

April 2, 1977

Dear Caroline:

Lovely to have a letter from you to day. I've been meaning to write for several weeks to say that we are, indeed, coming east but not to Ottawa, to Toronto, where the meetings are being held this year. I guess I didn't write sooner because I don't see one gasp of air while we're there, looked in meetings all the time we're in town. We arrive the night of the 5th and leave the morning of the 10th for a week in Montreal and environs with Marie-Claire and Mary. Helen thought she'd be free while I was tangled in meetings, but she's been asked to be eyes for Jean Little, a writer of fine children's books who has only 10% sight and finds that sort of thing scary unless she has an attendant; so Helen has volunteered and sacrificed a hope of seeing a few selling galleries, bookstores and the like. The only public event, which might have entertained you and given us a chance to lay eyes on you takes place on the night of the 9th when you'll already be in Ottawa; so our trip, as far as connecting with you, is obviously going to be a washout. We'll just have to pray for snow and a spring visit next year.

It will be my first visit to Toronto which I have avoided with the same suspicious I've had for New York, though not as pronounced, and I feel the ~~more~~ more dubious, given the press there at the moment. I've had good press for the book except that generated in Toronto--even in Ottawa and Vancouver, never mind the States, and I can only figure out that the hostility is part of a political battle that has very little to do with me or the book, but I'm never comfortable in a place that things of itself as a big pond scholding little frogs. I am comforted that there is safety in ~~hundreds~~ numbers, that with at least 125 writers in town I won't have to deal, P. Burdon always big enough to hide behind. And maybe Helen and I can sneak away for an hour or two to take delight in the real ~~x~~ city.

Helen saw an announcement of your book and crowed. I hope it really is out by now.

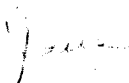
I asked the editor to send you Canadian Fiction, thinking you'd probably be amused by the interview, interested in the rest of it.

We spent the month of February on the desert in southern California, so good we plan to spend both January and February there next year. It gives me time to dry out, get some of the aches under control, live without a neck brace for a while, see southern friends. I ate too much Mexican food to get rid of the extra 15 pounds I've put on since I couldn't be active, but I did swim twice a day, and that was marvelous.

We're staying at King Edward, wherever that is, and, if you're home and feeling like checking in, we'll probably be there after 9:30 p.m. on the 5th of May, which will seem early to us so that we might at least have a visit by phone.

Have a good time in New York.

Love,

A handwritten signature, possibly "John", written in dark ink. The signature is somewhat cursive and appears to be written over a faint, illegible mark or ghosting of text.