

## Work Poetry / Poésie de Travail

K. B. Emmott

---

Volume 14, 1984

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/llt14wp01>

[See table of contents](#)

---

### Publisher(s)

Canadian Committee on Labour History

### ISSN

0700-3862 (print)

1911-4842 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

---

### Cite this article

Emmott, K. B. (1984). Work Poetry / Poésie de Travail. *Labour/Le Travailleur*, 14, 207–208.

# WORK POETRY/ POÉSIE DE TRAVAIL

## Keep Going

“the old shear man speaks:  
during the war a power outage wouldn't stop them  
they worked on by candlelight  
riveting ships bound for atlantic convoys”

— David Conn

the booking office late at night  
between surgeries I have time  
to type out David's poems for the publisher

the guy on the phone is rounding up relief nurses  
Anne it's me. Would you like to work evening on 3 North?  
Bill, can you work double shift tomorrow? Thanks,  
I knew you'd be overjoyed.

Hospitals always have emergency generators  
when the power went off at the General, the lights flicked on again  
within two or three seconds  
somehow we are really afraid of hospitals without electricity  
the show must go on.  
it isn't a bit romantic to operate by candlelight  
the swinging kerosene lantern shining into the wound? No sir

The continuous crews of wartime factories  
have nothing on us: the OR runs all night  
blocked grafts, pacemakers, incomplete miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy  
fractured legs and skulls, Caesarean section, 2 a.m. knife wounds  
one after the other carried in past silently mopping cleanup crews

On my shift too I drive hundreds of fine silk rivets  
into tubby hulls  
bound only for the battles  
of lower Granville Street

K.B. Emmott

*If you're interested in  
trisp, intelligent, argumentative writing\*\* on a wide variety of subjects  
you can't afford to miss*

# Queen's Quarterly

## A Canadian Review

*Since 1893, Canada's leading  
general-interest intellectual  
journal.*

*Winner, 1983 award for Best  
Journal Design. Conference  
of Editors of Learned  
Journals.*

Subscribe now and receive  
four 1984 issues of *Queen's  
Quarterly* for only \$22 - a  
\$4 saving over new rates  
which have gone into effect.

Treat yourself to the best  
bargain in serious reading  
today. Just use the conven-  
ient subscription form  
below. As a bonus for act-  
ing quickly, we'll send you  
a copy of our beautiful  
10th Anniversary poster.

In 1984 you can look forward to these high-quality essays:

- George Grant and Canadian Nationalism
- Tehran Diary (two parts)
- The Canadian Constitution
- Canadian Oil Exploration: History, Politics and Economics (two articles)
- Prediction Dilemmas in the Social Sciences
- Escott Meredith Reid: The Making of a Radical Diplomat
- Does Anyone Ever Deserve to Suffer?
- Quebec and Maritime Historiography (two articles)
- Computers and Language
- Understanding Suicide
- Karl Popper
- George Orwell
- Michel Foucault
- Beethoven's Biographers
- Sylvia Plath
- G.K. Chesterton
- The Manhattan Project
- The Source and Extent of a Patient's Right to the Truth
- Sex, Intelligence and the Brain
- Origins of the Blues
- Society and Mental Illness
- African Literature
- Marx, Werewolves and Ancient Greece
- Nuclear Proliferation
- Canadian Historical Geography
- International Gastronomy
- The Political Control of Security Services in Canada
- The New Monasticism
- The Chemistry of Violence
- Plus poetry, fiction, regular music and science columns, and the most comprehensive book review section found anywhere.



*Cosmopolitan outlook.\*  
Far and away the best university  
quarterly in Canada. a  
A fine periodical... superbly produced.\**

\$22 for 1 year     Payment enclosed     Bill me later

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

All subscriptions begin with the Spring number. This offer valid until 30 September 1984 and good only for new subscriptions to Volume 31 (1984).

Mail to: *Queen's Quarterly*, Dept. L, John Watson Hall, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, K7L 3N6.

\* Reader's comments from a recent survey.