

Popham, Elizabeth, ed., *A. M. Klein: the Letters*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011. xxxiii + 514 pp.

This volume represents a worthy culmination of the important series of the “A. M. Klein Research and Publication Project” that has enabled us to easily access the complete works of one of the greatest Canadian writers of the twentieth century.

Each volume in the series has had its own unique editorial challenges, and it is clear from Elizabeth Popham’s preface that this volume is no exception. One major editorial decision was not to publish nearly all Klein’s routine legal correspondence (ix). A second factor that clearly affects this volume is that Klein’s family correspondence has been sealed by the archive until the year 2022, the fiftieth year after his death (x). These two lacunae certainly tilt the emphasis of the letters in this volume toward Klein’s literary work. The letters that remain, with all their admitted gaps, still enable the reader to understand in a clearer and more nuanced way numerous aspects of Klein’s life and work.

One example of the insight one can gain from a careful study of this volume will suffice. Included in this volume are a number of letters to Guy Sylvestre, who was then a literary critic for Ottawa’s French daily, *Le Droit* and would later become head of what is now Library and Archives Canada. Both Klein and Sylvestre, it turns out, were interested in intensively exploring both sides of the French and English Canadian literary divide and experienced great satisfaction at knowing the interest of someone belonging to the other “solitude”.

The volume is copiously annotated and well indexed, though the presence of the notes at the back of the book and not on the same page as the document makes it less than convenient for quick reference.

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