Books in Review/Comptes rendus

Carl Spadoni and/et François Melançon

Patricia Lockhart Fleming. *Atlantic Canadian Imprints, 1801-1820: A Bibliography*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991. xviii, 188, [2] pp.; \$95.00 (cloth). ISBN 0-8020-5872-8.

This handsome and impressive bibliography of Atlantic Canadian imprints compiled by Patricia Lockhart Fleming is a companion volume to her earlier study *Upper Canadian Imprints, 1801-1841: A Bibliography* published in 1988. As the editorial foreword declares, it is indeed 'the first comprehensive analytical bibliography of Atlantic Canadian imprints ... [and] covers some 320 books, pamphlets, broadsides, government publications, and serials.' It does not include newspapers because, as the compiler points out, 'provincial directories are in preparation or have been published.' In her introduction Fleming describes her work as a '*descriptive* [*italics mine*] and *historical* bibliography based on *analytical* principles derived from the concept of ideal copy.'

'Analytical' and 'descriptive' are terms much used by Fredson Bowers in his *Principles of Bibliographical Description* (1949), while 'historical' is dismissed by Bowers as a bibliographical approach which is secondary to 'descriptive' bibliography, for example. This is not the place to debate definitions. It is a fact, however, that bibliographical studies since Bowers have demonstrated that a 'descriptive' bibliography can also be 'historical.' Fleming has married these two 'ways' with great expertise and scholarly precision. The marriage is based on well-defined analytical principles. 'Descriptive' and 'historical' also help to describe Marie Tremaine's great work *A Bibliography of Canadian Imprints, 1751-1800* (1952) which turned out, as Tremaine herself made clear, to be a social history. Fleming takes us into the nineteenth century following upon the methods used by Marie Tremaine. But, as one might expect, there are differences.

In the present volume, as well as in her earlier work devoted to Upper Canada publishing, Fleming provides us with a record of imprints arranged chronologically. In the Atlantic book each imprint is accounted for by a provincial code and number. Detailed bibliographical information covering title-page transcriptions, collations, contents, paper, illustrations, typography, and binding describe each item. In addition 'notes' regarding authorship, printing, publishing, distribution, and sales are included after each item when such information is available. These notes, along with six indexes, make up the 'historical' element of Fleming's study. This is the method she has followed in *Upper Canadian Imprints* as well. Such

decisions must be made, but one questions the absence of a longer and more informative introduction in which an attempt is made to synthesize the valuable but scattered historical notes. Fleming's introduction runs to little over three double-column pages which are largely devoted to an explanation of her descriptive historical methods.

A longer introduction might have begun with a statement of the *rationale* of her study and explained, for example, why the cut-off date is 1820. This reviewer has discussed this seemingly arbitrary date with several leading librarians in the Maritime provinces because of the possibility of there being some other bibliographical project under way, some study which would cover the middle decades of Atlantic publishing. As far as can be ascertained, no such work is in progress. Was the date decided upon because of time considerations (the work was begun as recently as 1987)? Possibly publication costs or a combination of these and other factors resulted in the decision? Most important, perhaps, is there an overriding bibliographical reason such as the proliferation of book publishing in the Atlantic provinces in the years 1830-1841? A cut-off date similar to Fleming's fine, substantial work devoted to Upper Canada might have been more appropriate.

A more substantial introduction would also have been useful to provide the reader with an explanation of some of the very real problems which confront the bibliographer working with nineteenth-century material. A unifying purpose is what every bibliography needs. As Bowers points out, 'the bibliographer's duty is not completed by the full and accurate description of the book' (*Principles*, p. 30). And there is Bowers's broad view that 'all books printed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are, for the purpose of discussion, treated as if printed by 'machine' (*Ibid.*, p. 355).

There is, then, the difficult, often daunting task of identifying imprints produced by hand- and machine-operated presses and the use of hand-set type and the increasing role of stereotype plates. Had the study been expanded to 1840, or thereabouts, it would have been possible to point out the importance of such centres as Saint John, New Brunswick, as places where fine printing was being done. The growth of the publishing industry in the Atlantic area bordered on the spectacular in the later decades of the nineteenth century. For example, the co-operative publishing relationships established by publishers located in the Atlantic provinces with other parts of Canada and the eastern seaboard of the United States, mainly in the field of marketing and distribution, had their beginnings in the longer time period.

Such comments are offered with the full knowledge and appreciation of the extremely helpful indexes provided in this work. They do much to make the historical bibliographical part of the book available. They deserve more attention here. Fleming provides the description of some 320 imprints, and these are then arranged by indexes as follows: an appendix of imprints not located (thirty-three items), as well as one imprint not seen; a name index; a title index; genre/subject headings; a language index; a trades index; and a place of publication index.

By consulting the 'Genre and Subject Index' in conjunction with the 'Name Index' it is possible to gauge the extent of provincial government use of the

printed medium. Acts, addresses, laws, proclamations, and other publications were published in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland by government contract. Appointment as King's Printer in Atlantic Canada in the nineteenth century was sometimes a mixed blessing. Contract deadlines had to be met and such work kept the printing offices busy. However, payment for such skilled work was often slow in coming. As staples, many printers and publishers had to publish newspapers and almanacs. For example, seven almanacs are described as having been published in New Brunswick during the 1801-1820 period and forty-three in Nova Scotia. None was published in Newfoundland or Prince Edward Island. Under 'Imprints Not Seen' there is evidence that 'The Prince Edward Island Calendar ... 1815' was printed for sale in Charlottetown.

The 'Genre/Subject Headings' provide an excellent and intriguing look at the variety of publishing actually done. A partial list includes addresses, agricultural societies, benevolent and Bible and tract societies, canals, carrier's addresses, fast day sermons, fire companies, freemasons, health, hymns, military regulations, music, natives, printers and printing, religious societies, satires, sermons, and shipwrecks. There are sixty headings in all. They provide fascinating insights into the society of the first two decades of the nineteenth century in the Atlantic provinces.

Patricia Lockhart Fleming continues to bring to her bibliographical endeavours an enviable and highly professional scholarly knowledge of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century publishing in Canada. What a worthy successor to Marie Tremaine. What impresses this reviewer, amongst many aspects of her work, is her wide experience with such often neglected matters as paper and typography. About paper she points out in her introduction that 'watermarks and papermakers' names have been verified in sources such as Churchill, Gravell and Miller, and Shorter. The method of fabrication of more paper, hand or machine made, is not recorded since all of the wove paper used in these imprints appears to be handmade [imported largely from Great Britain]. A native paper industry was not established in the Atlantic provinces until the end of this period when Anthony Holland's Acadian Paper Mill at Hammond's Plains near Halifax began production of wrapping paper in November 1819 and of printing paper early in 1820.' A fuller account of Holland's enterprise is to be found in entry NS183 [pp. 138-39] of the bibliography. Her use of text-type identification is equally thorough and is supported by some twenty illustrations representing all four provinces.

Much more might be said in praise of this fine bibliography. This, surely, is enough to recommend it to all who work with books. Finally, the design of the work is comparable to Fleming's earlier work in Upper Canada imprints. It was designed by one of Canada's most talented designers, Will Rueter. Was the present book shaped by him as well? Such a work as this deserves a full and handsomely set colophon to reveal not only the name of the designer, but the number of copies printed and the materials from which the book was made.

DOUGLAS G. LOCHHEAD
Mount Allison University