

“A Proper Book”: Kathleen Coburn and Margaret Avison’s *Winter Sun*

by David A. Kent

One day in the spring of 1960 just before noon, John Robert Colombo was standing at the magazine rack in the University of Toronto bookstore, looking over chapbooks and broadsheets. Down a nearby staircase stepped Margaret Avison, dressed in what Colombo thought were ‘hand-me-downs.’ Apparently coming from the University of Toronto Press office upstairs, she was carrying a manila folder. While Colombo and Avison were casually acquainted through the poetry scene in Toronto, usually they would greet one another with a simple, restrained “hello.” On this occasion, however, after the niceties were exchanged, Avison lingered. Encouraged, Colombo pointed to a broadsheet he was examining. Avison ignored the gesture and said, “You don’t know what I have here.” “I assume it’s a book,” Colombo replied. “It’s my own book,” she revealed. Colombo quickly offered her his congratulations. In response Avison took the small volume out and exclaimed, “but look at the title!” He examined the cover: *Winter Sun and other poems*. She then explained the difficulty: there was no title poem by that name in the collection. Colombo paused, and then he tried to reassure her: “I don’t think that will be too troublesome.” Nevertheless, it was evident that Avison was very upset about the error. “Can I buy you a coffee?” he asked. Surprisingly, she accepted, and so they proceeded to have a short, amicable visit in the Arbor Room at Hart House before once again going their separate ways.¹

Avison’s evident distress at the gaffe on the cover and jacket (but not the title page) of her book is certainly understandable, but her response is better appreciated when put into the context of the long, arduous process she had gone through before *Winter Sun* finally appeared. After all, she had just turned 42 years of age in April of 1960, and this book was her first. That there was this successful conclusion to the protracted struggle she experienced can be attributed to several key people who supportively acted on her behalf over many years, principally A. J. M. Smith, Northrop Frye, John Frederick Nims, F. R. Scott, Cid Corman, and, most crucially in this case, Kathleen Coburn.

Critics had been impatient to see Avison's first book. In his contribution to *The Culture of Contemporary Canada* (published in 1957), for example, Roy Daniells briefly praises Avison's work and ends with this observation:

Miss Avison has scattered her published poems in periodicals and has probably more first-class pieces in manuscript than have ever been printed. It is to be hoped that she will give us a volume in which her work to the present time can compendiously be viewed. (59-60)

Northrop Frye concluded his ten years of reviewing poetry for *UTQ*'s "Letters in Canada" in volume 29 (1960) and began his final article with comments on the "rich and fruitful time" the 1950s had been for Canadian poetry. He expressed sentiments similar to those of Daniells when he observes that "There are also a number of poets—I think particularly of Eli Mandel and Margaret Avison—who have not received their due of attention only because no published volume has been available to the present writer" (458).

Just over a year earlier, A. J. M. Smith, a tireless promoter of Avison since the early 1940s, was invited by George Woodcock to contribute to the new quarterly *Canadian Literature*. Smith had to decline but included in his reply the following recommendation:

I hope you'll get somebody very good—yourself or Milton Wilson or Miller Maclure—to do an essay on the poetry of Margaret Avison—It's really more interesting than Layton's and much more difficult. I myself can only admire with awe—a bibliography of her periodical and anthology pieces would also be useful. (Smith to Woodcock, 4 January 1959)

Within the month Woodcock had acted on Smith's suggestion, and Milton Wilson was pulled firmly into Avison's orbit. He replied to Woodcock in the following terms:

I had never considered writing an article on Margaret Avison's poetry, but the idea appeals to me. As soon as the current term is over, I shall get to work on it... The lack of a published collection by Miss Avison raises difficulties for the reader for her work. I wonder if a bibliography ought to be attached to the essay. (Wilson to Woodcock, 31 January 1959)

Wilson had recently written "Other Canadians and After," an article about the poetry of the 1950s for *The Tamarack Review*, in which the absence of a published collection by Avison is once again noted. Indeed, the final lines of this article mention the "ought-to-be-collected poems of Margaret Avi-

son" (92). Wilson wrote "The Poetry of Margaret Avison" in the first half of 1959, it was edited by Woodcock, and it appeared in the second number of *Canadian Literature* (Autumn 1959). The article begins by characterizing Avison's status: "For most readers of Canadian poetry, Margaret Avison seems to be less a poet than a kind of negative legend" (47). His reading of the forty-five poems she had published in magazines was to serve as an important introduction to central qualities of her work.²

Just months later, *Winter Sun* was published. It was, happily, a stunning debut, and the critical response in reviews was gratifyingly positive.³ Norman Endicott identified Avison as an "intellectual poet" who demonstrated a "range of craftsmanship" and was, he felt, "one of our most interesting poets" (61, 62). Milton Wilson described her as "an exciting and rewarding poet to read" and "among the best two or three poets Canada has produced since 1940" (in *UTQ*, 383, 380). A. J. M. Smith praised her "boldness and originality" and concluded that "rarely has a poet so compactly and richly identified sensation and thought" (in *The Tamarack Review*, 87, 86). Eli Mandel singled out her "passion and insight" and her "superb poetic dexterity" before concluding, "I suppose one could ask for something more of a book of poetry, but I am hard put to think of what" (705). James Reaney referred to her "long-awaited first collection" and then claimed that "These poems put this strange experience down so exactly that they can change your life" (284). About her "long expected first volume," George Woodcock remarked on her "most original ear and eye." He also noted that the "quality" of her publications in periodicals had "earned her an established position in Canadian anthologies even before she brought out a single volume" (5). None of these reviews of *Winter Sun* mentions the error that so upset Avison, but she made sure it was corrected two years later when the book was reprinted. The critical success of Avison's book culminated when she received the Governor General's Award for Poetry (1960). The jury that year included Northrop Frye. While workload was the ostensible excuse, undoubtedly a felt sense of conflict of interest is an important part of the reason Frye had earlier turned down Wilson's request to review Avison's first book for *The Canadian Forum*.⁴

The appearance of *Winter Sun* was belated not because Avison had not been trying to get a book published or from an absence of invitations or critical advocates. She told interviewer Sally Ito in 2002 that *Winter Sun* had been "many times rejected, like most first books" (172). While that remark is something of an exaggeration, the present essay will describe her earlier efforts to get a book published and then examine letters—principally from the archives of Routledge & Kegan Paul—to demonstrate how

crucial the help of one person in particular was in bringing *Winter Sun* into being: the Coleridge scholar at Victoria College, Kathleen Coburn.

Editors had begun to ask Avison about a book manuscript as early as the mid-1940s after her appearance in Smith's 1943 anthology, *The Book of Canadian Poetry: A Critical and Historical Anthology*. For example, Earle Birney, Alan Crawley, and F. R. Scott all approached her about publishing a book. Lorne Pierce actually secured a manuscript from her in the mid 1940s, but she distrusted what she described to Miriam Waddington as "the invoked nationalism of the credos" (letter to Waddington, 9 June 1945) and withdrew it. She felt that Pierce's patriotism trumped all other considerations. She described the following scene to F. R. Scott in a letter of 29 November 1945:

I felt confused & went down to Lorne Pierce to retrieve MSS., & he talked about Canadian Poetry as if he were a missionary but at the same time revealed that he was publishing Hambleton without having even glanced at the MS. So I pulled mine out almost as a gesture of trying to fight my way out of cobwebs.

The idea that a publisher would accept a manuscript solely on the basis of the writer's nationality rather than the quality of the writing was repugnant to Avison's sense of standards. After two of her poems appeared in John Sutherland's *Other Canadians: An Anthology of New Poetry in Canada 1940-1946*, published in 1947, she renewed her efforts to publish a collection. However, the experience with Pierce had convinced her that she would have to direct her inquiries outside of Canada if her work was going to receive anything like an objective evaluation.

We know of her attempt to secure a publisher in England because, in a letter to American poet and friend John Frederick Nims (4 February 1950), she tells him that her MS is currently "en route to England." The following autumn (4 October) she reported the discouraging results:

As you once exhorted me, I sent out many things to many people, & sent my book too, over & over. The magazines all returned everything—even *Poetry* didn't like a long poem that is better than anything I've done before. And the book is back from Faber after being back from Chatto & Windus after being back from Heinemann.

Evidence from the archives at Faber & Faber confirms that in June, 1950, the book committee at that publishing house rejected a manuscript with the title "Joel and others." It was apparently delivered and retrieved by Marg-

aret's brother Ted, then working in London as a bank executive.⁵ Avison's letter to Nims indicates that Faber, however, was the third English publisher she had tried.

One of the inhibiting elements for Avison, as she told Nims, was that she would "rather write than publish" (4 October 1950). Indeed, her focus was always on living in the present and articulating her experience in language, and she took little interest in the usual career-building activities. Nevertheless, in deference to the urging and aid of friends, she did continue to make efforts to get her work into print. For example, just as he had helped her in getting five poems published by *Poetry* (Chicago) in 1947, so Nims again took matters into his own hands. In 1951 he interceded with the editor of *Poetry*, Karl Shapiro, with the result that Avison's "Hiatus" duly appeared in that magazine the following year. In a letter to another friend and mentor, Avison reminded Northrop Frye that the previous year he had "rebuked" her "for hoarding unpublished MSS." She therefore described to him the unsuccessful efforts of recent months as well as her conflicted state of mind:

I've sent them all out over the last year many many times, & had them all back...Perhaps it's self defense, but I think I felt while hoarding them that I had a picklock to let me out of the economic prison, & would rather have left it untried than failed—the flaw in that is that it wouldn't be so dusty if the poems had been published by anybody & still not delivered me out of the prison. O well. (Avison to Frye, 3 May 1951)

After American poet Cid Corman met Avison in 1953, he was soon encouraging her to submit to his poetry magazine, *Origin*. In addition, during these years her work appeared in three anthologies: Dudek and Layton's *Canadian Poems 1850-1952* (1952), Birney's *Twentieth Century Canadian Poetry* (1953), and *Canadian Poetry in English* (1954), edited by Corman, Pierce, and Rhodenizer.

Avison's situation was complicated by the fact that she was never well organized when it came to managing her poetry manuscripts. For example, in 1954 she sent her MSS to John Crowe Ransom, whom she had met in the summer at the Indiana University School of Letters, and who edited *Kenyon Review*. He held her poems so long she had to write him several letters asking for them back. He did finally publish four poems in the spring 1956 issue of *Kenyon Review*. In that same period of time she declined another invitation from F. R. Scott to contribute to *The Blasted Pine* (Avison to Scott, 13 July 1954), and while her poems were with Ransom, she also had to put off Corman's requests. Apparently Avison often

had only one copy of a poem, so if it was out being considered at a magazine, there might be no other copy to circulate. As we have seen, she also had a long-standing “prejudice” against poems she had finished with and “in favour of the new-born, new-minted” (Avison to Nims, 24 September 1946).

Alan Crawley of *Contemporary Verse* wrote to Avison in the mid fifties to solicit poems. Her letter in reply became the occasion for a remarkable, extended confession in which she admitted guilt for her inefficiency and the generally disorderly conduct of her literary affairs:

Many thoughts are in my mind as I reread your letter, and think of the thoughts it has started in the days since it arrived. The focus point is something difficult to admit & related to the distractions and discouragements I mentioned. I feel rotten about the frittering I seem to do, earning a living, reading maybe too much and too rapidly, writing first drafts of poems now & then, when little pools of quiet occur, & then never going back to polish as they require. And even putting the loose pages of them in order or keeping track of what should be salvaged, what would come out after enough working over, what should be thrown away & forgotten. It is a state of confusion and unseemliness that grows worse with time; and my feeling of guilt grows too, together with a resolve to mend my ways. Yet certainly if the choice... is between husbanding old MSS., & invoking the quiet where activity and purpose come alive, the MSS have to go unhusbanded. And this has been a dilemma, so that I have no proper “book.” (Avison to Crawley, 4 June 1955 (??))

The feeling that she wasted time ‘frittering’ and that her creative impulses were directed to the experience of writing rather than to publishing made her situation acute. Add a serious bout of ill health during 1954 to her concerns, and her dilemma seemed insoluble to her.

And yet, after Avison had suffered through more than a decade of dead ends and rejections, someone appeared who suddenly and dramatically changed her fortunes: Kathleen Coburn, the Coleridge scholar from Victoria College. It all began inauspiciously enough with a “street car exhortation” (Avison to Coburn, 17 November, probably 1955) in which Coburn encouraged Avison to apply for a Guggenheim Fellowship. As a previous recipient of this award, Coburn, together with A.J.M. Smith, Alexander Brady, F. R. Scott, and Northrop Frye (also a Guggenheim Fellow), acted as Avison’s references. The application was successful. While holding this award in 1956-1957, she spent eight months in Chicago writing and assembling the poems that form the foundation of *Winter Sun*. In a note in *Always*

Now: *The Collected Poems*, Avison made the following brief acknowledgement to Coburn for her help:

Here I remember Kathleen Coburn (the Coleridgean) whose intervention, in England, got my first book out, *Winter Sun*, put together thanks to an eight-month grant (1956) from the Guggenheim Foundation. (Volume 3, page 211)

A slightly more detailed acknowledgement appeared in Avison's autobiography:

Kay Coburn knew of these attempts to publish. She befriended my manuscript, asking my permission to 'place' it in England, if she could. Her next trip was soon: she needed work time in London to consult manuscripts in the British Museum and to do peripheral research. Hence the Routledge and Kegan Paul publication, at last, of *Winter Sun*. Their Canadian representative being the University of Toronto Press, copies of the Canadian edition began appearing here. (*I am Here and Not Not-There*, 135-36)

Both these accounts are highly condensed, and they gloss lightly over the involved process of evaluation, acceptance, and publication that the manuscript went through from 1958 until 1960. The second passage is factually wrong about the relationship between Routledge & Kegan Paul and the University of Toronto (which is explained below), and both understate the boldness of Coburn's intervention on her behalf. In other words, just as Avison's acknowledgement in *Always Now* of Denise Levertov's help in getting her second book (*The Dumbfounding*) published is minimally described, so, too, it's possible to demonstrate that Coburn's help with *Winter Sun* went considerably farther than both this short note and brief account indicate.⁶

While Coburn and Avison had probably known one another for many years through mutual acquaintances and their association with Victoria College, in the mid to later 1950s Coburn took an active interest in Avison's career. In the later 1950s Avison was hired by Coburn to be a research assistant on her edition of the Coleridge notebooks, and she is formally thanked by the editor in the introduction to volume three. More important, in May 1958 Coburn took the initiative to send Avison's poems to English critic Herbert Read. Coburn first met Read in 1951 to discuss the publication of seventy Coleridge notebooks that Coburn had located and planned to edit. Besides having written a book about Coleridge, he was also a director of Routledge & Kegan Paul, where Coburn's first book about Coleridge, *Inquiring Spirit*, had been published. Read was instrumental in

securing the needed funding for the publication of the notebooks and later of the collected Coleridge project through the Bollingen Foundation in the United States.⁷

In June 1958 Read reacted positively to the poems by Avison he had read. He told Coburn, "These poems are certainly very original, full of intelligent observation and fresh imagery. I like them very definitely, though I find that one has to take them a few at a time because their significance is not immediately clear and the diction is not easy on the ear." Because Routledge & Kegan Paul was not enthusiastic about publishing poetry, he recommended that Coburn think of Faber & Faber: "If one could get T. S. Eliot to read them there might be a chance of Fabers doing the volume." Read suggested that Coburn contact a young editor there, John Bodley: "I may see him during the next day or two and would mention the matter to him" (he then adds at the bottom of the letter, "I have already done so"). He then noted that "Eliot is due back from America this week and I may see him tomorrow—if so, I will again put in a word for Miss Avison. If this strategy does not succeed let us discuss other possibilities when we meet" (Read to Coburn, 4 June 1958). A subsequent letter of 17 June begins with this update: "I warned TSE about the Avison poems: but perhaps forewarned is forearmed. I shall see Bodley again this week & make sure that he passes in the MS." Coburn had promptly sent Avison's poems to Bodley by the middle of June (Coburn to Read, 11 June 1958), and Eliot presumably read them. When Coburn and Read met in July, however, Faber had apparently declined the poems, and so a new 'strategy' had to be adopted. They decided to approach Routledge & Kegan Paul. One of the other directors of the company, Colin Franklin, was the person with whom Coburn corresponded, and he eventually became the person who oversaw the development of the manuscript.

From the letters that survive, Franklin did not seem to know that Read had already seen and expressed enthusiasm about Avison's poems because Franklin told Coburn in August that, while his initial response was that he liked Avison's work, he would be asking Read to look at her poetry and give his opinion. Avison then wrote to Franklin, on Coburn's suggestion, to tell him which of the poems in the manuscript had been previously published (15 August 1958). Meanwhile, Read evidently played his part and affirmed the value of Avison's work. As a result, by September 10, 1958, Franklin informed Coburn that he and Read had consulted and that Routledge "should like to take this a stage further. We feel there is something rare and attractive" in the poems. He asked for "another bundle of her poems" so that they would have more to choose from. The same day Fran-

Franklin wrote an encouraging letter to Avison with the same message. While not being able “to commit ourselves to publishing” as yet, he held out the real possibility of a published book and justified a request for more poems by saying that the first group’s “character and quality are unequal.” He suggested the following strategy to Avison: “It might be wise to make a choice of poems which go well together and suggest a certain manner or mood” (Franklin to Avison, 10 September 1958). Franklin’s correspondence over the next several months followed this pattern: writing to Coburn as the sponsoring agent and editor of Avison’s poems and separately to Avison as the writer.

On September 23, 1958, Avison sent Franklin a “new batch” of poems and indicated that she could send more if necessary. Unfortunately, the available correspondence does not indicate the identity of the poems at any point in this process of evaluation and consolidation. Coburn reported to Franklin on October 21 that she had been encouraging Avison to send “a much more considerable quantity of earlier (merely a little less recent) poems, but it seems to be difficult to persuade her to do this” (Coburn to Franklin, 21 October 1958). At the end of October Franklin sent a letter with two important requests. First, he told Coburn that Routledge “would like to find a way to publish” Avison’s poetry. He suggested that about one quarter of the poems on hand would probably have “to be pruned away for the sake of the size of a possible book. We were going to ask if you and she together would choose the poems which should appear.” The second request was “a commercial one. Do you think that the Toronto Press might take a small edition of, say, 500 copies? This would influence us and reduce the risk of publishing a first volume of poems.” Franklin clearly expected Coburn to play the role of intermediary and midwife to the collection as he concluded his letter with the following comment: “I ought to apologize for writing to you about work which is not your own, but we thought it better to put these questions to you in the first place rather than trouble the author with them. You know more about the practical side of publishing” (Franklin to Coburn, 30 October 1958). Franklin sent the good news to Avison the same day and then, a few days later (3 November), he had occasion to write to Frances Halpenny, editor at the University of Toronto Press, about another matter. He took the opportunity to mention Routledge’s interest in Avison’s poetry and wondered whether Toronto would “share an edition” of poems by a writer of “rare talent” (Franklin to Halpenny, 3 November 1958). However, it appears that the efficient Coburn had already telephoned Halpenny about the prospective book because a letter from Coburn to Franklin the very next day states that although the

university press “does not ordinarily publish any volumes of poetry...they are very much interested in Margaret Avison’s work and will make an exception in this case.” This development was certainly helped by the fact that Halpenny was a contemporary of Avison’s (they had been in the same year as undergraduates at the University of Toronto) and was aware of, and interested in, her poetry. Coburn also told Franklin that Avison “is quite agreeable to making a selection from the poems that you have and I shall of course be glad to work with her on that” (Coburn to Franklin, 4 November 1958).

A week later Franklin praised Coburn for her intervention with Toronto; their co-operation “makes all the difference to our decision about the book.” He reported that the poems were being sent back to Avison: “I like their independence of other people’s attitudes and fashions...it will be interesting to see the volume you choose together” (Franklin to Coburn, 10 November 1958). In her brief reply Coburn suggested that she and Avison “should be able to work quickly on the manuscript” and added this comment: “As she is very productive and new poems are appearing all the time, we may well send along two or three that you have not seen with alternates for possible deletion” (Coburn to Franklin, 14 November 1958). When Avison acknowledged the arrival of the manuscript, she mentioned Coburn’s “kindness in agreeing to help with culling and arranging the poems” and said the job should be completed in January (3 December 1958). For the sake of convenience, it was agreed that the collection should be shown to Toronto before being sent back to England.

In the letter accompanying the “trimmed” manuscript sent to Franklin at the end of January, 1959, Avison explained that the weeding she and Coburn managed to do had reduced the collection by “an exact mathematical $\frac{1}{4}$ in the discard heap.” She also said that the title, “Winter Sun,” remained “tentative.” She went on to say the following about the arrangement of the poems: “Arranging the sequence was not easy. The governing principle was variety of tone—I tried to fit things together in a way that seemed to me to create a kind of unity” (Avison to Franklin, 30 January 1959). Franklin replied in early February: “I shall read the whole typescript when it reaches me and let you know whether we have any comments about the balance or length of it” (Franklin to Avison, 5 February 1959). The available correspondence does not indicate if further revisions were called for and made, but the fact that the next piece of correspondence is three months later suggests that there may have been further modifications. In mid-May Franklin sent Avison a book contract to sign and offered this praise: “I think you have gathered a volume which stands well by itself and

has an independent voice” (Franklin to Avison, 15 May 1959). By late June all permissions and acknowledgements had been completed. Proofs were sent and reviewed in November, and Margaret’s Avison’s ‘proper book’ appeared in the spring of 1960.⁸

The correspondence I have been drawing on demonstrates how decisive a role Kathleen Coburn played in bringing Avison’s first book into print. She found the publisher in England and the co-publisher in Canada, led the negotiations, and even helped Avison select the poems and arrange the manuscript. Avison could not have asked for a more generous patron. Given her earlier frustrations and periods of immobility and ill health, one wonders how long it would have taken Avison to have published a ‘proper book’ had she not had the active support of Coburn and, indeed, so many others who believed in her talents and recognized her reluctance to promote her own work. Once *Winter Sun* appeared, of course, her career was launched, and her anonymity vanished.

Acknowledgements

Letters by Margaret Avison to Colin Franklin, held in the Routledge Collection, Special Collections, Reading University, are quoted with the permission of Routledge & Kegan Paul and Joan Eichner, literary executor for the estate of Margaret Avison.

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The letter by Margaret Avison to Alan Crawley, Alan Crawley fonds, Correspondence series, Box 1, Locator #2110, is quoted with the permission of Queen's University Archives and Joan Eichner, literary executor for the estate of Margaret Avison.

The letter from Milton Wilson to George Woodcock, from the George Woodcock fonds, Locator #2095, Box 3, file 60, at Queen's University Archives, is quoted with the permission of Queen's University Archives and Milton Wilson, Toronto.

Notes

- 1 Interview with John Robert Colombo on 9 April 2008.
- 2 Avison's "Civility a Bogey—Two Centuries of Canadian Cities—" is the first poem in Wilson's short anthology, *Recent Canadian Verse* (1958?). He would later include her work in his *Poetry of Midcentury, 1940-1960* (1964). He also taught her in a graduate course in the English Romantics while she was studying for her M.A. at the University of Toronto (1963-64).
- 3 One exception to the general chorus of praise was Louis Dudek, who may have been influenced by Irving Layton's prejudices in his assessment. In "Patterns of Recent Canadian Poetry," Dudek describes Avison's modernism as "eccentric" and sees her as "very much a product of Toronto's tense straitjacket culture" (277).
- 4 In a letter to Wilson (26 July 1960) Frye declines to review *Winter Sun* because he says he is enormously busy: "It seems very ungracious of me to return Margaret Avison's book. I know I ought to be reviewing it, but for this summer I have eight articles to write, two books to edit, at least five theses to read so far, and the result is that I'm beginning to feel a little desperate about my schedule. In any case, I'd be afraid of putting the review off so long that it wouldn't be fair either to Margaret or to the Forum. I should think Eli Mandel would make an admirable reviewer." He also notes that he is still a member of the Governor General's Awards Committee and requests that Wilson keep him posted on any promising new books of poetry. "My guess is that Margaret and Eli, (if Eli's book comes out this year) would be the only possibilities, but if anything else comes up I might just possibly not see it. The possibility is the kind of thing I get nightmares about." Frye told me in 1988 that he had avoided ever writing about Margaret's work for publication because of their close friendship and Margaret's sensitivities (Interview with Frye). Mandel ended up reviewing Avison's book for *Queen's Quarterly*; Wilson got James Reaney to do the review for *The Canadian Forum*.
- 5 I am grateful to Mr. Robert Brown, archivist at Faber & Faber, who located this reference. Brown indicates that the book committee note is signed MK [Morley Kennerley], so T. S. Eliot was not likely involved with this earlier Avison manuscript.

- 6 See Kent, “Composing a Book.”
- 7 See Coburn, *In Pursuit of Coleridge*, 110-11.
- 8 Subsequent correspondence in the Kathleen Coburn fonds suggests that Franklin visited Toronto in February of 1962 and that he, Coburn, and Avison enjoyed a dinner and visit together. After Coburn became a Commonwealth Visiting Scholar in England in 1962-63, she hoped that Avison would come to England to do further work on volume 3 of *The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, but by then Avison had other work and family commitments in Toronto to attend to.

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