

*Outline* and read it, her own manuscript had been returned to her with a recommendation for radical revising, but not before Macmillan had held it for more than six months. Therein lay the cornerstone of her case against Wells. Totally convinced of his use of her own work in his published *Outline*, she adopted the vindication of her convictions as her lifetime mission and throughout the decades of a long life, she did not relinquish her purpose.

Intriguingly, McKillop layers the biographies of Deeks and Wells to take us on parallel paths through the lives and works of two people whose lives could hardly be more disparate. Wells, a poor boy who made good, was intensely proud of his achievements and his over-vaulting of his designated "class." He was by far the most famous novelist of the first decades of the twentieth century and was faithfully assisted and cosseted by his wife, Catherine, whom he insisted on calling Jane. He was a constant womanizer of the most blatant kind, but "the lonely and vulnerable young woman worshipped him."

Florence Deeks was one of the three daughters of a family who were Loyalist in origin and intensely proud of it, born in Morrisburg, Ontario, in 1864 but resident in Toronto from the nineties. Her brother, George, made a fortune working in the railway industry, having developed a new technique for laying tracks in difficult country. He built himself a mansion on Admiral Road, and was the chief support of his widowed mother and sisters who lived in a house he had bought on Farnham Avenue. Florence was clever and as dogged in her working habits as she later proved to be in her prosecution of Wells. She passed her Senior Matriculation in Morrisburg when she was thirty years old, having spent most of her twenties, she said later, in travelling in Europe and America and in the study of art and literature. In Toronto, she enrolled at Victoria College, but did not complete her

degree, beginning to teach at the Presbyterian Ladies College in the late nineties. Her interests were artistic and literary and through the very active Women's Art Association, she became vitally interested in the burgeoning Women's Movement, just then beginning to build its momentum in Toronto under the enthusiastic leadership of Flora Denison.

When Florence Deeks finished her reading of Wells's *Outline*, she was so enraged by her conviction of his plagiarism of her work that she marched his book back to Eaton's. On sober second thought she bought another copy and set out to compare carefully his work with her own. Adding insult to injury, she found that he had completely removed all her stress on women. Otherwise she found many parallel and identical passages and, most damning of all, even the same mistakes. No one could ever accuse Deeks of hasty actions. It was 1922 before she finished a careful comparison of Wells' work and her own and 1925 before she showed a revised manuscript, now called *The Highway Of History*, to John Saul of Macmillan. The ensuing legal tangles continued for the rest of Florence Deeks' life and finally took her to England, a privy council appeal, and a personal appeal to George V. Because of the clever layering of the text, McKillop makes all these legal tangles as well as the actual courtroom appearances engrossing but, to a feminist, enraging reading.

Predictably, she was condescended to, treated as a hysterical woman and, finally, as an infernal nuisance. But her claims were also taken seriously by a number of men whom she enlisted to give their opinions on her manuscript, and it was Norman Tilley, who had a reputation as Ontario's finest litigator, who acted on her behalf when the case first came to trial.

Throughout, it is obvious that McKillop, having painstakingly researched the whole case, firmly believes in the validity of Deeks' accusations. Unproven though it is and

will remain, her manuscript travelled across the Atlantic to Wells at a time when he could and did use it for the work that above all ensured his fame and wealth. A Canadian Macmillan functionary must have been the agent, and suspicion rests strongly on Frank Wise, founding president of Macmillan of Canada, whose later conviction for forgery and imprisonment were quite divorced from the Deeks case. McKillop's even-handed treatment of all the tortuous byways of the case is a *tour de force*, as is his sketching of the context in which each of its principals lived. Biographers had long since unmasked the unscrupulous Wells, though always stressing his personal, not professional sleaziness; no one had memorialized Florence Deeks as McKillop has done, bringing her back among us in all her stubborn early feminism, naïveté, and rectitude.

## **DIARY OF A EUROPEAN TOUR, 1900: MARGARET ADDISON'S SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY AND EDUCATION**

Margaret Addison and Jean O'Grady, Eds.  
Montreal: McGill-Queens  
University Press, 1999.

**BY DENISE ADELE  
HEAPS**

For many University of Toronto students over the past several decades, the name Margaret Addison (1868-1940) likely connoted, if anything at all, an eponymous Victoria College residence for women. Constructed

in 1958, the beige-bricked curved edifice of uninspired design is situated behind and shadowed by the theatrical "Jacobethan" architecture of Annesley Hall, the university's first women's residence, which was erected in 1903. I was among the group for whom the name Margaret Addison signified nothing until I read her *Diary of a European Tour, 1900*, which was recently exhumed and scrupulously edited by Jean O'Grady for its premier publication. Now I identify Margaret Addison, the first Dean of Annesley Hall who held this high-profile position for twenty-nine years, among the pioneers and champions of women's post-secondary education in Canada.

Annesley Hall, O'Grady points out, testified "in bricks and mortar" to women's presence at the university during a transitional period when female students—a relatively new student body on campuses across the western world—were frequently received by an all-male professorate and male peers with indifference or hostility. You might say that Addison, by vigorously supporting and influencing the conception, planning, and *modus operandi* of this rock-solid symbol of women's inclusion, is one of the foremothers to Canadian university-educated women. Thus the primary significance and appeal of her travel diary, which documents a ten-month, turn-of-the-century European tour three years prior to her appointment as Dean, is biographical and historical. Composed at a time when Annesley Hall was in the process of becoming a reality, the text captures Addison's increasing research engagement with European forms of education for women, culminating in extended periods of observation and inquiry at Oxford and Cambridge's women's colleges. We are offered personal glimpses into the mind of a woman on the cusp of making the facilitation of women's post-secondary education in Canada her life's work, as well as, in O'Grady's words, "remarkable insight into the cultural milieu of a formative era in

higher education for women."

Like Addison, O'Grady has researched her subject meticulously, and her well-documented introduction, in conjunction with her thorough prefaces, interpolations, and endnotes to each diary chapter, provide the necessary biographical and historical contexts for a fuller appreciation of Addison and her text. Moreover, in her introduction, O'Grady broaches issues of gender, genre, and publication, positing the importance of retrieving women's life-writing in such forms as the travel diary—in the absence of more formal documents—to the revisionist project of constructing women's history. Addressing the question of literary merit, O'Grady praises Addison's articulate evocations of Europe, but also acknowledges that her weakness as a travel writer lies in her affinity for including lengthy, tedious, guide-bookish catalogues enumerating bric-a-brac and treasures that fill libraries, museums, and galleries. Indeed, Addison goes for quantity rather than quality of representation at times, and O'Grady's editorial decision to omit or synopsise many of these inventories should certainly enhance the literary appreciation of the casual reader.

O'Grady attempts to further foster the literary pleasure of the text by presenting it as a more polished, seamless, unified product than it actually is. The original travel diary, never prepared by Addison for publication, follows the natural, erratic rhythms of life and travel rather than art, resulting in narrative lacunae as well as passages that occasionally, jarringly, end mid-sentence. O'Grady softens the impact of these truncations and absences through various strategies. For example, the text breaks off mid-sentence when Addison is scouting for rooming houses soon after her arrival in Berlin, and does not resume until her departure from Berlin and arrival in Antwerp. To fill in the gaps, O'Grady inserts passages from the rough copy of Addison's article on women's edu-

cation in Europe found in the back pages of the diary, an article that was eventually published in *Acta Victoriana*. This passage details Addison's visits to and observations of various schools in Berlin. Other narrative gaps are filled in with excerpts from Addison's voluminous travel correspondence. The literary purist might justly frown upon this sort of intrusive editorial practice because it creates an artificial textual continuum; as well, it detracts from the impact of the abrupt breaks and silences: important (non)utterances that speak volumes to feminist literary theorists. Arguably, additions such as articles and letters, which are certainly useful to the biographer and historian, belong in an appendix.

Referring to the bipartite taxonomy of travel narratives developed by Mary Louise Pratt in *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, O'Grady identifies Addison's diary as "sentimental" rather than "scientific" because the personal pronoun—with its subjective, personal, emotional responses—is used "freely." I would argue that Addison slips back and forth between the positions of the sentimental and scientific travel writer with great ease, and that the objective observation of the scientific narrative would be more apparent were Addison's long lists and inventories left intact by the editor. Without a doubt, however, the sentimentality of Addison's diary increases, reaching a feverish pitch in the final chapters documenting her encounters with the female heads and associates of the Oxford and Cambridge women's colleges. O'Grady surmises that some readers may see traces of lesbianism in Addison's lengthy and passionate prose portraits of several of these women, particularly Blanche Clough of Newham, in whom Addison finds, suggestively, "an inimitable charm, an indescribable attraction, a subtle bewitchery, a personal magnetism, that no pen can describe." However, drawing on various contemporary

studies of the intense, emotional bonds of friendship among nineteenth-century women, O'Grady argues that it would be "culturally insensitive" to "label" these alliances as lesbian, a sexual orientation incompatible with cultural assumptions of the time.

While I agree it is best to avoid labels here, I do feel there is nothing culturally insensitive in speculating on repressed erotic desire; in fact, it seems naïve not to indulge in such speculation after a century of psychoanalytic theory. Addison's worshipful, poetic, fawning representations of her professional and social encounters with women who leave her as prostrate and head-achy as a courtly lover do carry glimpses of erotic attraction. However, I also recognize other, more concrete, possibly interconnected factors that likely shaped and determined Addison's passionate responses. These women were mentors to Addison, who, O'Grady surmises, had similar, inchoate ambitions of leadership at the time of her journey, so that meeting and networking with them would have had the potential to create an abundance of professional nervous energy and egoistic desire. No doubt, Addison was also quite simply thrilled to meet peers—fellow educators—who took her and her questions seriously. Her welcome reception at the Oxford and Cambridge women's colleges contrasts starkly with her treatment at the University of Heidelberg, where a glowering male Chancellor responded to her request for a curriculum by flinging the item across his desk with disdain before turning his back on her. Moreover, Addison's colonial mentality certainly amplified her impassioned reverence for the female figures administering the women's university education system in England. Addison idealized most things British and cherished a view of herself as a British subject: to wit, at the 1900 World's Fair in Paris, the British Pavilion makes Addison "proud of being English," while the Canadian Pavilion is

"not quite up to the mark." In the company of these powerful women, Addison appears to see herself as short of the mark because of her youth, inexperience, and colonial identity, but it is a shortcoming she is bent on remedying on colonial soil. Regardless, whatever the stimulus or combination of stimuli that galvanizes Addison's prose in the final chapters of her *Diary of a European Tour, 1900*, it makes for the most fascinating, engaging reading in the text: a climax, if you will..

## WHEN MEMORY SPEAKS: EXPLORING THE ART OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Jill Ker Conway.  
New York: Vintage. 1999.

BY SHERRILL CHEDA

How do we tell our life stories—as tragedies or as comedies? Are we heroines changing the world or victims being acted upon? Do we use an active or a passive voice? In *When Memory Speaks*, Jill Ker Conway, an excellent writer and thinker as well as a scholar and memoirist in her own right, focuses on the gender conventions that shape narrative and on what writers leave out. Once you read this outstanding book you will never again think of or tell your or anyone else's life story the same way.

Conway begins by discussing the archetypal life scripts for men and women in western cultures. As we know, the hero surmounts tests in an outer or inner journey and his defining characteristic is action. In contrast, the heroine is preoccupied with romantic life, marriage, and family

and her defining characteristic is an emotional response. When women finally got access to education in the second half of the nineteenth century, their public silence was belied by their private diaries and letters. Even those who wrote publicly wrote about their achievements as romance.

Conway brilliantly explores male secular heroes such as Rousseau, Ben Franklin, Frederick Douglass, Henry Ford, and W.E.B. DuBois. Romantic heroines in North American autobiography were those of captivity—by Indians or slavery. Later, reformers, such as Jane Addams and Margaret Sanger, wrote in a passive voice, never admitting that they were agents for change. It was only after reading *The Feminine Mystique* in the sixties that U.S. women abandoned the romantic myth in droves.

Imperial memoirs exhibit the different ways male and female adventurers/missionaries reported their stories. For example, Livingstone's motives for exploration in Africa were a mixture of political, economic, and religious objectives and he wrote about his activities as adventure. Sarah Boardman Judson, a missionary in Burma, had many adventures and loved them but wrote home mostly about Christian conversion themes. When newspapers replaced missionary and geographical societies as sponsors of exploration, the stories became more sensational, so that T.E. Lawrence's Middle East explorations have captured our imaginations while those of Gertrude Bell or Mary Kingsley, who passed as a trader in Africa and made friends with African tribes, have not.

The two world wars changed everything for both men and women. Siegfried Sassoon and Vera Brittain alike saw the futility of war. Later, often overlooked, nurses, memoirs from the Vietnam War tell it like it was and raise difficult moral questions.

Conway then turns to feminist plots and points out that, given the culture of the times, we must read early nineteenth century feminist