

feeling for it as a form of modifying communication," she wrote, sending her message special delivery.

She also had strong feelings about book arts, about paper, type design, illustrations, and dust jackets. Generally she was pleased with the production her books received from Macmillan of Canada, although she confessed once that in her view the American edition of *Swamp Angel* (Harper's) had more quality than Macmillan's. What she may have disliked about the Canadian edition was the drawing on the dust jacket of a young woman standing in a boat throwing a revolver into the lake. She had a particular dread of any illustrations that would make her writing appear romantic or sentimental. Her letters are full of pleas to her publishers to avoid the depiction of a "heroine" on the cover or in the text. She felt, above all, that *Hetty Dorval* was about the sage brush country around Lytton and so asked that a map of the B.C. Interior be used as a frontispiece and as a dust jacket illustration. That specific request, however, was turned down, but her desire for simplicity was honored and she was very pleased. She wrote to her editor: "Hetty arrived, in sextuplet. Thank you—and, do you know, I am *much* better pleased with her than I feared! The cover, green, and binding with plain gold lettering, are far beyond my fondest hopes—simply *charming*" (p. 138). Similarly she was pleased with the dream-like figures that ornamented the dust-jacket for *The Equations of Love*.

The Alcuin Society edition of *Hetty Dorval*, with typographic design done by Charles Morriss of Victoria, gave Wilson great pleasure, fulfilling her aristocratic taste in the book arts. Although signing each copy was a difficult chore for her (in 1967 she was recovering from a first cerebral hemorrhage), she pressed on because she was so proud of this treatment of her work. She was especially delighted by the engravings of Gus Rueter which give emphasis to the book's settings. Three geese in flight decorate the cover, and an arrow-shaped skein of geese in flight over the sage country illustrates the title page. Morriss used the colour green for the binding, the engravings, and for chapter numbers to highlight, perhaps, one of the book's epigraphs, John Donne's line "Good is as visible as greene." The preface, moreover, allowed Wilson to complete the modest portrait of herself and her work that she had created for the public, it also highlighted her love of the British Columbia landscape and her engagement with the art of fiction as a pastime simple, elegant, and whimsical.

## 1988 ALCUIN CITATIONS

The Alcuin Society is pleased to announce the finalists for the 1988 ALCUIN CITATIONS which are the only national awards for excellence in book design in Canada. Winners were selected from books designed and published in Canada in 1987.

The 1987 finalists were selected from over 150 books submitted by publishers across the country. This year's competition introduced a new category, **Poetry Chapbook**, in addition to **Poetry, Prose** (Non-Fiction/Fiction), **Pictorial, Juvenile, Education** and **Other**.

Judges considered, among other things, sound marriage of design and content, appropriate (not just appealing) cover design, page layout, typography and where applicable the balance of illustration and text.

The judges this year were: Don Dickson of the Vancouver Design Team; Roberto Dosit from Praxis Design; Ron McAmmond from the University of British Columbia Press and Ronald Hagler School of Library, Archival and Information Studies, UBC. All are from Vancouver, B.C.

The commentary was written by Ronald Hagler (Chairman).

### **Juror's Statement**

We were asked to identify books meeting our criteria for first, second, and third prize. We were allowed a category of "Other" to use at our discretion. We were not required to award an available prize if we felt the criteria were not met among the applicable submissions; but we were allowed to cite "Honourable Mentions".

It must be stated that the best may remain unacknowledged in these awards simply because it was not on the table to be judged. Over 150 items were submitted, but this represents only a small proportion of Canadian publications. Some trade publishers known for excellence are not submitting items. As judges we wondered if news of the competition could be spread to more freelance designers who might prompt the entry of their work in future years. Many of Canada's private presses seem to be aware of the competition. It is hard to know how inclusive is this year's coverage of this important part of the field, but they feature significantly among the prizes and honourable mentions.

A further awkwardness stems from the fact that although the Society established the above-mentioned prize categories, it is hard to define some of them. It may not seem difficult to determine what is a children's book or poetry, but it can be: one of this year's poetry prizes goes to a "prose poem", and some items offered as children's books could as easily have been in the "educational" category. Even the line between fiction and non-fiction is becoming ever more tenuous; and although we agreed among ourselves as to what constitutes a "pictorial" book, we were less certain that those making submissions would always agree with our distinction between a pictorial book and a book of non-fiction with many illustrations. Some of the most appropriate and imaginative design is presented not in works of running text and illustration, but among works a librarian would call "reference books": directories, bibliographies, etc.; it was awkward to have to judge these alongside non-fiction prose (with or without illustration).

We offer the above as helpful suggestions to improve the acceptance and legitimacy of the Alcuin Citation awards in the future. Now to the judges findings in detail, presented in no "order of importance". This will not, like the Academy Awards, build up to The Biggest Prize of All.

Ronald Hagler

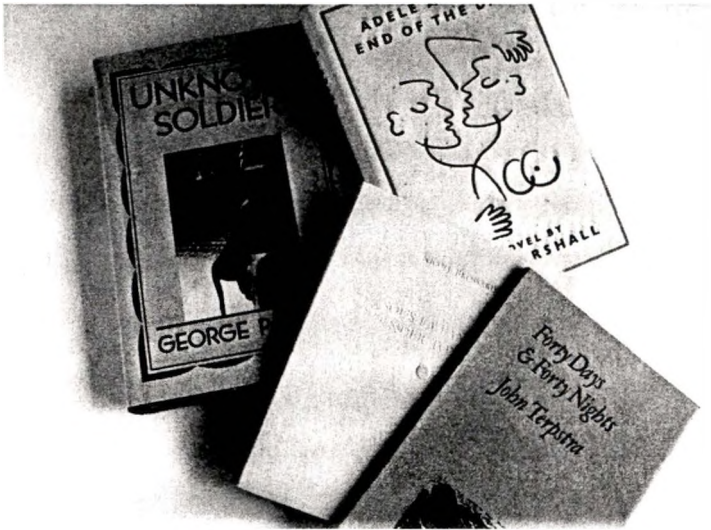
## Poetry

No first prize.

2. *SOUS LA LANGUE/UNDER TONGUE*; by Nicole Brossard; Montreal and Charlottetown, L'Essentielle and Gynergy Books; designers Odette Des Ormeaux and Libby Oughton

3. *FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS*; by John Terpstra; Windsor, Netherlandic Press; designer Tim Inkster

This was the largest group of submissions, containing most of the private-press publications submitted. Poetry is extremely difficult to set, with the designer at the mercy of the writer of sometimes short, sometimes long lines or poems. It is especially disappointing when the text pages are well done, but the cover is not; yet this occurred often enough to be commented upon. *Sous la langue / Under Tongue*, a single short prose-poem, pleased us as, perhaps, the most "whole" book in the entire competition as a physical object. Its rich paper,



embossed cover, deckle, and proportions match the line-length admirably. *Forty Days & Forty Nights* is a clean and elegant setting of more difficult copy with beautifully executed woodcuts on the two outer covers.

### Poetry Chapbooks

No first, second or third prizes.

### Prose Fiction

1. *UNKNOWN SOLDIER*; by George Payerle; Toronto, Macmillan; designer David Montle
2. *ADELE AT THE END OF THE DAY*; by Tom Marshall; Toronto, Macmillan; designer David Montle

*Unknown Soldier* and *Adele at the End of the Day* are very different-looking books. We did not at first suspect the same hand, but the same designer is responsible for both. Each is characterized by complete appropriateness of the design, from cover to cover, to the content: even the binding and jacket colours. Then one saw the occasional similarity between them: the framed lead-(including title)-pages, the unusual author/title relationship on the title page, the occasional printer's flower.

## Education

1. EXPLORING THE NIGHT SKY; by Terence Dickinson; Camden East, Camden House; designer Ulrike Bender

The submissions in this category were very few in number, and most were cluttered and visually uninviting. We hope school children are studying from better designed books than those presented here in competition. *Exploring the Night Sky* presents a great deal of complex information compactly, but each topic has its own easy-to-grasp spread of two facing pages on which text, coloured illustrations, and captions are clearly separated. Technical standards for the multi-colour production are very high.

## Prose Non-Fiction

Tied for 1st:

WHO'S WHO IN CANADIAN LITERATURE, 1987-88; by Gordon Ripley and Anne Mercer; Toronto, Reference Press; designer Gordon Ripley

FOLLOWING THE SEA; Benjamin Doane; Halifax, Nimbus Publishing Ltd. and the Nova Scotia Museum; designer GDA

CANADIAN WRITERS AND THEIR WORKS; edited by Robert Lecker, Jack David, Ellen Quigley; Toronto, ECW Press; designer The Porcupine's Quill

Honourable Mention:

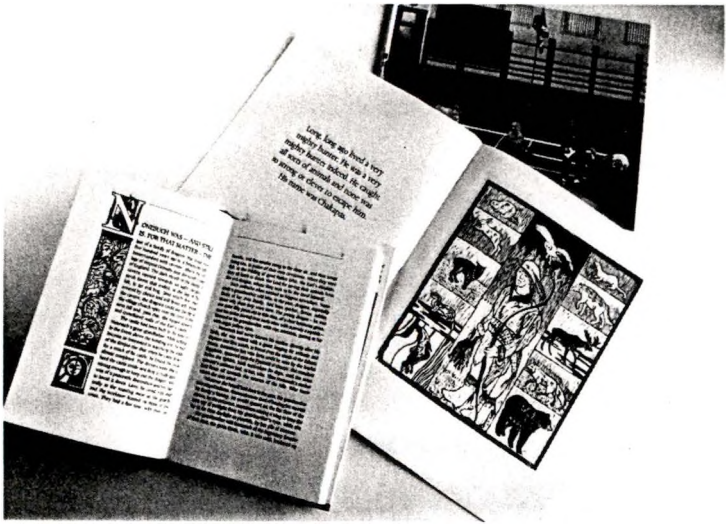
NORTHRUP FRYE; an annotated bibliography; by Robert D. Denham; Toronto, University of Toronto Press; designer Antje Lingner

A great difference of purpose and content among three excellently designed books made it impossible for us to rank them as first, second, third: each fulfils its purpose admirably. The most eye-catching is *Following the Sea*, a memoir of mid-nineteenth century sailing days elegantly designed in a manner that captures the spirit of the time from the style of leather-and-marbelled-paper for the jacket to the ruled pages with marginal captions and woodcut (as well as other) illustrations.



The four hundred pages of volume 9 of the Fiction Series of *Canadian Writers and their Works* display a mass of biographic, critical, and bibliographic information on (and woodcut portraits of) five writers while retaining clean and readable setting and manageable physical size.

The bio-bibliographic dictionary *Who's Who in Canadian Literature, 1987-88* is an equally successful book without a connected sentence of prose in it: all addresses, lists, dates, etc. Skillful use of italic, roman, bold, caps, leading, etc.



ensure that the tightly packed lines do not become a blur. These comments apply almost equally to the honourable mention in this category, *Northrop Frye: An Annotated Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*.

### Juvenile

No first, second or third prizes.

Honourable Mention:

CAN YOU CATCH JOSEPHINE?; by Stephane Poulin; Montreal, Tundra Books; designer Stephane Poulin

A BOOK DRAGON; by Donn Kushner; Toronto, Macmillan; designer Nancy Ruth Jackson

THE STORY OF CHAKAPAS: A Cree Indian Legend; by P.G. Downes, ed., Annie Downes Catterson; Kapuskasing, Penumbra Press; designer Tim Inkster

The three children's books chosen for honourable mention have excellent features: *The Story of Chakapas: A Cree Indian Legend* matches bold black-and-white woodcuts beautifully with dark-printed large Cartier type. The full-page coloured

illustrations of *Can You Catch Josephine?* are eye-catching (particularly the eyes!) and vigorous. A novel for teen-agers has been accorded unusual care by its designer: *A Book Dragon* uses elements of William Morris/Eric Gill styles (both decoration and heavy type) to unite the appearance to the mediaeval cast of the plot.

## **Pictorial**

No first, second or third prizes.

Honourable Mention:

UNOFFICIAL PORTRAITS: by Andrew Danson; Toronto, Doubleday Canada Ltd., and the Art Gallery of York University; designers The Spencer Francey Design Group

In the category which most puzzled us, and in which we knew to exist many books not submitted for competition, *Unofficial Portraits: Canadian Politicians Photographed by Themselves* imaginatively combines picture, caption, and introduction all with a sense of the whimsy inherent in the project.

## **Other**

Honourable Mention — Series:

Women's Press Series of Five Books: ENOUGH IS ENOUGH by Janet Silman; GOOD GIRLS/BAD GIRLS by Laurie Bell; QUEBEC WOMEN: A HISTORY by The Clio Collective; MASQUES OF MORALITY by Johan Iyall Aitken; WORK IN PROGRESS by Rhea Tregobov, designer Elizabeth Martin

We used our discretion to mention, honourably, a group of books from the same publisher under the category "other". This is a case of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts. Individually, no one of these volumes from The Women's Press might have attracted special notice; but the use of common design features, while preserving individual differences in cover design and other features, is an excellent solution to the problem of publishers-identification and efficiency without sacrificing good design for any single publication.