Literary Supplement*. Entries on Montgomery appeared in the 1934 *Who's Who* (where her recreations included "reading, walking and motoring") and in the 1934 *Junior Book of Authors*, and she even copied out her standard autobiographical sketch "shortly before her death" for inclusion in *Twentieth Century Authors: A Biographical Dictionary of Modern Literature* (1942).[54]

As well, *Anne of Green Gables* appeared third in a 1937 poll on favourite books and their authors in *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, a Montreal farm paper, behind Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield* and the Judeo-Christian Bible, an achievement that led columnist Roderick Kennedy to make a bold proclamation about her work:

> She tells a good story which holds interest from start to finish. She draws heroines who seem to live, and who are distinguished by fundamental sweetness, cheerfulness, and courage. Those qualities of the heart are more highly valued than any others among men and women of the country-side, and consequently they love L.M. Montgomery's characters … Her books are not great literature, but they are sincere and wholesome, and in spite of her tendency to make people too perfect and to gloss over the fact that the sweetest kindliness cannot conquer every problem, there is something permeating her work which makes it enjoyable to a large number of sophisticated readers. And, in spite of the essential femininity of her books they yet have an appeal even to husky, red-blooded young men, such as I was when I fell in love with "Anne of Green Gables," at college![55]

Moreover, one of her last published pieces, an essay on "Prince Edward Island" that had been solicited for *The Spirit of Canada* (1939), a commemorative booklet in honour of the Royal Visit of George VI and Queen Elizabeth (later known as the Queen Mother) and that appears as chapter 69 in this volume, was accompanied by a biographical note that identified her as "the outstanding interpreter of Prince Edward Island and the Canadian Girl."[56]

When L.M. Montgomery died in April 1942, her death and funeral received extensive coverage in a number of newspapers across Canada, as well as tributes in two Toronto periodicals, *Saturday Night* and *The Presbyterian Record*, all of which are included in full in this volume.

In a third tribute essay published in *The Maritime Advocate and Busy East* shortly after Montgomery's death, Aida B. McAnn declared that "many such delightful Island 'characters' are charmingly portrayed in Miss Montgomery's books, along with a cheerful, wholesome, happy, healthful way of life that seems well-nigh Utopian to our present war-plagued generation. There is no pleasanter 'escape literature' than the Anne Books." But in the same article, McAnn referred to Green Gables House erroneously as "the same neat white farmhouse with the green trimmings that it had been sixty-six years ago, when a little girl, one year old, came there to live with her grandparents." Attempting to correct such mistakes in the tourist sites related to *Anne of Green Gables* proved to be uphill work, however. In 1945, Montgomery's eldest son, Chester Macdonald, responded to a newspaper article in the *Tillsonburg News* about the Prince Edward Island National Park that stated that the "Lake of Shining Waters" was in Cavendish – a recurring misconception that Montgomery had noted in her journals as early as 1911 (what had inspired her, she wrote, was the pond at Park Corner). Responding to the article's blending of fact and fiction, Macdonald wrote concerning his mother: "in the mind of the author there never was a 'real' Green Gables … It is true that the lane through the woods at Ernest Webb's farm, which is the present so-called Green Gables, was the original of the 'Lovers' Lane' immortalized in the books … but certain it is that the 'Lake of Shining Waters' … is not at Cavendish, where the Travel Bureau has placed it in the middle of the Green Gables Golf Course, and never was."[57]

As I show in Volume 2 of *The L.M. Montgomery Reader*, the recovery of Montgomery's work as worthy of scholarly attention occurred within a larger evolution in the creation of a canon of Canadian literature, a project started in the 1920s and pursued with renewed energy in the 1960s and 1970s. In the meantime, what would keep Montgomery's name alive after her death were her readers: whether they saw her books as "escape literature," harmless girls' books, sophisticated writing for adults, or a combination of all three, these readers continued to buy her books in sufficient quantities to keep them in print. Presumably they found, as did McAnn in her 1942 essay, that "the spirit of L.M. Montgomery is imperishable; and Anne of Green Gables, the child of her brain, is immortal."[58]

NOTES

1 Gerson, "*Anne of Green Gables*," 18; see also Gerson, "Seven Milestones," 27–28. For further iterations of this genesis story, see Rubio, "Why L.M. Montgomery's Journals," 474–75; Rubio, *Lucy Maud Montgomery*, 2–8; Epperly, "L.M. Montgomery"; Åhmansson, *A Life and Its Mirrors*, 13–25; Reimer, "Introduction," 2; Gammel, "Introduction," 3–4; Steffler, "Anne in a 'Globalized' World," 152; Waterston, *Kindling Spirit*, 19–24.

2 Rubio and Waterston, *Writing a Life*, 12.

3 Rubio, "Introduction," 5–6; Gammel, "Making Avonlea," 8–10.

4 See the website for L.M. Montgomery Online at http://lmmonline.org for a comprehensive resource of scholarly contributions on L.M. Montgomery's work and its afterlives.

5 For more on the middlebrow and the work of female authors such as Montgomery, see Hammill, *Women, Celebrity, and Literary Culture*, 9–13.

6 Chief among these is Rea Wilmshurst (1941–1996), who spent countless hours in libraries searching for Montgomery's periodical pieces long before the digital age, publishing *Lucy Maud Montgomery: A Preliminary Bibliography* (1986) in collaboration with Ruth Weber Russell and D.W. Russell as well as eight collections of Montgomery's short stories.

7 Gammel, "Introduction," 4.

8 Montgomery, 6 March 1901, in *SJLMM*, 1: 257.

9 *The Patriot*, "Our Island Poets," 2.

10 Montgomery, 16 March 1904, in *SJLMM*, 1: 294; Montgomery, 22 December 1900, in *SJLMM*, 1: 255.

11 Montgomery to MacMillan, 31 August 1908, in *MDMM*, 39, 40; Montgomery to Weber, 10 September 1908, in *GGL*, 75; Montgomery, 15 October 1908, in *SJLMM*, 1: 340.

12 *The Boston Herald*, "Week-End Book Notes," 9. In 1930, responding to this allegation that she taught school in Cavendish, she wrote in her journal, "Not guilty" (Montgomery, 1 March 1930, in *SJLMM*, 4: 41).

13 Montgomery, 10 November 1908, in *SJLMM*, 1: 342.

14 *The Boston Herald*, "Mid-Week Book Notes," 7.

15 Pike, "Mass Marketing, Popular Culture," 246.

16 Montgomery, 5 January 1917, in *SJLMM*, 2: 202, 206.

17 *The Saskatoon Star–Phoenix*, "Author of 'Anne' Books," 8.

18 Montgomery, "Letters from the Literati," 4.

19 "L.M. Montgomery: An Explanation Regarding the Publication of Her Different Books," *Toronto World*, undated clipping, in SR, 39. The review to which she responds appears in Volume 3 of *The L.M. Montgomery Reader*.

20 Chesterfield, "Men and Women We Read About," 4; Montgomery, 1 March 1930, in *SJLMM*, 4: 42.
21 *The Boston Herald*, "With Books and Authors," 4; Ford, "Women's Work, Women's Clubs," 16; see also *The Writer*, "Montgomery," 4; *The Western Mail*, "Miss Montgomery's Methods," 36.
22 York, *Literary Celebrity in Canada*, 75, 78.
23 *The Globe*, "Anne of Windy Poplars," 21; Gerson, "Seven Milestones," 23; Montgomery, 15 October 1936, in *SJLMM*, 5: 99–100; Montgomery, 30 September 1936, in *SJLMM*, 5: 94; *The Guardian*, "Famous Island Authoress," 3; see also *The Gazette*, "Author Revisits P.E.I."
24 *The Globe*, "English Union Hears Author," 9; *The Globe and Mail*, "Old-Timers' Stories Source for Author," 5; also in Montgomery, Black Scrapbook, 2: 77; see also "Old Tales Are Not to Be Lost," unidentified and undated clipping, in SR, 389.
25 Montgomery to Shaw Correspondence School, undated letter, in *Successful Authorship*, 22; Mason, "Do We Canadians," Magazine Section 1.
26 Montgomery to "Mr. [Maynard] Dominick," 14 August 1926, in *The House of Stokes*, 72. The term "*cacoethes scribendi*" is Latin for "scribbling itch." Montgomery pasted photographs of both Stokes and Dominick in SR, 247. Montgomery, 27 January 1922, in *SJLMM*, 3: 37; untitled, unidentified, and undated clipping, in SR, 169.
27 Montgomery, 3 October 1929, in *SJLMM*, 4: 15; *Halifax Herald*, "Author of 'Anne of Green Gables,'" 7.
28 "The Anne Books," unidentified and undated clipping (ca. 1932), in SR, 371; untitled, unidentified, and undated clipping (ca. 1929), in SR, 330. Both anecdotes from the 1929 clipping appear in Montgomery, 22 September 1929, in *SJLMM*, 4: 8.
29 "Notes," unidentified and undated clipping (ca. 1911), quoting an undated letter from "Mrs. L.M. Montgomery McDonald [*sic*]," in SR, 43.
30 Montgomery, 16 August 1907, in *SJLMM*, 1: 331; see also *AP*, 75.
31 *The Globe*, "English Union Hears Author," 9.
32 *Manitoba Free Press*, "Bright Future for Canadian Letters," 16; Morgan, *The Canadian Men and Women*, 760; Marquis, *English-Canadian Literature*, 564–65.
33 Lillian Leveridge, "Some Canadian Women in Song and Story," unidentified and undated clipping (ca. 1918), in SR, 121. Montgomery was first referred to as "the Jane Austen of Canada" in a review of *Chronicles of Avonlea* that appears in Volume 3 of *The L.M. Montgomery Reader*.
34 *The Globe*, "Women in Canadian Literature," 20; Hathaway, "How Canadian Novelists," 19.

35 The Canadian Authors' Association (later the Canadian Authors Association) is a national organization devoted to the protection and development of Canadian authors, with branches across the country. It became responsible for *The Canadian Bookman*, a periodical that published several poems by Montgomery as well as reviews of her books, as well as *The Canadian Author*, to which Montgomery contributed an essay in 1937 (see chapter 67, "The Book and the Film," in this volume). The two periodicals eventually merged to form *Canadian Author and Bookman* and, later, *Canadian Author & Bookman and Canadian Poetry*.
36 New, *A History of Canadian Literature*, 132.
37 Montgomery, 30 April 1923, in *SJLMM*, 3: 128; French, "Rilla, Daughter of 'Anne'"; also in SR, 180.
38 Logan and French, *Highways of Canadian Literature*, 278, 298, 299, 300, 301.
39 Montgomery, 25 September 1895, in *SJLMM*, 1: 145; MacMechan, *The Headwaters of Canadian Literature*, 211.
40 Waterston, *Kindling Spirit*, 19; MacMechan, *The Headwaters of Canadian Literature*, 215.
41 Montgomery, 1 February 1925, in *SJLMM*, 3: 217. Montgomery also pasted in her scrapbook an unidentified and undated clipping that comments on both *Highways* and *Headwaters* and that criticizes the latter text for "treating the last two decades as 'the era of the best-seller,' ignoring writers of consequence in that epoch in favor of extended consideration of Ralph Connor and Lucy M. Montgomery" (SR, 222).
42 Waterston, *Kindling Spirit*, 20.
43 Stevenson, *Appraisals of Canadian Literature*, 31–32, 157, 128, vii; see also 131, 134–35. Stevenson's comments on Montgomery first appeared in near identical form in a 1924 article published in *English Review*.
44 Paterson, "The Absentee Novelists of Canada," 138; also in SR, 187.
45 Deacon, *Poteen*, 169, 210.
46 Rubio, *Lucy Maud Montgomery*, 356, 461; see also 464–65, 530–31.
47 Pierce, *An Outline of Canadian Literature*, 38, 107.
48 Rhodenizer, *A Handbook of Canadian Literature*, 102.
49 *Books for Boys and Girls*, 154; McGrath, "Reading with Blitheness," 104.
50 Clemens, "Sweet Singers of Canada," 610, 619–20. The phrase "blue sea coming up on every side" is apparently an allusion to Marjory MacMurchy's article "L.M. Montgomery: Story Writer," reproduced in this volume. It is worth noting that most of these introductory remarks appear with only minor variations in John W. Garvin's anthology *Canadian Poets* (1916), which also includes both of these poems, and are attributed to

E.J. Hathaway. Both poems excerpted in Clemens's article are also included in Garvin's anthology.

51 "Publisher's Postscript," 142. The new edition of *Anne of Green Gables* even called for a slightly revised and updated text (see Devereux, "A Note on the Text," 44–45). To date, textual studies of Montgomery's published texts have been limited to *Anne of Green Gables*, so it is not yet possible to determine whether any of the later texts have likewise been altered since their first edition.

52 See Montgomery, "Captain Jim's Enjoyment," "A Disappointment," "Miss Cornelia Makes a Call," and "Miss Cornelia's Startling Announcement."

53 "Sunrise along Shore," "Off to the Fishing Ground," "An Old Man's Grave," "When the Dark Comes Down," and "The Old Home Calls" appear in the former volume, and "The Way to Slumbertown," "Canadian Twilight," and "Oh, We Will Walk with Spring To-Day!" appear in the latter one.

54 *Who's Who 1934*, 2085; Montgomery, "L.M. Montgomery"; "Montgomery, Lucy Maude [*sic*]," 974.

55 *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, "Five Favorite Books"; Kennedy, "Authors of Today," 38.

56 "Notes on Contributors," 58.

57 McAnn, "Life and Works of L.M. Montgomery," 20, 19. Montgomery, 27 February 1911, in *SJLMM*, 2: 40; Macdonald, Letter to the Editor; see also *The Tillsonburg News*, "Green Gables Included." The L.M. Montgomery Collection at the University of Guelph contains a number of Chester Macdonald's papers, including a diary kept from March to November 1945 and typescripts of short stories that have not been found in published form, with titles such as "Karnath of the Apes" (signed "C.C. 'Jerry' Macdonald"), "The Fighting Prince of Mars," "Jerry Mills and the Rangers," and "Doubling in Brass: A Jerry Mills Tale." For a glimpse of his professional life, see the article "Lawyer Son Tells about Writing of Authoress Mother" in the *Fort Williams Daily Times–Journal* in July 1946.

58 McAnn, "Life and Works of L.M. Montgomery," 19.

A Note on the Text

This volume is based on ninety-one items published in journals, magazines, newspapers, and books in Canada and the United States across a thirty-five-year period. In her own essays and letters, Montgomery frequently recycled extracts, quotations, and entire paragraphs from one publication to the next, sometimes repeating the same text with only minor variations decades after a first publication. In selecting material for this volume, I have tried to avoid excessive duplication and have omitted material that is already available elsewhere, particularly Montgomery's "The Alpine Path: The Story of My Career," a memoir published in six instalments in *Everywoman's World* in 1917 and reprinted in book form in 1974. Because I have opted whenever possible to include pieces in their entirety, some duplication has been unavoidable. Additional items that were better excerpted than reproduced in full are mentioned in the headnotes and explanatory notes that accompany each chapter.

In addition to journals and letters, Montgomery kept over a dozen scrapbooks filled with poems, short stories, articles, clippings, photographs, and reviews pertaining to her professional and personal lives. These scrapbooks indicate that Montgomery felt a need to document her life and her career; yet, although she took great care to preserve these items for posterity, in most instances she omitted bibliographical information and disrupted the chronology so that it is usually impossible to ascertain where or when these items first appeared. After several years of combing through old periodicals, sitting in front of microfilm readers, searching online databases, and relying on the assistance and discoveries

of fellow researchers, I have tracked down many of these items to their original published sources, which are identified here for the first time. In many cases, this identification entailed matching typefaces or looking for internal clues in the text, but often it was the result of persistence (or what Montgomery would call "stick-to-it-iveness") or just dumb luck.

Because the pieces in this volume first appeared in a range of periodicals, I have retained the inconsistent use of American and Canadian spellings and styles. For ease of reading, I have silently corrected obvious errors in spelling and punctuation and standardized the capitalization of titles and subheads. I have italicized the titles of books and films as well as words and phrases that were bolded, underlined, or capitalized for emphasis in the copy texts. I have also corrected misspellings of names ("MacDonald" and "McDonald" instead of Macdonald, "Ann" and "Annie" instead of Anne, "Valancey" instead of Valancy, "MacNeil," "Macneil," "Macniell," "MacNeill," and "McNeil" instead of Macneill, "Ewen" and "Evan" instead of Ewan, "Wollner" instead of Woolner) and places ("Alvonlea," "Cavandish," "Leaksdale," "Leaskvale," "Prince Edward's Island"), but I comment on these corrections in the notes. All ellipses and phrases in parentheses or square brackets appear in the original publications; my occasional omissions are noted with [* * *]. If Montgomery makes a handwritten correction in a copy found in her scrapbooks, I treat it as authoritative and mention it in the notes. All other substantive corrections are likewise identified in the notes.

Titles of chapters appearing in square brackets are mine. Each chapter begins with a headnote that places the item in Montgomery's overall career. In the notes, I have tried whenever possible to identify literary allusions, quotations from Montgomery's own work, historical personages, archaic words and terms, misquotations, and factual errors, as a way of providing cultural and historical context to the primary texts. Readers who have been interested in tracing the literary allusions in her fiction will be pleased to see that Montgomery likewise peppers her essays and even her speech with allusions to past work. Unless stated otherwise, all quotations from the Judeo-Christian Bible are from the King James Version (KJV), and all definitions from the *OED* are from the Oxford English Dictionary Online.

For a comprehensive resource pertaining to L.M. Montgomery's legacy – editions, periodical pieces, textual transformations (including stage and screen adaptations, abridgments, rewrites, and parodies), posthumously published work, scholarship, and reviews – see the website for L.M. Montgomery Online at http://lmmonline.org.

1

[Such a Delightful Little Person]

— 1908 —

After *Anne of Green Gables* was published in June 1908, her publisher, L.C. Page and Company, promoted the novel aggressively, placing in major newspapers ads that included public endorsements of the book by prominent writers. The best known of these – by American author and humorist Samuel Clemens (1835–1910), otherwise known as Mark Twain – has often been misquoted, and a number of variations can be found in several of the items appearing in all three volumes of *The L.M. Montgomery Reader*. It appeared in a letter from Clemens's secretary to Montgomery in which "Mr. Clemens directs me to thank you for your charming book + says I may quote to you from his letter to Francis Wilson about it: 'In "Anne of Green Gables" you will find the dearest + most moving + delightful child since the immortal Alice.'" By Montgomery's account, she related the quotation to Page, who "worked it to the limit as a publicity morsel."[1] A notice in the *New York Times* provided a different take on the matter, claiming that Montgomery, who, "living in quiet Prince Edward's [*sic*] Island, is unaware of the ways of the advertiser, sent her book to Mark Twain in the innocent hope of amusing him, and was rather overwhelmed by receiving in reply his secretary's statement that in writing to Mr. Francis Wilson of the book, the master of his craft had named Anne 'the dearest and most moving and delightful child since the immortal Alice.' It is unnecessary to say that she was as much delighted as surprised."[2] The second major endorsement, by Canadian-born New England poet Bliss Carman, is not as well known today, although an excerpt appeared alongside the Twain quotation in at least one ad (see frontispiece). The novel was also endorsed by Marguerite Linton Glentworth, Chairman of the New York Women's Press Club, who

promised to "recommend it to all as a book to drive away the blues," and by Sir Louis Henry Davies of the Supreme Court of Canada (and formerly Premier of PEI), who stated, "I can hardly tell you how much I enjoyed the book. I have not read anything more delightful than this story in years."[3]

Anne of Green Gables, by L.M. Montgomery, one of the recent publications of L.C. Page & Co., of Boston, has been received with great favor by the press and public. The publishers are in receipt of the following letter from the well-known poet and essayist, Bliss Carman, with regard to the charming story:

"If I have been tardy in making my acknowledgments for Anne of Green Gables, it has not been for lack of appreciation. I notice with satisfaction that she has become one of the popular young ladies of the season. But I can assure you that if she had no one else to love her, I should still be her most devoted admirer. Such a delightful little person and so refreshing after the too numerous and far too sensational heroines of the hour.

"One can bask in such a presence as in a mild salubrious air. And it is no small triumph for an author to make so genuine a success by such simple, straight-forward means – nothing facetious in the book, no strain for effect, no reliance in dialect or novelty – just plain old-fashioned sufficient human nature.

"And I take it as a great test of the worth of the book that while the children are rummaging all over the house looking for Anne, the head of the house has carried her off to read on his way to town. That is real success, isn't it? Henceforth Anne must always remain one of the immortal children of fiction, those characters who are as real as our flesh and blood friends, and whom we treasure in the quiet places of our hearts reserved for the dearest mortals we know."

NOTES

1 J.V. Lyon to Montgomery, 3 October 1908, reproduced in *SJLMM*, 5: 332; Montgomery, 8 May 1939, in *SJLMM*, 5: 331. Francis Wilson (1854–1935), American actor and playwright.

2 *The New York Times*, "The Week's News of Boston Books," SR692.

3 *The Sun*, ad for *Anne of Green Gables*, 8; *The Boston Herald*, "From Page's List," 7.

2

Author Tells How He Wrote His Story

— 1908 —

This short article, published in the *Boston Journal* on 21 November 1908, quotes a letter from Montgomery that shows the author already striving to create a public persona that would suit her private nature. While the subhead states that "L.M. Montgomery Says the Tale Grew from a Serial Story into a Novel," she in fact refused to provide even the most basic personal information about herself, to the point that the newspaper editor evidently could not detect that she was a woman.

L.M. Montgomery, the author of *Anne of Green Gables*, tells the following interesting story of the growth of that popular novel:

"Ever since I can remember I wrote stories and verse for my own amusement. When I grew up I began to write them for other people's amusement. One day the editor of a Sunday school weekly asked me to write him a juvenile serial of seven or ten chapters. I looked through an old dog-eared, much abused note book for an idea and came across the following note, written years ago in my teens.

"'Elderly couple decide to adopt a boy from an orphan asylum. By mistake a girl is sent them.'

"I decided this would do for the central idea of my serial. I blocked out ten chapters and hunted out a few suitable incidents from the same old note book. I meant it to be a quiet little yarn with a well-behaved little heroine and a nice little moral snugly tucked away in it. If I had had time to sit right down then and there and write it, that is all it probably