

Science, Literature and Revolution: The Life and Writings of Dyson Carter

James Doyle

In a professional writing career that spanned more than fifty years, Canadian author Dyson Carter produced hundreds of magazine and newspaper articles, dozens of short stories, and seventeen books, including five novels. The bulk of his output was devoted to the popularization of science, the exploration of the relationship between science and society, and the exposition of his political beliefs. Some of his writing was self-published or issued by marginal organizations, but in the 1930s and 40s his articles and stories appeared in prominent newspapers and magazines in Canada and the United States. Three of his early books were issued by American commercial publishers, and were widely and respectfully reviewed in both countries.

By comparison with other writers who have had this kind of exposure, it might be expected that Carter would be mentioned in standard reference works on Canadian literature. Yet his name does not appear in the *Oxford Companion to Canadian History and Literature* (1967) or its supplement (1973), or in the *Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature* (1983, rev. 1997); he is not mentioned in the *Literary History of Canada* (1965) or its supplements; he is likewise excluded from the Canadian volumes of the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*. A search of reference books on Canadian literature turned up only three citations: a very brief biography and bibliography in Clara Thomas' *Canadian Novelists 1920-1945* (1946), a listing of his name, year of birth, and the titles of three of his novels and one non-fiction book in R.E. Watters' *Checklist of Canadian Literature* (1959), plus a passing mention in W.H. New's *History of Canadian Literature* (1989).

The reason for Carter's exclusion from most Canadian literary histories is not difficult to discover. For much of his adult life he was a member of the Communist Party of Canada (CPC). Like Norman Bethune, he was a victim of the collective hostility and amnesia that seized Canadians during the Cold War. Unlike Bethune, however, no economic rapprochement with Communist countries, not even the end of the Cold War, has reclaimed Carter's reputation.

Fortunately, in 1985 the National Archives of Canada accepted from Carter a collection of his books, pamphlets, and articles, which provides a substantial record of his various careers as scientist, writer, editor, publisher, and political activist. Personal information about him, however, is more difficult to come by. The most comprehensive source, in fact, is Carter's last published novel, *This Story Fierce and Tender* (1986), which appears to be a thinly disguised account of his childhood and early adult life.

The use of autobiographical fiction as a source of biographical informa-

8 Left History 5.2

tion raises a great many critical questions, which literary theorists and critics have rather neglected. One notable exception is Barbara Foley, whose book-length study of American “proletarian” fiction of the 1930s, although not centrally concerned with the fact-value of fiction, includes some tentative suggestions on the problems of verification and reliability of autobiographical novels. In a brief discussion of “Fact and Fiction in Proletarian Fictional Autobiography,” Foley suggests that in many of the examples of this genre that she has studied the reader is encouraged to infer a conflation of author and main character. “The principle of coherence shaping the text” of Agnes Smedley’s *Daughter of Earth* (1929), for instance, “derives from the narrative’s close correspondence to the events of Smedley’s own life,” rather than on the development of a novelistic “character.” Foley traces the conventions of autobiographical fiction followed by Smedley and other American “proletarian” novelists to such influential twentieth-century bourgeois modernist *bildungsromans* as James Joyce’s *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1915) and Thomas Wolfe’s *Look Homeward, Angel* (1929), which likewise adhere closely to the discoverable facts of their authors’ lives.¹

But the ultimate means of testing the factual authenticity of autobiographical fiction must be the appeal to external evidence – undisguised autobiography, letters, the testimony of objective witnesses. It is seldom likely that all details can be thus verified, but in confirming as many details as possible, the biographer can at least establish a degree of probability as to the reliability of the fictional source. This is what I have attempted to do with *This Story Fierce and Tender*. I have found that many of the external details in the novel have been confirmed either by objective information, or by Carter’s reference to these details in autobiographical writing produced in many cases several years before *This Story* was written. Among the general details thus confirmed are Carter’s year of birth, the profession of his parents, Carter’s lifelong struggle with medical problems, his education, his involvement with the Communist Party, and the main facts of his career as a journalist and novelist. Although there are many details that I have not been able to confirm, I have encountered no instances of external evidence that contradicts a biographical assertion of the novel. In the following pages I have indicated as clearly as possible the source of my information, demonstrating how the novel’s version of events is confirmed by other evidence and indicating where such confirmation is lacking.

Herbert Dyson Carter was born on 2 February 1910 in Saint John, New Brunswick. His parents, Gertrude and William R. Carter, were members of the Salvation Army sent out from Britain first to Bermuda, then to Canada, where they served in Montreal and Saint John. In 1912 the Carters were appointed superintendent and matron of the Provincial Detention Home for Juveniles in Winnipeg. “I literally grew up in reform schools,” Dyson Carter wrote in 1946, “taking grade schooling along with delinquent boys and girls.” Such an envi-

ronment was bound to inspire strong emotional and intellectual reactions in a sensitive child. Carter's life was also shaped by a severe physical handicap: he was born with *osteogenesis imperfecta* (O.I.), an incurable hereditary disease that makes bones brittle and inclined to break easily, especially in childhood.²

Through his portrayal of Elgin Morley in *This Story Fierce and Tender*, Carter describes in excruciating detail the physical and psychic torment of a childhood spent in hospital, traction and wheelchairs. Like a more famous victim of O.I., the French painter Henri Toulouse-Lautrec, Carter was an intelligent and imaginative child who passed many convalescent hours reading, thinking, and critically absorbing the influences of his restricted environment. According to an article he wrote in 1945 that confirms details from the novel, Carter's parents were proponents of the social gospel; J.S. Woodsworth was a friend of the family.³ According to the novel, Carter began to develop a sensitivity to socio-economic problems from his parents and their Christian socialist friends, and from his observations of the young inmates of the Detention Home. Political events in the wider world also impinged on his social consciousness: the seven-year-old invalid listened to the adults around him discussing the Russian Revolution; two years later (if his fictional account is reliable) he found himself literally in the midst of the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919, trapped in a car surrounded by angry strikebreakers (*This Story* 192).

Carter began to experience augmented bone calcification in adolescence, partly as a natural consequence of the maturation process, and partly as a result of vitamin D treatments, which began to be used for O.I. in the 1920s. He suffered many recurrences and complications, including progressive hearing loss as new bone growth exerted pressure on the small bone of the inner ear. Much later in life, his deafness would be total.⁴ His height was retarded and his hip and leg bones deformed by the fractures he had suffered, but he was able to walk with crutches by age fourteen, and with a cane soon after (*This Story* 357). By the late 1920s his health had improved enough to allow him to enroll in the University of Manitoba.

Having an academic aptitude for science since childhood, Carter majored in chemistry. But his interests were not restricted to science; his growing sense of social injustice responded to new associations in the university and in the politically active city of Winnipeg. At the urging of socialist friends, Carter read Bernard Shaw's popular new book, *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism* (1928) (*This Story* 371-73). But Carter had already become disillusioned with the social gospel of his parents and Woodsworth; he likewise rejected Shaw's middle-class Fabianism with its naive theory of wage equality and vague hopes for a peaceful transformation of the economic basis of society. According to his account in *This Story*, he was recruited into the Canadian Labour Defense League (CLDL) while working at a summer job operating a Multiplex (a variety of teletypewriter) for Canadian National Telecommunications (302-10). The CLDL, says historian Ivan Avakumovic,

10 Left History 5.2

was set up in 1925 to provide legal aid to people being prosecuted under anti-Communist legislation, and was run by Party members, although most of the rank and file were not Communists.⁵

Carter's education in Communist doctrine began, he says in his autobiographical novel, when a librarian with an interest in radical politics put into his hands a translation of Joseph Stalin's Speech to the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1930) (*This Story* 415-20). Stalin's speech is a defense of the USSR's system of Five Year Plans, buttressed by an assertion of faith that the economic crisis in the West was a sign of the approaching end of capitalism. Carter responded eagerly to this early encounter with the scientific socialism of the Soviet Union. Soon afterward he read Lenin's *The State and Revolution* (written in 1917), and embarked on a wide-ranging program of study of Marxism-Leninism. Carter was possibly unique among Canadian Communist intellectuals in coming to the Party through the reading of Stalin before he had encountered Lenin, or even Marx. This unorthodox beginning probably has a great deal to do with his almost obsessive admiration for the USSR, an admiration that focused on achievements in science and technology during the Stalinist era.

In 1931, Carter graduated from the University of Manitoba with an Honours B.Sc. in Chemistry. According to *This Story*, he was recruited into the Communist Party in that same year, on his twenty-first birthday (436-39). As both Carter's novel and Avakumovic's history point out, middle-class Anglo-Saxon intellectuals were much sought after by the CPC in the 1920s and 30s, especially in Winnipeg where most of the rank-and-file were poorly educated recent arrivals from eastern Europe. In 1931, membership in the Party involved considerable risk, as prominent Communists were then being arrested under the notorious Section 98 of the Canadian Criminal Code proscribing "unlawful association." If Carter did indeed join the Party at this time, he was probably (like his Elgin Morley) inducted into one of the Party clubs operating underground.

In the fall of 1931 he enrolled in the M.Sc. program at the University of Manitoba, and completed the degree the following year, with a thesis on "A Study of the Low Tension Arc Discharge in Liquids." He served as a lecturer in Physical Chemistry at the university, then as a researcher at the Winnipeg Cancer Institute and in the Physical Chemistry/Metallurgy laboratory of the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company. Registered as a Professional Engineer in the province of Manitoba in 1936, and as a Member of the Canadian Institute of Chemistry, he subsequently practised as a consulting chemical engineer.⁶

Besides pursuing his formal studies in physical chemistry, Carter began reading everything he could put his hands on concerning science in the USSR. This, as he wrote several years later, "led me far afield. Into history, philosophy."⁷ About this same time, he also embarked on his career as a writer of fic-

tion. In an account of his literary beginnings that he wrote in 1942, Carter claimed he began writing short stories when the editor of a literary magazine mistook him for someone else and solicited a submission from him. He also claimed that he subsequently wrote “a dozen blood-and-thunder stories,” a “novel which he burned,” and more “short fiction under five different names.”⁸ His earliest published short story that can be definitely identified, however, is more than mere “blood-and-thunder.” “East Nine,” written under the name “Jack Parr,” appeared in 1936 in the Toronto-based leftist arts magazine *New Frontier*.⁹ The story of a dying worker in an industrial accident ward, “East Nine” brought together Carter’s own extensive experience as a hospital patient with his concerns for socio-political questions. The story was also a deliberately crafted exercise in “socialist realism,” a literary theory expounded in the late 1920s by various writers and critics in the USSR and Germany, and conveyed to the English-speaking world primarily through the English edition of the Moscow-based periodical *International Literature*. According to such *International Literature* contributors as A. Lunacharsky and V. Kirpotin, socialist realism would counteract the effete and subjective tendencies of bourgeois modernism and its emphasis on morbid self-obsession and meaningless subtleties of literary form. Socialist realism, said Kirpotin, aimed at “the faithful description of life in all its aspects,” and at asserting “the glorious principle of the forces of the socialist revolution.”¹⁰

Both his scientific training and his Marxist studies had accustomed Carter to approach intellectual activity from a theoretical perspective, so he enthusiastically took up this Party-approved literary theory as his preferred approach to creative writing. He could have read about socialist realism in copies of *International Literature* that undoubtedly found their way to Winnipeg in spite of efforts of the RCMP and the Canadian post office to keep them out of the country. He might also have had access to *Masses*, a literary magazine edited by the CPC-affiliated Progressive Arts Club between 1932 and 1934, which published a series of articles and letters on socialist realism and its relevance to Canadian literature. As for practical models of socialist realist short stories, Carter could have read several examples in *Masses*, or in other leftist periodicals that were probably circulating among Party members in Winnipeg, including *New Frontier* and the American *New Masses*.

Carter’s “East Nine” reveals the evils of industrial capitalism through the story of a repairman who is fatally injured when the factory owner ignores safety rules in order to speed up production. By not caricaturing the capitalist as a bloated monster, however, Carter identifies the great evil not as an individual human being, but as the processes of dehumanization that engulf both worker and employer under capitalism. Carter ends his story with a prophecy of the revolution that will be the inevitable outcome of these processes, pronounced chorically by the other injured workers in the hospital ward: “Fellow man, worker, comrade, farewell... . We of East Nine who struggle and have yet

12 Left History 5.2

to die, salute you. No volley will be fired. Some other dawn-time guns will greet your memory.”¹¹

Carter published other socialist realist stories in *New Frontier* during the magazine's short life (1936-37), all of these contributions signed with the pseudonym “Jack Parr.” Through the late 1930s and early 40s he was also publishing stories under his own name in *New Advance* (the magazine of the Canadian Young Communist League), *For People Everywhere* (a New York left-wing youth periodical), as well as the popular American pulp magazine *Argosy*.

But fiction was not his primary literary activity. Needing to supplement his limited income as a scientific consultant, he discovered a lucrative market for popular articles on science and technology. As “Jack Parr” he had already written one such article for *New Frontier*. Beginning in 1939 he contributed many further articles under his real name to the *Winnipeg Free Press* and the *Winnipeg Tribune*, as well as the national magazines *Maclean's* and *Saturday Night*. These articles were on such subjects as the uses of solar heat, the future possibilities of chemical agriculture, new medical breakthroughs and, in line with the darkening international political situation, the hypothetical development of “super bombs.”

In 1939, Vanguard Press of New York published his first book, *If You Want to Invent*, a “how-to” monograph for a popular audience, outlining the procedures and pitfalls of securing patents. Apparently based on Carter's own experiences developing new methods and apparatus in his physical chemistry experiments, the book warns would-be inventors how the large industrial trusts suppress the initiative of the individual inventor by controlling the patent rights of their employees and contract researchers.

In the late 1930s Carter also began a scholarly work of historical geography which urged the development of Hudson Bay as a mercantile seaport for the Canadian wheat-farming regions, and as a base of naval defense against a possible invasion of North America. *Sea of Destiny* (1940) was very pro-Russian, drawing a comparison between the USSR's development of its arctic and Canada's neglect of its own northern territories. It was also anti-German, suggesting that Nazi submarines and battleships might well exploit the Bay as a major point of vulnerability in North American defenses. Reviewers were impressed by this knowledgeable introduction to a neglected feature of North American history and geography – although the isolationist *New York Times* reviewer dismissed Carter's “alarmist” prophecies that the European war might be carried into the arctic.¹²

In 1942 he began contributing articles on science and technology to two popular Canadian family magazines, the *Star Weekly* and the *National Home Monthly*. As science writer for the *Star Weekly* he received roving commissions to visit military, industrial and medical laboratories across North America to report on the latest advances in such fields as medicine, weaponry, communi-

cations, transportation, agriculture and the manufacture of consumer goods. His subjects included methods of reducing air pollution, the development of synthetic fabrics, scientific agricultural methods to increase food production, jet propulsion and the possibility of space travel, television, automatic piloting devices, prefabricated houses, and many other recent or projected developments in science and technology. In 1942 he gathered together a series of these articles to be published as *Men, Machines, and Microbes*, with a foreword by the editor of *Saturday Night*, B.K. Sandwell. In 1942 Carter also began writing a series of dramatized radio broadcasts that popularized current scientific and technological issues relating to the war. "Science in the News" was heard on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) over the next two years.¹³

In all his writing at this time he seized every opportunity to praise Soviet scientific and military achievements. At the outbreak of war in 1939 the Canadian government had regarded the USSR as an enemy power because of the Hitler-Stalin pact, and the CPC was ruthlessly suppressed, many of its members jailed without trial under the War Measures Act, or forced to flee to the United States. With Hitler's invasion of Russia the situation began to change. Support for the Russian war effort was soon translated into official tolerance for the Canadian Communist movement; in 1943 the CPC was legalized under the new name of the Labour-Progressive Party (LPP). With Russophilia growing as the details of the Soviet Union's resistance to Naziism became known, Carter found himself in demand as a lecturer, openly sponsored now by the LPP. After the victory of Stalingrad, the Party was able to book large theatres for Carter's talks about the Russian war effort.¹⁴

Carter's published tributes to the USSR included a 39-page pamphlet, *Russia's Secret Weapon* (1942), and a 50-page *Stalin's Life* (1943). These pamphlets help to explain Carter's enthusiastic admiration for the USSR and its leader. This admiration was not simply passive submission to the pro-Stalinism of the CPC/LPP during the leadership of the Stalinist hardliner Tim Buck: Carter was too individualistic to unreflectingly follow Party line on this or any other matter. His enthusiasm for Stalin was partly the result of reading the Soviet leader's speech to the 1931 congress of the CPSU in which Stalin emphasized how the collapse of the West and the ascendancy of Soviet Communism were in strict accordance with the historical theories of the "science" of Marxism. The tendency to conceive of Marxism as a science with principles as rigid as those of physics or chemistry appealed to Carter, and remained for years associated with Stalin in his mind.

His enthusiasm for Stalin was further advanced by the Russian defense against Nazi invasion in World War II. This is the theme of his *Russia's Secret Weapon*. In this pamphlet Carter reveals that the "weapon" is the Russian scientific spirit. Although now associated mainly with weapons technology, this spirit is based on "love and heroism," as opposed to the attitudes prevailing in fascist countries, where science is merely an instrument of tyranny and

exploitation. For Carter, the love and heroism of the Soviet scientific spirit centred on the iconographic figure of Stalin. In this respect, Carter was little different from many people, both within and without the Soviet Union during the war years, who tended to idealize Stalin as a symbol of his country's indomitable spirit. Much later, in his book *Science and Revolution* (1966), Carter would express his disillusionment with Stalin; but for many years before, during, and after the war Stalin was for Carter the personification of Soviet science in all its ramifications.

Meanwhile he had completed his first novel, *Night of Flame*, published in 1942 by Reynal and Hitchcock in the U.S. and by George J. McLeod in Canada. Like many Canadian writers of the time, Carter located the action of his novel in the United States to ensure cross-border sales. Set in a Chicago hospital, *Night of Flame* suggests the class conflict that the author considers the primary symptom of a sick capitalist society by contrasting the wasteful luxury of the West Wing of the hospital with the squalid facilities for industrial accident cases in the East Wing.

But the political implications of *Night of Flame* are overshadowed by the second half of the novel, which describes in suspenseful documentary-like detail the outbreak and progress of a fire in the hospital, caused by the neglect of safety standards. Although the criticism of capitalism is still evident in the cynical motives of hospital administrators, the novel focuses on the tragedy of the fire and only hints at the possibility of social revolution. *Night of Flame* also devotes a good deal of attention to plot strands involving a liaison between a badly injured young patient and a nurse, the unrequited passion of an older woman for a much younger man, and a doctor's struggles to free himself from an obsessive relationship with a wealthy woman. Although Carter was interested in the psychological implications of these relationships rather than in the prurient details, his highlighting of these narratives inevitably drew attention away from the socio-economic theme, and perhaps contributed to the modest popular success of the book. Reviewers stressed the realism of the story, and did not mention the economic conflict underlying the hospital's social structure. Positive notices in the *New York Times* (24 May 1942) and the *Saturday Review of Literature* (6 June 1942) guaranteed the book's success. *Night of Flame* went into a second printing, a notable achievement for a first novel.

The war years were a time of personal as well as professional success for Carter. In 1943, he married a public health nurse who shared his interests in medical science and socio-economic problems. His wife Charlotte was to become his collaborator on several books and pamphlets. By 1943 he was an internationally recognized novelist, a popular science journalist eagerly read across Canada, and a well-known publicist for Soviet achievements in war, science, and technology. His pro-Soviet writings reached a large audience through the *Star Weekly* and various daily newspapers.

At the same time that he was successfully pursuing mainstream literary

success, however, he was establishing himself as an author in the more limited context of the politically radical community. Although he had placed two of his books with international commercial publishers, he chose to issue his monographs and pamphlets such as *Russia's Secret Weapon*, *Stalin's Life and Men*, *Machines and Microbes* through Contemporary Publishers of Winnipeg, a small company with leftist sympathies. In 1943, the LPP established its own official publishing outlet in Toronto, Progress Books, which became Carter's principal publisher for the next decade. His first work for Progress was the monograph *Sin and Science* (1945), a study of the problems of alcoholism, prostitution, and venereal disease in modern western society.

For a few years, Carter continued this dualistic career as a writer for both the popular and the radical media. But the incongruities between the two kinds of writing he was producing became increasingly evident with the advent of the Cold War. On 7 August 1945, the day after the dropping of the Hiroshima bomb, the *Toronto Star* featured a signed front-page article by Carter on the peace time uses of atomic energy. By November, however, he was attacking the United States for its practice of "atomic bomb blackmail" against the USSR, in an article in the *Canadian Tribune*, the LPP-affiliated weekly national newspaper.

Most of Carter's readers outside the Party were probably unaware of his Communist sympathies. If it is true that he had joined the Party as early as 1931, he kept his membership a secret from the editors and readers of the commercial publications he wrote for. But with post-war western attitudes to the Soviet Union becoming more and more hostile, Carter decided to declare himself. In December 1945, he wrote a public letter to the LPP leader Tim Buck, "Dyson Carter Explains: Why I've Joined the LPP," which was published in the *Canadian Tribune*, then expanded as a pamphlet for wider distribution, *A Scientist Takes His Place: Dyson Carter Explains Why He Joined the LPP*. In a note on the author included in several of his books published in the 1960s and later, Carter wrote of his situation in the 1940s: "Because he refused to give up a belief that is basic in his writings – the view that all peoples, in their own interests, need to be informed about the achievements of Socialism – when the Cold War developed Carter was banned by publishers who had welcomed his work."¹⁵

There seems to have been an additional cause of the disappearance of his writings from the non-Communist Canadian media. Near the end of the war Carter wrote in a publication of the University of Manitoba Science Students Association that his pro-Russian anti-capitalist opinions provoked hostile reactions from the Canadian scientific community. When he praised Soviet science in *Russia's Secret Weapon*, "nearly all the comments from British and American scientific men were appreciative. The few Canadian technical experts who commented on the book wrote stinging accusations, claiming I was an imposter, a dreamer of tales."¹⁶

In similar terms, he accused the Canadian medical establishment of having tried to block his attempts to inform the public about penicillin. His “Smashing the Bacteria Blitz” in the May 1942 issue of *National Home Monthly* may well have been, as Carter claimed in a later article, “the first complete story of penicillin given to the public anywhere in the world.”¹⁷ “When a large magazine published my article about Fleming’s revolutionary find,” Carter wrote in 1966, “dozens of doctors wrote to the editor, demanding that he deny the ‘nonsense’ I had reported!”¹⁸ Carter also accused the pharmaceutical conglomerates of blocking mass production of the drug to ensure themselves a monopoly and grossly inflated profits. “I’m not referring to business profits,” Carter wrote. “This isn’t business at all. Not legitimate profit-making, but a vicious enemy of our free enterprise system – name it the cartel, the trust, the monopoly, the one-company racket or whatever – is sabotaging a miracle of research... . There is no mystery why penicillin output is hopelessly inadequate... . It is because this lifesaver is now worth thirty-five thousand dollars a pound, and will stay at that fantastic level so long as freedom of manufacture is interfered with by restrictive monopoly.”¹⁹

Whether because of his anti-establishment muckraking or simply because of Cold-War anti-communism, by 1947 Carter had ceased writing for the popular magazines and newspapers. But even with his limited readership he continued to maintain an international reputation as a writer. In 1946, he published two articles in the American *New Masses*, and began contributing to the *Canadian Tribune* a “Science Today” column, which was reprinted in the weekly magazine section of the New York *Daily Worker*. He revised and updated his successful *Sea of Destiny* under the title “Open Sesame!: The Story of the Hudson Bay Route,” and the revision was serialized in 1947 in the Winnipeg Communist weekly *Western Tribune*.

Also in 1947, Carter wrote the first version of a book that would not be published until twenty years later as *Science and Revolution*. Although consistent with Communist ideology in its anti-capitalist criticism of the subjugation of science to profits, Carter’s book went beyond the Party line to argue that the physical sciences, if released from the profit system, could bring about a millennium of freedom, leisure, and a classless society. According to orthodox Marxism, the revolution that will lead to world Communism is to be brought about through political and economic historical forces, not through science and technology. “Editors of small progressive firms would not accept the radical conclusions set forth in the book,” Carter wrote in 1966. “Still fewer could accept [the] thesis: that science is becoming a decisive force in great social, economic, political revolutions.”²⁰

The objections to his ideas were not, however, serious enough to jeopardize his standing in the Party. No evidence survives to indicate that he was under the threat of censure or expulsion. His differences of opinion with editors may, however, be relevant to Carter’s failure to rise within the Party. As a

well-educated member of Anglo-Canadian heritage, he might have been regarded as promising leadership material. In *This Story Fierce and Tender* Carter says that Morley would not accept a leadership position because he differed with Party authorities “on one question after another” (295). Carter never pushed such differences to the point of confrontation because he was a firm believer in the Leninist doctrine of democratic centralism – that is, the assumption that the decisions of elected or appointed Party officials must be accepted by the membership without undue debate. But he was determined to follow his own line as far as the relation of science to Marxism was concerned, and in order to do that he had to remain as independent of Party authority as he could.

In 1948 Carter and his wife moved to Toronto, where he continued his dual career as LPP science commentator and free-lance writer. In 1949 the New American Library of New York bought the paperback rights to his *Night of Flame*. The post-war era was the heyday of the 25-cent paperback, and publishers were looking for likely titles to reprint. Unfortunately, 1949 was also the dawn of McCarthyism in the United States, and the censorship of allegedly subversive publications. As a self-declared Communist, Carter was obliged to avoid trouble with the American government by publishing under a pseudonym: the paperback *Night of Flame* appeared under the pen name “Warren Desmond.”

Encouraged, however, by what seemed to be easy access to a lucrative market, Carter tried his hand at a novel written expressly for the paperback trade. *The Governor's Mistress* (1950), also attributed to “Warren Desmond,” and published simultaneously in Toronto, New York, and London, was a genuine “bodice ripper”: in one episode, the heroine's bodice is actually ripped by a lecherous seducer. But it was also a carefully researched historical novel, obviously making use of some of the material accumulated for *Sea of Destiny* and its 1947 revision. The autocratic power of New France, centralized in the sinister Governor Frontenac, is related to monopoly capitalism and identified as the basis of exploitation and intrigue. Pierre Radisson and his bushrangers are, conversely, a cadre of brave revolutionaries pitting themselves against imperialist power. But the main concerns of *The Governor's Mistress* are sex and adventure. It may have fulfilled these aims well enough to sell briskly from cigar stores and news stands, but Carter was not really interested in writing potboilers.

In 1950 he published with Progress Books under his real name a serious novel of socialist realism, *Tomorrow Is with Us*. Set in a vaguely identified city that could be in either the United States or Canada, the novel conveys the anxieties of the Cold War through a story with overtones of both the Gouzenko and Rosenberg cases. The main characters, physicist Alan Baird and the student Cal Finley, are not the sinister foreign agents the government and capitalist press accuse them of being, but idealists who want to see a better world. Baird is falsely suspected of dealing in “atom” secrets for the Soviet Union, a suspi-

cion mainly arising from the scientific ignorance of police and politicians. Baird eludes the police with the help of Communist activists, who are presented as decent committed people, sacrificing their domestic tranquility to their political obligations. The novel emphasizes the enormity of the forces arrayed against the progressive movement, and the courage and persistence of the people in the movement. *Tomorrow Is with Us* ends ambiguously, with Alan Baird under indictment, having little hope of righting the wrongs against him. But as the title suggests, and as Carter also emphasized in his story "East Nine," the progressive movement is vindicated by the reliability of scientific socialism's promise for a better future.

Tomorrow Is with Us was ignored by the non-Communist media, as all Progress publications were, and sold only in the few Party bookstores across Canada. But it was published in translation in the USSR, Poland, Rumania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany, and earned Carter an international reputation as a Communist novelist.²¹ By 1950, he was indisputably the most significant creative writer in the Canadian Communist movement. His reputation, though much diminished in the Canadian cultural mainstream, was growing within the Party, just at a time when the Party was becoming increasingly interested in culture.

Literary histories sometimes convey the impression that "proletarian literature" was largely confined to the 1930s; but as Alan Wald has admirably documented, creative writing inspired by Marxism and partisan Communism continued to proliferate, in North America and Europe, well beyond the Depression decade.²² In Canada as in other countries, the 1940s and 50s were decades of accelerated cultural activity on the political left. In 1946 the LPP's Progress Books began including occasional works of fiction and poetry in its catalogue, which had previously been limited to historical and political exposition. In December of that year the LPP sponsored a conference on the writing of Communist and labour history. The organizer of this conference was Stanley Ryerson, the Party's education director and editor of its theoretical organ *National Affairs Monthly*. Ryerson was well on his way to becoming the most eminent Marxist historian in Canada, although he had begun his academic career as a student of languages and literature, had written poetry and drama in the 1930s, and was eager to promote cultural activity within the Party.

In 1947 the LPP established a National Cultural Commission (NCC) under Ryerson's chairmanship. The NCC oversaw the creation of provincial and municipal commissions, which were charged with the responsibility of encouraging scholarly, literary and artistic activity among Party members. In 1949 the Party acknowledged the need for an organized response to the federal government's creation of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (the "Massey Commission"). By 1950 the LPP had active writers' and artists' groups in most major Canadian cities, and in 1952 began publication of a national culture quarterly, *New Frontiers* (the

title a deliberate echo of *New Frontier*, the united front periodical of the 1930s), under the editorship of the literary critic and anthologist Margaret Fairley.²³

Yet just as he had earlier decided to remain outside the Party's political structures, Carter seems to have preferred to keep aloof from the organized cultural activity of the LPP. In the annual reports and notes of meetings of the NCC and the Toronto Writers' Group in the CPC archives, his name never appears. He was appointed to the editorial board of *New Frontiers*, and his name is listed as an associate editor throughout the magazine's four-year life, but he never contributed any of his own writing. The assistant editor V.G. Hopwood, in an interview in 1993, could not recall that Carter had had any active involvement with the magazine.²⁴

Carter's detachment from mainstream Party cultural activity may reflect his disapproval of the Party's tendency to exclude the physical and natural sciences in its conception of culture. In *This Story* one of Morley's admirers refers contemptuously to the cultural vacuity of the "Party leadership" in the 1940s, including in this blanket condemnation the one member of the inner circle with a university degree. The reference is possibly to education director Stanley Ryerson, for this person "wasn't in science. Or engineering. Or anything real. He was into some goddam artsy-fartsy thing like history!" (300). On the other hand, Carter's detachment from Party cultural activity may simply reflect the fact that his time was much taken up with another organization. In 1950 he was elected president of the National Council of the Canadian-Soviet Friendship Society (C-SFS). The C-SFS had been established in 1943 at the height of Canadian enthusiasm for the Soviet war effort, with major federal politicians as patrons, and with such culturally distinguished figures on its councils as poet E.J. Pratt, and painters A.Y. Jackson, and Barker Fairley. By 1950, however, the Society had fallen victim to the Cold War, its liberal supporters had backed away from it, and its executive and membership were dominated by members of the LPP, although the Society remained independent of the Party.

Carter saw the Society's main purpose as bringing to the Canadian people an accurate conception of the Soviet Union. In 1951 he visited the USSR for the first time, and thereafter redoubled his promotional efforts on behalf of the country. With his wife Charlotte he produced the book *We Saw Socialism* (2 volumes, 1951 and 1952), a reverent tribute to such aspects of Soviet life as health care, agriculture, industry, and the arts. He also created a magazine entitled *News-Facts*, dedicated to telling Canadians "about the Soviet Union Today." *News-Facts*, like the Friendship Society, was independent of the LPP.

The demands of novel-writing may also have left Carter with little time for involvement with organized Party cultural activities. In the early 1950s, he began researching and writing his most ambitious work of fiction to date. Published by Progress in 1955, *Fatherless Sons* was the first of his serious fictions to use an explicitly Canadian setting, and attempted to convey the politi-

cal and personal experience of working-class Canadians in the early years of the Cold War. As the verbal echo in its title suggests, *Fatherless Sons* may have been partly inspired by the Communist reaction against Hugh MacLennan's popular novel *Each Man's Son* (1951). A reviewer in the *Canadian Tribune* complained that MacLennan ignored the poverty and strife-ridden labour conditions of industrial Cape Breton to concentrate on a sentimental and pseudo-psychological scrutiny of the main characters.²⁵ *Fatherless Sons*, by contrast, portrays working-class struggles for survival against capitalist exploitation and militarism.

Set in the easily recognizable Northern Ontario mining community of Sudbury (fictionalized as "Deep Rock"), the novel covers the years 1945 to 1952. The central character, Dave Nelson, a miner and son and grandson of a miner, returns from service in the Canadian army to confront his family obligations, especially to the widow and children of his brother who has been killed in the war, and to face his public responsibilities in the struggle against the pro-war, anti-union policies of the mining company. Like other works of socialist realism, *Fatherless Sons* sometimes makes its point through rather mechanical plot contrivances. For three generations, the author reveals, from the time of the Boer War through the two World Wars, the Nelson family has consisted of two brothers, one of whom has been killed in war. This rather artificial historical configuration serves to suggest how capitalism, in its reliance on war to stimulate industrial activity, has wasted the lives of workers and destabilized a basic unit of working-class solidarity, the family.

Fatherless Sons also extols Canadian nationalism. In the 1920s and 30s socialist realist fiction, like the Communist movement in general, exalted internationalism and class unity. But by the 1950s various influences – including the continuation of the Stalinist ideal of "socialism in one country," the recognition of various kinds of nationalisms, and the antagonism between the USA and the USSR – combined to authorize a militant nationalism within international Communism. In 1955, the same year that *Fatherless Sons* was published, the Hungarian Marxist literary critic Georg Lukàcs wrote that "socialist art is, of its nature, *national art*."

And the great realist works of art are a main factor in creating the intellectual and spiritual climate which gives human personality its specifically national character. The stronger a writer's ties with the cultural heritage of his nation, the more original his work will be.²⁶

In *Fatherless Sons*, Carter not only emphasizes the distinctive Canadian experience of his characters, he defines their nationalism in terms of a vehement anti-Americanism. The United States appears in the novel as a mad empire that threatens to annihilate its economic rivals by the suicidal means of

nuclear war. This insanity is personified in the sinister figure of the American chairman of the board of Trans-World Alloys (the International Nickel Company), Chester Lee Nolles (a thinly disguised John Foster Dulles, who was in fact a director of International Nickel). Americans are criticized throughout the novel in a descending scale from the darkly evil Nolles through the toadyish managing director of Trans-World and the lampoon-figure of a pompous army officer who comes to lecture the Canadian workers on U.S. defense strategies, down to a clownish Shriner-like parade of visiting businessmen that degenerates into a riot.

Carter conveys his anti-Americanism further through a fictionalized version of an episode in Sudbury's labour history, when the United Steelworkers of America raided the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers after Mine Mill was expelled from the Canadian Congress of Labour in 1949 because of allegations of Communism.²⁷ In Carter's version, the U.S.-based United Metal and Mill (the Steelworkers) attempts an unsuccessful raid on General Mine and Mill, represented in the novel as an independent Canadian union. Carter extends his anti-American criticisms to encompass the social democratic CCF Party, a recurrent antagonist of Canadian Communism since the 1930s. In *Fatherless Sons*, the CCF Member of Parliament for Deep Rock joins forces with the Americans behind United Metal and Mill, to serve as local leader in the raid.

Like many works of socialist realist fiction, *Fatherless Sons* ends ambiguously. The union battle is won by General Mine and Mill, and the Americans have been unable to achieve military victory in Korea, but Dave Nelson is killed in a mining accident and the rapacious American-owned company still controls the economy of Deep Rock. As at the end of *Tomorrow Is with Us*, however, the author affirms his confidence in the future and in the ultimate triumph of the Communist movement under the leadership of the USSR.

Fatherless Sons was ignored by non-Communist reviewers in Canada and the United States, but it provoked considerable reaction within the Canadian Communist movement. Predictably, the *Canadian Tribune* printed an enthusiastic full-page review.²⁸ But although this review was entirely favourable, the assistant editor of *New Frontiers*, V.G. Hopwood, wrote in to complain that by extolling the novel as unique, the reviewer was taking the "cosmopolitan" view that denies the existence of a Canadian literary tradition. In fact, Hopwood insisted, "*Fatherless Sons* belongs with those finest works of Canadian literature, such as Charles Mair's *Tecumseh* and Frederick Phillip Grove's *Master of the Mill*, which deal with the forces shaping Canada's national destiny."²⁹

But Hopwood was the only commentator to take up the issue of the position of *Fatherless Sons* in Canadian literary history. Most other readers were only interested in the connections between the novel and socio-economic fact. Some letters to the *Tribune* praised its treatment of working-class characters and its condemnation of American capitalism, while others criticized its

22 Left History 5.2

mechanical characterizations and its exaggerated anti-Americanism. The arguments led to a discussion of the novel at an LPP literature conference, a letter to the *Tribune* from Carter, and a second public discussion in which Carter himself participated.³⁰

The success of *Fatherless Sons* within the LPP and international Communist cultural circles might have encouraged Carter to continue his novel-writing career. But in 1955 his time was still much taken up with other activities, especially activities relating to his continuing involvement with the Canadian-Soviet Friendship Society. In that year he established his own publishing company Northern Book House, to publish *News-Facts*, as well as pamphlets and monographs about the USSR and Canada-USSR relations and about Carter's perennial fields of interest, science and medicine. Henceforth all of Carter's own books would appear under the imprint of Northern. In 1956, *News-Facts* was transformed into the glossy picture magazine *Northern Neighbours*, the editing and publishing of which became virtually a full-time job for Carter.

Northern Neighbours was not primarily a cultural magazine, although it included articles on literature and the arts, along with writing on such topics as family life, youth, morality and, inevitably, science and medicine. Its glossy photo spreads of smiling Soviet workers, soldiers, ethnic dancers, and children suggest its propagandistic purpose. Its articles included translations from Soviet publications, as well as original articles by Carter and others. But the magazine was concerned not only with extolling life in the USSR; it also devoted a great deal of attention to suggesting what Soviet-type socialism could accomplish in North America.

The establishment of Northern Book House was the culmination of inclinations characteristic of Carter's career as a writer and Communist. As he declared in *This Story*, he differed with the Party "on one question after another" (295), but he sought to assert his independence in ways that would allow him to remain within the official Marxist-Leninist organization. The Party had served him well enough in the publication of two of his novels and several monographs in the 1940s and 50s, but he did not forget that in 1947 Progress had rejected one of his most ambitious efforts, the manuscript that he later published through Northern as *Science and Revolution*. His association with the C-SFS gave him the opportunity to establish a publishing outlet with the backing of an organization that was supported by the Party yet independent of it. There were precedents: the Canadian Labour Defence League in the 1930s, for instance, an organization with the same kind of detached connections to the Party as the C-SFS, published its own newspaper, the *Canadian Labour Defender*, as well as pamphlets and monographs. Unlike the CLDL example, however, Northern and its periodicals were controlled by Carter personally: when he ceased serving as president of C-SFS he continued to control Northern. Ultimately, his publishing venture reflected a characteristic desire on

his part for complete control over the political and ideological activity that especially interested him. As almost all his career and writing demonstrate, Carter was both a loyal Communist and an intense individualist.

The fact that *Northern Neighbours* survived for thirty-three years supports Carter's claim that the magazine was relatively successful in attracting subscribers. Early in its life, however, it ran afoul of the anti-Communist policies of the United States government. In a 1961 memo to Communist Party headquarters in Toronto, Carter claimed that *Northern Neighbours* had begun with a circulation of about thirty-five hundred subscribers, and had reached a maximum of nine thousand, in all provinces, all states of the U.S., and about twenty other countries. In the late 1950s, however, as Carter went on to explain in the same memo, Northern Book House became

one of some four hundred foreign firms excluded from exporting to the USA, in the last months of the Eisenhower regime, by use of the legal device fraud *order ex parte* – that is, issuing a “fraud order” against a foreign firm, which is automatically barred from having that order removed legally. This was the climax of a ten-year fight with customs and postal authorities in the USA.³¹

Although the exclusion of *Northern Neighbours* from the United States continued under John F. Kennedy's presidency, the magazine carried on, supported by readers in Canada and abroad, until declining subscriptions, the imminent collapse of the USSR, and Carter's own failing health forced the end in 1989. The book publishing enterprise also had a long life, turning out a small annual list of books and pamphlets on science, medicine, and the USSR, which were sold by mail order and in left-wing book stores. Carter himself wrote several Northern monographs, mostly in collaboration with Charlotte Carter, including *Science of Health and Long Life in the USSR* (1956), *Cancer, Smoking, Heart Disease, Drinking: in Our Two World Systems Today* (1957), and *The Future of Freedom* (1962). In the early 1960s Carter moved his publishing operation from Toronto to Gravenhurst, Ontario. He no doubt chose the location because of the town's association with Norman Bethune, although he never had any official connection with the Bethune Memorial Home, which opened in 1976. Presumably the move out of Toronto was primarily an economy measure, although it emphasized further his isolation from the centres of Party activity.

This isolation was emphasized in another way when Northern published a revised and updated version of the work that no progressive publisher would handle back in 1947, now titled *Science and Revolution* (1966). As Carter explains in the book, *Science and Revolution* has three purposes: to demystify modern science so that the latest developments of technology and medicine are accessible to the general reader; to reveal the connections between science and political revolution; and to demonstrate the irrelevance of the profit motive to

science. Much of the revised book is obviously inspired by the successes of the Soviet space program, from Sputnik 1 in 1957 to the Luna 9 soft moon landing in January 1966. Carter's tone is jubilant: the Soviet Union has shown that there are no limits to what science, under socialism, might achieve in the future. Science in the West is advancing, Carter admits, but at a cost inflated by non-producing profiteers. If science and technology can be liberated from the profit motive, the Americans may even be persuaded to enter into cooperation with the USSR to conquer the world problems of over population, disease, and mass starvation.

Surprisingly, he admits that Soviet leaders, especially Stalin and Khrushchev, caused harm to science in the USSR by their bureaucratic interference. In contrast to the adulatory attitude to Stalin expressed in his war-time *Russia's Secret Weapon*, Carter admits in *Science and Revolution* that Stalin interfered with scientific development because of a pathological conservatism; he feared change and tried to stop it. This part of Carter's argument reflects not simply a reversal of his former admiration for Stalin: it also reveals his determination to elevate the physical sciences to a position of priority in Marxist-Leninist theory and Soviet history. As far as Carter is concerned it is scientific progress, rather than either economic developments or outstanding political leadership, that controls socialist historical destiny.

Science and Revolution was Carter's last non-fiction book; most of his time between 1966 and 1989 was devoted to editing, publishing and writing articles for *Northern Neighbours*. The USSR was not ungrateful for his efforts: in 1970, he was awarded the Lenin centenary medal; in 1980, the Order of Friendship of the Peoples; and in 1985, the Order of the Union of Friendship Societies.³²

In 1986, Northern Book House published Carter's autobiographical novel *This Story Fierce and Tender*. A long and extremely subjective work, the novel repays careful reading, if not for its ambiguous artistic achievement, at least for its record of Carter's early life and its revelation of the growth of a unique sensibility. The work is a Communist political *apologia*, but it owes much less to the socialist realist tradition than to the *bildungsroman*, the novel of self-revelation and education.

Carter once included in a list of writers who influenced him the name of American novelist Thomas Wolfe.³³ *This Story* bears some resemblance to Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel* (1929), especially in its emphasis on the sensuous experience of childhood. Like *Look Homeward, Angel*, Carter's novel is the story of a hypersensitive male growing from childhood to young adulthood in the early twentieth century. It is also, in the phrase of Wolfe's subtitle, "a story of the buried life." In Carter's novel, however, such a phrase refers not only to the imaginative and subconscious experience of the protagonist, but to the physiological sources of human motivation and action, which are to be revealed and controlled by scientific knowledge.

In narrative method, Carter's novel bears a general resemblance to another *bildungsroman*, Samuel Butler's *The Way of All Flesh* (1903). Like Butler, Carter distributes his protagonist's personality between two characters: one who grows from child to adult, and an older observer through whose eyes the development of the main character is presented. *This Story* traces the efforts of a biographer named "Dyson Carter" to reconstruct in the 1970s the life of "Elgin Morley" from his birth in 1910 to age thirty-five. Since Morley appears to be a scarcely disguised version of Carter himself, the book can be seen, like Butler's, as an attempt on the part of the aging author to reassess his younger self.

Like most *bildungsromans*, *This Story* emphasizes the importance of childhood: almost half the book's more than five hundred pages focus on Morley from age seven to age ten. Early in the novel, the narrator articulates the hypothesis that in "stricken individuals" – victims of severe genetic diseases like Morley – the development of the brain is accelerated to counteract the "course of self-destruction" which seems to dominate the physiological system. In people with such a powerful will to live and to realize the potentialities of life as early as possible, childhood according to this hypothesis is virtually "bypassed" (20).

Morley's extraordinary precocity, besides being evident in his hyperactive intellect, is expressed in romantic feelings directed toward a young woman who serves as his attendant while he is incapacitated by bone fractures. Although these feelings are only expressed verbally, and in sentimental, immature terms, the novel is unambiguous in its assertion of the sexual dimension of the child's feelings, prefiguring the more explicit experiences of the adolescent and adult later in the novel.

Sexuality is associated with love, and explicitly distinguished from "pornography," which is an expression of hatred. Child pornography, says the adult Morley to his biographer, is "disgusting" and "inhumane," "not because children shouldn't experience sex," but because it "crushes love" (134). This idea is developed into the basis of Morley's political beliefs, in a commentary reminiscent of Carter's idealization of "love and heroism" in his wartime *Russia's Secret Weapon*. "I didn't come to the truth by laboring through Capital, volumes one-two-three. For me the class struggle was beautifully simplified... . Life reduced the whole thing to simplicity, for me. Divided the world into those who love people and those who hate them!" (135)

Throughout the novel, Carter demonstrates the variety of experiences and thought processes – sexual, emotional, scientific and political – that express his protagonist's commitment to the ideal of love. Parallels are drawn between Morley's struggle against physical disease and the necessity of struggle against the "disease" of capitalism. The longing of the child to achieve a life free from physical pain and to achieve an ideal romantic/sexual relationship is paralleled with the politicized adult's vision of a world where universal "happiness" is

possible (59).

“Happiness,” furthermore, is to be achieved through the interaction of love and science. In the childhood chapters, the science that can make happiness possible is, of course, medicine. With Elgin Morley’s maturity and gradual freedom from the worst effects of disease, the science that comes to the forefront is the socialism of the USSR. “Stalin is a scientist,” declares Morley in the early 1940s. “Making socialism is a science. The whole Soviet Union is science applied to human life... . Stalin will apply scientific socialism to wipe the Hitlerites off the face of the earth” (524).

As the latter passage indicates, Morley’s pursuit of happiness is enacted against a backdrop of allusion to the great public events – international, national, regional and local – of the years from 1917 to 1945. Particular emphasis is placed on events directly related to the historical development of “scientific socialism”: the Russian Revolution, the Great War, the Winnipeg General Strike, the activities of the Communist Party in Winnipeg in the 1930s, the outbreak of the Second World War and the internment of Canadian Communists, the formation of the Labour-Progressive Party, and Canadian Communist support for the war effort of the USSR.

Unlike his earlier novels which used the straightforward traditional narrative methods of socialist realism, *This Story* uses discontinuous chronology, divided narrative perspective, and other literary techniques derived from avant-garde fiction of the early twentieth century. Chapters describing the interviews of the biographer “Dyson Carter” in the 1970s are interspersed with chapters focusing on Morley’s childhood, and others dealing with his early adulthood and the beginnings of his political activities and literary career. Key characters and influential experiences are introduced briefly, often cryptically, then elaborated gradually and intermittently, as if to reproduce the actual process of the biographer’s growing familiarity with the events and ideas that shaped his subject’s life.

If *This Story Fierce and Tender* is not an entirely successful novel, it is a memorable one, if only for the boldness of its narrative methods and its approaches to public as well as personal themes. Whether the intimate thoughts and feelings of Morley are those of his creator can only be a matter of speculation. But the novel is a forceful account of the interaction of influences and experiences that are derived from Carter’s own life: his struggle with disease, his education as a Communist, his zealous commitment to both Marxism and science, and his development as a literary artist.

According to a note at the end of *This Story Fierce and Tender*, Carter hoped to continue the life of Elgin Morley in a second volume covering the post-1945 years. With his publishing house now inoperative, it remains to be seen whether the sequel to his novel will appear. It remains to be seen, also, whether Canadian literary history will ever acknowledge Carter’s achievement. His socialist realist novels, *Night of Flame*, *Tomorrow Is with Us*, and

Fatherless Sons, will remain valuable as specimens of an alternative fictional tradition that was never adequately developed in Canada. The sometimes grotesque and frequently moving *This Story Fierce and Tender* should also be more widely known. Carter's life story also deserves to be recognized as a unique and instructive episode in Canada's cultural experience.

¹ Barbara Foley, *Radical Representations: Politics and Form in U.S. Proletarian Fiction, 1929-1941* (Durham, N.C. 1993), 288-94. Her earlier book, *Telling the Truth: The Theory and Practice of Documentary Fiction* (Ithaca, N.Y. 1986), also contains some useful suggestions on this subject, but is much more exclusively concerned with matters of fictional rhetoric than with the relation between fiction and verifiable fact.

² Carter's place and date of birth are recorded in the biographical note accompanying the Carter Papers in the National Archives of Canada (NAC). In *This Story Fierce and Tender* (Gravenhurst, Ont.: Northern Book House, 1986), "Ted and Marion Morley" are the superintendent and matron of the "Detention Home." Carter's parents' names and connection with the Home are recorded in the Winnipeg City Directories of 1912 and several years following. Carter's statement about growing up in reform schools is quoted in Clara Thomas, *Canadian Novelists 1920-1945* (Toronto 1946), 20. The fact that Carter, like Elgin Morley, suffered from O.I., was confirmed by a longtime friend of Carter's (J. Doyle, interview with Harold Griffin, Vancouver 17 May 1995).

³ "Dyson Carter Explains: 'Why I've Joined the LPP,'" *Canadian Tribune* 15 Dec. 1945: 7.

⁴ Carter describes his own severe deafness in a magazine article, "Labelled 'Totally Deaf,' Thousands Find Full Life in Hearing-Aid," *Star Weekly* 4 Aug. 1945: 2. The hearing problems of his fictional Elgin Morley are referred to frequently throughout the novel.

⁵ Ivan Avakumovic, *The Communist Party in Canada: A History* (Toronto 1975), 34.

⁶ Biographical note, Inventory, Carter Papers, NAC. Carter's M.Sc. thesis is listed in the University of Manitoba's on-line catalogue.

⁷ "Dyson Carter Explains," 7.

⁸ Carter, dust jacket notes for *Night of Flame* (Toronto: McLeod, 1942).

⁹ Carter is identified as the author of "East Nine" by the editors of *Voices of Discord: Canadian Short Stories from the 1930s* (Toronto, 1979), which reprinted the story. The contributions by "Jack Parr" to *New Frontier* include an article on science written in the same manner as articles for popular magazines that Carter wrote under his own name. They also include a short story about a Multiplex operator which is similar to an episode included in *This Story Fierce and Tender*.

¹⁰ V.I. Kirpotin, "Fifteen Years of Soviet Literature," qtd. in James E. Murphy, *The Proletarian Moment: The Controversy over Leftism in Literature* (Urbana, Ill. 1991), 100. The "socialist realism" first expounded by Kirpotin and others in *International Literature* must be distinguished from "social realism," a much looser label usually applied to literary works having little or no reference to explicit political ideology. The term "socialist realism" is also more historically exact than the widely used but vague label "proletarian" to describe fiction inspired by Marxist Communist doctrine and authorized by the international Communist movement. The American novelist James T.

Farrell, a Communist in the 1930s, includes a witty commentary on the vagueness of the “proletarian” label in his 1936 *A Note on Literary Criticism* (New York 1993), 78-79. Among useful discussions of the theory of socialist realism is Georg Lukács, *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, trans. John and Necke Mander (London, [1956], 1963).

¹¹ Carter, “East Nine,” *New Frontier* (June 1936), reprinted in Donna Phillips, ed., *Voices of Discord*, 86.

¹² H.W. Baldwin, review of *Sea of Destiny*, *New York Times* 25 Aug. 1940: 16. Other reviews included notices in the *Boston Transcript* 4 March 1939, and *Saturday Night* 7 Sept. 1940.

¹³ *Science in the News: A Series of Dramatised Broadcasts Heard Over CBC National Network Tuesdays at 10.15 EDT*. (Toronto: CBC 1942?). This publicity pamphlet (a copy of which is in the University of Toronto Robarts Library) provides brief summaries of the programs.

¹⁴ The popularity of Carter’s lectures, mentioned in *This Story*, 538, was confirmed by a former associate editor of the *Pacific Tribune*, who heard Carter speak in Vancouver during the war. (J. Doyle, Interview with Harold Griffin, Vancouver, 17 May 1995).

¹⁵ Carter, [Note on Author], *Science and Revolution* (Gravenhurst, Ont.: Northern Book House 1966), n.p. Cf. the comment of one of the characters in *This Story* on “Elgin Morley”: “He made money. Lots of money. He was in some of the big popular magazines. He had programs on the radio, full-length dramas. He had a novel that ... paid him big royalties. And when the Cold War hit him ... he threw their threats of boycotting him as a writer back in their faces. Wrote not another line for the big publishers. Put everything in the Party press. Defied them all with that pamphlet of his, an open letter to [Tim Buck] explaining why he was a Communist” (537).

¹⁶ Carter, “Einstein Is Worried about You,” *Question Mark* 12 (Feb. 1945): 5.

¹⁷ Carter, “You Can’t Have Penicillin,” *National Home Monthly*, Aug. 1944: 22.

¹⁸ Carter, *Science and Revolution*, 11.

¹⁹ Carter, “You Can’t Have Penicillin,” 5.

²⁰ [Note on Author] *Science and Revolution*, n.p.

²¹ “The Author,” *Canadian Tribune* 8 Aug. 1955: 10.

²² The emphasis on the 1930s has been especially evident in American literary history, beginning with Daniel Aaron, *Writers on the Left: Episodes in American Literary Communism* (New York, [1961], 1992), and continuing through the chapters on creative literature in Harvey Klehr, *The Heyday of American Communism* (New York 1984) as well as in Murphy, *The Proletarian Moment* and Foley, *Radical Representations*. Wald’s demonstrations of the importance of the post-1940 radical literary tradition is in his *Writing from the Left* (London 1994), especially chapters 7 and 8.

²³ Stanley Ryerson, “Our Country’s History Has Yet to Be Written,” *Canadian Tribune* 11 Jan. 1947: 7; S[tanley] B. R[yerson], “The LPP and the Arts,” mimeographed bulletin [May 1947], CPC Papers, NAC.

²⁴ J. Doyle, Interview with V.G. Hopwood, Vancouver, 19 August 1993.

²⁵ Don Fraser, Review of *Each Man’s Son*, *Canadian Tribune* 21 May 1951: 13.

²⁶ Lukács, *Contemporary Realism*, 103.

²⁷ O.W. Saarinen, “The 1950s,” in *Sudbury: Rail Town to Regional Capital*, ed. C.M. Wallace and Ashley Thomson (Toronto 1993), 194.

²⁸ W. J., “Canada’s Hard-Rock Miners Come Alive in New Dyson Carter Novel,”

Canadian Tribune 8 Aug. 1955: 10.

²⁹ Victor Hopwood, "Review Missed Full Import of Carter's Book," *Canadian Tribune*, 22 Aug. 1955: 8.

³⁰ "Open Forum on 'Fatherless Sons,'" *Canadian Tribune* 19 Sept. 1955; Carter, "I Always Write for the People," *Canadian Tribune* 10 Oct. 1955; "Author Meets Readers," *Canadian Tribune* 17 Oct. 1955.

³¹ Carter, typed undirected memo, 14 Nov. 1961, CPC Papers Reel H-1610 (vol. 45, no. 18), National Archives of Canada.

³² Biographical note, Carter Papers, NAC.

³³ Thomas, *Canadian Novelists*, 20.