

DEEPER UNDERSTANDING

“GIVE IT ANOTHER SQUEEZE”: LEACOCK AND RECYCLED WRITING

The preface to *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town* was not originally written for *Sunshine Sketches*. It first appeared in the December 11, 1911 edition of the British magazine *Canada: An Illustrated Weekly for All Interested in the Dominion*. Leacock slightly modified it for *Sunshine Sketches*. This recycling of work is typical of Leacock. Leacock rose early every morning to write for several hours. Often the result of this early-morning work was articles and short stories to be published in magazines and periodicals. Nearly every year he would put these articles together to create a book. As he says in the introduction to *Moonbeams from the Larger Lunacy*:

The prudent husbandman, after having taken from his field all the straw that is there, rakes it over with a wooden rake and gets as much again. The wise child, after the lemonade jug is empty, takes the lemons from the bottom of it and squeezes them into a still larger brew. So does the sagacious author, after having sold his material to the magazines and been paid for it, clap it into book-covers and give it another squeeze.¹

Sunshine Sketches follows a similar process. Its chapters first appeared as a serialisation in the *Montreal Star* over the spring of 1912. When they were assembled together into the book *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town*, Leacock added the preface by revising a previously-published autobiographical piece.

1. Was it shrewd of Leacock to re-use his work?
2. In what ways do you re-use your own work?



1

Leacock, Stephen. *Moonbeams from the Larger Lunacy*. S.B. Gundy, 1915, p. 5.