

RECOLLECTIONS OF WATERLOO COLLEGE

Flora Roy
Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2004

REVIEWED BY CLARA THOMAS

To the very few women who were teaching in Ontario's universities at the time of the great expansion in the 1960s, Flora Roy is a legendary figure. To many others, academic colleagues and former students, she has continued to be just that through all the years since. In 1948, through the recommendation of Professor A.S.P. Woodhouse, who for many years supplied English Departments across Canada from among his graduate students at the University of Toronto, she was appointed Head of the Department of English at Waterloo College. She retired, still Head, from full-time teaching in 1978, but taught on a part-time basis until 1993. The College had long since become Waterloo Lutheran University, then Wilfrid Laurier University. Though Dr. Roy was honoured in every way available to her institution, she preferred a low profile; consequently her enormous contribution to the present respected reputation of Wilfrid Laurier's English Department is largely unknown. Now, fortunately, she has written her own account of the years of her tenure, ending with the 1960 transformation of the College into Waterloo Lutheran University. She is preparing Volume II, bringing her story up to the present.

The history of the College begins in 1914 when the Evangelical Lutheran Seminary of Canada opened in Waterloo. It instituted courses leading to High School senior matriculation and in 1924 the Waterloo College of Arts was established, adding a four year, post-secondary education. A year later, the Arts Fac-

ulty was affiliated with the University of Western Ontario, enabling the College to give an Honours degree in Arts, offering the same courses as Western's. When Dr. Roy arrived with her second-in-command, James Clarke, a fellow student at Toronto, the College was thriving. She and Clarke proceeded to teach the entire Honours curriculum.

Like all institutions in those immediate post-war years, Waterloo College was still in the midst of the boom in numbers that began as the veterans crowded in, eager for the education and qualifications they had missed during the war. The demands on faculty were very heavy, completely off the scale by today's standards, but that was not a matter of concern to Roy, who was used to hard work and had had some years of experience, both in Regina and as a teaching fellow at Toronto. What was difficult and is astonishing to read about these many years later was the difficulty she experienced in being accepted socially in Waterloo-Kitchener. She found an insular society with a degree of tension between those of German descent and those of the usual southern Ontario mix of English, Irish, and Scots, whose roots dated back to World War I when the former city of Berlin was re-named Kitchener.

The considerable mix of European faculty at the College, compared to the relatively homogeneous faculty at Western at the same time is also surprising. Dr. Roy made the most of it, describing the broadening of her own horizons through the influence of individuals and also through her holiday travels. In spite of her heavy work load she considered her experiences to be liberating and rewarding, a source of enrichment for her lectures and her students. Her account of two summers spent in Quebec gives a particularly illuminating impression of our two solitudes as they seemed in the early post-war years. It is when she moves to a discussion of the political allegiances and manoeuvres she encoun-

tered all around her that she prepares us for the climactic happenings that were to erupt in the fifties.

In 1956 a non-denominational board was established to obtain government grants to run expanded science programs under the name Waterloo College Associated Faculties. The Associated Faculties began operation in 1957.... In 1959... the provincial government established three universities—the University of Waterloo, the University of Jerome's College, and Waterloo Lutheran University College.

In Dr. Roy's opinion the campus-shattering events that led up to this and the bitter split that ensued began in Winnipeg's United College with what is known as the "Crowe Affair." In the broadest of terms Canadian academics were on the boil and colleges with religious ties, such as United and Waterloo, were particularly suspected of living in the past. What was even more damaging to their reputations among the rebels were the church affiliations that prevented their acquisition of the funds that were going to be available to secular universities.

In the last years of the fifties battle lines were drawn and a bitter struggle ensued. There were three parties, each of them completely persuaded of its validity: those who wholeheartedly espoused the new university and the planned affiliation of Waterloo Lutheran University College; the "loyalists" who stubbornly opposed the new plans; and the College's Faculty Association which developed into a group who openly anticipated taking over and running the College. The loyalists "were fighting for the continuation of an institution in which they had invested not only their intellectual labour but also their aspiration for the future. They hoped to build an educational foundation that would put the Canadian Lutheran Church on a level

with the American Lutherans whose pride was in their colleges and universities." Dr. Roy became a "loyalist," both by conviction and, later, in the knowledge that she would not be welcome as a Faculty member of the new university. The controversy engulfed Waterloo College. What was at stake was not only financing, but also the conviction that once a part of the University, Waterloo Lutheran would speedily become simply a service resource for the Arts courses that would be essential for the overwhelmingly important mathematics and engineering faculties in the new institution. Finances were, of course, crucial for the loyalists and the final outcome something of a miracle. The whole conflict was complicated by the fact that Dr. Hagey, President of Waterloo College, moved over to become President of the University of Waterloo, with every expectation of taking the College with him.

The fate of Waterloo College in relation to the new university was only a part of the unrest among Ontario Universities at the time. The Association of Colleges and Universities of Canada, headed by Dr. Gibson of Queen's, was also working against the founding of any new university in Ontario and the entire picture was complicated by its activities. However, out of the struggle, and thanks to the negotiating skills of Dr. Overgaard, a highly influential Loyalist Lutheran, Dr. Delton Glebe, chairman of the Lutheran Board and the advice of their lawyer, Malcolm Robb, the loyalists won their case. Waterloo's affiliation with Western was severed and Waterloo Lutheran University was chartered. Of course they lost faculty to the University of Waterloo, but they also found candidates happy to apply for positions at Waterloo Lutheran. Money was forthcoming, both federal and provincial, and the Ontario expansion of universities began in earnest: York in 1959 and shortly after, Trent, Brock, Laurentian, Windsor. In the years that followed, Waterloo Lutheran became well

known for its rigour and the overall distinction of its Honours English course. When in 1973 the university became Wilfrid Laurier University, its student enrolment was 2,299; its reputation was secure.

Flora Roy is unique among Canadian academics. She shepherded her department through perilous times without compromising her standards or adjusting them to meet the noisy demands of fad or faction. The successes and devotion of her students are her continuing testimony.

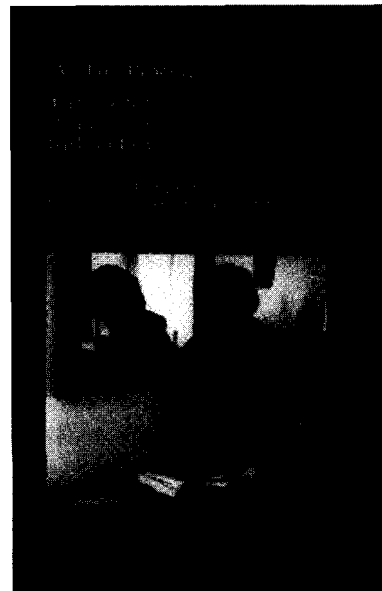
Clara Thomas was one of the two first women to be hired by York University. She has been with York since 1961, the year Glendon opened. She is now a retired Professor Emeritus. This year York did her the honour of naming the libraries' Archives and Special Collections the Clara McCandless Thomas Archives and Special Collections, York University.

"ALL THIS READING": THE LITERARY WORLD OF BARBARA PYM

Frauke Elisabeth Lenckos and Ellen J. Miller, Eds.
London: Associated University Press, 2003

REVIEWED BY HEATHER CAMPBELL

In her "Foreword", Hilary Pym Walton describes *All This Reading: The Literary World of Barbara Pym* as a "loving collection" (9) and indeed there is a current of real affection that unites these essays. The arrangement of the collection supports the sense of personal and professional tribute: it begins with a short introduction and a brief biography, and closes with a chronology. The body of the work is divided into two sections: eight critical articles are followed by nine short essays that



strike a much more personal note. The scholarly material, therefore, is effectively framed by the biography and the reflections and reminiscences.

The articles in the first section, "Reading in Barbara Pym's Novels", explore the subject of reading in Pym's work from a range of perspectives. Three of the essays take an autobiographical approach: Anthony Kaufman proceeds from a reading of Pym's early journals to argue that in the novels she "was able to transform her feelings of rejection, anger, and depression into brilliant social comedy" (89); Orphia Jane Allen finds the later novels to be both metaphor and vehicle for Pym's developing self-identity, and particularly her gradual acceptance of illness, aging, and impending death; and Ella Wymard discerns in the novels Pym's own disappointment in the degree of comfort and solace offered by formal religion to those who suffer in private. She observes that for Pym "writing is itself a ceremonial act" (116) and the novelist has a clearer and more immediate understanding of the reality of everyday human existence than does the church. Barbara Everett reads Pym in the context of the Modernist movement, and considers the claim of the various novels to be defined as "minor" or "major." Frauke Elisabeth Lenckos finds that the novels them-