Book Reviews

British Columbia: A Celebration, edited by George Woodcock; photographs by J. A. Kraulis. Edmonton: Hurtig, 1983. Pp. 208, $29.95.

Reviewers, acutely aware of gaps in their knowledge, uncertain of their constituency, have a graceful retreat: praise the book, and without many reservations either. Or add just enough to imply, not too delicately, how much more you know than you actually say. There is hypocrisy in favourable reviews as in unfavourable ones. Still, there may be some justice in an easterner who once had a love affair with British Columbia reviewing a book by an "outsider" who married her.

Splendor sine occasu is British Columbia's motto, but her splendours should never be taken casually; it is best to take them with pride, as if, as the motto has it, there was never an end to them. Quiet, unobtrusive countrysides, a sudden village, the ordered neatness of that comfortable world of small farms that is southern Ontario, southern Quebec, the Saint John and Annapolis valleys — these are not British Columbia's charms, though they will be found in Vernon and Kelowna and the lower Fraser. British Columbia must be taken as she more generally is: bold, big, brassy, beautiful. So her life, like books that celebrate it, has to be forthright as well as modest, extravagant as well as tender. It is difficult for easterners to quite grasp British Columbia's physical scale: it is a vast empire of regions, in some ways deployed further and realized more in the minds of its people than empire Ontario or imperial Quebec.

The photographs of J. A. Kraulis represent his own poetic instinct. The neutral camera, showing the pageantry and power the province's geography, is not always present. Kraulis' camera is studied, but it is elegantly and charmingly so, as in the Chinese effects of reeds in Lac Le Jeune south of Kamloops (p. 78). Occasionally his pictures shoulder the full burden and splendour of being British Columbian, such as the aerial view of the Fraser valley taken from east of Hope (p. 111), Mount Robson (p. 101) or the splendid panorama of the Spectrum Range in Mount

Edziza Provincial Park (p. 113). One is caught by the photographs, undeniably; and Kraulis' treatment of the sea coast of Vancouver Island is done as lovingly as if he were a Nova Scotian. There are frequent touches of intimacy of landscape, not exactly of cosiness, but with the sense of a nature unalien to man.

The book can be got at more easily through its pictures than its text, but that is stating the obvious. It is right to say, however, that the pictures and the text are not one. They have each their own world: the text does not explain the pictures, nor do the pictures elucidate much the text. It is a book of two gods, perhaps no bad thing in British Columbia; both are trying to reach us; both succeed; but they succeed separately, each in their own way. Thus the text requires from the reader a series of exploratory tangents; the effect cannot be measured because the tangents elude measurement. It cannot, like the pictures, be suddenly taken *per saltum*: it must be taken here and there, from time to time. The book's place is on the coffee table. There may be problems getting it up from there; it is a wide book, its text runs in double columns, and it is awkward to hold. One wonders if short stories in double columns may not defeat themselves. But, that being said, there are some stunning things here. My historian's eye prefers somehow the literary to the historical; perhaps the historical extracts are too much snippets to please one's exacting, overtrained professionalism. But the short stories and poems stand on their own feet, things of beauty often, such as Earle Birney's lovely, intelligible magic on page 187. Not all the poems can be so described. (There is one of the garbage can, fishbones, moonlight, noises of cat-conflict sort.) There is more than one stunning short story, such as Audrey Thomas' "Ted's wife" (p. 189), or Ethel Wilson's "Fog" (p. 154), twenty-five years old now but timeless. You will need the page numbers to find what you want; there is no index of anything, though there is a table of contents.

One can argue that in celebrations one mode of praise should reinforce the other. Here, of course, they don't; but do not repine. The book is $29.95, and it is a bargain and a joy all at once.

Dalhousie University P. B. Waite

Wilderness of Fortune: The Story of Western Canada, by James K. Smith. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1983. Pp. 310; illus.

To those interested in Western Canadian and particularly fur trade history, James K. Smith is well known as the biographer of David Thompson and Alexander Mackenzie. His newest book surveys the history of the Pacific and Prairie west from the period of pre-contact to the alienated seventies. Two chapters focus specifically on British Columbia, with further comment placed appropriately in chapters that have been topically and chronologically organized.

While this book might be properly identified as an illustrated history, it is not to be dismissed as just another of those volumes long on handsome or exotic illustrations and thin on penetrating comment. On both counts, pictures and text, this book deserves high praise. While the illustrations include some of the old stand-bys too often reproduced, the great majority are fresh, fascinating, and often in colour (though the captions on some of the photographs are not as precise as one would wish). The text demonstrates, moreover, that the author has done more than just search for pictures and paintings and that he is conversant with most of the better monographs that have appeared on western Canadian history over the past decade. What results is a very solid overview that is supported by an interprative foundation.

As a survey of western Canadian history, however, the book would be even more attractive if it were not quite so heavily weighted in favour of the period before 1900. Comprising about two-thirds of this volume, this is the strongest part of the book, and it reflects an author at home with his material. Given the lesser emphasis played upon the twentieth century, the chapters devoted to western settlement, the war years, the booming twenties, the depression and the contemporary west are a little too brief. While the fur trade has received its proper due, and more, the stuff of twentieth-century wilderness fortunes, mining and forestry in British Columbia, and agriculture or petroleum on the prairies, warrant a greater profile in both illustrated and written comment. But this is a modest quibble. Smith has captured something of the grandeur of the western wilderness and the drama of its occupation while largely avoiding the sentimentality and romanticism that plagues and distorts almost all of the earlier popular histories of western Canada. In all, this is an appealing book that readily merits a place on one's gift list.

University of British Columbia DAVID H. BREEN

Green Gold: The Forest Industry in British Columbia, by Patricia Marchak. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1983. Pp. 454.

> . . . the present policies inevitably lead to depletion of the resource base and increasing peripheralization of the economy. The province, initially allowing itself to become a regionally specialized resource production area, eventually becomes a denuded, dependent and impoverished region within the world economy. The book is written in the conviction that this is unnecessary and that even as late as the 1980's the process can be reversed: the people of B.C. can develop a self-sufficient and stable economy without destroying their environment. To do so, however, would require very different public policies, a toughness in dealing with the multinational corporations which dominate the economy, an enlightenment of understanding by organized labour, and a determination to put development with appropriate technology and on a modest scale ahead of high wages and continued dependence on imported consumer products. (p. 2)

These statements, coming at the beginning of *Green Gold*, set the stage for an involving political debate on the nature and direction of the forest industry in British Columbia. And debate there is, as Patricia Marchak makes telling point after telling point. Political and economic theory are linked with historical analysis and supported with well-chosen facts. It is a one-sided exchange, but the views of the opposition are well known and their inability to respond does not diminish the sense of arguments flying back and forth across the floor of the House. Then, for some unaccountable reason, Marchak interrupts herself with a filibuster, giving the reader time to go for coffee and wander around the grounds. Upon return, the debate has resumed, but the sense of urgency is gone and the legislation she proposes has lost the force of rhetorical and political necessity. As a result, the overall effect is one of a collage, a set of poorly integrated elements.

Part One (Capital) contains some of the most interesting arguments in the book. Despite the massive quantities of wood removed from British Columbia's forests (the "green gold" of the book's title), very little of the surplus has gone into general economic development. Why has this happened? Marchak turns to the ideas of Innis under the rubric of "staples theory." When this approach is coupled with the dominance of multinational corporations and the efforts of unions to restrict the outflow of surplus value, many features of B.C.'s forest sector are illuminated. This analytical framework could have underlain the rest of the book, but the author proceeds by referring back to these ideas only occasionally, rather than by developing them rigorously.

Part One also contains a brief historical account of the forest industry in B.C. and a discussion of the current industry-government relationship with several appropriately critical comments. Finally, the structure of the industry is examined in a chapter that echoes Peter Newman's recent books on the Canadian Establishment, yet lacks the humanity of his writing.

Part Two (Labour) begins with a provocative analysis. Marchak argues persuasively for a theory of class divisions in the labour force based on gender, family, and geographic origins. Her arguments are securely grounded in survey data. She goes on to draw a distinction between the different segments of the forest sector (pulpmills, sawmills and logging) in terms of employment patterns. Her conclusion challenges conventional wisdom; the tradition of unemployment in the forest sector reflects not the unstable personalities of loggers but "rational" economic behaviour by their employers.

The remainder of Part Two suffers from the fascination of the researcher with her data. The detailed discussion of statistical tests and results is incongruous with the relatively more superficial treatment in the other sections of the book, and the point of the analysis is lost. A comment similar to one found in many textbooks would have been appreciated; e.g., chapters 8 through 10 may be omitted without loss of continuity.

The last Part (Communities) sketches in the recent history of two towns dominated by the forest industry. Despite the differences in size and extent of resource exploitation, the two towns (Mackenzie and Terrace) are very similar in the consequences of external political and economic domination. The residents have very little say in the decisions which affect the future of their communities. Part Three concludes with a useful summary of the author's arguments and an outline of proposed legislation. Her political program is disappointing for the apparent lack of democratic input from the communities she studied.

A lot is at stake. Decisions made by the provincial and federal governments in the next few years will determine whether British Columbia is relegated to an increasingly dependent hinterland or begins to diversify its economic and social life. The positions taken in this debate by Patricia Marchak deserve a thoughtful examination by policy makers and the general public alike.

University of British Columbia PETER MORRISON

Mayne Island and the Outer Gulf Islands: A History, by Marie Elliott.

This book is a labour of love. Most local histories are, and therein lies their greatest strength and greatest weakness. Marie Elliott effectively chronicles 120 years of Mayne Island's development from the original homesteads of German and British American settlers to the ferry lineups and tourism pressures of the 1980s. The telling is full of the "old stories," the arrival and departure of each founding family member, the heritage of each major building and farm, and, not surprisingly, the life of each sloop, steamer and ferry that has connected the island communities one with another and to the outside world. The text is clearly written based on sound archival and oral research and amply supplemented with detailed maps and excellent photographs of the island.

While there is enough detail to satisfy the local reader, it is not overwhelming. An analysis — albeit affectionate — of economy, society and recent politics attempts to place Mayne Island in the large context of British Columbia's historical development. One theme is central to the story — transportation. It was key to the Island's economic fortunes. Market agriculture, especially hothouse tomatoes, was the island's main industry until the 1950s, when the CPR introduced higher freight rates. The success of summer tourism hinged on frequent ferry service, as did the shipments of fish, cordwood, charcoal and spring daffodils. According to Elliott, by the 1950s the population of Mayne, North and South Pender and Saturna was shrinking, in part because of the end of a brief logging boom, but mainly because of the difficulties with ferry transportation for both people and produce.

The remoteness of island life, dictated by geography and compounded by poor service, gave shape to what Elliott calls an "egalitarian" society. Original settlers of a variety of backgrounds set a co-operative tone for island and inter-island living which British immigrants, settling after 1900, did not disrupt. Although in the twenties and thirties Mayne Island was the centre of British middle-class activities (tennis, teas and formal balls), British families were simply one more, not the predominant, element in an agrarian society. More convincing is Elliott's examination of the Japanese community's relationship to other islanders. By 1942 the Japanese represented one-third of the population and conducted approximately 50 percent of island commerce. Mayne Islanders rose to their defence during World War II, suggesting that white British Columbians were not uniformly prejudiced. In this analysis, responsibility for the

evacuation and lost property rests, for the most part, with the federal government, not with Mayne Islanders.

If the social pattern of the Island diverges from traditional interpretation, the nature of local political concerns does not. The problems of transportation and the pressures of land development, familiar themes in the history of B.C.'s rural communities, receive thorough treatment in the final chapters. For anyone who has ever wondered about the politics of ferry scheduling these are worthwhile reading. Elliott documents the "cavalier" attitude of a provincial administration preoccupied with blacktop. Nonetheless, in the early sixties the Social Credit government reluctantly agreed to take over ferry services. Once the islands become more accessible, conservationists battled developers in numerous government committees, culminating in the NDP creation of the Islands Trust. This unique local body continues to have substantial control over islands planning to this day.

Mayne Island and the Outer Gulf Islands: A History is a useful and informative book. While one wonders from the outset if Mayne (and not Saltspring), was the centre of Gulf Island activity, Elliott moves beyond affection and provides insight into the character of island life. Her book reveals that only recently has the parochial familiarity of the island world been disrupted by newcomers seeking vacation homes and retirement property. Historians should welcome this regional study as an opportunity to test the larger pattern of British Columbia history. Students of provincial politics should find the islands' struggle for local autonomy of particular interest. Gulf Island visitors and residents should consider this book a worthy companion for their next ferry trip.

Vancouver City College ANDREA SMITH

Francis Rattenbury and British Columbia: Architecture and Challenge in the Imperial Age, by Anthony A. Barrett and Rhodri Windsor Liscombe. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1983. Pp. 405; ill. 229.

Francis Mawson Rattenbury has been much written about, just as in his own lifetime he must have been much talked about. A young Yorkshire immigrant to Canada in 1892, at the age of 24 he captured public attention within a year by winning a North America wide competition to design the new British Columbia parliament buildings. During his ensuing 38-year career in the province he not only designed major build-

ings throughout British Columbia — in particular hotels, court houses, banks and numerous prestige residential commissions in Victoria and Vancouver — but also acted officially as architect first to the Canadian Pacific Railway and then to the Grank Trunk Pacific. The substantial earnings from these commissions were invested in large-scale land development and transportation companies. Rattenbury was a talented self publicist, often addressing his public on a wide range of topics through interviews and letters to the newspaper and later from the platform as a municipal politician. He eloquently defended himself in various judicial inquiries, usually relating to cost overruns on his large public commissions. However, toward the end of his life there was the divorce of his wife of many years in favour of a young divorcée, the crash of his financial empire, then social ostracism and retreat to southern England in 1930. Finally there followed his murder at the hands of his new wife's lover and her subsequent tragic suicide — all in a blaze of sensational reporting by the British press.

It has been the task of the authors to cut through the myth and fiction and establish a firmer footing for Rattenbury's architectural contribution to the built history of British Columbia. In doing so they build on previous work, in particular T. Reksten's biography, *Rattenbury* (Sono Nis, 1978), and Barrett's own previous collaboration with Sir Michael Havers, Q.C., and Peter Sharkland, *Tragedy in Three Voices, The Rattenbury Murder* (William Kirber, 1980).

Unlike Reksten, who used primarily public records concerning Rattenbury's architectural activities or the monographs and articles of others who have relied mainly on analyses of extant structures and construction documents, Barrett and Liscombe have drawn extensively on new evidence in the form of personal letters from Rattenbury, mainly to his mother and niece between 1893 and 1931. These were also used extensively in the first part of the earlier book by Barrett *et alia* on the murder.

It is a comment, however, on the very recent maturity of architectural history studies in British Columbia that ten years ago this Rattenbury study would have been so much more difficult to write. The authors were able to draw extensively on recent published work by Peter Cotton, H. Kalman, Alistair Kerr, L. K. Eaton, J. D. Freeman and T. Mills for comparative material in setting Rattenbury's work in a contemporary architectural context. The letters and a close scrutiny of the professional journals of the period establish a detailed and authoritative baseline for Rattenbury's career, his architectural commissions, his travels and to a lesser extent his financial dealings. The authors are sympathetic to the

fact that, like so much correspondence of "colonials" to home, Rattenbury's was quick to highlight his successes while glossing over the failures, and they have made good use of official documentary sources in order to compensate. What emerges is a tightly disciplined account of the architect's professional activities and a solid comparative anlysis of Rattenbury's leadership as British Columbia's premier civic architect of well over a hundred commissions.

There are some shortcomings. While the book is expensively produced on archival paper, design, layout and organization are poor. Many of the black and white illustrations, both of plans and photographs, are barely legible. There are some annoying errors. For instance, the 1892 "Roursay Bros. & Co. building" is in fact the Ramsay Bros. & Co. candy factory. Rattenbury may indeed have supervised tenders for the Chinese School, but his former apprentice D. C. Frame was always credited with the design in the press and professional journals of the day. This latter point indicates one aspect of Rattenbury's career on which both the architect in his letters and the authors seem to remain silent; that is the structure and working of Rattenbury's office. We know, for instance, that at various times between 1897 and 1910 Rattenbury occupied offices in Victoria's Five Sisters building along with such other notable architects as Thomas Sorby, Sam Maclure, Thomas Hooper, C. E. Watkins, Douglas James and P. L. James. While Hooper and Rattenbury would attack each other openly on a number of issues, jobs were often shared among the others either informally or formally through design partnerships (such as the Government House commission shared by Maclure and Rattenbury). Rattenbury indeed stepped into the shoes of his older fellow Yorkshireman, Thomas Sorby, on becoming Western division architect for the CPR. Rattenbury provided additions to numerous Sorby-designed CPR stations and hotels (including the Hotel Vancouver) and subsumed into his own work much of Sorby's pioneering shingle-style design. This style rapidly became a hallmark of the entire "Five Sisters" group. Yet how did these office relationships work? Did the architects share a floating pool of draughtsmen? Was some tablework ever given out to other architects during slack times? Another question is whether or not Rattenbury's success was based entirely on his own self-promotion and design abilities. G. W. Taylor, in *Builders of British Columbia, An Industrial History* (Sono Nis, 1982), has suggested the existence of a Huddersfield, Bradford and Leeds consortium based on Yorkshire woollen industrialists' investments. These were channelled through the Yorkshire Guarantee and Securities Corporation, founded in Vancouver in 1890. Yorkshire money,

according to Taylor, controlled or had interests in B.C. Sugar Refineries, B.C. Electric, B.C. Telephone, B.C. Tramways, Vancouver Machine Works and also one of the largest blocks of Vancouver real estate. Many of these companies were Rattenbury clients. These are merely a few issues open for exploration as a result of Barrett and Liscombe's research.

With the firm demolition of such popular rumours that, for instance, Rattenbury stole the parliament buildings design from the English firm of his uncle (i.e., it was originally intended for a Maharajah's palace!), the way is open for further serious re-examination of Rattenbury's creative role in the formation of British Columbia's distinctive Edwardian west coast style. The 1901 Lyman Duff house, for instance, certainly demonstrates innovative brilliance. In other instances Rattenbury could be naively derivative. I am convinced, for instance, that Rattenbury's 1903/6 Revelstoke courthouse is an abbreviated version of H. T. Hare's Shoreditch Public Library published in the *Architectural Review* of 1893. Similarly, the Rattenbury shingle-style signature of steep gables either blind with a lancet vent or open with an indented gothic arch most likely derived from designs by Toronto architects Dennison and King published in the *Canadian Architect and Builder* in 1890.

In short, Barrett and Liscombe have contributed a founding architectural biography for cultural history research in British Columbia and thereby have established a standard which will challenge future scholars in this field.

Victoria MARTIN SEGGER

Gunboat Frontier: British Maritime Authority and Northwest Coast Indians, 1846-90, by Barry M. Gough. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984. Pp. 287. $27.95.

Gunboat Frontier is an account of how the Royal Navy was used to pacify the Indians of the northwest coast during the mid to late nineteenth century. The author argues that the ships and men of the navy were an important instrument of British colonial and Canadian policy, and that gunboats were frequently used on the coast, as on other imperial frontiers, to quell and control fractious natives. Naval force was initially employed to inflict retribution on the Indians for attacks on Europeans, but increasingly through the period of colonization naval officers were called upon to intervene in Indian matters. There were actions to suppress

Indian warfare, slavery and liquor trading and, associated with these, the navy also lent support to the missionaries who worked to bring about cultural change among the coast Indians. Clearly the Royal Navy was an important weapon in the arsenal of the invading Europeans, and Gough describes a number of incidents up and down the coast over a period of fifty years when naval vessels were used in the effort to establish British authority on this maritime frontier.

As far as it goes, this book is a useful contribution to the literature on the northwest coast. It is an example of a rather old-fashioned kind of imperial history, and the basic argument about the role of the Royal Navy has already been presented in the author's two earlier books, *Distant Dominion: Britain and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1579-1809* and *The Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast of America, 1810-1914*. The last of the trilogy, *Gunboat Frontier*, fills in the details of the navy's relations with Indians. There are, however, three major problems with this book: two that have to do with what the author does say and a third to do with what he does not.

First, there is altogether too much vague writing on these pages. The book is littered with qualifiers. This lack of precision with words is particularly apparent in the descriptions of Indian social structure. We are told that "along the entire coast the village constituted the autonomous political entity," but at the same time there were "unions of such local groupings into larger political units . . . " (p. 7). Later the various inlets of the west coast of Vancouver Island are called "the seats of empire" for Indian peoples (p. 108). "Empire" is an especially inappropriate word for groups that did not seek territorial aggrandizement, as an imperial historian should know. Or again, the Kimsquit, a Bella Coola group, apparently "were a tightly-knit people whose interwoven ancestries were tied together by sentiment and pride of lineage" (p. 201). What does that really tell us about that particular group's social organization that could not be said about any number of indigenous peoples? Admittedly, describing the various cultures of the northwest coast with clarity would be a difficult task, but the author also shows a tendency to be vague about the central concern of his work. Having described how H.M.S. *Boxer* gave assistance to Father A. J. Brabant, Gough continues: "The *Boxer*'s timely assistance may have been typical of the Royal Navy's support for missionaries of whatever Christian denomination" (p. 174). That it may have been typical is obvious; surely in a monograph on the navy we are entitled to know whether in fact it was. In the concluding

paragraph of the last substantial chapter the navy's gunboat actions in support of Empire are summarized as "countless in number, puzzlingly insignificant in the amalgam but vitally illuminating in their individual particularities of character, circumstance and place" (p. 209). Does that mean, in plain English, that the many individual incidents are interesting, but together they do not amount to much? If so, it is an odd way to sum up the subject matter of this volume.

The vagueness of its expression tends to diffuse the main point of this book, but there is no doubt that the author places a great deal of emphasis on the use of force, or the threat of force, to suppress the Indians. Yet one wonders whether, by focusing on violence, he exaggerates the level of conflict. How important was the use of armed force in overall Indian policy and how frequent in the context of Indian-European relations over five decades were these naval forays among the Indians? Sometimes, even on the evidence presented here, naval actions were inconclusive. Moreover, on the second to last page, it is admitted that gunboat actions affected only "a small minority of natives" (p. 214). Presumably, therefore, satisfactory Indian policy was not a matter of power alone, as the example of the United States shows. While Indian policy in British Columbia often involved crisis management, what happened between the crises? As in his earlier books, Gough here refuses to consider other interpretations of the level and importance of violence in Indian-European relations on the coast, particularly during the early contact period. He reiterates the view that "the maritime frontier had a violent history of white-native contact" (p. 109) and on this occasion cites, in support of that contention, a section of my *Contact and Conflict* in which I am at some pains to play down the level of inter-racial violence as a factor in early contact.

The third criticism of this book is perhaps the most fundamental. It would have been a worthwhile exercise simply to use the naval sources to describe its role as an agent of imperial power on the northwest coast. But the author promises to do more than that and then fails to deliver. Since British Columbia is a Pacific place this book is a contribution to Pacific history. Over recent years historians of the Pacific have argued that we should do more than merely describe the imperial waves that successively crashed upon the reefs and beaches of the world's greatest ocean. It is necessary not just to follow the tides of empire but also, to use the title of a recent history of the Pacific, to stand "where the waves fall" and make some effort to see history from the viewpoint of those already

on the shore.[1] It is one thing to describe the power of European weapons and assume that the newcomers had the upper hand, but the Pacific peoples did not always play dead when the whites produced their big guns. All of the excessive firepower of *Resolution* and *Discovery*, which Gough details as representative of British naval superiority from the outset, was of no help whatever to James Cook as he was hacked to pieces on the rocky shoreline of Kealakekua Bay. There was another side to this story, and Gough begins by suggesting that he will tell it. The Admiralty papers are touted as possibly the last unused major documentary source on "Northwest Coast Indian life in the nineteenth century" (p. xv), and on the first page Gough states that his "objective has been to get as close to the historic interface of white and native societies as possible, and to describe and assess how each responded to the other" (p. xiii). In fact, throughout the book there is very little sense of how and why the Indians responded. Consistent with the old imperial history, the natives do not act but rather react to the actions of Europeans. The northwest coast Indians' own motivations and priorities are not examined in any detail. It is not sufficient to name Indian groups and individuals and to offer a general description of their culture. One would like to know about their notions of warfare, their views on crime and punishment, and the reasons why they sometimes resisted and sometimes did not. After describing the Cowichan affair, in which James Douglas led an armed force to capture and summarily execute an Indian who had attacked an English settler, Gough observes that "for reasons unknown, the natives did not regard the capture, trial and punishment with the same measure of acceptance as the authorities" (p. 66). Presumably those reasons had to do with the Indians' view of the invasion of their territory, and with a whole set of different cultural attitudes towards revenge and compensation. Although one must be careful about analyzing other cultures, some conclusions could be drawn in this case. Certainly to attempt what is difficult is better than raising the reader's expectations and then backing off. To the extent that they are used here, the Admiralty papers are a revealing source on the views of navy men but not on northwest coast Indian life. For in the end, *Gunboat Frontier* tells only one side of the story. While it details the attitudes and actions of the Royal Navy, it does not take the reader across to the other side of the frontier.

Simon Fraser University ROBIN FISHER

[1] K. R. Howe, *Where the Waves Fall: A New South Sea Islands History from First Settlement to Colonial Rule* (Sydney and London: George Allen and Unwin, 1984).

False Creek: History, Images, and Research Sources, by Robert K. Burkinshaw. Vancouver: City of Vancouver Archives, Occasional Paper no. 2, 1984. Pp. iv, 81; maps and photographs.

False Creek has possibly the most varied history of any district in the city of Vancouver. While the West End has seen an evolution from the large and gracious homes of the well-to-do, through deteriorating multiple family dwellings, to its present forest of high-rise apartment blocks, its function has always been primarily residential. Similarly, despite dramatic alterations in appearance, downtown's essential role remains commercial. False Creek, in contrast, has changed from a quiet waterway surrounded by forest, to the location of heavy industry, to "a filthy ditch in the centre of the city," and now to the site of B.C. Place, innovative housing and the lively Granville Island. Thus False Creek is a fitting subject for the second occasional paper[1] produced by the City of Vancouver Archives.

In *False Creek: History, Images, and Research Sources*, Robert K. Burkinshaw has drawn on the rich photograph, map and documentary collections of the City Archives to produce a handsomely illustrated volume. The well-chosen and generally well-reproduced pictures and historic maps could almost stand by themselves. Mr. Burkinshaw brings attention to changing ideas about False Creek by showing sketches of some of the more grandiose schemes for the area including a plan initially devised by the CPR in the 1880s and adapted by the Vancouver Harbour Commission in the late 1910s to build deep-sea docking facilities at Kitsilano. To illustrate a contrary idea, the filling in of the Creek, as proposed by several civic politicians in the early 1950s, he reprints campaign advertisements.

The text has many strengths but is less satisfying. It clearly and concisely outlines some of the tangled aspects of False Creek's history such as the city's long quarrel with the CPR over the Kitsilano fixed trestle and the complex question of foreshore ownership. Although Mr. Burkinshaw wisely eschewed the temptation to tell the whole story of False Creek and focused on what he considered to be the major developments in and around the Creek, his choice of emphasis is eclectic. For example, he relates, in comparative detail, the observations of explorers and records of early European activities in the area, but his only mention of the Kitsilano Indian Reserve is a passing reference to its establishment in 1871.

[1] William McKee, "Portholes and Pilings: A Retrospective Look at the Development of Vancouver Harbour up to 1933." City of Vancouver Archives, *Occasional Papers*, No. 1 (1978).

He does not explain how Indian title was extinguished in 1913 or how the property became the site of a RCAF base during World War II and, eventually, Vanier Park. Equally striking is the limted reference to shipbuilding activity on the Creek, especially during World War I, when Coughlan's Shipyard, for example, had over 7,000 employees. Even more surprising is the short shrift given to the machine shops, small manufacturers and wholesalers who operated on the shores of False Creek and on Granville Island. Indeed, Granville Island almost merits an equivalent volume of its own. Mr. Burkinshaw provides no more than tantalizing hints of how the Harbour Commission reclaimed and developed the Island (1916-23) as a compact industrial site or how, in the 1970s, the Island emerged as the home of a public market, theatres and trendy restaurants. Indeed, the text for the chapter covering 1969-83 — surely a decade and a half during which False Creek underwent more dramatic changes than in any comparable period in its history — is only a disappointing page and a half long, and the photographs do not reveal the whole picture.

Nevertheless, as a handsome pictorial record and brief textual explanation of the previous incarnations of False Creek, this volume is a welcome addition to the historiography of Vancouver; its elaborate notes and bibliography, as intended, offer a helpful guide to further research. The City of Vancouver Archives is to be commended for sharing its rich historical resources with a public wider than those who have the pleasure and opportunity of regular visits to its splendid Vanier Park location at the entrance to False Creek.

University of Victoria PATRICIA E. ROY