



In Hindsight: Half a Century of Research Discoveries in Canadian History

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Produced by The Ontario Historical Society

Episode 21: Ontario Made Me. Calgary Adopted Me.

In mid-August 1974 I arrived in Calgary only a few months before the commemoration began of its 100th anniversary. Premier Peter Lougheed's endorsement in the *Calgary Centennial Souvenir Book* struck the right note: "Calgary has a proud past to reflect upon—a century rich in achievement, and the unique heritage of the city has contributed greatly to the development and character of our province" (page 11). The young University of Calgary, just eight years old, shared in the plans. The original core faculty, Education (see *In Hindsight* Episode #1), now was joined by a host of other academic faculties: Arts and Science, Physical Education, Engineering, Graduate Studies, Fine Arts, Social Work, Medicine, Nursing, and Environmental Design, with Law the latest addition in 1974.

The History Department, whose antiquity dated back to 1947 (see Episode #1), shared in the centenary plans. Working with Dave Coutts, President of the Chinook Country Chapter of the Historical Society of Alberta (HSA), and Grant Weber, HSA President, Professors Anthony Rasporich and Henry Klassen organized a jointly sponsored conference on the history of "frontier Calgary," held on campus 9-10 May. Over the months to follow my two new

colleagues edited the papers. Then Dave and Rose Scollard of McClelland and Stewart West produced the attractive volume *Frontier Calgary. Town, City and Region, 1875-1914*. In their introduction, the two Canadian historians emphasized the book's "multi-faceted approach to the development of a small frontier ranching town into a cosmopolitan urban environment in the short space of a generation" (page vii).

A mural at old Calgary Airport, entitled "Past, Present and Future," summarized popular views of Alberta's past in the mid-twentieth century. Completed by the Alberta artist Don Franche (1919-1994), it hung in the main hall from the late 1950s to the early 1970s. Damaged beyond repair during a renovation, the artist completed a duplicate for the opening of the new terminal in October 1977. It shows four historic figures (from left to right: Rev. John McDougall, Colonel Macleod, Crowfoot, and Father Lacombe) in pastel, with heavenly light shining upon them. They and an unidentified pioneer settler appear to be looking toward the city of the future. Below there appears a wagon train led by cowboys, the heroic image of the "Old West."

I was not the only appointment to the Department of History in 1974. To quote the *Calgary Herald* of 25 July 1974: "Former Alberta lieutenant-governor Grant MacEwan has accepted a position as history professor at the University of Calgary. Dr. MacEwan will lecture on exploration and settlement of the Canadian Prairies." Grant, then in his mid-70s, had championed Western Canadian history for decades. While not formally trained in the profession, he had the writing skills and experiences needed to communicate with a huge audience. Grant had grown up in a prairie world before radio, a time when storytelling dominated.

In 1973/74 Calgary's Western Canadian historical interest reached a high point. Throughout Canada the heritage of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police was being celebrated through "movies,

television, advertising, magazine articles, coins, postage stamps, newspaper articles, a Royal visit, and numerous celebrations, [in which] notice was drawn to the fact that the Police were one hundred years old.” Hugh Dempsey explained in the “Introduction” to his edited work *Men in Scarlet* (Calgary: Historical Society of Alberta / McClelland and Stewart West, 1974) that the celebration ran for two years as 1873 marked the legal organization of force, and 1874 the official assumption of the duties to which they had been assigned, largely centred in Alberta, “which, although still part of the North-West Territories in 1874 was the focal point of the Force’s semi-military operations.”

The first history book I read about my new city was my colleague’s *Calgary Cavalcade*, proudly dedicated “To the North West Mounted Police Who Founded the City of Calgary in 1875.” It was the first history of Calgary since a slight promotional work in 1912 and a soft-cover booklet written in 1950. It emphasized the city’s remarkable characters. To write it Grant went through newspapers and old city council minutes, as well as interviewed old-timers. Well-received, it went through four printings, the last in 1975.

Born in 1902, Grant grew up on a pioneer farm just north of Brandon, Manitoba. After several years in Brandon itself, he spent his teenaged years on the family’s new farm in the Carrot River valley near Melfort, Saskatchewan. Early in his life he developed work habits of long hours, marked by efficient use of time.

Grant’s knowledge of Western Canada’s rural past came from his farm upbringing, as well as from his university training and teaching. On the family farm he lived through the entire early twentieth century prairie experience, from breaking virgin sod with horse and plow, to the full mechanization of agriculture. His years of study at the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph, and graduate work at the Iowa State College of Agriculture, as well as his teaching at both the Universities of Saskatchewan and

Manitoba, deepened his understanding of Western Canadian agriculture. He loved Canadian history.

At the same time Grant wrote university texts on agriculture he kept up his popular writing, contributing more and more articles to newspapers to reach a wider public. His first history book, *The Sodbusters*, appeared in 1948. The manuscript originated six years earlier in a four-part CBC Radio series, which the network continued in 1943 and 1944. The author's interviews with old-timers, as well as his own library research, furnished him with the ideal topic, the pioneer farmers and colourful individuals who migrated to the Canadian prairies. The "sodbuster heroes" occupy centre stage.

Just before leaving the University of Manitoba for Alberta in 1951 Grant wrote *Agriculture on Parade*, a history of Western Canadian fairs and exhibitions. Grant's move to Calgary gives his warm reference to the Stampede City in *Agriculture on Parade* special meaning. His chapter on Calgary's Exhibition and Stampede contains two classic MacEwan writing devices: the interesting anecdote, and the close interplay between past and present. In writing of Calgary's first winter, he mentions NWMP inspector Ephrem Brisebois, who, in 1875, "with self-esteem becoming an Alexander the Great," named the tiny fort Brisebois. His superior, however, just weeks later, overruled him, for overstepping his authority, and re-named the police post Fort Calgary.

The agricultural expert came to human history with a sense of urgency. He wanted both Western and Eastern Canadians to know Western Canada's past. As he told his son-in-law Max Foran in 1983: "My own parents belonged to a generation which came in soon after the railroad arrived. I knew that they had a story and that there were people around me who made me laugh and inspired me with their stories, but that nothing was happening to record their memories" (Grant MacEwan, quoted in Max Foran, ed., *Journals*, (1986), page 147).

Grant's first three history books were published in Toronto. After completing his next manuscript in 1956 the prairie author sent it off to Ontario. It was a biography of the life and times of Bob Edwards of the *Calgary Eye Opener*, the most outrageous newspaper in early twentieth century Western Canada. No one had ever written a full study of Edwards. Grant's track record, and his assurances of a healthy Western Canadian market, proved not good enough. Thomas Nelson and Sons decided not to proceed, as did the University of Toronto Press and Macmillan.

Fortunately, the Institute of Applied Art, educational publishers in Edmonton, and the only book publishing house in Alberta at the time, took a chance on the manuscript. They brought it out as *Eye Opener Bob* that October. The gamble paid off, for the biography became an Alberta best-seller. The *Calgary Albertan* on 7 December 1957 published a particularly warm review, one which captured exactly what Grant had tried to do: "Old-time Calgarians will lose 40 years while they are strolling through this book. For them it is a privilege. The younger generation and the newcomers have a duty to read it, for only thus will they know that Eighth Avenue is hallowed ground."

Grant moved to Calgary in 1951 and quickly became involved in community activities, winning a seat on city council in 1953, and then election to the provincial legislature in 1955. Calgary changed enormously in the 1950s. The new *Albertan* had arrived at a time when the huge influx of newcomers during the city's oil and gas boom pushed aside tales of early Calgary. He arrived just in time to record stories soon to disappear. One must appreciate the context. The Glenbow Archives and Library, that wonderful repository of Western Canadian history, only began in 1956.

Fifty Mighty Men, a collection of 50 articles that Grant published in the *Western Producer* newspaper from 9 May 1957 to 24 April 1958, came out the same year as *Calgary Cavalcade* in 1958. Unlike *Sodbusters* this collection included six Indigenous people,

each presented in a positive light. In 1975, Grant published *And Mighty Women Too*, a companion volume to *Fifty Mighty Men*, with character sketches of 50 Western Canadian women. He also wrote two volumes of collective biography on the Indigenous peoples of Western Canada: *Portraits of the Plains* (1971) on the First Nations; and *Metis Makers of History* (1981). Both books included examples of leading First Nation and Metis community leaders, warriors, athletes, and artists. In *Tatanga Mani. Walking Buffalo of the Stonies* (1969) Grant used the Stoney Nakoda chief's life as a vehicle to tell, very sympathetically, the story of the First Nations in southern Alberta in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Grant resigned as Alberta Liberal leader in 1959, returned to the city council, and became mayor of Calgary from 1963 to 1965. Appointed lieutenant-governor of Alberta in late 1965, he served until 1974. He kept writing, as he simply could not stop. Well into his 80s the former lieutenant-governor kept up his rigorous community commitments, as well as his historical writing and research.

Right to his final years he enjoyed giving historical talks. *Seniors' World*, an Alberta seniors magazine, reported in January 1995 a recent address of his at the Golden Age Club in Calgary. The 92-year-old popular historian spoke on "Funny and Humorous People," a tribute to the foothills personalities, bold and creative, like Bob Edwards, and several early Eastern Canadian characters in Alberta, like Colonel James Walker, one of the original NWMP and later a major business leader, active in many local volunteer organizations until his death in 1936. Walker was the individual selected 40 years later in 1975 as Calgary's Citizen of the Century. Then, Grant added: "When the smart and daring people left Ontario for Alberta, that left a pretty boring province back east." The crowd roared. He still knew how to work an audience (John

W. Berger, “What it’s like to be Mayor of Calgary,” *Senior’s World*, January 1995, page 5).

Just a few weeks before his death on 15 June 2000, Grant completed the dictation to his son-in-law Max Foran of his book on water. *Watershed. Reflections on Water* appeared several months after his death.

I had the good fortune to first meet Max in the fall of 1975, my second year in Calgary. We shared an intense love of history and became close friends. In the late 1990s Max and I and Alberta historian Hugh Dempsey, with several other kindred souls, began to meet every month or so for a late afternoon’s conversation about Western Canadian history. We did so until 2020, and Covid.

Max’s historical contributions over a half a century cover a wide spectrum. Although born and raised in Australia he became, as I did, a Calgarian. In my opinion my friend’s *Calgary. An Illustrated History* (1978) still stands as the most complete and accessible account of Calgary’s past. This well-crafted, superbly researched study remains a model for other Canadian urban historians. Max’s accomplishments as an historian in the 1970s and 1980s are most remarkable considering he had a full-time position at the time as a teacher, with the added duties of school administration as a school principal. He and his wife, Heather MacEwan Foran, were also the parents of two young daughters. Fortunately, Max has the discipline and the talent for obtaining and then assembling an enormous amount of information, shaping it, and explaining it.

Let us now backtrack to mid-August 1974. On entering my new office in the brand-new Social Sciences Building, on the side of the new building with a glimpse of the Rockies, on my desk I saw a complimentary ash tray, a sign of the times. I happily remained in Room 646 for 35 years, from 1974 to 2009. Everything was in perfect equilibrium. I had obtained a two-year posting to teach my passion, my hobby, Canadian History. It was renewed for two

more years, then tenure granted in 1978. Without my securing of my made-in-heaven University of Calgary position there would have been very few, if any, personal “research discoveries in Canadian history.”

Marion McKenna, an American historian with her Ph.D. from Columbia University, had her office next to mine on the south side. She had published greatly in her field of American political and legal history. The first woman to be appointed to the History Department in 1968, she quickly became a full professor. She was a wonderful colleague. Her Ph.D. advisor at Columbia was the distinguished historian Allan Nevins. As an undergraduate student at the University of Toronto I had read and greatly enjoyed his *The Gateway of History*, a revised 1962 version of his original 1938 text. A reference to the importance of on-site inspection in historical work has never left me. Nevins noted in reference to the mid-nineteenth century English historian Lord Macaulay, that he “read twenty books to write a sentence,” and would travel “a hundred miles to make a line of description” (page 372).

European historian Frank Eyck’s office was on the north side of mine. His good friend Irving Hexham, a professor of Religious Studies at the University of Calgary, has left a sketch of this remarkable individual. “The impression he created was of a born and bred English gentleman. His cultivated accent, clearly spoken Queen’s English, his gestures and mannerisms, all spoke of someone totally comfortable in the best society.” Frank was educated at St. Paul’s Public School, London, and had attended Oxford and read Modern History. Irving added: “His sense of fair play, his unfailing courtesy, and his decency, portraying the values of Englishness, made him typical of the best sort of Englishman” (in the “Introduction” to *A Historian’s Pilgrimage. Memoirs and Reflections* by Frank (U.F.J.) Eyck, 1921-2004, ed. Rosemarie Eyck (2009), page xiii). Frank was not, however, born an Englishman. Sent by his parents in 1935 from Nazi Germany at the

age of 12, the German-Jewish schoolboy learned to live in a very strange culture. Frank helped me greatly with my understanding of nineteenth century Britain (see Episode #9).

During my job interview in mid-February 1974 I was very fortunate to meet Ian Getty, who worked for the Stoney Nakoda First Nations at Morley (Mîni Thnî) just 50 kilometres west of Calgary, approximately half-way to Banff. Just three years earlier Ian had completed his M.A. in the History Department, on “The Church Missionary Society among the Blackfoot Indians of Southern Alberta, 1880-1895.” Sharing a common interest in the Indigenous Peoples, we remained in touch after I returned to Toronto. He became a life-long friend. For nearly a week he put me up after my one evening in mid-August 1974 in a decrepit old Calgary hotel, with dim lights, and patches covering up rips in the bed spread. Ian’s mother and sister Margaret welcomed me for meals at the family home near the campus many times that first fall and winter.

Other close friends that first fall and onward included Howard and Tamara Palmer. They made special efforts to invite the newcomer from Ontario over at Thanksgiving and Easter and on many other occasions as well. Howard’s greatest concern was that all groups regardless of their religious or ethnic background be included in Canadian historical accounts. He was a pioneer in the field of Canadian ethnic history, writing about the subject before others in Canadian history recognized its importance. Before his appointment to the History Department, he served as the research director of the multiculturalism program in the Department of the Secretary of State in Ottawa.

That fall I met in person Hugh Dempsey who had so greatly impressed me when I first heard him speak at the University of Toronto several months earlier (see Episode #15). Quite fittingly the book jacket of the 1973 printing of Paul F. Sharp’s classic *Whoop-Up Country. The Canadian-American West*, which I consulted for my first lectures on the Canadian Plains, contains this

ringing endorsement by the American publication, *History*:
“*Crowfoot* is presented with imagination, evokes pathos, and deals with universal problems.”

Through research conducted my first winter at Calgary’s Glenbow Archives, I discovered Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance, a colourful Calgary character in the early 1920s (see Episode #4). Thanks to Hugh I met several individuals, born at the turn of the century, people then in their 70s and 80s, who took me back in their reminiscences to the Calgary of the early twentieth century.

Blood (Kainai) elder Mike Eagle Speaker (1903-1979) knew him well in the 1920s. Long Lance had encouraged the young Blood to leave the reserve to study at Claresholm Agricultural College. He visited him there in 1923 and saw him several times in the mid-1920s in Calgary. They adopted each other as brothers in 1924.

Mike’s great-grandmother had raised him after the death of his mother and grandmother. She herself had been born in the 1820s, half a century before the buffalo herds disappeared. Before Mike entered St. Paul’s, the Anglican residential school on the reserve, she had taught him a great deal about the Bloods’ history and ancient customs. Mike learned much as well from his father Eagle Speaker who had gone on war parties against the Cree.

Images of Mike remain fresh in my mind. The time, for instance, when he demonstrated Plains sign language to one of my history classes at the University. Calgary stands at the junction of the Bow and Elbow Rivers, and to refer to the city you simply touch your elbow. I also recall the proud look on his face as he watched his family and friends dancing in their traditional costumes at “Blood Indian Days.” But, above else, I remember the late fall 1977 visit I made with Mike, his wife, and a grandson, to the Old Agency on the reserve where St. Paul’s once stood. We walked around seeing the sites of the old buildings, where the boys’ and girls’ residences, the school and the barns once stood. Then we visited the cemetery.

When returning to the car I turned and looked behind. My friend was still standing by the cemetery. I heard him giving a prayer in Blackfoot.

Now with a two-year academic appointment secured, with tenure to follow in 1978, ample money flowing in, most weekends free, and the encouragement from my new colleagues, my publications multiplied. My deep research on Grey Owl, one of Canada's greatest tales of self-invention, had begun (see Episode #3). One of my great research discoveries came in October 1974 when I met his "brother," his "Indian brother," John Tootosis (1899-1989). We first corresponded, and in a note on 18 September 1974 he wrote: "Yes, I knew Grey Owl. He was a brother of mine according to Indian custom."

For over 40 years John had been involved in First Nations politics on the Plains. His grandfather's brother was the famous Plains Cree leader Poundmaker. By complete chance on a trip to Ottawa in mid-March 1936 the President of the Saskatchewan section of the League of Indians of Western Canada met Grey Owl, then in the city. John and he got on very well, and in fact the famous writer and lecturer invited his new friend to save money and use his hotel room as if it were his own, which he did. Curious about Grey Owl's identity, John soon found out his Indigenous identity was thin. He could not drum, nor dance authentically. He was not who he said he was.

Why didn't John expose him? Probably, as I explain in my 1990 biography *From the Land of Shadows: The Making of Grey Owl*, because he and other Plains Cree leaders knew he was on their side. The First Nations needed public figures in the dominant society to speak out on their behalf. "They agreed with him that the white man was destroying the country and supported his mission to save the environment" (page 161).

The Cree elder and I became good friends and stayed in touch. In mid-March 1976 he spent four days at my Calgary basement suite. In early May 1983, John stayed over in Calgary for several days at my wife Nancy's and my new home. I drove him one day to Banff. He told me that the promise of the treaties had been to make the Indian self-reliant and self-supporting. This had not happened at all. I noted in my diary: "he told me that he wants the same status for Indian reserves as San Marino has with Italy." On his next visit in mid-November, I recorded in my diary: "He's very enthusiastic about self-government. Told me again about San Marino (had a copy of their treaty with Italy!). Make own laws. Return to old customs. Has worked 50 years for this."

Worthy of note is the letter John sent me on 17 September 1983: "How are you Chief Red Cap. Since you are my chief I have to use your Cree name. Hope everything is going good." I earned my title for being John's train station porter, a "red cap." He had an excellent sense of humour.

Eventually my biographies of Long Lance (1982) and Grey Owl (1990) came out. My study of a third extraordinary character, Ontario-born Will Jackson or Honoré Jaxon, Louis Riel's secretary, made a trilogy of three prairie visionaries, with *Long Lance* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1982; 2nd ed. Red Deer, Alberta: Red Deer Press, 1999); *From the Land of Shadows, The Making of Grey Owl* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1990; 2nd ed. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1999); and *Honoré. Prairie Visionary* (Regina: Coteau, 2007; 2nd ed., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2023).

My work continued with Peter Jones (1802-1856), the Mississauga chief and ordained Methodist minister (see Episodes #5 to #8). The word "Mississauga" is the designation that the early and mid-nineteenth century British Canadian settlers used for the Ojibwe on the north shore of Lake Ontario. The nineteenth century "Mississauga records" stand on the same level as the Jesuit

Fathers' contributions on the Hurons in the mid-seventeenth century. In many ways the "Mississauga" material is richer as Ojibwe themselves composed so much of it. Thanks to the hospitality offered by my mother, a widow since the death of my father in 1973, and after her departure from our family home roughly a quarter of a century later, by my sister Barbara and my brother and his wife Melany, I was able to spend days on end over many years in archives in the Toronto area. My first book on this interesting group was *Sacred Feathers*, a biography of the leading Mississauga chief of the mid-nineteenth century. *Mississauga Portraits*, also with the University of Toronto Press, is its sequel. It looks at the lives of Peter Jones and seven of his mid-nineteenth century Ojibwe contemporaries, all with some connection with the Methodist church. In its time references the study extends from the later eighteenth to early twentieth centuries, but the focus is really on the period from the 1820s to the 1870s. There is a surprising Alberta connection. Ralph Steinhauer, named as Grant MacEwan's replacement as Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, was a great grandson of Henry B. Steinhauer, a young Ojibwe Methodist minister who came to what is now Alberta and founded the earliest Indigenous farming settlement (see Episode #12).

Sacred Feathers was dedicated to my wife and my two sons, David and Peter Smith. They again helped so much to make *Mississauga Portraits* possible. My wife Nancy Townshend gave me her full support for this project, and others, over our entire marriage from 1982 onward. Her contribution has been invaluable. I thank her so much. David and Peter first introduced me to the digital revolution. Since they left home the University of Calgary IT Support Team has helped enormously with innumerable technological issues. One happy consequence of working for so long on this project is the digitization revolution of the early twenty-first century. I have benefitted greatly from the new research tools. Many articles from nineteenth century North American and British newspapers have

now become available on the Web. With the new search engines one can locate many new contemporary newspapers.

The highlight of my early friendship with Ian Getty was the organization of the Department of History's 1977 Western Canadian Studies Conference in mid-February that year. Lieutenant Governor Ralph Steinhauer opened our conference, "One Century Later: The Native Peoples of Western Canada since the Making of the Treaties," in the MacEwan Hall Ballroom on campus. That evening the Stoney Nakoda First Nations west of Calgary hosted a pow-wow at Morley (Mînî Thnî) to mark the 100th anniversary of the signing of Treaty Number Seven.

The conference was an incredible success. As I wrote back to my mother in Oakville on 24 February 1977: "We had over 400 at the opening session, 300 full delegates and 500 at the banquet." At the head table at the Calgary Convention Centre, I sat between the Lieutenant Governor and our banquet speaker, Harold Cardinal, the well-known Alberta First Nations leader. Two memories of my performance as MC remain fresh. Just as the participants seated themselves and the meal was about to be served, Harold Cardinal looked quite unsettled, and directly asked, "Aren't you going to have an opening prayer?" *Faute majeure!* [Major mistake.] Fortunately, I saw seated just before the head table the Plains Cree spiritual leader Albert Lightning, a well-respected man in his late 70s. Immediately I sprang into action, raced down to where he was seated, and asked if he would please say grace. Thank heavens he accepted.

After the blessing I believed all was now well. Not quite. As the meal was being served, and no instructions had come from me, Harold asked; "Aren't you going to have a toast to the Queen?" Honestly, it never occurred to me! But then enlightenment clicked in; the First Nations regard their treaties as agreements with the British Crown. Immediately I recovered lost ground! I stood up

and asked those present please to rise and join me in a toast to the Queen! I thoroughly enjoyed the rest of the banquet!

It was thanks to Ian's contacts and hard work that the Indigenous people participated as fully as they did; one-third of the delegates were Indigenous. Distinguished Canadian historian Sarah Carter, then a M.A. student at the University of Saskatchewan, attended. In her introduction to the 2010 collection of essays with Alvin Finkel and Peter Fortna, *The West and Beyond. New Perspectives on an Imagined Region* (Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2010, page xii), she commented: "A tremendous sense of energy and vitality infused the 1977 gathering, including important exchange and dialogue across disciplines and vocations among the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal delegates." The editors of *The West and Beyond* then added: "It would be difficult to exaggerate the impact this gathering had on Carter, who was casting about for a thesis topic and knew virtually nothing about the history of the Aboriginal people of the West."

The 1976 arrival to the Department of Doug Francis, who had his Ph.D. from York University, as did Howard Palmer, boosted the Canadian history section to seven: Rasporich, Klassen, Bob Shields, and David Bercuson who had arrived just before Howard, and then me. These were the "salad days" for Canada in our department. Doug and I soon acted upon a problem we witnessed in our general Canadian history courses. In a draft proposal to publishers in 1978 we pointed out the challenge first year university students experienced in Canadian History courses. At our university frustration was great among the 300 or 400 students each term to secure assigned readings on reserve in the university. Holt Reinhart and Winston took up our suggestion. *Readings in Canadian History*, two volumes with R. Douglas Francis (seven editions from 1982 to 2009), gave us a contract. In 1984 we began a new project with Richard Jones, a friend from my year at Université Laval (see Episode #2). *Origins*, and *Destinies*, a two-

volume history of Canada jointly authored by R. Douglas Francis, Richard Jones and Donald B. Smith, was the result (1986 to 2010, six editions); and *Journeys*, our one volume history of Canada (2006 and 2010, two editions). On the publication of the first editions of *Origins* and *Destinies*, Barbara Grant, Doug's wife, organized a terrific book launch at the Wainwright Hotel in Calgary's Heritage Park.

My first evening in the city in mid-August 1974, I stayed at the soon to be demolished Carleton Hotel (originally the King George, built in 1911), just two blocks west of the new Convention Centre where we held the banquet for our 1977 Conference "One Century Later." That evening I saw a movie in the Grand Theatre enclosed by an office building bearing the name of Senator James Lougheed, the grandfather of Peter Lougheed, then premier of Alberta (1971-1984). Two decades later I began work on the history of Calgary through eyes of these two heritage buildings, then threatened with demolition, The University of Calgary Press published *Calgary's Grand Story* in 2005, the launch being held in Lougheed House, the mansion, now a national historic site, built by James and his wife Belle Hardisty. I retired four years later in 2009, but not really as I continued with the same zeal for writing and research as always. Teaching I missed, but not marking.

My last major book, *Seen but Not Seen: Influential Canadians and the First Nations from the 1840s to Today*, appeared in 2021. It might best be called a "sequential biography." I love biography as it humanizes the past. In *Seen but Not Seen* I explore in chronological order the ideas and life stories of 16 influential Canadians to narrate the history of Indigenous peoples' marginalization and to understand why non-Indigenous Canadians failed to recognize Indigenous societies and cultures as worthy of respect. To expand my study, I also included at least 20 other intriguing characters. My interest in the topic of the relationship between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples extends back

over half a century, to my M.A. in Canadian history at the Université Laval in Quebec City, and my Ph.D. at the University of Toronto.

In 1971 I published my first academic article in Canadian history in *Ontario History*, the journal of the Ontario Historical Society (OHS). It was on Grey Owl. My ties with the OHS have remained close ever since. Indeed, Rob Levery, then the Executive Director of the OHS, wanted to host the Toronto book launch of *Seen but Not Seen* in the OHS's historic John McKenzie House in Willowdale, in North York. But the one historical truth that all members of our noble profession solemnly accept intervened, and that is, you cannot predict the future! The outbreak of the horrible Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, less than a year before the publication of the book, totally obliterated that plan.

During the late summer of 2021, with Covid still very much at large, Rob Levery and I began to discuss a follow-up to *Seen but Not Seen*. Within a few months a new project had taken shape: a limited series podcast consisting of sketches of approximately 20 historical figures in Canada whom I had researched in depth over half a century. The weekly series, *In Hindsight*, follows the model of old-fashioned radio in its relaxed, accessible focus on different personalities in nineteenth and twentieth century Canadian history. Wearing a set of headphones in Calgary, under the extremely capable direction of OHS Project Manager and Librarian Sarah McCabe in Toronto, I began recording weekly episodes in January 2023. The accompanying written reports for each episode took several days each to compose. Episode #21, completed in October 2023, marks the Final Wrap Up of the series.

After approximately 75,000 words of text, and 10 hours of recorded "old fashioned" radio broadcasts, how does one end *In Hindsight*? For me the legendary Grant MacEwan provides the model for an appropriate conclusion. Upon notification that he had reached the end of the time allotted for his paper at the 1975

Frontier Calgary conference, the published proceedings note (page iv) that the beloved Albertan “bolted from the stage” and left “his audience delightfully suspended with a friendly wave and terse farewell rejoinder, ‘That’s it!’”

Background Notes

Anthony Rasporich and Henry Klassen, eds. *Frontier Calgary. Town, City, and Region, 1875-1914* (1975) based on conference papers of the same name, 9-10 May 1975. Available at <https://digitalcollections.ucalgary.ca/archive/Frontier-Calgary---town--city-and-region--1875-1914-2R3BF1F3EK5Y0.html>.

For useful background information on several First Nations individuals mentioned in this episode see my article (on Mike Eagle Speaker) “Best Known Blood Figure Gone Unnoticed,” *Kainai News*. No. 2 (June 1979), page 8.

Norma Sluman and Jean Goodwill, *John Tootoosis. A Biography of a Cree Leader* (Ottawa, 1982).

Donald B. Smith, *Seen but Not Seen* (2021), pages 262- 264 (on Harold Cardinal).

Dianne Meili, “Albert Lighting, Cree, Ermineskin Reserve,” in *Those Who Know. Profiles of Alberta’s Native Elders* (Edmonton, 1991), pages 79-88.

The papers from the 1977 Western Canadian Studies Conference appear in *One Century Later. Western Canadian Reserve Indians since Treaty 7*, ed. Ian A.L. Getty and Donald B. Smith (Vancouver, 1978). For a fully documented study of the writings of Grant MacEwan, see Donald B. Smith’s “Alberta’s Foremost Storyteller,” *Alberta History*, Autumn 2001, pages 13-21.