

**THIRTEENTH ANNUAL
HISTORICAL WALKING TOUR**



Fondation du Cimetière

Beechwood

Cemetery Foundation

INTRODUCTION

Poetry and politics have always been natural to Ottawa, at least since 1832, when Hamnett Kirkes Pinhey published “The Carleton Election, or the Tale of a Bytown Ram,” a comical poem about an unruly local by-election. In 1872, Sir John A. Macdonald told an Ottawa audience that “he felt assured that the civil service of Canada would compare favorably with that of any country in the world. Here there were, among its members, poets, men of science and men of literary tastes and habits, some of whom had even European fame, and if they had not more of public acknowledgment, it was rather because of a limited sphere of action than of capacity.”

In the years following Confederation, civil servants and members of parliament lived up to Macdonald’s proud description, as a diverse community of anglophone and francophone poets, authors and essayists grew along with the capital. Unchanged over the last 150 years is the remarkable literary concentration at Ottawa. Today, Ottawa’s poets benefit from the presence of small presses such as *Bywords* and *above/ground press*; publishers such as *BuschekBooks* and *Les Éditions du Vermillon*; reading series such as *Tree*, *Dusty Owl* and *Capital Slam*; institutions such as *Library and Archives Canada* and the *Ottawa Public Library*; events such as the *Ottawa International Writers Festival* and the *Ottawa Small Press Book Fair*; organizations such as *Ottawa Independent Writers* and the *Kanata Writers’ Group*. These and many other stimulating resources will ensure that a proud literature and a rich literary heritage will continue to flourish in Canada’s capital.

POET’S HILL

As early as 1896, an Ottawa magazine had the following to say regarding literary commemoration in the capital: “It is about time that we in Canada should consider keeping alive the memories of the many men and women who, by their literary or other gifts, have added in some degree to the development of our culture and intelligence. Should there not be some place in the Dominion - and what more fit place than Ottawa - where memorials of them might be preserved?”

At last in September 2006, this vision became a reality at Poet’s Hill, a stage for literary commemoration, reflection and education at Beechwood Cemetery. With a grand vista of Parliament Hill in the distance, Poet’s Hill inspires an active appreciation for Canadian history and culture as revealed through poetry and other forms of literary expression.

Among the features on Poet’s Hill is a podium to encourage literary expression and composition, and four flower beds dedicated to writers who represent the range of literary heritage here at Beechwood: William Pittman Lett witnessed and wrote about the building of the Rideau Canal and the growth of Ottawa; Archibald Lampman has become synonymous with Ottawa’s literary spirit; in the early 20th century, Arthur Bourinot was one of the first winners of a Governor General’s Award for poetry; and in the late 20th century, John Newlove won that award as the voice of a new generation of poets who reshaped Canadian literature in the 1960s and 1970s.

SCOTT, *Duncan Campbell*

Born in Ottawa on August 2, 1862, Scott became a clerk in the Department of Indian Affairs at the age of 17. He rose in this department until, at the time of his retirement in 1932, he was its deputy superintendent-general.

His friend Archibald Lampman inspired him to become a poet. He is now recognized as one of the outstanding figures in Canadian poetry. He was the author of *The Magic House and Other Poems* (Ottawa, 1893), *Labour and the Angel* (Boston, 1898), *New World Lyrics and Ballads* (Toronto, 1905), *Via Borealis* (Toronto, 1906), *Lines in Memory of Edmund Morris* (N.P., 1915), *Lundy's Lane and Other Poems* (Toronto, 1926) and *The Green Cloister: Later Poems* (Toronto, 1935). He also wrote two volumes of short stories, *In the Village of Viger* (Boston, 1896) and *The Witching of Elspie* (New York, 1923). He wrote the preface to *The Poems of Archibald Lampman* (Toronto, 1900). His last publication, *The Circle of Affection* (Toronto, 1947) was a mixture of prose and verse.

He was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1899 and conferred the degree of D. Litt in 1922 by the University of Toronto. He passed away on December 19, 1947.



BOURINOT, *Arthur Stanley*

Born in Ottawa on October 3, 1893, Bourinot was called to the bar of Ontario in 1920 and practised law until 1929. He later became head of the legal department of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. Starting in 1915, Mr. Bourinot published many collections of poems, short stories, articles and legal annotations. His commemorative poem, "Canada's Fallen," was awarded a Governor General's prize in 1919; he also won the Governor General's Literary Award for Poetry in 1939 for his collection *Under the Sun*.

He edited the *Canadian Poetry Magazine* from 1948 to 1954 and from 1966 to 1968; also he was associate editor of *Canadian Author and Bookman* (1953-60). His carefully researched historical and biographical books and articles on Canadian poets have made a valuable contribution to the field of literary criticism in Canada.

In 1967, he received the Canada Centennial Medal and, in November 1968, the Medal of Service of the Order of Canada. Bourinot passed away on January 17, 1969.



NEWLOVE, *John*

Born in Regina on June 13, 1938 and raised in Kamsack, Sask., Newlove first gained prominence for his poetry in the late 1960s.

Fellow poet Paul Wilson says that Newlove was one of the first to write about Saskatchewan, and despite leaving his home province early in his career, its influence never left his writing, which often included images of and references to the Canadian Prairies.

He won the Governor General's award for *Lies* in 1972, the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild Founders Award in 1984, and the Literary Press Group Award in 1986. His poetry has been published in journals, magazines and literary anthologies in Canada and the United States and in several countries abroad. Newlove's poetry was most popular in the 1960's and 1970's when he was considered one of the dominant voices of Canadian poetry.

John Newlove died in Ottawa on December 23, 2003. He was 65.

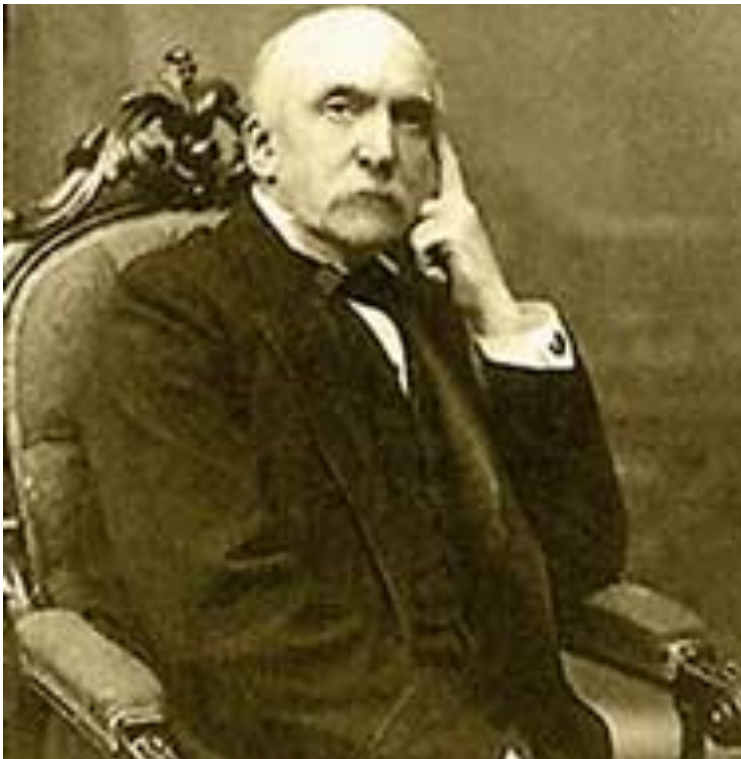


DAVIN, *Nicholas Flood*

Nicholas Flood Davin was a lawyer, journalist and politician, born at Kilfinane, Ireland on January 13, 1843. The first MP for Assiniboia West (later part of Saskatchewan), Davin was known as the voice of the North-West. Davin was a parliamentary and war correspondent in England before arriving in Toronto in 1872, where he wrote for the *Globe and Mail*. In Toronto, Davin was noticed as an orator and a writer.

Davin wrote *The Irishman in Canada* (1877), as well as poetry and an unpublished novel. His *Eos: An Epic of the Dawn and other Poems* (1889) was the first volume of poetry published in the North-West Territories. The rest of his published work consists mainly of his own speeches.

He died in Winnipeg on October 18, 1901. Davin left his mark on the province and remains the only politician after whom a locality, a school, and a street have been named, and who is the subject of a biography, a play and an opera.



OSBORNE, *Marian "May"*

Born in Montreal, Quebec on May 14, 1871, Osborne was a poet and dramatist. She lived in Toronto for many years, but from 1920 until her death she lived in Ottawa.

She was known to have artistic, dramatic and athletic talents. She had an excellent voice, painted, sang, acted in the theatre and as a young woman, was a fencing champion in Ontario.

She published three book of poems, two children's books, and two plays one of which was produced in Ottawa and Montreal. She was the author of *Poems* (1914), *The Song of Israel and Other Poems* (1923), *Flight Commander Stork* (1925), a lyrical drama entitled *Sappho and Phaon* (1926), and a prose comedy called *The Point of View* (1926). She also wrote ballets and screen-plays. She was Vice-President of the Poetry Society for Canada and councillor for Canada for the Poetry Society of England.

Osborne died on September 5, 1931.



CAMPBELL, *William Wilfred*

Born in Kitchener (then Berlin), Canada West in 1860, Campbell became one of Canada's most brilliant poets.

At the turn of the century, Campbell wrote an idyllic portrait of Merivale Road. A versatile, passionate writer, Campbell also wrote romances and several closet dramas. His first two volumes of verse were *Snowflakes and Sunbeams* (1888) and *Lake Lyrics* (1889). He contributed to the "Mermaid Inn" literary columns in the *Toronto Globe* in the early 1890s, and he was elected to the Royal Society of Canada in 1892.

Mackenzie King admired Campbell so much that he instigated a movement to erect a memorial to the poet. It takes the form of a stone bench beside the grave, which lies in a corner of the plot. The bench once featured a bronze plaque, now missing, which had a portrait of William Campbell, and several lines from a poem were carved at one end. The bench is intended to give admirers of Campbell's poetry an opportunity to sit in serenity and reflect upon his work. William Wilfred Campbell passed away on January 1, 1918 at the age of 56.



LETT, *William Pittman*

Lett Street is named after William Pittman Lett, a journalist, poet and author. Born on August 12, 1819 in Duncanon, Ireland, he came to Canada with his parents when he was about six months old.

His father, Captain Andrew Lett of the 66th Cameronian Regiment, was one of the first settlers of Richmond, Ontario. The family arrived in Richmond in 1820, taking Captain Lett's land grant for military service. The family moved to Ottawa in 1849. Here William Pittman Lett left on record in historic verse, his famous "Recollections of Bytown and its Old Inhabitants."

As editor of the Ottawa Advocate newspaper, the younger Lett displayed his ability as a writer of both poetry and prose. In the winter of 1850, he organized a dramatic club that played in the first town hall, on Elgin Street, during several winter seasons.

Five years later, he was elected to the office of city clerk when the City of Ottawa was incorporated, and remained in this position until his retirement 36 years later. Lett passed away at the age of 73 on August 16, 1892.



LAMPMAN, *Archibald*

Born in 1861, Lampman began as a writer for the Trinity College magazine *Rouge et Noir*. He published his first poetry collection, *Among the Millet*, in 1888. As a poet, he was renowned for carefully crafted observations and contemplation of nature.

Between 1893 and 1896, Lampman lived in the grandiose Philomene Terrace on Daly Avenue. He was enthusiastic about the house, as it was the first time he had a room of his own in which to write. He earned his living as a clerk in the Post Office Department. He passed away on February 19, 1899, at the age of 37.

He is widely regarded as Canada's finest 19th century English language poet. Lampman's ability to write detailed, meaningful poems is among the reasons his work has had a lasting import in Canadian literary culture. Across Ottawa, Lampman is recognized in historical plaques on Slater Street, Daly Avenue, Montreal Road (in St. Margaret's Church) and at Beechwood Cemetery, where he is buried. He appears in the grand stained-glass window at the Main Branch of the Ottawa Public Library together with the likes of Shakespeare, Byron and Tennyson. He has a street named after him, and an annual prize bearing his name is awarded by *Arc Magazine* to recognize local achievement in poetry.



OTHER IMPORTANT LITERARY FIGURES AT BEECHWOOD

Sir John George Bourinot (1837-1902) - Section 22, Lot 36 S.E. Pt.

Born in Sydney, Nova Scotia, 1837, worked as journalist in Nova Scotia, came to Ottawa shortly after Confederation as clerk in the Senate, became an influential writer on parliamentary and constitutional issues, hosted literary gatherings with Lampman, Campbell, Scott, others, his son is the poet Arthur Bourinot.

Frederick Augustus Dixon (1843-1919) - Section 48, Lot 38 S. Pt.

Born in England, came to Canada in 1870, joined the civil service in 1878, was tutor to children of Governor General Dufferin, wrote plays for performances at Rideau Hall, wrote a chapter on Ottawa in Picturesque Canada in 1882, collaborated with other local writers including Henry Morgan and the poet Susan Frances Harrison.

Norman Gregor Guthrie (1877-1929) - Section 50, Lot 47 W.

Born in Guelph 1877, practiced law at Ottawa, wrote under pseudonym John Crichton, selected publications: A Vista (1921), Flower and Flame (1924), Pillar of Smoke (1925), Flake and Petal (1928).

William Dawson LeSeuer (1840-1917) - Section 35, Lot 5

Known as "The Sage of Ottawa," most respected Canadian essayist on cultural issues in 19th century, president of the Ottawa Literary and Scientific Society (among other groups), was Archibald Lampman's superior at the Post Office Department.

Henry James Morgan (1842-1913) - Section 48, Lot 20 S.E.

Born in Quebec City, 1842, came to Ottawa with Civil Service in mid-1860s, compiled the first detailed bibliography of Canadian literature: Bibliotheca Canadensis, or A Manual of Canadian Literature (1867), headed the committee to erect a monument to N.F. Davin at Beechwood Cemetery.

John Almon Ritchie (1863-1935) - Section 48, Lot 35

Born in Saint John, New Brunswick, 1863, his father was a Supreme Court Justice, close friends with Archibald Lampman, a college mate, wrote plays and poetry, lines from his poem "There is a Land" are inscribed over the main door of the Peace Tower.

Gustavus William Wicksteed (1799-1898) - Section 50, Lot 100

Born in Liverpool, 1799, came to Canada in 1821, joined the civil service as a law clerk, published a series of essays and poems during 1880s and 1890s: Waifs in Verse and Prose, Friend of Sir John A. Macdonald.

PARLIAMENT HILL

By A.S. Bourinot

I

Great men have known the beauty of this hill,
Bound by the river at its rocky base,
Brooding upon the destiny of our race
The dreams they visioned they are with us still.
Macdonald whose great heart and vigorous will
Welded disparate parts in unity,
And Cartier, too, and all that galaxy
Who planned and worked the union to fulfill.

Time has not touched the beauty of its face,
This hill that links the present with the past,
Impregnable it stands to front the blast,
A diadem of stars upon its head,
Proud in the thought that here mighty dead
Find forever an imperishable place.

II

Here Davin spoke, and Howe whose sounding surge
Of words was surf beating on a prominence.
McGee here made with tragic eloquence
His final speech for union on the verge
Of death, and Laurier with silver phrase
Would charm the Commons by his gallic grace.
All, all are gone, the builders of this place;
Their names will be remembered all our days.

Great men have loved the beauty of this height
Where Lampman walked, dreaming of life and fate,
And the incomprehensible things that wait
To snare the mind of man, the luring bait
Of fame and power and riches in his sight
Were transient as a comet in the night.

III

All, all are gone, but others take their place,
Coming and going with life's altering tide,
But this great height with its unchanging face
Bearing the north wind's force in strength and pride,
The long, slow lapse of interminable years,
Looks to the low blue hills of eternity,
Finding in them the faith that calms all fears
And stands, a symbol of stability,
In this changed world where all is flux and flow,
And autocrats, their columnists of hate,
Attempt with crushing heel and blow on blow
The last free nations to annihilate.
Far longer than this height shall scatheless stand
Shall freedom hold full sway in this our land.

IN BEECHWOOD CEMETERY

By Archibald Lampman

Here the dead sleep--the quiet dead. No sound
Disturbs them ever, and no storm dismays.
Winter mid snow caresses the tired ground,
And the wind roars about the woodland ways.
Springtime and summer and red autumn pass,
With leaf and bloom and pipe of wind and bird,
And the old earth puts forth her tender grass,
By them unfelt, unheeded and unheard.
Our centuries to them are but as strokes
In the dim gamut of some far-off chime.
Unaltering rest their perfect being cloaks--
A thing too vast to hear or feel or see--
Children of Silence and Eternity,
They know no season but the end of time.

OTTAWA

By Duncan Campbell Scott

City about whose brow the north winds blow,
Girdled with woods and shod with river foam,
Called by a name as old as Troy or Rome,
Be great as they, but pure as thine own snow;
Rather flash up amid the auroral glow,
The Lamia city of the northern star,
Than be so hard with craft or wild with war,
Peopled with deeds remembered for their woe.

Thou art too bright for guile, too young for tears,
And thou wilt live to be too strong for Time;
For he may mock thee with his furrowed frowns,
But thou wilt grow in calm throughout the years,
Cinctured with peace and crowned with power sublime,
The maiden queen of all the towered towns.

IT'S WINTER IN OTTAWA

By John Newlove

The streets are full of overweight corporals,
of sad grey computer captains, the impedimenta
of a capital city, struggling through the snow.

There is a cold gel on my
belly, an instrument
is stroking it incisively, the machine
in the half-lit room is scribbling my future.

It is not illegal to be unhappy.
A shadowy technician says alternately,
Breathe, and, You may stop now.
It is not illegal to be unhappy.

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Special thanks to Dr. Steven Artelle
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