

## Book Reviews

*Overland from Canada to British Columbia by Mr. Thomas McMicking of Queenston, Canada West*, edited by Joanne Leduc. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1981.

Many historians and others of that ilk tend to regard editorial scholarship as the least demanding intellectually and the most mechanical technically. Editorial scholarship is seen to have the singular virtue of being able to be picked up and put down at will without the need for the sustained effort and the close concentration required for the creation of the written text. This is a very simplistic view of the role of an author. To do the job properly a very carefully conceived approach to the original work to be considered must be made. Any person perusing the admirable volumes produced by the Yale University Press of James Boswell, Horace Walpole or Benjamin Franklin will instinctively be aware of such a plan.

A good editor is very like a good theatrical producer. The latter knows that he must not obtrude himself too much on what is finally seen by the audience. What is perceived must be right for the play, not something to satisfy the ego of the producer. The editor, like the producer, cannot allow the trappings to obscure what is being said. Moreover, elaborate costume design and elegant sets cannot hide the fact of a badly acted play or one that is unsubstantial. "The play's the thing," and so too is it with a text to be worth the time and effort of a good editor.

Joanne Leduc understands her role very nicely. She has prepared an introduction to Thomas McMicking's journal that is precise and thoughtful. She has done her research carefully in a wide variety of scholarly institutions and given the requisite background information in the notes. Sadly, some of the value of the latter is lost by the decision — one presumes of the University of British Columbia Press to diminish the costs — to place the notes at the end of the book. Since most of the notes are explanatory it is extremely irritating to have to keep turning to the end of

the printed text for the reader to make use of such material. Footnotes which are merely reference material can quite properly repose at the conclusion of the material itself, but when the notes are explanatory, charmingly informative and well written, it is unfortunate that they are not placed where they can be read easily. The upshot is, of course, that most readers never bother with these notes and all of the good efforts of an editor go for nothing. Miss Leduc deserves better treatment than is allocated to her by the format of the book.

To continue with the thespian comparison, an inadequate play cannot be carried even by great actors and actresses. Regretfully it must be said Thomas McMicking is not a particularly distinguished or perceptive writer. His story of the expeditions begun in Canada West in the spring of 1862 and ending on the west coast in early September is interesting enough recounting the various adventures along the journey. However, it is essentially just a narrative — in its present form it appeared as a series of articles in the *British Columbian*, a newspaper printed in New Westminster. (The present editor has wisely not subdivided the text as it was first published.) Crossing overland was far from easy, and all of this is recorded faithfully and correctly but without much panache. McMicking declared he did not recommend or encourage “the overland route” despite the fact that it was cheap and not overly difficult, but rather he was writing to encourage the building of a transcontinental railway to allow for mass settlement of the prairies. Telling the story as he does, and it must have been a tedious business travelling at such a slow pace, it would be evident to any reader that a railway, or at the very least a proper road system, was essential for the British North American colonies to develop properly.

McMicking was obviously a sensible individual. He organized the expedition properly and directed it very competently. There are few accidents and little loss of life, aside from drowning, and “the Overlanders” could feel satisfied that they had such good leadership. McMicking’s account is rarely humorous — his remark on roasted skunk is virtually the only comic comment — and he was obviously a very solemn young man. He gives praise or critical comment when he deems it necessary. His fellow “Overlanders” seem sensible indeed. One in particular deserves much praise, and that is Catherine Schubert, the only woman in the group, who is, indeed, a most admirable character. McMicking singles her out for special commendation.

For the local history enthusiast this is a nice addition to the bookshelf.

As noted earlier, the editorial work is impeccable and the illustrative material well chosen. Thomas McMicking, the author, is an agreeable companion for an evening, but even his best friend could never say that he was a great writer.

*University of Victoria*

S. W. JACKMAN

*Vancouver: An Illustrated History*, by Patricia E. Roy. Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, and National Museum of Man, National Museums of Canada, 1980.

As one of the contributors to the History of Canadian Cities Series, I had been reluctant to review companion volumes. I feared the unseemly prospect of appearing to tell tales out of school or, at the other extreme, becoming a booster for the series rather than a critic of the volume at hand. Nonetheless, in the course of supervising a series volume through the complicated and often molasses-like processes that mark the sponsorship of the project, it seemed increasingly appropriate to review *Vancouver* in light of an insider's perspective on what was done and why. Accordingly, I have reviewed the book with an eye to the objectives of the series, the hazards of a transcontinental co-ordination of publication, and the particular viewpoints of Patricia Roy on labour and political issues. I have singled out the latter for comment because they represent the most controversial stance apparent in the book — its assent to the elite's perception of the city.

The series was designed to meet scholarly standards while reaching a general readership. Scholarly monographs, certainly those produced about my city (Hamilton), have set high academic standards but frustrated interested and intelligent citizens who were not initiated into the special rites of controversial methodologies.

More commonly, Canadian cities have been the subjects of uncritical and unmethodical urban biographies. When he initiated the series, author and editor Alan Artibise prepared a guide to assure a balance of the academic and the popular. Furthermore, to promote comparative studies, all volumes had to contain sections on the urban economy, population, the urban landscape, civic politics, and society and culture. As well, serial information on population growth, national origins, religious denominations and other measures of urban characteristics had to appear in a set of tables. To date Alan Artibise's editorship has been vigorous; he

has struggled to hold authors to chronological and topical balance. To enhance public interest and to make certain points about a very tangible subject, maps and photographs have been lavishly provided. Captions for the latter have improved considerably since the *Winnipeg* phototype for the series. Those for *Vancouver* often contain more than a reference to the date and street depicted. Beyond the editor's design, the topical interests of the institutions that have sponsored publication have had to be considered. The National Museum of Man likes to have its concerns represented: Amerindians and cultural institutions. Publisher James Lorimer and Company, drawing upon one of its publication themes, is alert to the land development issues.

Despite the list of requisites, authors have the usual freedom to interpret the factual information within given topics. Controversy and analytic efforts can enter the discussions of the broadly defined mandatory subjects. In a subdued but persistent fashion, for example, Patricia Roy places her work in a British Columbia historiographic controversy about labour and the left. That is not to say that her work has a sharply opinionated presentation; her treatment of controversial points about labour and politics appears with evidence in a narrative form, but it is no less charged with a viewpoint because of her style and omission of context. This critique will be developed later in the review.

Each participant in the production of the manuscript — a crowded room of helpful experts but a crowd nonetheless — had different timetables. Eventually the publisher's timetable takes over and, in the rush to achieve sound commercial marketing with a Fall release, it imposes demands that are difficult to keep in order at fifty miles distance and exceedingly awkward across the continent. For academics used to the pace and marketing torpor of some university presses and familiar with the preparation of only a text, the alacrity of James Lorimer and Company along with the co-ordination of cartographic and photographic work present unfamiliar experiences. Speed and complexity help to explain minor rough spots in *Vancouver*: the uneven quality of maps, a table (XI) whose alignment of subjects and data is confusing, and a table IIa instead of conventional numbering sequence. None of these detract from the appeal of the book.

To a large extent, *Vancouver* is written as history from the top down. That perspective in urban history is valid, but along with the real estate entrepreneurs, investors and transportation companies, urban history has to encompass the world of labour. Patricia Roy largely discusses labour with reference to political and industrial action; the workplace and the

conditions that eventually provoked conflicts are not assessed. That lack of discussion about “the contested terrain” of the shop or sawmill results in what I feel is a skewed impression of the workingman’s perception of Vancouver. That perception is allowed to surface during troubled periods like 1918 and 1919, but then it appears only as muted, divided and exhausted protest. The adjectives apply to the selected events. However, the pitch of analysis is not in sympathy with an understanding of labour’s plight — of a regime of tough employment and political practices. Patricia Roy incorporates, but also operates beyond, the traditional approach to British Columbia history — the Island versus lower mainland contest brought out by Margaret Ormsby; she is even further from the emphasis on class conflict presented by Martin Robin. Whatever the flawed details evident in the latter’s history of the province, its observations about the probable influence of a narrow agrarian base, industrial rather than craft union heritage, and extreme socio-political contrasts between labourers and company authorities in the resource towns cannot be ignored. Since metropolitan relations have a reciprocal quality in which the hinterland also can affect the metropolis, Patricia Roy’s abbreviated presentation of the labour movement seems to miss the grim essentials of a resource-based economy. Conceivably, there could have been an analysis of working conditions and employers’ leverage in the unique economic emphases of Vancouver — transportation, forest products, resource equipment and tourism. Given the seasonal and cyclical fluctuations in employment as well as other features inherent in certain Vancouver jobs, the fact that labour could be worn down and fragmented is not surprising. The current dynamism in Canadian labour history and the interest that *Vancouver* may promote should generate the type of detailed articles that would have made Patricia Roy’s task an easier one and would have made her observations more complete.

Vancouver’s splendid natural setting receives full credit. What also is striking to someone from the central Canadian “conurbation” is the splendid isolation. Vancouver lacks the overlap of powerful media influences that occur along the Windsor-Quebec City corridor. The corporate power of Toronto can be felt and resented in Vancouver, but living in the immediate shadow is a different experience. A city crowded only by the ocean and mountains and not by other concentrations of population must have produced singular cultural traits. As well, the politics of development relating to the resource areas of British Columbia and the confrontations in labour relations early in the century may well have engendered the “red-baiting” of Mayor G. G. McGeer or the creation

of that particular body, the Non-Partisan Association. *Vancouver* seems to apologize for or explain away these political manifestations without seeking their socio-economic grounding. Here again my bias is showing; still the concern is, I feel, a legitimate one.

*Vancouver* does not explicitly consider how the city's surroundings and hinterland have made it different from other Canadian cities. Nonetheless, the book provides abundant details that build toward a sense of a unique community. On the other hand, *Vancouver* prompts the drawing of analogies with other urban centres, especially those founded in the nineteenth century. The discussion of the ratio of males to females in the early settlement years and of the cultural consequences suggests parallels with other Canadian cities, although the chronology may be different. The discrimination against Italians around the time of the First World War sounds remarkably similar to the situation in Hamilton, yet I hope that Patricia Roy wrote the following tongue in cheek: "Vancouver denied all relief to men of Italian descent not because of Italy's position in world affairs but because Italians were often found 'drinking and carousing'." That statement seems an especially unfortunate use of the civic authorities' rationale. Once again it suggests the missing dimensions of life among the city's labourers and it suggests a siding with official Vancouver. The land development observations, from founding to apartment-building construction booms, appear comparable with episodes in many other Canadian cities. As more volumes in the series appear, questions about contrasts and similarities will multiply and possibly encourage comparative scholarship. Meanwhile *Vancouver*, as an informed survey history, should further the cause of west coast history and draw more researchers into the extraordinary city archives.

McMaster University

JOHN C. WEAVER

*Indian Healing: Shamanic Ceremonialism in the Pacific Northwest Today*, by Wolfgang G. Jilek. North Vancouver: Hancock House, 1982. Pp. 181, \$7.95.

Among traditional Coast Salish native people, the vision quest was a central experience that integrated cultural symbols within the personality structure of an individual. The integration of personal experience and cultural form was facilitated by winter ceremonials during which dancers acted out the symbols of their dreams and visions. These ceremonials,

commonly known as spirit dances, were opposed by Christian authorities and outlawed by the governments of Canada and Washington State. In the mid-twentieth century, a form of spirit dancing reappeared among these people. The form it took was related to the problems experienced by people who find themselves in a relatively disadvantaged minority.

Dr. Wolfgang Jilek is a clinical and community psychiatrist who practised in the Fraser Valley during the period when spirit dancing renewal began. *Indian Healing: Shamanic Ceremonialism in the Pacific Northwest Today*, is an account of his research into the cultural psychology of the contemporary phenomenon. The first nine chapters of the book are an identical re-issue under different title of his 1974 monograph, *Salish Mental Health and Culture Change: Psychohygenic and Therapeutic Aspects of The Guardian Spirit Ceremonial*. Even the page numbers of the two texts are the same for the first 116 pages. Chapters 10-12, an additional forty-four pages, present data on native mortality rates, a summary analysis of spirit dance symbolism and a cursory discussion of other Native American ceremonial revivals. The book is not about shamanic ceremonialism throughout the Pacific Northwest today. Like its predecessor, *Indian Healing* describes only the particular spirit dancing tradition of the Coast Salish people.

Jilek's thesis in both versions of this work is that contemporary spirit dancing may be seen as a psychotherapeutic measure for the relief of anomic depression caused by the relative deprivation experienced by native people in relation to the dominant white community. Jilek argues that the ceremonial is effective because it induces altered states of consciousness out of which participants create reintegrated personality structures. This personality reintegration is symbolized as a form of death and rebirth. The very fact that spirit dancing is a native rather than western therapeutic system serves to counter the state of anomic depression caused by relative deprivation. Jilek's approach to the phenomenon combines ethnographic description with the language of clinical analysis. His use of such terms as cathartic abreaction, pathognomonic and dyspnea, maintains a clinical tone that contrasts sharply with the natural, often poetic language of native testimonial.

Although this book is little more than a re-issue of Jilek's previous work under a different and misleading title, there is value in it. The natives' accounts of their spirit dance experiences are powerful and eloquent. These convincing testimonials, as much as Jilek's clinical description, attest to the power in a native system of ritual psychotherapy. There is a power in the language of description used by spirit dancers that makes

the language of clinical psychology seem lifeless and superficial. It would have been a rewarding challenge to find a language of description within the western academic tradition that would have complemented the Salish sense of communication.

Jilek's personal commitment to the Salish people and their ways of healing come through clearly in the book. His support and understanding of how the system is beneficial to people suffering depression associated with severe cultural loss have been of assistance in legitimizing spirit dancing within an otherwise prejudiced white community. Jilek is unusual among western physicians in recognizing the therapeutic benefits of a cultural system existing outside the doctor's office. The book provides a solid background for a scientific understanding of a phenomenon previously stigmatized as superstition. Perhaps it remains for other writers to write about spirit dancing in a language of experience.

*University of British Columbia*

ROBIN RIDINGTON

### *Gentlemen Emigrants: A Reply*

I am pleased that Jean Barman rated my study, *Gentlemen Emigrants*, "an important book" and a "graphic introduction to [a] significant facet of Canadian socio-demographic history" (*BC Studies*, No. 54, Summer 1982). I am also pleased that she found my discussion of supernumerary British gentlemen to be informative and "incisive." Her review, however, overlooks many of my main points while misrepresenting one of the central themes in the book — viz. that popular attitudes towards British emigrant gentlemen in Canada changed during the Edwardian years. As well, she implies that my research for the chapters which deal with British Columbia is less than adequate.

Before addressing these charges, and before correcting some of the erroneous impressions conveyed by Dr. Barman, let me emphasize that *Gentlemen Emigrants* deals with a period from the end of the Napoleonic Wars to the outbreak of the First World War; the book also ranges from the British Isles to the Pacific coast. I have, in other words, cast an extensive net, and so it is perhaps inevitable that some readers — and reviewers — whose interests are local will be disappointed that I did not devote more attention to their particular areas. But such are the risks one runs when writing a book intended for a wide audience in Canada, the United States, and Britain.

Dr. Barman begins her review by referring to statistics which, she implies, are cited on page 2 of my book. There are no statistics on that page, and the figures which I do provide (on page 8) are quite different from those given by Dr. Barman. My figures refer to the proportion of "higher class migrants" among the overall army of Britons who came to Canada during the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century. Nowhere do I put the number of emigrants at 150,000. Indeed, as I point out in the book (pp. 6-8, 59-60), it is impossible to be precise as to the number of British gentlemen who came to Canada, because of the inconsistencies and irregularities which marked the enumeration of emigrants/immigrants on both sides of the Atlantic.

Your reviewer seems to accept my arguments concerning the attitudes and preconceptions of public school emigrants, and she credits me with providing a sound analysis of aristocratic settlement in the prairie West. "There his range of primary evidence is extensive," she writes, "his perception of the changing nature of the host society acute." She claims, though, that my "attempt to encompass British Columbia within the same conceptual framework is, by contrast, disquieting."

Disquieting it may be, but the fact is that the very forces which brought gentlemen emigrants to, say, Alberta, also affected those who came to our province. Limited career opportunities in the Old Country, a spirit of adventure, a desire for wealth, along with an interest in various types of agriculture (including stock-raising) accounted for a great number of the emigrants who settled on this side of the Rockies. The Cornwall brothers, Charles Houghton, the Vernon brothers, John Carmichael Haynes, John Clapperton — all of whom are mentioned in the book — are cases in point.

Referring to my second chapter on British Columbia, Dr. Barman complains that I am more concerned with "high adventure" than with the "main chance." By the "main chance" she means fruit farming, an activity that unquestionably appealed to many well-bred Britons. Yet how many pages in a book of this type should be devoted to the fruit ranchers? By drawing attention to the importance of Lord Aberdeen's orchards at Coldstream, by referring to Professor Ormsby's work on horticulture in the Okanagan, by providing a detailed examination of Walhachin, and by quoting contemporaries such as Paddy Ackland and C. W. Holliday, I think I managed to convey a fair idea of the Edwardian "fruit mania" in B.C. At the same time, though, it was also necessary to devote attention to the coteries of gentlefolk on the Gulf Islands, to the gracious hamlets of "longstockings" near Duncan, on

Vancouver Island, and generally to emigrant gentlemen outside the Okanagan Valley. And as for my alleged preoccupation with "high adventure" and "eccentric" big game hunters — it would be folly to underestimate the importance of individuals like Clive Phillips-Wolley, W. A. Baillie-Grohman, and Warburton Pike. Not only did they bring a great deal of capital to the province; they also brought B.C. to the attention of a great many British investors, tourists, and wealthy settlers.

I take greatest exception, however, to Dr. Barman's contention that I somehow believe that "the positive contribution of genteel emigrants was over by 1900." Nowhere in the book do I suggest this. Nor do I ever dismiss the Edwardian emigrants as "exiles and ne'er-do-wells." What I do say is that popular attitudes towards emigrant gentlemen changed around the turn of the century. There are many reasons for the change, including a growing sense of nationalism among Canadians and an unfortunate tendency among some of the latter-day Tom Browns to affect superior airs. The change is most evident in contemporary stereotypes of the "remittance man" — an expression which is virtually unknown in the 1880s but which, by the early 1900s, is applied (unfairly, to be sure) to many newly-arrived British gentlemen. Local reactions to these emigrants can also be discerned in some of the jokes, anecdotes, and ballads which circulated at the time.

On this score, Dr. Barman apparently feels that my evidence is questionable and that my research is lacking. "Amidst two dozen pages demonstrating his general contention," she complains, "are precisely two pieces of evidence referring to British Columbia: an 1890s ballad, published in 1962, lamenting the incompetence of a 'young British rauncher,' and two anecdotes, published only in 1933 and 1976. . . ."

First of all, it should be apparent that virtually all of the points I raise in my chapter on "Remittance Men" in Canada can be applied to B.C. Secondly, had Dr. Barman been more familiar with this field and with some of the literature in question, she might not have been quite so critical of my secondary references. For example, the ballad of the "Young British Rancher," reprinted by Phillip Thomas in the *British Columbia Library Quarterly* in 1962, was first published in a Victoria periodical called *Honest Injun* in 1897. That periodical may not have had a large readership, but I do know from interviewing "Old-Timers" that the ballad was well-known on Vancouver Island in the early 1900s. The song was also in much the same vein as Robert Service's "The Black Sheep" (1909), C. S. Hayes' "Tale of the Che-Cha-Ko" (1910), the

*Week's* "Lay of the Remittance Man" (1912), and sundry other ditties which were popular in the province before the Great War.

As for the 1933 anecdote about a young English greenhorn who mistook a native Indian for a Romany gipsy — this was related by Judge Spinks in his reminiscences of fin-de-siècle B.C. It was one of those stories, Spinks wrote, that had "been told him at odd times at the firesides of old-timers, at campfires of cowboys, Indians, and hunters, and even in bar-rooms."<sup>1</sup> Obviously, then, it was not a new or an exceptional tale when it was actually printed in 1933. The same can be said of the hoary tale about the fastidious English gentleman who was found half dead of thirst beside a river, because he did not have a drinking cup. When relating this tale, I cited Jack Mould's account of the Bulkley Valley, *Stump Farms and Broadaxes* (1976), in order to show that such stories were not restricted to the southern parts of the province. But as I indicate elsewhere in my book, Rudyard Kipling heard this tale when he visited our province in the early 1900s. In fact, it was this oft-told tale that prompted Kipling's now famous remark that "Every new country needs — vitally needs — one-half of one per cent of its population trained to die of thirst rather than drink out of their hands."<sup>2</sup>

I am reminded that Kipling noted that certain gentlemen in the West had a reputation of being rather sensitive. Whenever they felt aggrieved or unjustly criticized they sat down and wrote a letter to *The Times*; failing that, they wrote heated letters to the editors of the local press. I trust that readers of *BC Studies* will not think me guilty of exhibiting similar tendencies! I realize that *Gentlemen Emigrants* has some shortcomings and that it might have been strengthened in places. I am confident, nevertheless, that readers will find the book does not overlook the role of emigrant gentlemen in British Columbia. Readers will also find — *pace* Dr. Barman — that the book recognizes fully the substantial and lasting contributions made by British gentlemen emigrants in western Canada during the Edwardian years.

<sup>1</sup> William Ward Spinks, *Tales of the British Columbia Frontier* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1933), p. v.

<sup>2</sup> Rudyard Kipling, *Letters to the Family* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1908), pp. 36-37.

## Jean Barman Replies

I regret the distress caused by my review (No. 54, Summer 1982), which sought to emphasize *Gentlemen Emigrants'* many merits. Let me first assuage Patrick Dunae's concern over the validity of my estimates of the number of British male "higher class migrants" to Canada between 1870 and 1914. I simply went back to the original data on which his proportions, taken in part from secondary sources, were based; see N. H. Carrier and J. R. Jeffery, *External Migration* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1953), pp. 54-56 and 137-142 on data reliability, and tables on pp. 57, 95-96, 113, 115 and 118-119. As justification for focusing on the book's British Columbia content, I can only point to the title of the journal for which the review was written: *BC Studies*. Perhaps we simply disagree on evidence. I still do not, for instance, consider adequate attention to British Columbia a ballad and two anecdotes, however reputable their provenance.