political superstructures. Much less is written about the millions of kinship and family networks that connect Canadians to people in virtually every corner of the world and, conversely, people in virtually every corner of the world to Canadians. Errington's study of migration to Upper Canada not only offers a framework within which to build new understandings of nineteenth-century Upper Canadian society, but also it provides a framework for scholars wishing to undertake examinations of the matrices of twenty-first-century transatlantic and transpacific Canadian societies.

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In 1967 Leslie M. Frost, the Conservative premier of Ontario from 1949 until 1961, published Fighting Men, an excellent account of his battalion’s service during the First World War. What is less well known is that Frost and his brother Cecil wrote more than 200 letters home to their parents during the war, of which 170 survive. These are now located in the archives of Trent University, and R. B. Fleming has organized and published them as a comprehensive collection. Taken as a whole, the letters are evocative, informative, and telling of the kind of place Canada was during the war and of how soldiers coped with training, combat, and, often, crushing boredom. For those interested in Frost’s political career, the collection offers fresh insight into the formative years and events of his intellectual, ideological, and political development.

The Frosts were from Orillia; Leslie was 20 and Cecil 18 when they enlisted in 1915. Leslie wound up a junior officer in the 20th Battalion and Cecil a captain with the 2nd Machine Gun Brigade; both served in the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division. They shipped to England in October 1916, with Leslie arriving in France in August 1917. He was seriously wounded in March 1918. Cecil arrived in November 1917 and was slightly wounded in October 1918, returning to active duty until the Armistice the following month.

The men were firmly rooted in family and community, and their correspondence reveals much about the social and political framework of the Dominion. Fleming’s introduction is an interesting (though overlong) review of the Frost family and the history of the small Ontario town in which they grew up and to which they felt an intense attachment.

These richly detailed letters by intelligent, perceptive observers help us understand how middle-class English Canadians viewed the war, their country, the Empire, and themselves. Leslie comes across as a driven political “junkie” who, ironically, expressed increasing loathing for Canadian politicians of every stripe. He was deeply interested in goings-on in the Houses of Commons in Ottawa and London and often adopted the “high diction” of Empire in a manner

probably more British than the British themselves. Still, reflective of Canada’s own national evolution, as time passed, Leslie became less than enamoured with some British authorities, stating in November 1916, “I am in favour of the Canadian Expeditionary Force being run by Canadians. Imperial Officers do not understand us” (p. 93). In the same letter, he wrote, “Let Canada raise her own army, feed it, and officer it and it will be better than having Englishmen, who think we are backwoodsmen, run us... Then perhaps they would cease regarding us as ‘colonials’” (p. 94). The men’s imperial fervour further diminished once they crossed to France, where enthusiasm and bravado yielded to grim reality and occasional criticism of the management of the war. The men quickly transferred their pride to the impressive achievements of the Canadian Corps.

On the other hand, in November 1916, Leslie wrote his parents angrily of the poorly organized and mismanaged CEF in Britain. Cecil was fed up, too. In January he wrote of the painful boredom attendant to the army’s maladministration: “At present, we are having a delightful time trying to fill in the day and also the night with doing nothing and [when] we are tired of doing nothing, we do some more nothing and so on” (p. 109).

Leslie was obviously the greater intellect of the two, by far less self-centred and self-serving. Although many of Cecil’s letters are interesting for their unvarnished commentary — for example, regarding battalion rivalry and his evident pride in serving as a machine-gunner — he seems in constant need of money and more money, creature comforts, better food, and whatever else his heart desires. Whatever ills befall him always seem the fault of others; he is beyond reproach. While he is literate and expressive, Cecil is also much more direct, coarser even, in his political and social views — as well as in the manner of their expression.

Not surprisingly, Leslie’s letters become shorter and less expressive once he arrives at the front. He has less time to write about fewer subjects suitable for home-front consumption. He worries greatly about the frequency of mail from home, highlighting the immense moral value of remaining connected with family and friends in Canada. In March 1917, he wrote his parents, “I know of nothing better than to get a letter from home because they seem to take us back to old Orillia” (p. 128). In the front line, where death could strike at any time, soldiers missed their families. In October 1917, while in France, Leslie wrote his parents, “I am not likely to forget for some time the day I said good-bye to you” (p. 216).

Fleming’s footnotes are far too numerous, overlong, tedious, and often gratuitous. Moreover, not every letter is valuable, and readers might have been spared the frequently mundane. Despite this, the Frost letters constitute an important collection that should be used by anyone interested in gaining insight into the attitudes of wartime English Canada and its soldiery.

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