



Both Hands: A Life of Lorne Pierce of Ryerson Press

Sandra Campbell

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Editor and publisher, workaholic and romantic, idealist and pioneer, Lorne Pierce once described his editorial desk as "an altar at which I serve - the entire cultural life of Canada." Pierce laboured at his altar between 1920 and 1960 as the driving force behind Ryerson Press, the leading publisher of Canadian works during the mid-twentieth century. In *Both Hands*, Sandra Campbell captures the inimitable cultural role of a remarkable man whose work paved the way for the creation of a national identity. *Both Hands* delves into the encounters, trials, and triumphs that inspired Pierce's vision of cultural nationalism - from his rural upbringing in eastern Ontario, to the philosophical ideals he acquired at Queen's University, to his service as a teacher, a Methodist preacher, and a military man during the First World War. All these experiences coalesced in his work at Ryerson Press - then Canada's largest publishing house - even as he battled lupus and deafness to make his mark on the country's literary scene. Campbell situates this unflinching look into Pierce's personal and public life within the context of Canadian society, detailing his relationships with major figures such as the Group of Seven, Harold Innis, Donald Creighton, E.J. Pratt, the modernist Montreal poets, Northrop Frye, and many others. Set against the rich backdrop of Canada's early literary and artistic heritage, *Both Hands* vividly presents the life and work of an impresario of literary, historical, and art publishing of indisputable influence throughout the country's cultural milieu.

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