

Letters

Editor,

Regarding the editorial by Tim Rogers which appeared in the January 1984 issue of the *Canadian Folk Music Bulletin*, I appreciate your concern about the lack of Quebec membership in the CFMS and the sensible, sensitive appraisal of the current situation in the editorial. I am not surprised by the fact of a relatively small representation in Québec and while Donald's observation concerning the recent shift of interest towards a performance-oriented organization may explain the decline of interest in the CFMS by the Québec scholarly community, this latter group represents only a handful of potential members. The majority of people in Quebec who are interested in traditional music are either players or dancers. Most of these people play and dance in the home or the community and, with the exception of the young, urban

population, most of these people learned the rudiments of traditional music and dance in the home from family and neighbors. Urbanization and mass media have considerably influenced popular standards for entertainment in general and repertoire and style with regards to dance music. Nonetheless, traditional music in Quebec remains essentially local in nature. Although I am sure that the community of players and dancers in Quebec are essentially sympathetic to the objectives of the CFMS, I am doubtful that you will succeed in soliciting membership on the basis of your publications, which are national in scope and which are oriented primarily toward scholars or revival-oriented performers. (There are only a very few revival-oriented performers here in Quebec.)

Lisa Ornstein, Quebec City

Editor,

I am writing a book about Ernest Cashel, a man who was convicted of the murder of an Alberta settler. Cashel was hanged in Calgary in February of 1904. In the time between his conviction and execution, however, he escaped from the Calgary guardroom and led the Mounted Police on a merry old chase. It is certain that he enjoyed the sympathy of some members of the public because there were people who were later convicted of sheltering him. There are, in short, a number of parallels between Cashel's story and the exploits of some of the famous outlaws in the United States. It occurs to me that Cashel may have been celebrated in songs, stories or poems, as some of his counterparts in the U.S. were. I would be most grateful if you could help me.

Murray J. Malcolm
223 David Knight Crescent
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

In Reply:

As far as I can tell there have been no indigenous songs about Cashel collected in western Canada. By this I mean songs written at the time and sung by Albertans. (I stress collected because there may well have been some in circulation that escaped the collectors' net.) Stu Phillips did write one in the '50s. It is part of a series of historical songs that he did prior to moving down to Nashville. Phillips sings it on an album entitled *Echoes of the Canadian Foothills* (Rodeo Records, SRLP 17). That's the best I can come up with. To my knowledge neither Wilf Carter nor Stompin' Tom Con-

nors (our two most prolific country balladeers) celebrated Cashel in song, nor have any songs turned up in the cowboy collections (both Canadian and American) with which I'm familiar.

Have any of our readers run into material about Cashel? -please write.

Membership Secretary,

I decided not to renew my membership. I cannot read French and am not interested in the minutes of meetings. I would like to see more record and concert reviews, articles and interviews on/with folk, singers and songwriters.

Don Brooks, Chatham, NY

In Reply,

The BULLETIN is more than simply a magazine — it's also the newsletter of a society. Our constitution obligates us to publish the minutes of our Annual General Meeting in our newsletter. It's only once a year, and we use small print and publish an extra-large issue, so the readers aren't really missing out on anything.

As well, being a nationally-chartered Canadian arts organization, our mandate is to serve the French-speaking one third of our country as well as the English-speaking two thirds. Again, we are obligated to publish Society business (such as the minutes discussed above) in both languages. We feel we should be publishing some of our articles in French; some of our authors write in French; translation is expensive and time-consuming; if we were to translate all our French articles into English, we'd also feel obliged to translate all our English articles into French. The result would be a magazine twice as big, twice as expensive, and twice as long to produce, for the same amount of reading material. We feel strongly that the better course is to serve both cultures in their own languages, translating only the essentials.

This is fairly academic, since you've already cancelled your subscription; but your note moved me to put my thoughts on paper, and has clarified some things in my own mind. Perhaps you'll think a bit more kindly of us . . .

John Leeder
Secretary